



Ivory skeleton for Travancore king to study anatomy

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUG 11 /- At a time when the western treatment method was not popular here, a ruler of the erstwhile princely state of Travancore got a human skeleton carved out of ivory in order to study anatomy and osteology over a century ago. As social customs barred him from 'touching' corpses and bones, Uthram Thirunal Marthanda Varma, the then King, who had a great affinity towards English medicines and its treatment system, got the replica of human skeleton made from ivory in 1859. Created by an unknown craftsman from Travancore, the skeleton, having astonishing similarity with original human skeleton and impeccable perfection in its measures, is now kept on display at the Natural History Museum in the zoo campus here.

Museum authorities say that a research is underway to ascertain the identity of the skilled craftsman who carved the ivory skeleton with so much

precision and still remains an unsung hero in the annals of history. The museum records showed that the model was 'executed in 1859 by local workmen under commands of His Highness Uthram Thirunal Marthanda Varma Maharaja for scientific study. The younger brother of visionary King Swathy Thirunal, Uthram Thirunal, who had ruled Travancore during AD 1846-60, had a great fancy for the European style, fashion, dress, occupation, furniture, amusements, medicines and treatment system since infancy. According to local historian Madras, he said, Natural History Museum Superintendent S Abu said the ivory skeleton has always kindled a special interest among doctors and medical experts who visit the museum. "The ivory skeleton was made in such a meticulous way, experts see it as an excellent mix of science and craftsmanship which had even amused the British, he said. "Uthram Thirunal is

considered as the person who had popularised English treatment system in Travancore. He had devoted great time in studying the medical science and imported medicines and latest medical devices from England and other parts," Gopalakrishnan told PTI. "However, the prevailing social customs had created hurdles to pursue his interest to study human anatomy and osteology. To overcome the obstacle and continue his study, he had got made this ivory skeleton," he said. It is believed that the skeleton was sculpted based on an actual skeleton, brought from Madras, he said. Natural History Museum Superintendent S Abu said the ivory skeleton has always kindled a special interest among doctors and medical experts who visit the museum. "The ivory skeleton was made in such a meticulous way, experts see it as an excellent mix of science and craftsmanship which had even amused the British, he said. "Uthram Thirunal is

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converted into a private dispensary being found insufficient, a separate building was constructed on an enlarged scale to provide the necessary accommodation," Menon said. The arrangements at the dispensary won the admiration of even Europeans. With the prince spending a large amount of time at his dispensary, people, especially belonging to Hindu community, preferred this institution to government charity hospital. It is interesting to note that though upper class Nambuthiri Brahmins would not even touch English medicines under the idea that most of the liquid substance contained spirits, they began to take them freely from the prince's dispensary. Brahmins, who visited Travancore as part of various religious ceremonies, spread the news of medical knowledge of the prince and the virtues and effectiveness of European medicines in Malabar (north Kerala) and other neighbouring

princely states. The royal's dispensary was the only resort of upper state Brahmins for medical aid while coming for Murajagam, an auspicious ritual conducted in Sree Padmanabha Swamy Temple here every six years. Records also showed that Uthram Thirunal successfully treated his brother and the then king Swathy Thirunal, when he suffered from diarrhoea. A three-month-long treatment under him also cured the chronic dyspepsia of a Gouda Brahmin Sastru, who came here for Murajagam from Benaras, it said. The prince's laboratory had glass retorts, boilers, evaporating dishes, crucibles of different kinds, and many other things necessary for conducting chemical experiments. There was also a powerful electric machine, a galvanic battery, an air pump, an ice-making machine besides several kinds of optical instrument, such as stereoscopes of various sorts, telescopes of sizes and opera glasses, it added. (PTI)

CREATIVE WORLD

Don't agree with it: Ranbir on Rishi's criticism of 'Jagga Jasoos'



MUMBAI, AUG 11 /- Actor Ranbir Kapoor today said he doesn't agree with Rishi Kapoor's criticism of his latest 'Jagga Jasoos' but feels his father was only trying to protect him. In an interview with a tabloid, Rishi had slammed director Anurag Basu for being 'irresponsible' with the film, which was in the making for over three years. When asked what he thinks of his father's criticism, Ranbir told reporters, "My father is a very emotional man. Whatever he said was to protect me in some way I don't necessarily agree with what he said. 'Jagga Jasoos' is something that we worked for three and a half years. We all were aware of what we were doing. Sometimes you succeed, sometimes you fail," he added. The actor said he looks at 'Jagga Jasoos' as a learning experience and not a failure. "I don't look at it as a failure, I look at it as a learning. It gave me a lot. The experience of working with Anurag Basu and everyone was very good. I can't answer for somebody else but I don't necessarily agree with everything." The actor was speaking at the trailer launch of Sanjay Dutt's comedy, 'Bhoomi'. At the event, filmmaker Rajkumar Hirani and Vidhu Vinod Chopra were also present.

Ranbir is all set to play the titular role in the forthcoming biopic on Dutt to be directed by Hirani. When asked if he is under pressure to deliver with the film, the 'Barfi' actor said, "Rajkumar Hirani is one of the finest filmmakers we have. I am happy to work with him because he works really hard on his scripts, very passionately. Having said that, there is no formula to success. Anurag Basu and I worked in 'Barfi' which was quite successful. So it isn't like if you work with this person you'll get a hit, if you work with someone else, you don't know what will happen. I am just happy that I am working with such amazing people." Ranbir said. To which, Chopra added, "The pressure in the industry is ' flop proof' and said 'Jagga Jasoos' was a well made film with some 'excellent moments.' Directed by Omung Kumar, 'Bhoomi' is scheduled to release on September 22. (PTI)

'Secret Superstar' is about empowerment of the girl child: Aamir

MUMBAI, AUG 11 /- Superstar Aamir Khan says through his upcoming film 'Secret Superstar' he intends to highlight the message of equality between boys and girls in the society, something which he did in his last blockbuster film 'Dangal' as well. "Secret Superstar" revolves around a young girl (Zaira Wasim) and her dream to become a singer. Talking about the similarity between the two films, producer Aamir said in a statement here, "This film and 'Dangal' both are based on the same topic, which is changing the attitude towards girls. Treating girls equally as we treat our boys. This is again based on empowerment of the girl child." Produced by Aamir, Kiran Rao under their banner Aamir Khan Productions, Zee Studios and Akash Chawla, 'Secret Superstar' is written and directed by Advait Chandan. The film is slated to release this Diwali. (PTI)

Nick Jonas joins 'Chaos Walking'

LOS ANGELES, AUG 11 /- Singer-actor Nick Jonas has joined the cast of post-apocalyptic thriller 'Chaos Walking'. The 24-year-old musician will star alongside actors Daisy Ridley and Tom Holland, according to The Hollywood Reporter. The film is based on Patrick Ness' best-selling novel of the same name and will be directed by Doug Liman. The story is set on a colony planet where almost all women have been killed by a virus and all living beings have been affected by The Noise, a virus that inflicts immersive visions of one's thoughts. Jonas will portray the role of Davy Prentiss Jr, a young soldier in Mayor Prentiss' army who is fuelled by jealousy over his father's mentorship of long-time rival Todd Hewitt. The movie also stars Mads Mikkelsen as the villain, along with Demian Bichir and Kurt Sutter, who have recently come onboard. The film is slated to release on March 1, 2019. (PTI)

Anna Paquin to star in lesbian romance 'Tell It to the Bees'

LOS ANGELES, AUG 11 /- Actor Anna Paquin is all set to feature in lesbian romance, "Tell It to the Bees", opposite actor Holliday Grainger. The 35-year-old actor has started shooting for the period drama in Scotland, according to The Hollywood Reporter. The film will be directed by Annabel Jankel. The story is set in a small town of 1950s Britain that discovers the romantic relationship between a single mother (Grainger), who is struggling with the breakdown of her marriage, and a doctor (Paquin). The movie is based on Fiona Shaw's 2009 novel of the same name. (PTI)



Girls prepare to take part in a mermaid lesson in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil —REUTERS

'Suits' enlists Jay Harrington for multi-episode arc

LOS ANGELES, AUG 11 /- The creators of legal drama 'Suits' have roped in actor Jay Harrington to feature in a multi-episode arc in the show. The 45-year-old 'Better Off Ted' actor will be seen playing Mark Meadows, Donna Paulson's ex-boyfriend in two episodes, according to The Hollywood Reporter. "We have discussed Jay for many roles over the years because our casting director, Bonnie Zane, knows I'm a huge fan of his from 'Better Off Ted' and other things. Often he was unavailable. A few months ago he was pitched for the role of Tommy Bratton, but we ended up going with Al Sanjuzza. A few weeks later we were writing the role of Mark Meadows and that was perfect." (PTI)



Working with my father will be special: Alia

MUMBAI, AUG 11 /- Alia Bhatt is excited to be a part of 'Aashiqui' franchise and said the upcoming film in the movie series will be special as it's her father's director-producer Mahesh Bhatt's home production. Alia, who made her Bollywood debut with 'Student of the Year', is collaborating with her father for the first time. The third installment in the musical romance film series will see Alia opposite Sidharth Malhotra. There were reports that Alia was not too keen on doing the film but the actor on Friday took to Twitter to rubbish such stories. "Never ever said anything about not wanting to do

I faced homelessness once: Idris Elba

LONDON, AUG 11 /- Actor Idris Elba has revealed that there was a time when he did not have a roof over his head. The 44-year-old actor said he had to find a place to spend the night as he did not have anywhere to put up, reported Contactmusic. I faced homelessness once, and it just seems bizarre that young people are getting into this perpetual cycle. "This is England, Great Britain, we shouldn't be facing that," Elba told TimeOut magazine. "The Dark Tower" actor's comment comes after he appeared at the Shelter benefit with rapper Skepta. "I've got a passion and I turned up to say, 'Skepta's here, support the cause'," Elba added. (PTI)

The Munsters' reboot in the works

LOS ANGELES, AUG 11 /- NBC is rebooting 1960s comedy series 'The Munsters' about a family of lovable monsters with "Odd Mom Out" creator Jill Kargman. Inspired by the original series, the half-hour single-camera show follows members of an offbeat family who are determined to stay true to themselves but struggle to fit in in hipster Brooklyn, reported Deadline. Kargman will write the script and executive produce with Sethmeyer's Seth Meyers and Mike Shoemaker. Universal TV is the studio. NBC and Universal previously took a shot at rebooting 'The Munsters' several years ago as an hour-long series written by Bryan Fuller. It resulted in the big-budget pilot 'Mockingbird Lane', directed by Bryan Singer and starring Jerry O'Connell as family patriarch Herman Munster; Portia de Rossi as his wife Lily; Eddie Izzard as Grandpa and Charly Wakefield as cousin Marilyn, which aired as a Halloween special in 2012. (PTI)

Fashioning paper into art: Reviving the ancient craft of Sanjhi

NEW DELHI, AUG 11 /- He started when he was just 11 and now, more than three decades later, Mohan Kumar Verma is one of the few remaining custodians of Sanjhi, the centuries-old craft of turning paper into objects of art. The fourth generation craftsman from Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, is attempting to give the ancient art a contemporary twist by using mirrors, frames and more intricate designs. He also hopes to create a platform for the young to learn the craft.

"Being a tradition in our family and the only source of income, I was bound to learn the art form. I learnt it from my grandfather. In my childhood we didn't have many resources to revive the art form," said Verma. "But I decided later that I would mould the art in various forms and create a contemporary version for present art enthusiasts," added the 46-year-old artist. After discussions for over a year with the Delhi Craft Council, Verma along with other artists created a series of artworks exploring the theme of architecture. The result was 'Sanjhi Revisited: A splendid exhibition of a unique paper art', a showcasing of multi-coloured paper cuttings crafted to depict Mughal architecture, temples and the ghats of Mathura. The exhibition is on at the India Habitat Centre until tomorrow. Sanjhi, which evolved in the 16th and 17th centuries, was particularly used to decorate the walls and floors of temples. As it originated in Mathura, the

paper cuttings were widely used to depict Indian mythological stories, particularly with Lord Krishna as the focus. The walls of the Visual Arts Gallery at Habitat Centre were adorned with motifs of architectural imagery seen in miniature art as well as traditional architectural themes from religious Sanjhi designs. Inspired by the decorated marble panels of the Rajmahal Palace, Amber, Verma also recreated the flower motifs widely used in palace interiors. He has also recreated the domes and minarets, typical of Mughal architecture, and delicate line drawings in the syncretic styles of Persian, Central Asian and Indian art. For the artist, the only source of income has been exhibitions and workshops. Although Verma is happy that the craft is back on its feet thanks to initiatives by groups like the DCC, he also wants the government to intervene to preserve the art form. "Exhibitions happen once in a while so it is not a

regular source of income. But I am not worried about that because for me this is what the best I can do and I also want my children to carry on with the profession," he said. According to Radhika Bharat Ram, honorary general secretary of DCC and curator of the show, promoting the folk art is an important mission. "When we visited the Indian Art Fair in the city we were really disappointed to see that there was no works by Indian craftsmen displayed at the fair. (PTI)