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NARENDRA MODI, MAHANT SWAMI MAHARAJ INAUGURATE PRAMUKH SWAMI MAHARAJ CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



Prime Minister Modi and Mahant Swami Maharaj inaugurating the Pramukh Swami Maharaj Centennial Celebration festival ground

Pramukh Swami Maharaj Centennial Celebration was inaugurated on Wednesday, December 14, 2022, in Ahmedabad by India Prime Minister Narendra Modi and His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj, the spiritual leader of BAPS Swaminarayan

Sanstha (BAPS). The opening marked the public dedication of the month-long festival spread over 600 acres, which includes inspiring attractions, insightful exhibitions and enlightening programs that are free to all visitors.

PM Modi and Mahant

Swami Maharaj commenced the auspicious inauguration ceremony amid the chanting of Vedic mantras and puja from the Sant Dwar, the majestic 380-foot-wide entrance gate honoring the great sages and saints of India. Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat, Gujarat Chief Minister

Bhupendra Patel, and senior swamis of BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha also participated in the ceremony.

Upon entering the festival grounds, Mahant Swami Maharaj and the PM Modi were greeted with a colorful welcome dance by

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hundreds of BAPS children and youths. PM Modi then offered his heartfelt tribute by placing flowers before the beautiful 30-foot sculpted image of Pramukh Swami Maharaj.

After the ceremonial opening, the prime minister was guided through the enchanting glow garden, where artistic renditions of moral stories and inspiring values reflected Pramukh Swami Maharaj's efforts to illumine the lives of countless people globally. The prime minister then observed the *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* display, celebrating 75 years of India's independence through a tribute to Indian heroes and inspirational figures.

From here, PM Modi reached the stunning 67-foot-tall replica of New Delhi's Swaminarayan Akshardham Mandir. They circumambulated the temple and sacred images consecrated within, including Bhagwan Swaminarayan and his spiritual successors, Bhagwan Shri Sita-Rama, Bhagwan Shri Radha-Krishna and Bhagwan Shri Shiva-Parvati. PM Modi then offered flowers and prayed at the holy feet of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and the installed deities.

The prime minister then arrived at the Bal Nagari, the children's cultural wonderland, where he was greeted by the BAPS children who had created and produced the shows and exhibits.

The prime minister viewed the three innovative musical shows in Nagari. The 'Sea of Suvarna' is the story of "Swarna the Goldfish," performed by 270 BAPS girls,

emphasizing the importance of both hard work and prayers for success. The 'Village of Buzo' is the emotional journey of a tribal boy and the sacrifice of his parents, highlighting the value of respecting parents. Finally, the 'Jungle of Sheru' is about a young lion whose journey inspires the realization of our inner strength and true identity.

Finally, PM Modi joined Mahant Swami Maharaj on the main assembly stage, where they were enthusiastically greeted by tens of thousands of devotees present, while millions watched live around the world.

On this occasion, the UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak shared a personal video message of tribute, offering his admiration and gratitude to His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj for his countless contributions to the UK and the world.

The Head Swami of Akshardham in Gandhinagar, Anandswarup Swami said, "What was it in Pramukh Swami Maharaj that attracted so many and inspired them to positively transform their lives and selflessly serve? Pramukh Swami Maharaj was so simple and

made himself easily accessible to everyone because he saw God in all. So anyone who came into his contact experienced so many virtues in him: selfless love, limitless compassion, contentment, divinity, peace and the presence of God."

BAPS Senior Swami Ishwarcharan Swami said, "On this historic inauguration of Pramukh Swami Maharaj's centenary celebrations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken out time to come solely due to the strong bond of affection and reverence that he had for Pramukh Swami Maharaj."

CM Bhupendrabhai Patel said, "As we have come together to celebrate the centenary of Bhagwan Swaminarayan's fifth spiritual successor Pramukh Swami Maharaj, all of us remember the manifold ways his life inspired us. He served all of humanity his entire life with a vision that transcended bodily distinctions. He inspired countless to transform their lives. After the terrorist attack on Akshardham, his actions set an example for the world of peace and forgiveness that became renowned as 'the Akshardham

Response'. He provided comfort to all in need, providing aid to the disaster-stricken. He personally inspired thousands to become addiction-free. One of his greatest contributions is the inspiration of family unity. This is a festival to pay tribute to the invaluable contributions he had made to society."

On this occasion, PM Narendra Modi said, "I want to congratulate Mahant Swami Maharaj for inspiring this magnificent Nagar and the swamis for conceptualizing and creating it. It is not only impressive; it will be a source of inspiration for generations to come. This festival is great not just because of its scale and beauty but because of the experience of divinity and grand vision behind it, where everyone can learn about our heritage, history, faith and values."

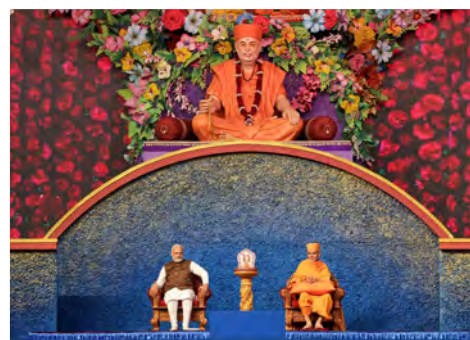
"Pramukh Swami Maharaj taught me that the greatest goal in life is to serve others, and he inspired me to serve till my last breath."

"Pramukh Swami Maharaj did not give me great lectures, but delivered profound truths through simple words and his

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Prime Minister Modi and Mahant Swami Maharaj commenced the auspicious inauguration ceremony amid the chanting of Vedic mantras



Tens of thousands present and millions watching live mesmerized by the spectacular opening ceremony

CONTINUES FROM PAGE 02

example. He cared for me even when I was not in office, just a mother would for her child. His presence always gave me peace and reassurance."

"I dearly miss Pramukh Swami Maharaj. But today, I feel his love and spiritual energy through Mahant Swami Maharaj, who continues to inspire me to serve everyone in our country."

Mahant Swami Maharaj, in his blessings, stated, "Why has Narendrabhai Modi come? He is very intelligent and can grasp the entire nagar in an instant, but he has come solely to offer his homage to Pramukh Swami Maharaj." The colorful evening concluded with a *maha-aarti* with tens of thousands of devotees as they paid tribute to their guru Pramukh Swami Maharaj, who personified his universal teaching, "In the joy of others lies our own."

Ishwarcharandas Swami, international convenor of BAPS, extended an invitation to everyone to visit 'Pramukh Swami Maharaj Nagar' and enjoy the free inspiring presentations, exhibitions and attractions.

Live broadcast of daily evening programs on live.psm100.org

The centennial celebration is scheduled to go on till January 15, 2023.



Prime Minister Modi addressing the inaugural assembly



Prime Minister Modi taking a tour of the festival ground



Entrance Gate of the Pramukh Swami Maharaj Centennial Celebration festival ground

Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone Dedicates A Tree In Honor Of Pramukh Swami Maharaj

Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone dedicated a Tuscarora Crape Myrtle Tree and plaque in honor of the centennial birth anniversary of His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj at the H. Lee Dennison Building on His Holiness' birthday. The event was held on December 7, 2022.

His Holiness is the fifth spiritual guru and leader of BAPS (Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha), and helped to build more than 1,100 temples, including the

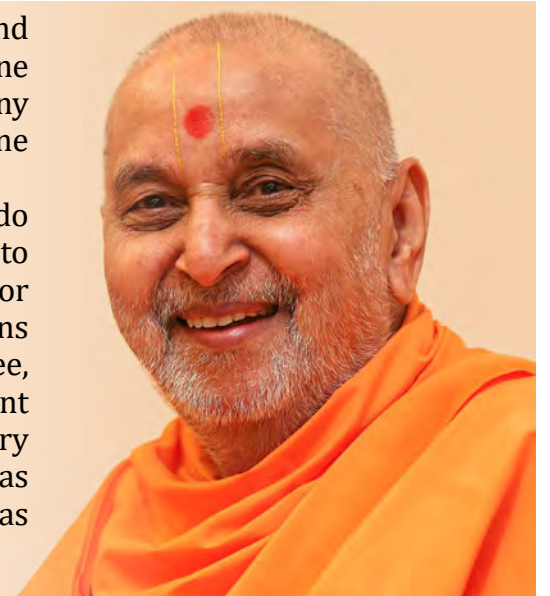
BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Melville. He dedicated his life to the well-being of others and led by example inspiring others through his work and character.

"This is such an important occasion for us here in Suffolk County," Executive Steve Bellone stated. "Of course, we were very proud as we were celebrating the centennial of the birth of Pramukh Swami Maharaj."

"It really is a representation of the foundation of life, of wisdom, growth, prosperity; so many of the things that Pramukh Swami

Maharaj has represented and done throughout his life," Bellone said. Maharaj has impacted many lives around the globe, Bellone added.

"His legacy will continue to do so for generations to come. So, to will this tree named in his honor be here and benefit generations to come, as well." The tree, Bellone said, is a permanent declaration of the "extraordinary contributions" that Maharaj has made around the globe, as well as on Long Island.



Indian-Americans Set to Benefit Most as Eagle Act Ends Country Quota

A bill that would allow US firms to focus on hiring people based on their skills, not their place of origin, has the support of the White House in Congress. If enacted, the law would help several hundred thousand immigrants, especially Indian-Americans.

The EAGLE Act would eliminate a per-country cap on employment-based green cards—a policy that disproportionately affects Indian immigrants.

If passed, this legislation would phase out the per-country caps over the course of nine years to ensure that eligible immigrants from less populated countries are not excluded as the EAGLE Act is implemented.

"The administration supports

efforts to improve our immigrant visa system and ease the harsh effects of the immigrant visa backlog," the White House said.

"Accordingly, the administration supports the House passage of HR 3648, the Equal Access to Green Cards for Legal Employment (EAGLE) Act, and its goal of allowing US employers to focus on hiring immigrants based on merit, not their birthplace, by eliminating the "per country" limitation on employment-based immigrant visas (green cards)," it said.

During the transition period, visas would also be set aside for nurses and physical therapists to address urgent needs in the healthcare industry, and for employment-based immigrants and their family members who

are not currently in the United States, the White House said.

"This legislation would be life-changing for hundreds of thousands of immigrants currently stuck in legal limbo as they wait for green cards," said Neil Makhija, Executive Director of the Indian American Impact.

The per-country cap on green cards is a relic of a discriminatory system that excluded Asian immigrants entirely in the past, he said.

"The caps were enacted decades ago and do not reflect our country's values. It is time for Congress to act and provide fair and equitable treatment to so many immigrants who call this country home," Makhija said.

The bill, among other things, also includes important

provisions to allow individuals who have been waiting in the immigrant visa backlog for two years to file their green card applications, the White House said.

Although the applications could not be approved until a visa becomes available, this would allow employment-based immigrants to transition off of their temporary visas and provide them with additional flexibility in changing employers or starting a business, it said.

Importantly, the bill would also keep families together by ensuring that children of employment-based immigrants do not age out of dependent status or lose their eligibility for a green card, the White House noted.

CDC Expands Polio Wastewater Testing to Michigan & Pennsylvania

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention announced on 30 November it will expand wastewater testing for polio to select communities across the US after a person tested positive for the disease in New York this summer.

After the first polio case in the United States, in over a decade, was found in New York's Rockland County in July, there has been pressure to step up efforts to combat the illness. Ever since the unvaccinated man was diagnosed, the virus has been detected in wastewater samples from nearby communities: New York City, Orange County, Sullivan County and Nassau County on Long Island.

"Wastewater testing can be an important tool to help us

understand if poliovirus may be circulating in communities in certain circumstances," Dr. José Romero, Director of the CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, said in a statement.



Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai Receives Padma Bhushan in California

India's Ambassador to the US, Taranjit Singh Sandhu handed over the Padma Bhushan, to Google and Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai in San Francisco.

Taking to *Twitter*, Sandhu said, "Delighted to hand over Padma Bhushan to CEO @Google & Alphabet @sundarpichai in San Francisco. Sundar's inspirational journey from #Madurai to Mountain View, strengthening India-US economic and technology ties, reaffirms Indian talent's contribution to global innovation."

After receiving the Padma Bhushan award, Sundar Pichai in his blog said, "I want to thank Ambassador Mr Sandhu and Consul General (Dr. Nagendra) Prasad for hosting me to receive the Padma Bhushan. I am deeply grateful to the Indian government and the people of India for this

immense honour. It is incredibly meaningful to be honoured in this way by the country that shaped

me."

"India is a part of me. I carry it with me wherever I go. (Unlike

this beautiful award which I will keep somewhere safe)," he added.



Athens, NYC Mayors' Agree to Work Together Under Sister City Pact

A sister city agreement was signed at city hall by Athens Mayor Kostas Bakoyannis and New York City Mayor Eric Adams, opening the door for joint projects in tourism, environmental protection, technology and cultural affairs.

"The sister city agreement serves as a compass in our joint path towards strengthening the sustainability and resilience of our cities. It extends our cooperation in environmental protection and consolidates our shared policy of zero tolerance towards social discrimination," said Bakoyannis.



Photo: greekcitytimes

Mayors of Athens and NYC signing the Sister City Act

On his part, Adams said New York City has been inspired by Athens' example: "a place where people of different backgrounds come together to seek a better future for themselves and their fellow citizens".

"Today, we're committing to the future of our partnership and laying the groundwork for collaboration. This sister city agreement will allow us to share best practices and address our most pressing challenges," said Adams, adding that Athens and NYC will work together to increase tourism flows between the two cities.

Penguin Random House Gets Nihar Malaviya as Interim Chief

After Penguin Random House's current CEO Markus Dohle stated he was stepping down from the position, publishing executive of Indian descent Nihar Malaviya was named interim CEO of the New York-based organisation.

Mr. Malaviya, who has been President and Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the publisher's American division Penguin Random House US since 2019, will assume the role of Interim CEO of Penguin Random House

starting January 1, 2023, the publisher's parent company Bertelsmann said in a statement Friday.

"Following Malaviya's appointment, the GMC will comprise 20 top executives of eight different nationalities," the statement said.

As interim CEO of Penguin Random House, he will "lead the creation of new competitive advantages that position the global company for future growth," the statement said.

Mr. Dohle is stepping down

as CEO at the end of 2022, and simultaneously resigning his seat on the Bertelsmann Executive Board, "at his own request and on the best of mutual terms," Bertelsmann said.

Mr. Dohle said in the statement that after nearly 15 years on the Executive Board of Bertelsmann and at the helm of the global publishing business, he has decided to hand over the next chapter of Penguin Random House to new leadership, following the antitrust decision in the US against the merger of

Penguin Random House and Simon & Schuster.



THE FORTNIGHT THAT WAS

Looming Real ID Requirement for Air Travel Delayed by 2 Years

Americans will have two more years to obtain a Real ID driver's license or identification card, the Department of Homeland Security announced on November 5, 2022.

Congress created the Real ID program in 2005 to establish minimum security standards for state-issued driver's licenses and ID cards. The change came following a recommendation from the 9/11 Commission.

But states, including Maine, got postponements, saying they weren't ready for the new rules. Maine began issuing Real ID's in 2019. Then the pandemic hit, and the federal government delayed enforcing the Real ID requirement.

Postponing enforcement of the last phase of the Real ID Act will give motor vehicle departments across the country more time to process the new credentials, but will come 17 years after the changes initially were to be in place.

"This extension will allow individuals more time to obtain compliant identification, helping to prevent undue travel disruptions and preserving the health of the aviation system as we continue to navigate the pandemic's impacts on global air travel," said Kevin M. Burke, North America President of the Airports Council International.

The US Travel Association, which had been advocating for a Real ID extension, said in a statement that moving the deadline is "the right decision" to prevent significant travel disruptions.

"This delay helps to give travelers the time necessary to get the credential needed to fly domestically," said Tori Emerson Barnes, the travel association's Executive Vice President of Public Affairs and Policy. "It remains critical that DHS identify ways to modernize identification standards to make the entire travel process more efficient," he added.



Community News

Indian Government Launches Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children

Indian Consulate is pleased to inform that Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India has launched the "Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children" (SPDC) for the academic year 2022-23 for the Children of NRIs/PIOs/OCIs for pursuing undergraduate courses in several disciplines in India. A copy of the guidelines is attached herewith for ready reference. Only fresh-year undergraduate students (1st year) shall be eligible to get the scholarship for the entire duration of the undergraduate course.

The following are the main features of the SPDC for the academic year 2022-23

- (i) The SPDC Scheme is available to eligible candidates from NRI/PIO/OCI community in all countries across the globe;
- (ii) The scheme is open to two categories of applicants (age group of 17 to 21 years as on July 31, 2022).
 - a) Children of PIOs/OCIs/NRIs who have studied outside India in any of the countries across the globe; and
 - b) Children of Indian workers of ECR countries (who have studied in India or abroad).
- (iii) The total number of seats for scholarships is 150, out of which 100 slots are reserved for the category at (ii)(a), and the remaining 50 slots are reserved for the category at (ii)(b). Out of the 50 slots reserved for the category at (ii)(b), 1/3rd slots shall be reserved for children who have studied in India. Further, 50% of slots in all categories are reserved for female applicants subject to fulfilling other eligibility conditions. If slots are not filled up in any of the categories, they will be made available to applicants from other categories under SPDC and vice-versa.
- (iv) Children of NRIs/PIOs/OCIs must have completed their 11th & 12th education or equivalent (not beyond), in a foreign country.
- (v) Candidates would be selected on Merit-cum-Means basis. Evaluation will be done on the marks obtained in 12th grade or equivalent examination. The candidates would also have to fulfil all the criteria prescribed for the purpose.

NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS, ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA, & HOW TO APPLY

Please refer to the Information Document Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children for academic session

Global Peace Secretariat Launches PeaceAction5 for 75th Ann. Human Rights Day

Global Peace Secretariat invites you to its PeaceAction5 campaign, marking 75th Anniversary of Universal Human Rights Day, to take any of 5 actions listed below promoting peace, respect for fellow human beings.

- Walk, Jog 5 miles or 5 steps, stairs based on ability.
- Get 5 friends to take free course on non-violent communicating on globalpeacesecretariat.com.
- Donate food, clothes or coats (gently used) to 5 people in need in the spirit of holiday giving and beyond.

Please post your pictures on Instagram, @globalpeacesecretariat

The PeaceAction5 campaign ends on January 9, 2023 Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Divas, celebrating 'People of Indian origin living outside India' Day when Mahatma Gandhi returned to India from South Africa in 1915. 2023 marks 108 years of his return to India.

Religious Events

Ved Mandir



1 Ved Mandir Dr, Milltown, NJ 08850 Ph: (732) 821-0404

Open Every day -- 7:00 AM to 7:30 PM

AARTI TIMES

Morning Aarti -- 7:00 AM, Evening Aarti -- 7:00 PM

Everyday Online Session by Mandir Priests

5:00 PM To 7:00 PM

17 Dec - 108 GAYATRI MANTRA CHANTING - 5:00 PM onwards

24 Dec - SUNDERKAND PATH - 5:00 PM onwards

www.vedmandir.org

Sri Venkateswara Temple (Balaji Mandir)



1 Balaji Temple Drive, Bridgewater, NJ-08807, Ph: (908) 725-4477

Mon - Fri: 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM & 4:30 PM - 8:30 PM

Saturday, Sunday & National Holidays: 8:30 AM - 8:30 PM

Every Sunday - Vishnu Sahasranama - 8:30 AM - 9:15 PM

www.venkateswaratemple.org

The Hindu Temple Society of North America Sri Maha Vallabha Ganapati Devasthanam

45-57 Bowne Street, Flushing, NY 11355, Ph: (718) 460-8484

Weekdays: 8:00 AM to 8:30 PM; Weekends: 7:30 AM to 8:30 PM

Pradosham - 6:00 PM onwards

Dec 17 - Ekadasa Rudra Parayanam- 4:00 PM onwards

Akshayam- 1:00 PM onwards

Dec 20 - Pradosham - 6:00 PM onwards

Dec 24 - Sri Sukta Parayanam - 4:00 PM

<https://nyganeshtemple.org/>



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★★★★★

BHAVNA TALKIES

Ms. Bhavna Kant

 <https://bit.ly/37Aa6nT>
 <https://bit.ly/3Jqfkjl>
 <https://bit.ly/3DSFLwR>



BHEDIYA

(2022 / Horror Comedy / Cinema Release)

THIS WOLF WINS HEARTS FOR SURE!

Writer Niren Bhatt
Director Amar Kaushik
Cast Varun Dhawan, Abhishek Banerjee, Paalin Kabak, Deepak Dobriyal, Kriti Sanon, Saurabh Shukla



Plot

An ambitious, city-bred Bhaskar intends to build a road through a thickly forested area of the lush northeast. He has neither respect nor love for nature or its relationship with humans, and he ends up in a precarious situation.

Analysis

Films these days have a long list of challenges to meet. They need to be able to win the audiences' hearts and/or make them think; offer something new; entertain unapologetically; or have substance or a message.

It's not an easy feat, and I would say *Bhediya* succeeds reasonably.

First of all, it deserves a pat on the back for attempting a tough-to-handle genre, blending in thought-provoking and hard-hitting messages, providing a dose of humour, managing to

tug emotionally, and serving an amazing visual treat.

An element that deserves the first mention is the cinematography by Jishnu Bhattacharjee.

Fantastic visuals and superb VFX are the highlights of the film.

The transformation was absolutely A-class, and the animals looked as realistic as they could be.

The North East has been captured in all its beauty, and the scenes with VFX thrown in reminded me of Pandora in *Avatar*.

The horror element is not too high, except for the setting and atmospherics. North East and the forested areas do lend a mystique.

The way they have blended humor with metaphors, veiled messages, sarcasm, and folklores is appreciable. Works

much better than a preachy approach.

They highlight the fast life-commercial-city-psyche and make it look ugly.

They begin with making us fear the wolf and by the end they make us fear 'for' that very wolf.

The empathy that they manage to evoke and the emotional connect that the film makes in the third act is a clear winner. The message of harmony that humans need to have with nature, is well delivered.

Having said that, I confess that the I felt my attention going astray sporadically. Perhaps some stretches could have been crisper or sharper. The premise is interesting but not very intriguing. Humor is cute but not hilarious. Although I enjoyed the film, but felt a lack of intensity.

I know comparisons are wrong but I would still go ahead and point out that neither the

horror nor the comedy, or the mystery is at par with *Stree*. But this film wins hearts for so many reasons as mentioned earlier.

Varun Dhawan is superb in all shades of his role.

Abhishek is the life line of the humor quotient of the film. He steals every scene he is in, even if he is not the focus.

Paalin makes a good debut.

Deepak Dobriyal is good but not great.

Kriti has too small a presence to speak about.

The film is definitely recommended. You might like it or love it depending upon your palate. But no denying that it entertains and accomplishes a lot.

Score 3.5 on 5



THE WONDER

(2022 / Drama / Netflix)

THIS INTRIGUING PERIOD DRAMA IS CAPTIVATING, STIRRING & HEARTBREAKING!

Based on The Wonder by Emma Donoghue
Director Sebastian Lelio
Cast Florence Pugh, Kila Lord Cassidy, Niamh Algar, Elaine Cassidy, Tom Burke

Photos: The Wonder Trailer

Plot

In rural Ireland in the 18th century, an English nurse is hired to observe a young girl who claims to have not eaten for the last four months but is apparently healthy and doing well.

The church and the deeply religious think she is God's miracle.

A doctor scientist believes she is a science miracle.

The pragmatists believe she is famishing.

The nurse has doubts that she is being fed secretly.

But the truth is convoluted and shattering.

Analysis

The period setting, the intriguing premise and the cast is what drew me to this film. Performances and the setting had me spellbound but the twist for me came totally

unaware and I was blown away by how subtly the narrative conveys what it intended to.

Sebastian Lelio effectively places religious fanaticism against scientific realism and also glaringly highlights the putrid patriarchy, the claustrophobic regressive scenario and how extreme religiousness effects human behaviour and mindset that leads them into believing their own warped alternate reality.

Lelio, whose films have always been critically acclaimed, says that the story might be unreal but what it represents is real even in the present context.

Interestingly, even though Emma Donoghue's story is fictional but it is inspired from real social phenomenon reported during that period called "Fasting Girls". One famous case of a Welsh girl,

Sarah Jacob is eerily similar.

But how the film uses the fasting girls' story to convey something more hard hitting is what blows you away.

So many aspects of the film bring it to shine and lend it a stirring authenticity even though we know it's a fictional story. The sets, art designs, costumes, lighting, get ups, the dark and grey frames and most importantly that haunting background score which lends a sinister feel as if warning of an impending darkness. A darkness that creeps upon you suddenly, it scares you and breaks your heart.

But beyond the darkness, there is a light, of reasoning, ethics, humanity, love and hope that Elizabeth represents.

I would suggest to avoid reading any reviews with spoilers, for the story to be impactful.

The realisation that makes it all the more impactful is that the concerns that are highlighted are still relevant across centuries, countries, cultures and religions.

Florence Pugh (Elizabeth) shines like a beacon. You would need to rewind and rewatch her scenes to absorb and relish the beauty and subtlety of her expressions.

Kila Lord Cassidy steals your heart with the innocence and naiveté that she lends little Anna.

The film is a gem and a must watch for those who like slow burn cinema with substance.

It has a superbly intriguing story if you tread unaware, boasts of captivating storytelling and what it highlights is heart-breaking.



Matt Damon, Casey Affleck to star in *The Instigators*



Photos: indiewire

According to Deadline, *Ocean's Eleven* stars Matt Damon and Casey Affleck have signed on to star in their next heist movie together, titled *The Instigators*. The film hails from Apple Original Films and will be produced by Damon's long-time friend and Casey Affleck's brother, Ben Affleck. The award-winning trio previously starred in the acclaimed 1997 film *Good Will Hunting*.

The *Instigators* will be directed

by Doug Liman, who will be reuniting with Damon after two decades, as the two last worked together in the action thriller *The Bourne Identity*. The film will feature the Oscar-winning actors portraying "two thieves who must go on the run with the help of one of their therapists after a robbery goes awry," reads the logline.

Chuck MacLean wrote the script, which Robinov, Graham, and Casey Affleck worked on developing.



Photos: IMDb

Kristen Stewart Named Berlin Film Festival Jury President

Photos: Los Angeles Times

The 73rd Berlin International Film Festival's jury will be presided over by actor, screenwriter, and director Kristen Stewart.

"We're excited about Kristen Stewart taking on this distinguished task," festival directors Mariette Rissenbeek

and Carlo Chatrion said on Friday (December 9, 2022). "She's one of the most talented and multifaceted actors of her generation. From Bella Swan to the Princess of Wales she has given life to everlasting characters. Young, shining and with an impressive body of work behind her, Kristen Stewart is the

perfect bridge between the US and Europe."

"Kristen Stewart has become one of the most eminent international actors, thrilling audiences and critics alike," the Berlin fest concluded.



Trevor Noah Bids Goodbye to The Daily Show

Following the conclusion of his seven-year run on *The Daily Show*, Trevor Noah expressed his last goodbyes to the audience. On December 8, he hosted the final show and made his final appearance. After his final day, he thanked all of the spectators in an emotional statement.

In a BTS video shared by The Daily Show's official Twitter handle, Trevor Noah said he is grateful to every audience, "I'm grateful to you. Every single one of you."

According to *Entertainment Tonight*, he recalled the old days when the show started and how there were not enough people to fill up the audience space. "I

remember when we started the show, we couldn't get enough people to fill the audience... And I look at this now and I don't take it for granted, ever." He thanked everyone and appreciated those who watched him, the show, and people who used to share short clips. "Every seat that's ever been filled to watch something that I'm doing, I always appreciate it. Thank you to the people who watch, the people who share the clips. Everyone who's ever had an opinion."

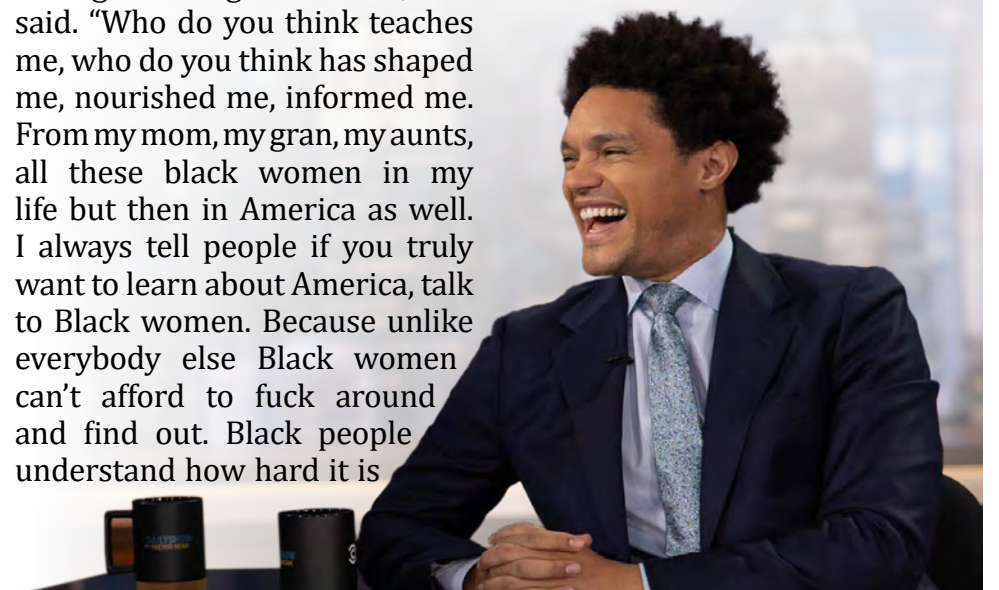
In the emotional speech, he also added a laugh by passing a comment on haters. He said, "Even the people who hate-watch. We still got the ratings! I'm eternally grateful to you."

Noah gave a special shout out to Black women in his closing moments.

"I've often been credited with having these grand ideas," he said. "Who do you think teaches me, who do you think has shaped me, nourished me, informed me. From my mom, my gran, my aunts, all these black women in my life but then in America as well. I always tell people if you truly want to learn about America, talk to Black women. Because unlike everybody else Black women can't afford to fuck around and find out. Black people understand how hard it is

when things go bad."

"I'm grateful to them, I'm grateful to you. This has been an honor," he added.



RRR Wins Best International Picture at Atlanta Film Critics Circle

RRR has added another feather to its cap after winning Best International Feature at Atlanta Film Critics Circle. SS Rajamouli's film features Ram Charan and Jr. NTR in lead roles.

Indian Telugu-language epic action drama film -- directed by SS Rajamouli, who co-wrote the film with V. Vijayendra Prasad -- won Best International Picture at the 2022 Atlanta Film

Critics Circle Awards. Taking to *Twitter*, Atlanta Film Critics Circle shared a photo of lead actors Ram Charan and Jr. NTR. It tweeted, "The 2022 Atlanta Film Critics Circle Awards. Best International Picture: RRR."

The official *Twitter* handle of RRR shared the tweet and wrote, "Thank you so much @ATLFilmCritics (folded hands emojis) #RRRMovie."



Atlanta Film Critics Circle
@ATLFilmCritics

The 2022 Atlanta Film Critics Circle Awards

Best International Picture:
RRR

#AFCC #AFCC2022Awards @RRRMovie #RRR #RRRmovie



taran adarsh @taran_adarsh · Dec 8

IT'S OFFICIAL... ROHIT SHETTY - DEEPIKA PADUKONE - 'SINGHAM AGAIN'... #RohitShetty announces his lady #Singham... #DeepikaPadukone to be a part of #SinghamAgain, making her the first lady cop of #RohitShetty's popular Cop Universe.



Deepika Padukone to Feature in Singham Again

Actress Deepika Padukone will play the role of cop 'Lady Singham' in Rohit Shetty's Ajay Devgn-starrer *Singham Again*, a sequel to 2014's *Singham Returns*.

At the launch of the song, 'Current Laga Re' from his upcoming film *Cirkus*, Rohit Shetty made one of the biggest announcements of the year.

Rohit Shetty then revealed, "Everyone

knows that my next film is *Singham Again*, belonging to the cop universe. Every time, I am asked 'Lady Singham kab aayegi?'. Toh *Singham Again* mein Lady Singham aayegi." He said this and pointed at Deepika Padukone. The actress posed dramatically and then hugged Rohit Shetty. Rohit Shetty added, "She's my lady cop from the cop universe. So, we'll be working together as early as next year."

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