

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, FRIDAY, MAY 26, 2023

Daily Evening Newspaper



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BRIEFLY

Active Covid cases Dip To 5,707, as 490 new cases logged in 24 hrs

NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): India logged 490 new coronavirus infections, while the active cases have decreased to 5,707 from 6,168, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on May 26.

The death toll has increased to 5,31,856 with two deaths, the data updated at 8 a.m. stated. The COVID-19 case tally was recorded at 4.49 crore (4,49,88,916).

"The active cases now comprise 0.01% of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate has been recorded at 98.80%," the Ministry said.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 4,44,51,353 and the fatality rate was recorded at 1.18%. According to the Ministry's website, 220.66 crore doses of COVID vaccine have been administered in the country so far under the nationwide vaccination drive.

Two houses damaged in fire mishap in Baramulla

SRINAGAR, May 26 (Agencies): At least two residential houses were damaged in a fire mishap early this morning in Kalantara Payeen in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, officials said.

Agency reported that a fire broke out from a residential house in Kalantara Kreeri early this morning. The fire soon after spread to a nearby house, however due to immediate intervention by the F&ES Department, the fire was contained from spreading further. Two residential houses involved in the blaze received damage to certain portions.

Meanwhile, an F&ES Department official said that a fire broke out at 5:10 at Kalantara Kreeri this morning where two residential houses, one single storey and one double storey were involved.

"Fire service reached the spot at 5:13 and after a fire fighting operation of nearly 3 and half hours, fire was brought under control with minimal damage

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Success of G20 meet in Srinagar will boost Tourism in J&K, allay fears in minds of visitors: Union Tourism Secy

NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): The third G20 Tourism Working Group Meeting held in Srinagar was "very successful" and this will contribute to boosting of tourism in Jammu and Kashmir and help in "allaying any fears" in the minds of visitors in future, a top official said on Friday.

Addressing reporters here, Union Tourism Secretary Arvind Singh also said that during the TWG meet held from May 22-24, G20 member countries, invited countries, and international



organisations gave inputs and feedback on the GOA Roadmap for tourism as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development goals and

G20 Tourism Ministers' Declaration.

There two documents were the two key deliverables of the tourism track meet in the summer cap-

ital of Jammu and Kashmir, and Singh said, G20 members have broadly reached an agreement on the five

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Leh Manali caught up in another dispute

SRINAGAR, May 26 (Agencies): Amidst the ongoing dispute between rental bike operators in Leh and Manali, a significant meeting was convened by senior officials in the presence of the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, BD Mishra The Tribune reported. The primary agenda of the meeting was to address the demand for a ban on rental bikes from Himachal Pradesh.

A bilateral agreement

restricted bikes from Leh to picking up clients in Keylong, while Manali rental bikes were prohibited from accessing Pangong and Nubra. However, in 2019, both sides accused each other of violating the pact.

Considering Ladakh shares its border with parts of Himachal Pradesh, it is common for tourists to rent bikes from Manali as a means to reach Leh. However, the local rental bike

operators in Leh have frequently claimed that this practice negatively impacts their business. The situation escalated recently when enraged residents of Leh vandalized 15 bikes and a pick-up truck that had been rented from Manali.

The Ladakh Bike Rental Cooperative Limited and the Bikers Association of Manali find themselves entangled in this conflict, with accusations of agreement violations being thrown

at each other in the past. Due to the outbreak of the Covid pandemic and subsequent travel restrictions, the issue was put on hold temporarily. However, with the arrival of the tourist season, the matter has resurfaced.

During the meeting with LG BD Mishra, Tashi Gyalsen, Chairman of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) in Leh, highlighted that the conflict between

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Delhi court grants NOC to Rahul Gandhi to get passport for 3 years

NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): A Delhi court on Friday granted Congress leader Rahul Gandhi a no-objection certificate (NOC) for issuance of an "ordinary passport" for three years.

Gandhi had moved the court after he surrendered his diplomatic passport upon his disqualification as an MP. "I'm partly allowing your application. Not for 10 years but three years," the judge told Gandhi's lawyer.

The former Congress chief is an accused in the National Herald case in which BJP leader Subramanian Swamy is the complainant.

South west monsoon likely to hit Kerala by June 7

SHIMLA, May 26 (Agencies): South West Monsoon is likely to hit Kerala by June 7 and it would advance slightly gap of two to three days delay as per the normal progress of Monsoon between June 1 to 5.

This was stated by

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About 4,500 devotees leave for annual Kheer Bhawani Mela in Kashmir



JAMMU, May 26 (Agencies): Amid tight security, nearly 4,500 devotees, including members of the Kashmiri Pandit community, on Friday left from Nagrota area here to attend the annual Kheer Bhawani mela in Kashmir, officials said.

The annual Kheer Bhawani Mela, celebrated

on Zeisht Ashtami, will take place on May 28 at the shrines of Tulmulla (Ganderbal), Tikker (Kupwara), Laktipora Aishmuqam (Anantnag), Mata Tripursundri Devsar (Kulgam), and Mata Kheerbhawani Manzgam (Kulgam) in the Valley.

The four-day pilgrimage commenced today

as Divisional Commissioner (Jammu) Ramesh Kumar, Relief Commissioner K K Sidha and prominent Kashmiri Pandit leaders jointly flagged off the yatra from Nagrota area, ensuring the safety and well-being of the devotees.

"The relief

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Family from telangana who lost way in tourist resort of Gulmarg rescued

SRINAGAR, May 26 (Agencies): Jammu and Kashmir Police rescued a family from Telangana who had lost their way in the tourist resort of Gulmarg in Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Friday.

They said three adults and four kids had lost their way after a Gondola ride.

Police said the family arrived at the tourist resort and went for a Gondola ride to Kangdoori Gulmarg.

"While on return to Gondola Phase second they lost their way and got stuck in the Kangdoori area," they said.

Soon after, Police rescue teams with the assistance of ATVs (all-terrain vehicles) and

Ponywalas followed around the Kangdoori area.

"They finally reached the location of the tourist family and rescued them from the area and brought them back to Gulmarg safely," police said.

The tourist family expressed their gratitude towards Baramulla Police for timely help.

SC grants interim bail to Former Delhi Minister Satyendar Jain on Medical Grounds

NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Friday granted interim bail to former Delhi minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Satyendar Jain for six weeks in a money laundering case.

The court also imposed various conditions including neither talking with the media nor leaving Delhi without permission.

A bench of Justices JK Maheshwari and PS Narasimha granted interim bail to Jain till July 11 and directed him not to influence witnesses in the matter.

The SC directed that all relevant papers of treatment be produced before this court. The top court said that the order will remain in operation till July 11 and



listed the matter for July 10 for further hearing.

The top court also gave Jain to choose any hospital of his choice for his medical treatment. The top court made it clear that interim bail is considered on medical conditions.

Senior Advocate AM Singhvi, appearing for Jain, said that they are seeking bail due to health reasons.

ASG SV Raju, appearing for the Enforcement Directorate (ED) sought

Jain to be examined by a panel of doctors either by AIMS or Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital. He also informed the SC that he was the Health Minister and that government hospitals were under him.

Last week, the top court asked ED to file a reply on Satyendar Jain's plea seeking bail in a money laundering case and also granted liberty to Jain to move vacation bench of the top court for an early hearing on his plea challenging Delhi High Court order dismissing his bail plea in the money laundering case against him.

Jain's lawyer had told the top court that he has lost 35 kg and turned skeleton due to this.

Former Delhi minister Satyendar Jain had

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MeT predicts more rains as mercury drops below normal in J&K

JAMMU, May 26 (Agencies): The weather department on Friday predicted widespread intermittent light to moderate rain, thunder and lightning with possibility of hailstorm and gusty winds during next 24 hours in Jammu and Kashmir.

Quoting a meteorological department official, that intermittent light rain, thunder and lightning was expected at a few places during May 27-28.

From May 29-30, the MeT department forecast "fairly widespread intermittent light to mod-

erate rain, thunder and lightning with possibility of hailstorm and gusty winds at a few places."

The MeT department also urged farmers to suspend all farm operations during May 29 and 30.

Regarding temperature, he said, Srinagar recorded a low of 9.4°C against 10.8°C on the previous night and it was 2.6°C below normal for the summer capital.

Qazigund, he said, recorded a low of 7.0°C against 8.0°C on the previous night and it was below normal by 3.7°C for the gateway town of

Kashmir. Pahalgam, he said, recorded a low of 4.8°C against 6.1°C on the previous night and it was 1.3°C below normal for the famous tourist resort in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

In Kupwara town, he said, the mercury settled at 9.3°C against 11.4°C on the previous night and it was 1.3°C below normal for the north Kashmir area.

Kokernag recorded a low of 6.0°C against 7.4°C on the previous night and it was 4.6°C below normal for the place, the officials said.

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Four Baramulla residents booked under PSA for anti-national activities

SRINAGAR, May 26 (Agencies): Four residents of Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district have been booked under stringent Public Safety Act (PSA) for their alleged anti-national activities, police said.

The PSA allows deten-

tion without trial for a year.

A police statement said four persons hailing from various areas of Pattan Baramulla were booked under PSA for being involved in anti-national activities. They were subsequently detained

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Woman among two persons found dead in South Kashmir

SRINAGAR, May 26 (Agencies): A woman was among two persons found dead under mysterious circumstances in Kulgam and Anantnag districts on Friday, officials said.

Quoting an official, news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) reported that a 42-year-old woman was found dead under mysterious circumstances at her home in Bathipora Kulgam. "She probably has died by suicide after consuming poisonous substance at her home", he said.

"In a separate incident, a youth from Shaksaz Kadipora Anantnag who was missing since yesterday evening was

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EDITORIAL

ONLINE
EDUCATION

Education is an important part of life. Shiksha is a Sanskrit word which means to learn or teach. We can receive education through any medium. Education prepares man intellectually. Similarly, online education is a simple way to get education in today's modern era. Online education system is like a boon in modern times. One who has not taken education due to any reason can achieve new dimensions through online education system.

Like we traditionally go to Gurukul or class and get their knowledge by sitting in front of their teacher. But in online education system it is considered as the latest form of education, we meet our teacher through internet and meet them through laptop or cellphone and get our knowledge.

Online education has also been accepted as a valid education medium since the year 1993. Which are called distance education in the language used. In this, the prescribed syllabus is taught through VS/DVD and internet. Education of big services like civil service, engineering and medical, law etc. is also being made available online by many institutions today.

In the changing environment, there have been many changes in technology and its uses are also huge. Due to technology, many changes have also been seen in the method of taking education. Today, teaching related material used in online education can be sent from one place to another through technology. Online education saves time.

Also, students can access the education from the comfort of their homes. Children continuously teach their teachers new ways of reading from online classes and are also interested in reading, not only this, online education also saves the cost of tuition or big coaching centers.

Online education Our Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman started a program called PM eVIDYA to promote online education. The challenge posed by the Corona pandemic crisis in front of the education world. Online courses will be started by 100 universities under PM eVIDYA. In this, the emphasis has been laid on school education by the Central and State Government through DIKSHA PORTAL.

Students of classes 1 to 12 will be provided e-content and QR code based books under "One Nation-One Platform". There is also a plan for providing important assistance by the under-states. In "One Nation-One Platform", emphasis will be laid on education through radio, community radio and podcasts for studies.

Manodarpan Yojana will be launched by the Government of India for psychological support, mental health and emotional support of students, teachers and parents. Along with this, children were already being given education through Swayam Prabha DTH. 12 more channels will be added in which telecast of live sessions will be done through skype, 6 hours of course material per day and provision will be made 24 x7 on all days of the week with three repeat telecasts. Along with promoting online education, the government's focus is also on preparing teachers for this. This is the reason that there is a preparation to provide online training to all teachers teaching in schools. At present, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and NCERT have been entrusted with the task of preparing a complete plan for this.

The Bengaluru drowning should be a wake-up call

By: Patralekha Chatterjee

We have been programmed to sneer at the drain inspector's report. Blame it partly on Mahatma Gandhi's use of the scorching phrase to describe American historian Katherine Mayo's book Mother India. But the totally avoidable death of a young woman in a waterlogged underpass in Bengaluru recently only underlines the need for more and better drain inspections, and actionable reports. In sum, it is about urban governance. Several things need to happen if we wish to avoid such tragedies, not just in Bengaluru, but across the country. Bhanurekha, 22, a techie working with Infosys, drowned to death last Sunday after the car she was travelling in entered a flooded underpass in rain-lashed Bengaluru. There were seven people inside the car. Six were lucky enough to be rescued in time but the young woman succumbed.

A lot of reports have already appeared in the local and national media about the incident. One learns there was a barricade to prevent people from entering the underpass, but the rain and wind had swept it away.

As I write, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), the local civic body, is under fire for inadequate desilting of drains, clearance of encroachments, and monsoon preparedness in general. A report by the BBMP says heavy rainfall, along with strong gusts of wind, led to leaves and branches choking the small vents of the drain gratings, preventing rainwater from flowing away, causing waterlogging. Another report in a national newspaper links the delays in much-needed development work to officials being on "election duty for nearly a month". Many location-

specific reasons are being trotted out to explain the terrible death.

Karnataka chief minister Siddaramaiah, who has just taken over, has announced compensation of Rs 5 lakhs to the next of kin of the deceased and free treatment for those admitted in the hospital.

Let us zero in on the basics: a young woman died in her prime. Needlessly. The broader picture underlying the tragedy serves as a glaring reminder of the huge gaps in infrastructure and governance in the time of climate change when extreme and erratic weather events are increasing. And the implications.

Flooded underpasses is not a new story in Bengaluru. Last July, local newspapers had pointed out that despite the corporation's efforts to fix flood-prone underpasses, many remained waterlogged. Journalists flagged a survey by the Bengaluru Traffic Police which listed 54 flood-prone roads in the city, known the world over as India's Silicon Valley. In September, heavy rainfall led to some along the city's tech workers using boats to get to the office. A recent report by the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre had identified more than 200 flood-prone locations where even one centimetre of rain would lead to flooding.

Clearly, the city lacks a functional system to drain out the water when the water level reaches a certain level following heavy rain.

But flooded roads and underpasses are not unique to Bengaluru. Several Indian cities are increasingly having to cope with severe urban floods.

In the time of climate change, only the very naïve or ignorant are surprised by unexpected extreme weather. "There has been an increasing trend of urban flood disasters in India over the past sev-

eral years whereby major cities in India have been severely affected. The most notable amongst them are Hyderabad in 2000, Ahmedabad in 2001, Delhi in 2002 and 2003, Chennai in 2004, Mumbai in 2005, Surat in 2006, Kolkata in 2007, Jamshedpur in 2008, Delhi in 2009 and Guwahati and Delhi in 2010... Global climate change is resulting in changed weather patterns and increased episodes of high intensity rainfall events occurring in shorter periods of time," says the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).

"Stormwater drainage systems in the past were designed for rainfall intensity of 12-20 mm. These capacities have been getting very easily overwhelmed whenever rainfall of higher intensity has been experienced. Further, the systems very often do not work to the designed capacities because of very poor maintenance. Encroachments are also a major problem in many cities and towns," notes NDMA. "Consequently, the capacity of the natural drains has decreased, resulting in flooding. Improper disposal of solid waste, including domestic, commercial, and industrial waste and dumping of construction debris into the drains also contributes significantly to reducing their capacities," as India's apex body for disaster management observes in its portal.

How prepared are Indian cities to meet these enormous challenges, and what is being done to equip them to cope with the new realities? We have seen that ad hoc solutions do not work.

Srinivas Alavilli, an activist and co-founder of Citizens for Bengaluru, says the root cause is "lack of empowered city governments". The third tier has not really evolved much largely because the state governments do backseat driving, especially when it comes to cities

that are state capitals. The reason is obvious -- they are cash cows. Mr Alavilli says the "lack of devolution of powers and funds is the single biggest challenge for urban India".

A 2021 report by the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (Performance audit of management of stormwater in Bengaluru Urban area) noted that "the city of Bengaluru is a victim of a paradoxical situation -- urban flooding on one hand and depletion of ground water table levels, on the other. There is an urgent need for urban managers to address this issue from the water security/environment and urban planning perspectives".

The report went on to observe that "a robust policy governing storm water management does not exist" in the city and that the "BBMP did not possess foolproof data on the total number/length and nature of different types of drains under its jurisdiction. The absence of a comprehensive inventory of drains and their proper classification contributed to lack of clarity on critical issues such as the extent of buffer zone to be maintained, etc. This in turn hampered maintenance of drains as many utility lines like electrical, telephone, optical cable, etc, were laid across the drains in many locations obstructing flow in the drains".

Right now, Bengaluru's Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike is in the dock. But just blaming the bureaucrats in charge will not help unless we also ask the more uncomfortable question: why has the BBMP not had an election in the last three years?

A death by drowning has turned the spotlight on Bengaluru and the state of its drains. The issues it has thrown up, however, pivot around poor infrastructure, and are relevant to many of India's cities. We need to wake up, and quickly.

India's Heritage is a Source of Pride

By: Vijay Garg

India is an ancient nation. It is not just a collection of about one and a half billion people or a part of history and geography. Not even just one country. It is a unique cultural experience. Indian culture is very ancient. There is a flow of Sanskrit tradition from the Vedic period and even earlier. To know, to hear, to keep what is heard in the memory and to recite it is called fasting in the Upanishads. Shrutis and Veda are words with similar meaning. The maintenance of word and form knowledge is memory. Of truth and beauty Re-creating is culture. There is continuity in Indian culture. All symbols and monuments with permanence are heirlooms of a prosperous heritage. All countries maintain and strengthen their ancient heritage. Prime Minister Narendra Modi rightly said on the occasion of International Museum Day that museums inspire us to connect with the past and awaken awareness of the future. Museums are the greatest classrooms for properly understanding the culture of any period. Harappa or Mahanjodaro went to civilizations We also get it from the antiquities preserved in museums. Through these things, we get to know the lifestyle and customs of the people of that time. It is also a fact that the techniques used for construction and urban planning during the Harappa or Mahanjodaro civilizations are far behind even today's cutting-edge technologies. There is no knowledge of the drainage system and architecture of that time. The tragedy is that in hundreds of years of slavery, all the heritage of the country has been lost. Precious manuscripts and Libraries were

burned. Many artifacts were taken out of the country in an unethical manner. Due to the growing prestige of India, many countries have started returning these heirlooms. Fewer than twenty artifacts came to India in the decades after independence, but in the last nine years about 240 artefacts have been brought back. Preservation of cultural heritage and monuments is a national duty. Article 49 of the Constitution mentions, 'Artificial or artistic works of national importance, declared by or under a procedure made by Parliament. It will be the responsibility of the government to protect every monument, place or object of historical interest from damage, destruction and damage. Despite this, many memorials were lost during the previous governments. In 2009, the number of missing memorials was 35. According to the Archaeological Survey Agency of India i.e. ASI, 14 monuments were victims of urbanization till 2018. Twenty-four monuments were not known. Meanwhile, the Indus Civilization Study Committee attached to the Ministry of Culture has attached importance to the study of excavations at Bhirana and Rakhigarhi in Haryana. given According to carbon dating, the civilization was estimated to be 7000-6000 years BC. The committee emphasized on studying the period of 9000 years back with the Vedic period civilization. ASI committee chief KN Dikshat said that the results of carbon dating should be understood in relation to the time of Rigveda, Ramayana and Mahabharata. The antiquity of these heritages can also be determined with literary evidence. The alleged scholar who described India as a land of many cultures considered the Harap-

pan civilization to be earlier than the Vedic civilization. They do not tell They describe Sumerian civilization as older than Harappa. They do not focus on Vedic word proofs. In the Rigveda, the river Saraswati is full of water. These facts are ancient from Harappa. The relations between India, Sumer and Egypt should be seen in the light of the Rigveda. Some historians do not consider the Rigveda as evidence. In their view, the meaning of archeology is only the objects related to the science of building construction. Building construction alone is not proof of antiquity. This antiquity can also be in words and objects related to art or architecture also in UNESCO declared the Rigveda a World Heritage Site because it is the oldest written evidence of humanity. India is a prestigious country in the world heritage. There are more than 35 places on the World Heritage List. Aquarius has also been included in this list by UNESCO. India is striving to get all the other places included in the World Heritage List. Before the Islamic invasion, there were millions of temples in India. From the invasion of Muhammad bin Qasim to Aurangzeb, the demolition of temples has a tainted history. Many temples are not broken by the same material Mosques were built. The aggrieved Hindus struggled for this heritage. The destruction and reconstruction of Somnath is evident. A historic movement took place over the Sriram Janmabhoomi temple in Ayodhya. The temple is under construction. The case of Gyanvapi is under consideration in the court. A lawsuit is also going on regarding Srikrishna Janmabhoomi. The mosque 'Quwat-ul-Islam' built with the same material

after demolishing many temples in Delhi has become a challenge to Indian pride. The Atala Masjid of Jaunpur is said to have been built on the Atala Devi temple. of the temple in Pandua, Bengal. The place is a mosque. Indian nation is a cultural concept. Culture is also expressed through architecture and other symbols. All such heritages fill the mind of India with national pride. Through them we connect with our heroic past. There is a similar philosophical cultural continuity in India from the past to the present but the so-called liberals call it a mixed culture or a composite culture. The Supreme Court said after 1994, 'There are many differences among the people of this country. They feel proud that they are partners in common inheritance. That heritage is nothing else, the heritage of culture. All the centers of Indian culture are in Pakistan after the partition of the country. Land ownership changes, but inheritance does not. After partition, there was a campaign to free Pakistan from the ancient Indian tradition. Wheeler, a British archeologist, tried to give historical material to Pakistan that people did not know much about. In 1949, his article titled "Pakistan 4000 Years Ago" was published in Pakistan Quarterly. was Pakistan was two years old then. Wheeler's intention was to free Pakistan from Indian heritage. Pakistan and its supporting scholars did not last. Pakistan has no heritage of its own. The whole world is looking at India and the heritage of Indian culture. India itself is a world famous international heritage site.

(Vijay Garg Retired Principal
Educational Columnist Malout Punjab)

Sukrala Devi Dharmik Trust holds medical camp

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, MAY 26: Shri Mal Mata Sukrala Devi Dharmik Trust In Association With Narayana Hospital Organized a Day-long health Check-up-Cum-Awareness Camp In the Premises Of Pavitr Samadhi Sthal Sohanjna Jammu.

On the Occasion, Revered Sant Shri Gangadhar Ji Maharaj, who runs Shri Dwarkanath Shastri Ji Ashram, Welcomed and blessed all the guests Saint Shri Gangadhar Maharaj Ji, who runs the ashram, Thanked All the Guests and Blessed That such work should Continue in the Future also so that those People in the Society who cannot take care of themselves can get the benefit of such camps.

Sh Raj Kumar Gupta Ji (President Jammu Kashmir Gou Raksha Samiti) were Guest of Honour. Dr Nikhil Mahajan (Cardiologist), Dr Bhanupratap (Internal Medicine), Dr. Rajpal Singh (Oncologist), Dr. Rohit Sharma (Ortho). More than 1,500



patients were examined. Besides, ECG, Blood Sugar, BP, free medicines and various other tests conducted totally free of cost and medicines were also given as per the requirement.

Gangadhar ji Maharaj, Praising Shri Tript Shastri, Chairman of Shri Mal Mata Sukrala Devi Religious Trust said holding of medical camps is imperative to ensure a disease free society, where a person is hard pressed to care for self being during daily busy routines. He asserted that endeavours would be made to organize similar camps across the Union Territory and massive outreach of health services across

the Union Territory with the aim to ensure health for all and to generate awareness about various diseases. He said the effort will go a long way in reaching out to the people virtually at their door-steps. General awareness and regular check-up can help fight various maladies and ensuring a disease-free society. He said the people, especially old, women and children need constant check-ups and monitoring. He hoped such philanthropic organizations would come forward in a big way and help in making the mission of health for all a huge success.

Raj Kumar Gupta, President Jammu Kash-

mir Gou Raksha Samiti said healthcare services nowadays are not affordable for everyone living in the society and underprivileged people are deprived of this basic right. We Believe access to good healthcare is a basic right of every individual and these initiatives are the real efforts towards serving mankind, he said, encouraging people to be health conscious to become better citizens and help the country and growing further.

Tript Shastri also thanked the entire team of and Narayana Hospital. Gangadhar ji Maharaj presented religious books to all the guests. Tript Shastri, Shri Mal

Mata Sukrala Devi Trust Chairman, expressed gratitude to the people for their participation in the camp. He said purpose of holding such medical camps to generate awareness on various diseases as also identifying such of the patients, who otherwise are unaware about health related problems and get timely medicare. He said such camps help people to identify deficiencies so that they can have specialized treatment in the health institutions on regular basis.

Tript Shastri urged the people present on the occasion to seize every opportunity of health check up and also keep their environs clean and hygienic for healthy life style and leading a disease free life. He assured that such camps would be organized on regular basis with an aim to serve the society.

Jatin Langer Vice President; Shubham Langer, General Secretary, Vimal Mehra Media Incharge, Dr Dharm Paul (Retd. Dy Director Health) were also present.

NYK organizes Yuva Utsav on 'Panch Pran' in GDC Udhampur



TOP NEWS REPORT

UDHAMPUR, May 26: Nehru Yuva Kendra (NYK) Udhampur, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt. Of India organized "Yuva Utsav" in collaboration with NSS Unit of Govt Degree College, Udhampur in which 500 young participants from across the district participated in 5 different competitive events viz Young Artists Camp - Painting, Young Writers Contest - Poetry, Mobile Photography Contest, Declamation Contest and Group Cultural Fest.

The colourful event organized on the theme "Panch Pran" witnessed exhibitions and stalls from Central Bureau of Communication and Department of Agriculture. The Chief Guest of the event was Vice-Chairperson District Development Council Advocate Juhi Manhas Pathania whereas Shaid Nahiem Ahmed, Dy SP

was the guest of honor.

The event started with the traditional lamp lighting ceremony followed by the Ganesh Vandana by students of DPS Udhampur. At the outset, District Youth Officer Khushal Gupta welcomed the Guest, Jury, Faculty members, Staff and students of various educational institutions.

He focused on Panch Pran and briefed the audience about the objectives of organizing such events. He said that Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan through its field offices is organizing Yuva Utsav in all the districts across the nation and that that the winners of all components of Yuva Utsav will qualify for State Level Yuva Utsav followed by the National level Yuva Utsav.

After the welcome address, various cultural teams gave their performances and participants of declamation contest also spoke on

the topic "Panch Pran". In the conference hall, the students wrote their poems and contestants of Mobile Photography were given the time of 2 hours to take their best photographs. Advocate SD Kotwal also presented his self-written poems on Patriotism and Nation Building.

Juhi Pathania lauded the efforts of Nehru Yuva Kendra Udhampur for organizing such grand event. She added that youth should come forward and participate in such programmes. She urged the rural youth in particular to make the best use of such platforms and represent themselves in nation building activities. DySP Shaid Nahiem also put his views on the rising menace of drug addiction and said that such events are necessary in today's era to bring youth in mainstream. At the end, prizes and certificates were distributed among the winners and jury members.

DPAP demands compensation to hailstorm affected farmers, orchardists

TOP NEWS REPORT

SRINAGAR, May 26: Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) on Friday expressed concern over losses caused to crops and orchards in different parts of Kashmir and urged upon authorities to provide compensation to affected farmers.

In a statement, the party spokesperson said that hail storm and gusty winds have caused huge damages to crops and orchards.

"The farmers and orchardists in various districts of Kashmir have suffered huge losses due to unprecedented hailstorm, gusty winds and heavy rains," he said.

He added that farmers and orchardists were already under distress due to earlier losses faced by them past year.

DPAP has appealed the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to direct the concerned officials to assess the losses and to announce a special financial package to the affected farmers, orchardists who have suffered extensive damages due to hailstorm, winds and heavy rains that caused havoc in Kashmir.

The hailstorm has wrecked havoc in various districts of Kashmir past evening which has resulted into huge loss to fruit and other agricultural crops.

Provide adequate compensation to hailstorm-affected farmers and orchardists: Mir

TOP NEWS REPORT

SRINAGAR, May 26: Former minister and Apni Party's Senior Vice President Ghulam Hassan Mir on Friday urged the LG administration to provide adequate compensation to the agricultural farmers and orchardists who met with huge losses due to the recent heavy rains and hailstorms in various parts of the Valley.

In his statement, Ghulam Hassan Mir, said, "The recent hailstorm has damaged fruit-laden trees, including apple, cherry, and pear in the orchards, and crops including wheat, rice, and vegeta-

bles in various places." "The damages to the crops and fruits have been caused, especially in many parts of north and central Kashmir, causing heavy damages to farmers. This is the second time these recent months that the farmers and orchardists have suffered massive losses due to the adverse weather situation. The destructive hailstorm destroyed standing crops and the fruit that was still in its initial form."

Demanding an official assessment of the losses, which should be followed by adequate compensation

to the affected people, Ghulam Hassan Mir, said, "Given the fact that crops and orchards are the primary sources of livelihood to a large population across the Valley, the administration is supposed to provide swift relief and proper compensation to the sufferers so that the affected people can overcome the loss caused by the weather fury."

Mir appealed to the LG administration to ensure the official teams are immediately sent to the affected areas to assess the losses and provide compensation swiftly to the sufferers.

LAHDC Leh pays tributes to Chosje Togdan Rinpoche

TOP NEWS REPORT

LEH, May 26: LAHDC Leh conducted a prayer meeting at the Council Secretariat to pay tribute and homage to, Late Ladakh Chosje Togdan Rinpoche Konchok Thupstan Stanpey Gyaltsan Pal Zangpo, who attained Mahaparinirvana.

The prayed meeting



was presided over by Chairman/CEC Tashi Gyalson in the presence of H.E. Tsamtrul

Rinpoche and MP, Ladakh, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal. It was attended by the

Executive Councillor RDD Tashi Namgyal Yakzee; Executive Councillor for Minority Affairs Ghulam Mehdi; Executive Councillor for Agriculture Stanzin Chosphe; Councillors and Nominated Councillors; DC Leh Shrikant Suse; BDC Chairpersons and all the Head of the Departments of Leh District.

As a mark of respect to the departed soul of the Rinpoche, a two-minute silence was observed.

Nominated Councillor Konchok Tsephel spoke about the Rinpoche's contribution as a spiritual leader and as a minister. He also spoke about his contribution in preserving of Ladakhi culture and heritage on a wider scale.

CEC Tashi Gyalson chairs meeting regarding Tsangda Project

TOP NEWS REPORT

LEH, May 26: District Panchayat Officer, Leh Junaid Amin Bhat gave a presentation on Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (Phase 2) Leh District where he gave a detailed overview of Solid Waste Management of the District including Segregation Sheds, Vehicles Purchased, SRMC Man Power Data, Total Waste collected, the requirement for strengthening of SMRCs, Number of ODF Plus villages, bailing and shredding machines for Plastic Waste Management, Twin dust bins distributed, IEC activi-



ties done, grey water management status, etc. CEC Tashi Gyalson directed the concerned officer to form a committee within 7 days to formulate an action plan and work collaboratively on all the strategies including Financial

implications to make the Tsangda project a successful model in Leh. CEC and concerned officers/ officials also discussed the requirements and shortcomings of Tsangda. He laid special emphasis on a comprehensive plan which

includes source segregation of waste, segregated collection and transportation, formation of a cluster of nearby villages to have a common temporary waste storage shed, processing of segregated waste, continuous awareness genera-

tion for reducing Single Use Plastic (SUP), use of substitute products, etc

The meeting was attended by the Executive Councillor for Rural Tashi Namgyal; Executive Councillor for Minority, Ghulam Mehdi; Additional District Development Commissioner/ ACD Leh, Sonam Norbo; Chief Planning Officer, Leh, Tsewang Gyalson; District Panchayat Officer, Leh Junaid Amin Bhat; Block Development Officer, Leh, Tsering Wangchuk; Supervisor/ Coordinator, Project Tsangda.

Army conducted interaction session for ESM at Gulgam Kupwara



TOP NEWS REPORT

KUPWARA 26 May: As part of its outreach initiatives and Perception Management Programmes Indian Army's Kupwara Terriers conducted an interaction session for ESM and from remote area of Gulgam and adjoining villages on 26 May 23.

The interaction session was aimed to address grievances of ex-servicemen and resolve various pension

anomalies and ameliorating day to day problems of the veterans. The objective was also to provide comprehensive resolution of grievances and make them aware about the latest benefits and welfare schemes.

The session saw a participation of about 40 ESM who are retired from Army and other para military forces. The lecture was delivered by the Company

Commander from Indian Army's Gulgam Company. During Interaction various queries on pending documentation were clarified.

All those Ex-servicemen who attended the event paid their gratitude towards Indian Army for conducting such an informative interaction session and hope for the same kind of events be inducted by Indian Army in future also.

Marvel halts production on 'Thunderbolts' movie due to writers' strike

Marvel Studios has put production of "Thunderbolts" feature film on hold due to the ongoing Writers Guild Association (WGA) strike.

Members of the WGA went on strike early this month demanding better wages, higher minimum pay, more writers per show, better streaming residuals, regulation on the use of AI writing tools and shorter exclusive contracts among other things.

According to entertainment news outlet Deadline, "Thunderbolts" was set to start shooting in three weeks in Atlanta. The move comes



weeks after the studio had to pause pre-production on its Maheshwala Ali-led "Blade" movie, which was expected to

shoot in June as well. "Paper Towns" Helmer Jake Schreier is directing "Thunderbolts", with "Beef" scribe Lee Sung

Bin working on the script from a first draft by writer Eric Pearson. The film stars Sebastian Stan, Florence

Pugh, Wyatt Russell, Olga Kurylenko, David Harbour, Hannah John-Kamen and Julia Louis-Dreyfus, all reprising their Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) characters. "Thunderbolts" is currently scheduled to release on July 26, 2024.

While the fifth season of Stranger Things is also affected by the strike, The Rings of Power and House of the Dragon have both chosen to continue shooting their upcoming seasons without writers on set.

Reyhna Pandit returns to Kumkum Bhagya



Reyhna Pandit is set to make a comeback to the television show Kumkum Bhagya after four months. She will be

returning to her role of Aaliya in the show.

In the recent episodes, viewers witnessed how Ranbir tried to

take Khushi away from everyone but got arrested by the police. Prachi got into an argument with Ranbir at the police station.

With her comeback, Aaliya will be seen trying to brainwash Rhea against Prachi and instigate her to make plans and win Ranbir back into her life.

Talking about her return to the show, Reyhna said, "I am excited to be back in the show after this brief stint of four months. My character Aaliya is very close to my heart. My entry in the show has been shot and I can certainly say that I am making a thunderous entry. Aaliya is bar toofan lekar aane wali hai and it will indeed be worth the watch for the viewers."

Her look in the show will also change drastically. The actress said, "In fact, I am re-entering in a whole new avatar. I will no longer be seen wearing glamorous outfits. I will be seen donning a simple, decent Pathani suit. I hope that the audience will love my new look in the show."

Kumkum Bhagya airs Monday to Sunday at 9 pm on Zee TV.

Bill Lee, composer and father of Spike Lee, passes away

Veteran jazz musician Bill Lee has passed away. Bill Lee, father of renowned filmmaker Spike Lee, breathed his last on Wednesday morning. He was 94.

The news was confirmed on Spike Lee's official Instagram handle where he shared a series of portraits of his late father captured by David Charles Lee. He also shared the album art for his 1989 film Do The Right Thing score, which Bill Lee composed.

"My Father, Bill Lee played bass on Bob Dylan's classic song It's All Over Now, Baby Blue in his album Bringing It All Home. This morning, May 24th my father made his transition. Today is also the birthdate of Bob Dylan..." Spike Lee wrote.

Bill Lee also wrote the soundtracks for his son's first three feature films She's Gotta Have It (1986), School Daze (1988), and Mo' Better Blues (1990). He also scored an early Spike Lee short, Joe's Bed-Stuy



Barbershop: We Cut Heads, the first student film to premiere at Lincoln Center's New Directors/New Films Festival, in 1983. Bill Lee and his son were estranged for some time in the mid-1990s due to differences over finances and family matters, putting an end to their film and music collaborations. In addition to Spike Lee, Bill Lee is survived by his wife, along with three sons and daughter, a brother and two grandchildren.

Sana Amin Sheikh is back

Sana Amin Sheikh has been part of TV shows like Pratigya, Kya Mast Hai Life and Mera Naam Karegi Roshan.

She has also starred in films like Singham, Table No. 21, and Island City.

The actor, who was last seen in Kuch Rang Pyaar Ke Bhi Aise Bhi 3, is all set to make her TV comeback with Chitra Vakil Sharma's next show.

Sana, reportedly, will play the lead in the show opposite Sahil Phull of Dosti Anokhi fame.

The show will touch on a socially relevant topic, and she has already started her preparation for the character.

The show is currently in the pre-production stage.



Anurag Kashyap's 'Kennedy' gets standing ovation at Cannes

Filmmaker Anurag Kashyap is back at the Cannes Film Festival with his film Kennedy and has once again registered a resounding response like all his earlier films, such as Raman Raghav 2.0, Ugly, Bombay Talkies and the two-part gangster drama Gangs of Wasseypur, which made it to the festival.

Kennedy, which is a police noir film, received a seven-minute standing ovation at The Grand Lumiere Theatre where it was screened under the midnight screening section at 12:15 am on Thursday (France local time).

Kennedy follows the story of an insomniac cop who dwells in different circumstances while looking for redemption. Kashyap was joined at the festival by his friend and frequent collaborator Vikramaditya Motwane, and cast members Rahul Bhatt and Sunny Leone, along with Shariq Patel, Ranjan Singh, Kabir



Ahuja, Bhumika Tewari, Neeraj Joshi and Ashima Awasthi.

About the film screened at the 2023 Cannes Film Festival, Anurag Kashyap said: "It's always special to show your

film to the world at Cannes and it's a lifetime moment to play at the Grand Theatre Lumiere. Kennedy is a very special film to me and extremely personal too. We have put our heart and

soul into making it. The seven-minute long standing ovation from the audience has filled me with gratitude. I am very grateful and excited at the same time."

Talking about her Cannes debut, Sunny Leone said: "I am thrilled to make my Cannes debut with Kennedy being screened here. It's only a dream few actors get to live, and I take a lot of pride in being a part of such a prestigious event. I cannot wait to see how the global audience reacts." The music of the film has been composed by Ashish Narula with Aamir Aziz and Boyblanck.

Rahul Bhatt added: "Kennedy is our labour of love. The film is exciting, it keeps you gripped. I am full of gratitude for everyone, especially Anurag, who made this possible." The film has been produced by Zee Studios and Ranjan Singh, and Kabir Ahuja of Good Bad Films.

Kohrra explores dark facets of love and relationships

Netflix's new series, Kohrra, explores dysfunctional family dynamics and the dark facets of love and relationships through the overlay of a crime investigation.

The series has been created by screenwriter Sudip Sharma, filmmaker Randeep Jha, and Clean Slate Filmz Productions.

Kohrra features Suvinder Vicky, Barun Sobti, Varun Badola, Harleen Sethi, Rachel Shelly and Manish Chaudhary,



among others.

Sudip says, "When Gunjit Chopra and Diggi Sisodia came to me with the idea of Kohrra, I was drawn to the possibilities of a fresh and distinct cop investigative story underlined with the complexities of human emotions.

The collaboration with Netflix, Clean Slate Filmz, and a great cast has allowed us to create a show that hopefully will be loved by the audience."

Inayat Sood to play crime reporter in Hansal Mehta's Scoop

Filmmaker Hansal Mehta is all set to come up with an intriguing web series, titled Scoop.

The series will mark actor Inayat Sood's debut on Netflix. She will be seen playing the character of Deepa Chandra, a young and determined journalist mentored by the renowned Jagruti Pathak (played by Karishma Tanna).

Sharing details about her role, Inayat said, "Playing Deepa has been an exhilarating experience. I think her character holds immense importance and significance. It has been an honour for me to bring her character to life. I can only hope I've done justice to the writing!"

Scoop is a character-driven drama adapted



from the book Behind Bars In Byculla: My

Days in Prison by Jigna Vora.

The series delves into the gripping journey of Jagruti Pathak, an ambitious crime journalist whose life takes a dramatic turn when she is charged with the heinous murder of fellow journalist Jaideb Sen. The show takes us on a rollercoaster ride as Jagruti finds herself in a prison cell alongside the very individuals she once reported on.

Kabir Bedi will make his Kannada film debut in Koragajja



Veteran actor Kabir Bedi is all set to be seen in a Kannada film for the first time. Recently, he was spotted dubbing

the film in Mumbai, where he spoke about the story of the film, his character, and the experience of working

in a different language for the first time.

Producer Trivikram Sapalya and director Sudhir Attavar's Kannada film Kari Haida? Koragajja under the banner of Druthi Creations and Success Films will feature Kabir Bedi, Sandip Soparkar, and South stars Shruti, Bhavya and Naveen Padil.

Kabir Bedi says, "Working in a Kannada film was a great and special experience. This is the story of a tribal boy who lived 800 years ago, and people worship him even today. There is a temple built in his name. I am glad that a film has been made about his story. The director of the film, Sudhir Attavar, is talented and has made it with great care. I am sure that the film will touch the hearts of the audience."

Rs 75 coin to be launched by PM Modi at inauguration of new Parliament building

NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): A Rs 75 coin will be launched to commemorate the inauguration of new Parliament building by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday.

According to a notification issued by Finance Ministry, the 35-gram coin will be circular in shape with a 44 mm diameter.

The front side of the coin will feature Lion Capital of the Ashoka Pillar with 'Satyamev Jayate' written below it. On the left side 'Bharat' will be written in Devanagiri script while on the right side, India will be



written in English. It will also feature the symbol of Rupee and 75 written in international numerals. Back side of the coin will feature an image of Parliament complex. On the upper periph-

ery of the coin, Sansad Sankul will be written while Parliament complex in English on the lower periphery. Below Sansad Sankul, the year '2023' will be inscribed in international numerals.

'Why does Congress 'hate' Indian culture so much': Amit Shah on 'Sengol' row

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh had claimed there was no documented evidence of Mountbatten or Nehru describing the Sengol as a symbol of transfer of power by the British to India.

NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday accused the Congress of reducing the ceremonial sceptre Sengol, which will be installed near the chair of the speaker in the new Parliament building, to a "walking stick".

Amid the war of words between the ruling and opposition parties over the inauguration of the new Parliament building, Shah said the Congress needs to "reflect" on its behaviour as he denounced the party's claim that there was no evidence of the Sengol being a symbol of transfer of power by the British to India in 1947.

"Why does the Congress party hate Indian traditions and cul-



ture so much? A sacred Sengol was given to Pandit Nehru by a holy Saivite Mutt from Tamil Nadu to symbolize India's freedom but it was banished to a museum as a "walking stick," Shah tweeted.

"Now, Congress has heaped another shameful insult. The Thiruvaduthurai Adheenam, a holy Saivite Mutt, itself spoke about the importance of the Sengol at the time of India's freedom," he said.

Congress, he further posted, is calling the "Adheenam's history as BOGUS! Congress needs to reflect on their behaviour".

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Friday claimed there was no documented evidence of Lord Mountbatten, C Rajagopalachari and Jawaharlal Nehru describing the Sengol as a symbol of transfer of power by the British to India.

The Sengol will be installed near the Chair of the Lok Sabha speaker after the new Parliament building is inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday.

The event is being boycotted by 20 Opposition parties, including the Congress.

Body of missing Kerala hotelier found stuffed in 2 trolley bags

MALAPPURAM, May 26 (Agencies): In a gruesome incident, a hotelier in Kerala was allegedly murdered by his former employee and the latter's woman friend, who then dumped the body parts in a gorge a week ago, police said here on Friday.

Police said they had found a corpse stuffed in two trolley bags suspecting it to be that of Siddique (58), a missing hotelier from Kozhikode district. The deceased, a native of Tirur, ran a restaurant at Kozhikode's Olavanna.

The body of Siddique was found in a gorge along the Attappady ghat road and three suspects have been taken

into police custody. Tirur police said the body was found cut into two halves, and the torso was in one trolley bag while the lower part was in the other.

Malappuram Superintendent of Police S Sujith Das told the media that the hotel owner is suspected to have been murdered by Shibili, a former employee of his hotel, and Sharfana, a woman friend of the accused.

"We suspect that Shibili and his woman friend Sharfana are involved in this. They were absconding but were detained in Chennai with the help of railway police. Our team has reached there, and



they will be brought here soon," he said. Siddique had been missing from Kozhikode since May 18, and his family had lodged a complaint with the police.

The police officer said the information about the body was revealed by a third person under custody, who is another friend of Shibili's.

"As per our preliminary investigation, the death

happened between May 18 and 19. Hence, the body is estimated to be around seven days old. It seems like the murder happened due to some personal issues," police said.

The police have collected CCTV images of the suspect from Kozhikode's Eranhipalam area.

Meanwhile, a close relative of the deceased told the media that Sid-

dique had settled the accounts with Shibili on May 18 and later went missing.

"Siddique was using an ATM card in the name of his younger son. It has been found that after he went missing, the card was used at various places, and around Rs 1.5 lakh was withdrawn," the kin told the media.

Police confirmed to agency that Shibili was also an accused in a POCSO case allegedly involving a co-accused.

However, the district police chief said the details of the murder and the motive behind it would be revealed only after the post-mortem and the interrogation of the accused.

Arvind Kejriwal seeks meeting with Rahul Gandhi amid battle with Centre over ordinance



NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday sought time to meet Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi to get party's support in Delhi services ordinance issue.

Kejriwal tweeted: "Sought time this morning to meet Cong President Sh Kharge ji and Sh Rahul Gandhi ji to seek Cong support in Parl against undemocratic n unconstitutional ordinance passed by BJP govt and also to discuss general assault on federal structure and prevailing political situation."

The Centre on May 19 had promulgat-

ed the ordinance to create an authority for the transfer and posting of Group-A officers in Delhi, which the AAP government had called a deception with the Supreme Court verdict on control of services.

The ordinance came a week after the Supreme Court handed over the control of services in Delhi, excluding police, public order and land, to the elected government. It seeks to set up a National Capital Civil Service Authority for transfer of and disciplinary proceedings against Group-A officers from the DANICS cadre.

Transfer and postings of all officers of the Delhi government were under the executive control of the lieutenant governor before the May 11 top court verdict. Chief Minister Kejriwal, who is the AAP's national convener, has sought support of various political parties, including the NCP, the Shiv Sena (UBT) and the TMC, on the Delhi services issue.

11-year-old killed, 27 injured as bus collides with truck in Greater Noida

NOIDA, May 26 (Agencies): An 11-year-old boy was killed and 27 other passengers were injured after a bus collided with a truck in the Greater Noida area here in the early hours of Friday, police said.

The accident took place when the Bihar-bound bus crashed into the Haryana-registered truck on the Eastern Peripheral Expressway near Ladpura village in Kasna area, they added.

Of all the passengers



on the bus, which had started from Punjab, 28 were hurt and were admitted to a hospital, where the boy succumbed to his injuries, a senior police officer said.

The body of the

deceased, who hailed from Bhojpur in Bihar, has been sent for post-mortem, the officer said.

The other 27 passengers are undergoing treatment, the police said, adding that further probe is under way.

"Land Jihad" Won't Be Allowed In State, Says Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami

UTTARAKHAND, May 26 (Agencies): Illegal encroachments in the name of "land jihad" will not be allowed to vitiate the atmosphere of Uttarakhand, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said on Friday, amid an ongoing statewide drive to remove structures built without permission on government land.

Addressing a meeting of the Vishva Hindu Parishad's (VHP) Kendriya Margadarshak Mandal here, Dhami said, "Uttarakhand shares its borders with two countries (China and Nepal). A particular community had illegally encroached



on land and raised structures in the border areas of the state, which are being removed as part of a drive." "Illegal encroachments in the name of land jihad will not be allowed to vitiate the atmosphere in Uttarakhand", Dhami said.

He said the state gov-

ernment has already appealed to encroachers to remove such structures on their own, or the administration will demolish them.

Last month, Dhami warned occupiers of illegally built mazar (tombs) to remove those on their own and reiter-

ated that his government would not allow "land jihad" in the state.

Under a conspiracy, thousands of shrines have been built illegally on public and forest land without permission, he said.

"Not a single illegally built religious structure will be allowed to remain standing in the state. All illegal structures will be completely demolished," Dhami said on Friday.

He said Uttarakhand will be the first state to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC). "The committee constituted to prepare a draft of the UCC has done 90

percent of its job and will submit its report to the state government by June 30," he said.

The UCC will be implemented after being examined, he said, adding that it will apply to people of all religions and communities.

Uttarakhand's UCC will become a model for the entire country, Dhami said.

The VHP's central Margadarshak Mandal is holding a two-day meeting here to debate a range of issues, including conversion, land jihad, same-sex marriages, and live-in relationships.

School jobs scam: Supreme Court refuses to stay ED, CBI probe against TMC general secretary Abhishek Banerjee

NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Friday refused to stay the ED and CBI probes against TMC general secretary Abhishek Banerjee in connection with the school jobs for cash scam even as it stayed an order of the Calcutta High Court imposing a cost of Rs 25 lakh on him. A vacation bench of Justices JK Maheshwari and PS Narasimha listed for hearing in July Banerjee's plea against the high court's May 18 order dismissing a petition filed by him seeking recall of a previous order of the high court which said probe agencies such as the CBI and ED could interrogate him in the case. "Re-list in the week commencing July 10. Till the next date of listing, the imposition of the cost part by the impugned order shall remain stayed," the Bench said.

The Bench, however, issued notice on Banerjee's petition against the Calcutta High Court's order allowing the ED and the CBI

to interrogate him in the case.

Noting that the imposition of cost of Rs 25 lakh was "perhaps not warranted", Justice Narasimha said, "But then, it does not mean that no cost can be imposed at all.... I think the order is a very balanced and fair order."

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, representing Banerjee, asserted that his client had nothing to do with the batch of cases relating to the recruitment scam. He said the Supreme Court had directed to reassign the case from the Bench of Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay to another Bench and accordingly the matter was assigned to Justice Amrita Sinha. The new Bench didn't examine the matter afresh as was required, he added.

On behalf of the ED, Additional Solicitor General SV Raju said the high court order only gave liberty to the CBI and the ED to interrogate Banerjee. "The order only said "investigate if you want"

Independently of that order, ED has power of investigation. That power is unfettered, it cannot be usurped," Raju submitted.

Banerjee, who was on May 20 questioned for over nine hours by the CBI in connection with the probe into the case, has sought the apex court direction that no coercive steps be taken against him by the agency.

The TMC MP's name cropped up in a complaint filed by Kuntal Ghosh, a local businessman and an accused in the school jobs scam, where he alleged that central investigating agencies were pressing him to name Banerjee, who is the general secretary of the TMC, in the case.

The ED summons came within 24 hours of the Calcutta High Court dismissing a petition filed by Banerjee seeking recall of a previous court order, which said probe agencies such as the CBI and ED could interrogate him in the teacher recruitment scam case.

"New Parliament Building Inauguration A National Event, Not...": Sanjay Raut

MUMBAI, May 26 (Agencies): The inauguration of the new Parliament building is a national event and not a programme of a political party, said Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Friday, amid the decision by 20 opposition parties to boycott the function.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the new Parliament building on Sunday.

Opposition parties have accused the BJP of "sidelining" President Droupadi Murmu by not inviting her to the inauguration.

"We are not against the inauguration of the new (Parliament) building. We want to know why the President of



India has not been invited. Where is the Vice-President, who is the chairman of the Rajya Sabha? Speaker Om Birla's name figures in the invitation list," Mr Raut told reporters.

Being the constitutional head of the country, the opposition parties have said, the President should inaugurate the new Parliament building.

Sanjay Raut wondered if LK Advani, because of whom BJP has now seen "acche din", has been kept away from the function.

"Instead of responding to questions, BJP is giving excuses like Indira Gandhi inaugurating an extension of the existing Parliament building and Rajiv Gandhi inaugurating the Parliament library," Mr

Raut said.

He said there is a difference between the extension building, the library, and the main building.

Asked about reports claiming that the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena wants to contest 22 of 48 Lok Sabha seats in Maharashtra next year and its ally BJP not agreeing to the demand, Mr Raut said they don't consider the Shinde-led Sena a political party.

"Leave alone 22 seats, even if they get five seats, it would be more than enough. We don't care if the Shinde Sena contests all 48 seats. Our tally of 19 Lok Sabha seats (won by undivided Sena in 2019 polls) will remain intact."

China faces new wave of XBB Covid variant, could see 65 million cases weekly

Shares of Chinese Pharma companies spike since new variant

BEIJING, May 26 (Agencies): The Chinese authorities are rushing to push out vaccines to combat an ongoing new wave of the coronavirus that is expected to peak in June and infect as many as 65 million people a week since the new XBB variants of the virus are evolving to overcome the immunity developed after China's abrupt departure from its "zero covid" policy last year, reported The Washington Post.

According to official media sources, quoted by The Washington Post, leading Chinese epidemiologist Zhong Nanshan on Monday said that two new vaccinations for the XBB omicron subvariants (including XBB. 1.9.1, XBB. 1.5, and XBB. 1.16) have been given preliminary approval. Speaking at a biotech symposium in Guangzhou, Zhong said that three to four other vaccines will soon receive approval, but he gave no further information.

The new outbreak may be the greatest wave of illnesses ever recorded since China's stringent zero-Covid programme was abandoned last winter, which resulted in up to 85 per cent of the population being sick at the time.

Although there was an increase in infections in the United States as a result of the new variations, the public health emergency was nevertheless proclaimed to be over on May 11 even though specialists have



not ruled out the possibility of new variants causing another wave of illnesses in the years to come, according to The Washington Post.

Officials in China claim that the current wave will be less severe, but public health experts believe that to avoid another surge in mortality among the massive elderly population of the nation, a vigorous vaccination booster programme and a ready supply of antivirals in hospitals are essential.

Another epidemiologist at the University of Hong Kong's School of Public Health, "The number of infections will be less. The severe cases will certainly be less, and deaths will be less, but that could still be a large number," adding, "Even when we think this is a milder wave, it could still be quite a substantial health impact on the community." According to the Beijing

Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, the variations have increased the number of cases since last month, with Covid surpassing the flu as the most prevalent infectious disease over the final two weeks of April.

The public has been reassured by health experts that reinfections have milder symptoms and that hospitals won't be overloaded as they were during the previous winter. Some medical facilities have recommended residents wearing masks and stay away from busy areas if they are old or immunocompromised, as per The Washington Post.

Even still, restrictions similar to those that existed during the zero-Covid era, when China tried to stop any illnesses, have not been reinstated, and the majority of citizens seem to be going about their daily lives as usual.

Olivia Zhang, 33, who works at an amusement park in Beijing said that he feel like the impact of has not been that big, adding, "But they will only be out for a short time before coming back to work. No one is scared of being around them." Several online complaints have surfaced of a university in Nanjing forcing students testing positive to quarantine in dorms. Other students posted online that they were self-quarantined at school so as to not infect their family members at home, The Washington Post reported.

Amid the spike, shares of the Chinese pharmaceutical countries have also seen a massive increase in their values on Wednesday, Hong Kong-based The Standard reported.

The Standard is an English-language free newspaper in Hong Kong. It also has its digital version available which also covers all the latest happenings of Hong Kong.

Shares of CanSino Biologics (6185) increased by 4.4 per cent, Kintor Pharmaceutical (9939) increased by 6.7 per cent, Shandong Xinhua Pharmaceutical (0719) increased by 6.1 per cent, and Shanghai Junshi Biosciences (1877) increased by 3.1 per cent, reported The Standard.

Among others, Shanghai Fosun Pharmaceutical (2196) and Clover Biopharmaceuticals (2197) both saw gains of 1.15 and 1.45 per cent, respectively.

Imran Khan says he has no plans to travel abroad, slams Pakistan govt



ISLAMABAD, May 26 (Agencies): Unfazed after being placed on the no-fly list, Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan on Friday took a swipe at the top leaders of the ruling coalition, saying he has no plans to travel overseas as he neither owns properties nor has any businesses

abroad.

Khan, his wife Bushra Bibi and other leaders and former assembly members of his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party were reportedly barred from leaving the country on Thursday.

Taking to Twitter, Khan wrote: "I want to thank the government

for putting my name on the ECL as I have no plans to travel abroad, because I neither have any properties or businesses abroad nor even a bank account outside the country."

"If and when I do get an opportunity for a holiday, it will be in our northern mountains, my favourite place on earth," he said.

The Exit Control List (ECL) is maintained by the interior ministry and deals with individuals who are not allowed to leave the country due to pending court cases or for other reasons.

Earlier, the Samaa News channel reported on Thursday that the Pakistan government had barred Khan, his wife and at least 80 people from leaving the country.

"The federal government has decided to add the names of 80 people, including PTI Chairman Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi, to the no-fly list," the report said.

Japanese politician's son arrested over stabbing, shooting attack

TOKYO, May 26 (Agencies): The son of a local Japanese politician was arrested on Friday in connection with a stabbing and shooting incident in Nagano prefecture which claimed the lives of four people.

The police have identified the suspect as Masanori Aoki, the 31-year-old son of the Nakano city assembly speaker, Xinhua news agency reported.

At around 4.25 pm on Thursday, local police received an emergency call about the man stabbing a woman in the city of Nakano.

The two officers who rushed to the scene were shot dead, according to local police.

After fleeing the scene, the suspect later barricaded himself for hours inside his father's home in a quiet residen-



tial area of Nakano city. Local police on Friday morning also confirmed a fourth death at the scene -- an elderly woman.

She was reported to sustain injuries, but her conditions were uncertain as she was in proximity to the scene to be evacuated on Thursday. The motive of the attack remains unknown.

Gun violence remains extremely rare in Japan,

despite the killing of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in July last year, reports the BBC.

Shootings of multiple police officers are even rarer, with the last incident taking place in 1990, when two officers were shot by gang members in Okinawa prefecture.

In 2014, there were just six incidents of gun deaths in Japan, compared with 33,599 in the US.

Japan Announces Fresh Sanctions Against Russia Over Ukraine Invasion

TOKYO, May 26 (Agencies): Japan announced fresh sanctions against Russia on Friday over its invasion of Ukraine, targeting its military as well as the construction and engineering sectors.

Russia was hit with a wave of sanctions after it sent forces into Ukraine in February last year, but calls have grown from Kyiv and its allies for tougher action against Moscow.

The latest embargo by Tokyo follows the Group of Seven summit Japan hosted last week in Hiroshima, where the

bloc's leaders agreed to "starve Russia of G7 technology, industrial equipment and services that support its war machine".

The new Japanese sanctions include "an asset freeze of Russian individuals and groups, a ban on the export of goods to Russia's military-related organisations, and a ban on the export of construction and engineering services to Russia," top government spokesman Hirokazu Matsuno told reporters.

The asset freeze targets 17 individuals

and 78 groups, including high-level military officials, while the 80 organisations hit with export restrictions include the Russian mobile phone operator MegaFon, according to the Japanese government.

The United States, Britain and the European Union have all announced fresh punishments against Moscow recently, as well as commitments of more military aid to Ukraine, including F-16 fighters.

Matsuno also condemned plans to deploy



Russian tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus.

Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko said Thursday that Moscow had begun moving nukes to its territory.

Matsuno said this will

"further escalate the situation".

"As the only country to have suffered atomic bombings during wartime, Japan can never tolerate Russia's threat of nuclear weapons, not to mention their use."

Cambodian Man Killed By 40 Crocodiles After He Tries To Move One



PHNOM PENH, May 26 (Agencies): About 40 crocodiles killed a Cambodian man on Friday after he fell into their enclosure on his family's reptile farm, police said.

The 72-year-old was trying to move a crocodile out of a cage where it had laid eggs when it grabbed the stick he was using as a goad and pulled him in.

The main group of reptiles then set about him, tearing his body to pieces and leaving the concrete enclosure at the farm in Siem Reap awash with blood.

"While he was chasing a crocodile out of an egg-laying cage, the crocodile attacked the stick, causing him to fall into the enclosure," Mey Savry, police chief of Siem Reap commune, told agency.

"Then other crocodiles pounced, attacking him until he was dead," he said, adding that the remains of the man's body were covered with bite marks.

He said one of the man's arms was bitten off and swallowed by the crocodiles.

A two-year-old girl was killed and eaten by crocodiles in 2019 when she wandered into her family's reptile farm in the same village, the police chief said.

There are a number of crocodile farms around Siem Reap, the gateway city to the famed ruins of Angkor Wat.

The reptiles are kept for their eggs, skins and meat as well as the trade in their young.

Two 13-Year-Olds Turn Themselves In Over Sydney Building Fire

SYDNEY, May 26 (Agencies): Two 13-year-olds have turned themselves over to police after a blaze burned down a seven-storey heritage building in central Sydney, officers said Friday.

Australian police said an arson investigation had been launched after Thursday's fire at a vacant former hat factory, which spread to an adjacent building and forced mass evacuations before being extinguished.

A group of young people were "seen running from the fire scene

shortly after 4 pm", assistant commissioner Paul Dunstan said.

"Two young people handed themselves in at two separate police stations in the late hours of last night."

"We are speaking with these young people throughout the evening and they are now assisting police with our inquiries," he added, saying both were 13 years old.

He called on three or four other "young people who were present during the fire" to come forward

with their parents to "put their side of the story forward".

Shortly after the blaze erupted, flames higher than the building and a thick column of smoke could be seen across Sydney.

The entire top floor wall toppled and crashed into pieces on the street below, fire service video showed, as the building glowed orange with flames.

Rush hour transport to and from nearby Central Station had to be stopped as firefighters tackled the blaze.

Pakistan Hands 33 Protest Suspects To Military For Trials

"The accused who are being handed over to the military are those who trespassed and entered very sensitive defense installations," Pakistan's Interior Minister said.

ISLAMABAD, May 26 (Agencies): At least 33 people suspected of attacking army installations during protests that followed the arrest of Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan earlier this month have been handed over to the military for trials, Interior Minister Rana



Sanaulah said on Friday.

"The accused who are being handed over to the military are those who trespassed and entered very sensitive defense installations, so the question is how did they manage to get there," Sanaulah told reporters.

South Korean passenger plane with 194 people on board flies with open door



SEOUL, May 26 (Agencies): A passenger opened a door on an Asiana Airlines flight that later landed safely at a South Korean airport Friday, airline and government officials said.

Some people on board tried to stop the person from opening the door but it was eventually opened partially, the Transport Ministry said.

The plane with 194 people was heading to the southeastern city of Daegu from the southern island of Jeju. The flight is normally about an hour, and how long the door was open

wasn't immediately disclosed.

Police detained the unidentified person who opened the door, the airline said. Their motive wasn't immediately known.

The passengers included teenage athletes who plan to attend track and field competitions in Ulsan, another southeastern city.

The incident terrified some passengers but no one was injured, though some passengers were assessed at a hospital, Asiana and Transport Ministry officials said.

Equity markets rally in early trade

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbs 178.34 points to 62,050.96 in early trade

MUMBAI, May 26 (Agencies): Equity benchmark indices extended their previous day's rally on Friday amid buying in index major Reliance Industries, fresh foreign fund inflows and a largely positive trend in global markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 178.34 points to 62,050.96 in early trade. The NSE Nifty gained 51.1 points to 18,372.25.

From the Sensex pack, Reliance Indus-



tries, Tech Mahindra, Maruti, UltraTech Cement, Wipro, Bajaj Finserv, Hindustan Unilever, Infosys, Titan and State Bank of India were among the major gainers.

Power Grid, HDFC, Axis Bank, IndusInd

Bank, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank were the laggards.

In Asian markets, Seoul and Tokyo traded in the green, while Shanghai quoted lower. The US market ended mostly with gains on Thursday.

Leave encashment up to Rs 25 lakh tax free

Taxation on leave encashment, compensation against unutilised paid leaves, depends on the time when it is received. Usually, if it is availed while on job, the amount received is taxable.

NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): The government has notified an increase in the tax exemption limit for leave encashment benefits received by non-government employees at the time of retirement from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 25 lakh, as promised in the Union Budget.

This comes into effect from April 1. "The aggregate amount exempt under section 10(10AA) (ii) of the (Income tax) act shall not exceed the



limit of Rs 25 lakh where any such payments are received by a non-government employee from more than one employer in the same previous year," the I-T department notification said.

Taxation on leave encashment, compen-

sation against unutilised paid leaves, depends on the time when it is received. Usually, if it is availed while on job, the amount received is taxable. However, if availed on retirement, it is fully exempt for central and state government

employees and partially exempted for non-government employees up to a limit of Rs 25 lakh.

In her budget speech, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in February this year proposed the increase in the tax exemption on leave encashment on retirement. "The limit of Rs 3 lakh for tax exemption on leave encashment of non-government salaried employees was last fixed in 2002, when the highest basic pay

in the government was Rs 30,000 per month. In line with the increase in government salaries, I am proposing to increase this limit to Rs 25 lakh," she said in her budget speech.

FM proposed increase in tax exemption in Budget

In her budget speech, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in February this year proposed the increase in the tax exemption on leave encashment on retirement.

Most of Political parties assured me to boycott inaugural function of new building of Parliament, says Sunil Dimple



Top News Report

JAMMU, May 26: Mission Statehood Jammu Kashmir today staged protest against the Government for not restoring statehood, democracy and nor holding Assembly elections in J&K.

Led by Sunil Dimple, President Mission Statehood, scores of protesters assembled in New Plot Road and burnt the effigies of the BJP Government for not restoring democracy in J&K.

Addressing the protesters Sunil Dimple alleged there is no democracy in Jammu Kashmir after abrogation of Article 370, demolition J&K Dogra State into Union Territory on 5 August 2019. He demanded restoration of statehood with Special Status of Art 370, unification of Jammu Kashmir Ladakh along with POK, Gilgit Bhatistan before holding Assembly elections in J&K.

Dimple appealed to all political parties of J&K to boycott the inaugura-

tion of New Parliament Building as the BJP has not invited the President of India on the inaugural function. He said most of the political leaders are in his contact and they have assured us to boycott the inaugural function of parliament's new building.

Among those who joined the protest include Sat Sharma, Sachin Soi, Rupesh Bhat, Ajay Kumar, Sita Ram Rakwal Bunty Dogra, Om Parkash and Ashok Sharma.

Dharun Kesar inaugurates KiyAar Makeover by Binakashi Sharma

Top News Report

JAMMU, May 26: Dharun Kesar (DK), actor of Dogri fame movie Aaun Aan Shinda, today inaugurated KiyAar Makeover by Binakashi Sharma at Katra Kadmal near Honda showroom in presence of prominent people of the Katra town.

Speaking on the occasion, Dharun Kesar complimented the owner Rohit Kumar Sharma on opening of the new saloon in the city area. He asserted that government has initiated several schemes aiming to foster entrepreneurship in the country.

He asserted that Jammu and Kashmir is becoming self-sufficient Union Territory in all respects. He

wished for the success of the new venture and asked the proprietor to provide good service to the customers. He said that quality service has always attracts potential customers and will make good business. He said that quality is very important in the business and the owner of the showroom should surely utilize quality products for the customers.

DK asked youth to explore the entrepreneurial avenues as both the J&K and Central Government have launched number of schemes for the welfare of people as well as youth of the nation. He exhorted upon youth to avail the benefits of the central sponsored scheme to become job creators instead of job seekers.



After SHO, Udhampur BJP threatens to attack NPP if it holds protest



Top News Report

JAMMU, May 26: Four days after NPP President and former Minister Harsh Dev Singh was assaulted by Udhampur police, its now the BJP that has threatened to oppose and hold clashes with Panthers Party in case it holds protest in Udhampur. This was revealed by Mr. Gagan Pratap Singh Party Spokesman and General Secretary in a press conference today.

Gagan Pratap Singh said that a BJP leader of Udhampur named Rohit Sethi has given a interview to Veera Cable, a local channel and cate-

gorically announced that his team would counter the NPP protest if held in Udhampur and hold 'clashes' with the latter. "Intriguing to note that despite the open threat issued by the said leader which has gone viral on the social media, the district administration has failed to act. Alas! First it was the SHO Udhampur who not only restrained the NPP from holding a peaceful protest but also assaulted its leadership and now its the BJP leadership which is warning and threatening to 'clash' with its party workers in case they exercised their fundamental rights of holding processions or

protests. Is it the last nail in the coffin of democracy? Where are the champions and other protagonists of democracy? And while no action has been taken against the police officers responsible for their extremely culpable barbarism against the NPP leader, the BJP goons have also been allowed to go scot free", anguished Gagan said.

Asserting that rule of law had collapsed in Udhampur, Singh said that it was Goonda Raj of police and its henchmen that prevailed in Udhampur. He said that enjoying open patronage of the BJP leaders, the Udhampur Police was hell bent to demolish not only the opposition but all that the constitution stood for. He appealed the President of India and CJJ of Supreme Court to take Suo Motto cognizance of the Jungle raj run by Police-BJP mafia.

Purshottam Parihar General Secretary was also present in the press conference.

Wireless digital 'bridge' restores connection between brain and spinal cord post-injury

NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): Neuroscientists and neurosurgeons say they have re-established the communication between the brain and spinal cord through a wireless digital bridge, allowing a paralysed person to walk again naturally.

"We have created a wireless interface between the brain and the spinal cord using brain-computer interface (BCI) technology that transforms thought into action," summarised Gregoire Courtine, professor of Neuroscience at Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL) and University of Lausanne (UNIL), Switzerland.

Reporting in the journal Nature, the scientists present the situation of Gert-Jan, 40 years old, who suffered a spinal cord injury following a bicycle accident that left him paralysed.

The digital bridge enabled him to regain natural control over the movement of his paralysed legs, allowing him to stand, walk, and even climb stairs. Gert-Jan explained that he has recovered the pleasure of being able to share a beer standing at a bar with friends.

"This simple pleasure represents a significant change in my life," he says.

To establish this digital bridge, two types of electronic implants are needed, the scientists



said. "We have implanted WIMAGINE devices above the region of the brain that is responsible for controlling leg movements," explained neurosurgeon Jocelyne Bloch, who is a professor at UNIL and EPFL.

WIMAGINE devices, developed by The French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission (CEA), a French public government-funded research organisation, allows to decode the electrical signals generated by the brain when we think about walking, the scientists said.

"We also positioned a neurostimulator connected to an electrode array over the region of the spinal cord that controls leg movement," said Bloch.

"Thanks to algorithms based on adaptive artificial intelligence methods, movement intentions are decoded in real time from brain recordings," said Guillaume Charvet, head of the BCI program at CEA.

These intentions are then converted into sequences of electrical

stimulation of the spinal cord, which in turn activate leg muscles to achieve the desired movement. This digital bridge operates wirelessly, allowing the patient to move around independently.

The researchers also found that rehabilitation supported by the digital bridge enabled Gert-Jan to recover neurological functions that he had lost since his accident.

They were able to quantify remarkable improvements in his sensory perceptions and motor skills, even when the digital bridge was switched off. This digital repair of the spinal cord suggested that new nerve connections had developed, they said.

While the digital bridge has only been tested in one person at this stage, Bloch and Courtine explained that in the future, a comparable strategy could be used to restore arm and hand functions.

They added that the digital bridge could also be applied to other clinical indications, such as paralysis due to stroke.

Death risk from liver disease twice as high in lower-income countries: Lancet study

NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): The risk of death for hospitalised liver disease patients is more than twice as high in lower- or lower-middle income countries compared to high-income nations, according to a study that analysed data from 25 countries, including India.

The study, published in The Lancet Gastroenterology & Hepatology journal, found that the higher risk in lower income countries is largely due to limited access to diagnostic and therapeutic resources.

Liver disease occurs when a person's liver experiences chronic inflammation, often due to obesity, excessive alcohol use, viral hepatitis or a combination.

Over time, this inflammation can lead to severe scarring in the liver, known as cirrhosis, which disrupts liver function and can ultimately cause liver failure.

Liver disease is one of the world's leading causes of death, currently accounting for 2 million deaths each year and pro-

jected to claim even more lives in the future, according to the researchers.

"A working liver is so important for our health since the organ is connected to so many aspects of bodily function," said Jasmohan Bajaj, a professor at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine, US.

"Anything that impacts the liver can influence how other organs and systems in our bodies operate, including our immune system, cardiovascular system, brain, gut and kidneys," Bajaj said.

Bajaj and Ashok K Choudhury, a professor at the Institute for Liver and Biliary Sciences in New Delhi, and colleagues investigated how the risk of death from cirrhosis varies across countries and what underlying factors are behind such inequities.

"Most cirrhosis research is focused on the global North or specific regions of the world and don't account for differences in public health resources. Our work is one of the only prospec-

tive studies to analyse imbalances in cirrhosis mortality from a global perspective," said Bajaj, the lead author of the study.

The research team collected and analysed medical data from nearly 4,000 patients with cirrhosis at 90 medical centres in 25 countries across six continents.

Compared to patients treated in high-income countries, cirrhosis patients in lower-income countries were more than twice as likely to die at the hospital or within 30 days of discharge, according to the data.

"These results are very shocking and sobering. We did not anticipate such a wide disparity in cirrhosis mortality, but it shows that globally we are not on a level playing field when it comes to addressing advanced liver disease," Bajaj said.

The study also highlighted global differences in medical resources that could be contributing to the divergence in mortality rates.

For example, the survey data

showed that cirrhosis patients in lower-income countries were less likely to have access to or afford relevant diagnostics, medications, therapies, ICU care and liver transplant while hospitalised.

Cirrhosis patients in lower-income countries were also more likely to be hospitalised at later stages of the disease and were more likely to have gastrointestinal bleeding, hepatitis B flare or infection, all of which are preventable conditions if provided with proper care, the researchers said.

The findings could reflect a lack of outpatient care for patients, as well as of personal financial resources, they said.

"The important thing to realise is that patient care for cirrhosis should start before they even need to go to the hospital. Recognition, access and affordability of treatment are three important factors that would ideally prevent a lot of hospitalisations from occurring in the first place," Bajaj added.

Dementia risk increases the younger a person develops Type 2 diabetes

NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): The risk of developing dementia increases in persons with Type 2 diabetes who develop glucose resistance earlier in their lives, a significant study has revealed.

New research published in Diabetologia, the journal of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes, shows an association between Type 2 diabetes and developing dementia in later life -- with the risk of dementia

increasing the earlier a person develops the disease.

The study investigated the association between pre-diabetes and dementia.

Pre-diabetes is an intermediate stage of high blood sugar, where blood sugar is high but has not yet crossed the threshold for Type 2 diabetes.

"Pre-diabetes is associated with dementia risk, but this risk is explained by the development of diabetes. Dia-

betes onset at an early age is most strongly related to dementia," said the study by Jiaqi Hu and Professor Elizabeth Selvin of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in the US.

To reach this conclusion, the authors analysed data from participants of the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) study. Those enrolled were aged 45-64 years in 1987-1989 and from four US counties.

The cognitive function assessments incorporated data from a scoring system involving three cognitive tests.

Among 11,656 participants without diabetes at baseline, 2,330 (20 per cent) had pre-diabetes.

They found that the earlier age of progression to diabetes had the strongest association with dementia -- a 3 times increased risk of dementia for those developing diabetes before age 60.

It fell to a 73 per cent increased risk for those developing Type 2 diabetes aged 60-69 years and 23 per cent increased risk for those developing diabetes aged 70-79 years.

At ages 80 years or older, developing Type 2 diabetes was not associated with an increased risk of dementia.

"Preventing or delaying the progression of pre-diabetes to diabetes will substantially reduce the future burden of dementia," the authors noted.

Gujarat Titans brace for Mumbai Indians storm

Upbeat Mumbai take on Gujarat Titans for a place in final

AHMEDABAD, May 26 (Agencies): Akash Madhwal's breathtaking bowling performance against Lucknow Super Giants in the Eliminator will fill Mumbai Indians with confidence as they take on defending champions Gujarat Titans in Qualifier 2 here today.

Mumbai, riding on the magical figures of 5/5 produced by Madhwal at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Wednesday night, knocked out Lucknow with an 81-run win.

The massive victory was a warning to the rivals that they could lift their game even in the absence of star pacers Jasprit Bumrah, Jofra Archer and batting mainstay Tilak Varma.

Mumbai pride themselves on thriving when the odds are stacked against them, something they have done through-



out the season. Having finished last in the previous edition, Rohit Sharma's team has managed to remain in contention for a sixth IPL title even with limited resources.

The likes of Cameron Green, Suryakumar Yadav and Tim David have responded well to the challenges and now form the

backbone of the batting department, with the young Nehal Wadhwa also making a huge impact.

It will be a stern test for Gujarat's bowling attack, led by Mohammad Shami (26 wickets), to get the better of Mumbai's batsmen.

Gujarat, who were outclassed

in Qualifier 1 by Mahendra Singh Dhoni's Chennai Super Kings, will have one last chance to get themselves together in their bid to qualify for their second IPL final on the trot.

It will be imperative for the holders that their batting clicks in unison as Shubman Gill and Vijay Shankar have done most of the heavy lifting with the bat in the last few games.

Gill might have had an off-day against Chennai, but his two centuries in the closing stages of the league round make him the biggest threat for Mumbai.

With 722 runs at an average of 55.53, the India batter has 421 runs and is just eight runs short of going past RCB's Faf du Plessis to finish with most runs in this IPL.

Mumbai Indians peaking at right time, feels Green



CHENNAI, May 26 (Agencies): Cameron Green is finally justifying his Rs 17.5 crore billing just when Mumbai Indians needed him the most and is happy that his team is now a step away from the summit clash of the IPL after initial struggles. Having pummelled Lucknow Super Giants by 81 runs in the Eliminator,

Mumbai face Gujarat Titans to decide Chennai Super Kings' opposition in Sunday's final. Green in fact said even skipper Rohit Sharma told newcomers in dressing room that the five-time champions are slow starters.

"Obviously, all experience that he (Rohit) has got for India and in IPL, he kind of knows. I think

MI never won the first game of IPL and he tries to mention that to us," Green said. "We obviously had a slow kind of start but you want to obviously start peaking at this time of the year, you don't want to be playing good cricket and slowing down now but peaking at right time," the giant Australian, who has scored 262 runs and taken six wickets, said. For him, the easiest job in the world is to bat alongside Suryakumar Yadav. "I think it's probably the easiest job batting with him. You got to get him on strike, that's the plan. And if you get a loose ball, you hit it."

PV Sindhu Advances To Semifinals Of Malaysia Masters, Kidambi Srikanth Out

KUALA LUMPUR, May 26 (Agencies): Star Indian shuttler PV Sindhu advanced to the semifinals of the Malaysia Masters Super 500 tournament with a hard-fought win over Yi Man Zhang of China in the women's singles here on Friday. Double Olympic medalist Sindhu, seeded sixth in the tournament, beat lower-ranked Zhang 21-16, 13-21, 22-20 in a quarterfinal match that lasted one hour and 14 minutes. World number 13 Sindhu avenged her round-of-32 loss to Zhang, ranked 18th, in the All England Open earlier this year. She had also beaten her Chinese opponent in the same tournament last year.

Sindhu faces seventh seed and world number nine Gregoria Mariska



Tanjung of Indonesia in the semifinals on Saturday. Tanjung upset second seed Yi Zhi Wang of China in the quarterfinals 21-18, 22-20.

Tanjung has been in fine form recently and Sindhu had lost to her in the Madrid Spain Masters final in straight games in April.

Sindhu will, however, go into the semifinals

with a 7-1 head-to-head advantage over Tanjung.

In the men's singles, however, Kidambi Srikanth lost to Indonesian qualifier Christian Adinata 21-16, 16-21, 11-21 in 57 minutes in the quarterfinals to bow out of the tournament.

HS Prannoy will be up against Japan's Kenta Nishimoto in another men's singles quarterfinals later in the day.

Australia Include Jimmy Peirson As Cover For Back-up Keeper Josh Inglis

Australia have selected wicketkeeper Jimmy Peirson as cover for back-up gloveman Josh Inglis, who will return home after the opening Ashes Test for the birth of his first child.

SYDNEY, May 26 (Agencies): Australia have selected wicketkeeper Jimmy Peirson as cover for back-up gloveman Josh Inglis, who will return home after the opening Ashes Test for the birth of his first child. Alex Carey is Australia's first-choice keeper for the World Test Championship (WTC) final against India and the five Ashes Tests and Inglis has been selected as his back-up. But Inglis will return to Perth after the first Ashes Test starting on June 16 and his place will be taken up before the second Test at Lord's by 30-year-old Queensland gloveman Peirson, who has 65 first-class games to



his credit, according to cricket.com.au on Friday.

The Australian team management has said Inglis will rejoin the squad later in the series. Peirson, who has

iconic Baggy Green during the Ashes.

The right-handed lower-order batter has improved his batting drastically over the years, going from an average of less than 30 in his first 35 first-class games to 42.56, including six tons in 30 games since the 2020-21 season.

He also struck an unbeaten 128 for Australia 'A' during their tour of Sri Lanka last year.

Peirson's appearance in the Australian Test squad has partly been delayed because Tim Paine was the first-choice keeper for a long time and then Carey replaced the former captain, who stepped down due to a contro-

versy ahead of the 2021 Ashes series at home.

Peirson said he was driven by the desire to set higher standards for himself.

"These guys (Carey and Inglis among others) are setting their benchmark, and I want to set my benchmark higher, and maybe bring a few other attributes into that as well, through leadership or whatever else," said Peirson.

"It's great to have that competition. That's what drives you to be the best you can be. If someone's pipping you, you want to be better than them. That's certainly one of my great driving factors: I want to be the best, I want to be the next man in."

IPL 2023: Matheesha Pathirana is in safe hands, says sister Vishuka after MS Dhoni meet CSK pacer's family

AHMEDABAD, May 26 (Agencies): Matheesha Pathirana's sister Vishuka was over the moon after MS Dhoni went to meet the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) pacer's family. She didn't forget to get a few pictures clicked with the legendary Indian cricketer.

Vishuka captioned the pictures and wrote, "Now we are sure that mali is in safe hands when Thala said, 'You have nothing to worry about Matheesha, he's always with me'. These moments were even beyond what I had ever dreamt of."

As far as Pathirana is concerned, he joined the Super Kings back in 2022. Although he didn't play a whole lot of matches, the right-arm pacer



earned accolades from the now 41-year-old Dhoni.

Dhoni has mostly entrusted Pathirana to deliver with the ball in the death overs and the Sri Lankan cricketer hasn't let his captain down.

Pathirana is third in the list of

leading wicket-takers for the Super Kings this year. He has picked up 17 wickets from 11 matches at an economy rate of 7.91.

Recently, Dhoni said that Pathirana should try and stay away from red-ball cricket. The

veteran said that Sri Lankan cricket needs to use him with a lot of caution.

"I personally think he is not someone who should play a lot of red-ball cricket. I think he shouldn't even get close to it. Even in white-ball cricket, the 50-over version, he should play as little as possible. [He should] play the big ICC tournaments because he is not somebody who will change a lot. This [having an impact in short bursts] is what he will do, so you can always use him at crucial times," Dhoni was quoted as saying.

Pathirana is expected to play when CSK take part in the IPL 2023 final to be played on May 28 at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

India on upswing, beat Japan 3-1



NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): India came from behind to clinch a comfortable 3-1 win against Japan in their second Pool A game at the Hockey's Junior Asia

Cup in Salalah, Oman. Arajjeet Singh Hundal (36th minute), Sharda Nand Tiwari (39th) and Uttam Singh (56th) scored a goal each for India, while Kumpei

Yasuda (19th) found the back of the net for Japan.

This was India's second win in as many games at the junior continental championship.

India mounted an attack from the get-go and were keen on landing the first blow against Japan.

But it was Japan who broke the deadlock against the run of play as Yasuda slotted it past the left of the goalkeeper to lead 1-0 at the halftime.

Call on Asia Cup after IPL final

NEW DELHI, May 26 (Agencies): A decision on the Asia Cup's fate will be taken on the sidelines of the IPL final, which will be attended by top Asian Cricket Council (ACC) dignitaries, BCCI secretary Jay Shah said.

Pakistan have the hosting rights for this year's Asia Cup but with the BCCI deciding against sending Team India to the neighbouring country without government permission, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Najam Sethi had proposed a hybrid model where they will organise at least four games on



home soil and India will play their matches at a neutral venue.

It couldn't be confirmed whether Sethi has been formally invited for the IPL final.

"As of now, the decision with regards to hosting of Asia Cup hasn't yet been finalised.

We are busy with IPL but the top dignitaries of Sri Lanka Cricket, Bangladesh and Afghanistan Cricket Board are coming to watch the IPL final. We will have a discussion and take a final decision in due course," Shah said.

It has been learnt that

Sethi's proposed hybrid model looks like a feasible solution although ACC had made no formal statements. According to the model, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and Afghanistan will play four preliminary matches in Pakistan and India would play all their games at neutral venues. The two India-Pakistan games will also be held in Sri Lanka, although PCB wants Dubai as the venue. The weather in the UAE in September is not conducive for 50-over games but to make the hybrid model work logistically, the UAE is a far better option for the ACC.

MI Sensation Akash Madhwal Banned From Local Tournaments, Brother Cites "Dar Ka Mahoul"

AHMEDABAD, May 26 (Agencies): Mumbai Indians unearthed a new gem as pacer Akash Madhwal bagged a 5-wicket haul for the franchise, playing pivotal role in the team's victory over Lucknow Super Giants in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2023 Eliminator.

As the cricketing fraternity went ga-ga over the emergence of another pace bowling gem from Mumbai Indians, Madhwal's brother shared some interesting anecdotes from the seamer's cricketing background. In fact, Akash's brother Ashish revealed that the

MI star is banned from playing cricket in his hometown, as he had become too dangerous to play against.

Ashish, in a chat with India Today, credited MI skipper Rohit Sharma for helping Akash take the next leap forward.

"The thing with Rohit bhai is that he gives players chances. He trusts his players and backs them. A new player is always scared for his position in the team. And Rohit has taken away that scare and Akash is delivering now," Ashish said.

"When he was working after his engineer-

ing, people would come every day and say don't go to work today, come play in our team and we will pay you. And from there he transitioned to the leather ball after his trials at Uttarakhand," one of Akash's local friends said during the chat.

Akash, who primarily played tennis ball cricket, had become too good for the level. Hence, he was banned from local tournaments as people were afraid to face him.

"Nobody let him play here. There was a lot of fear of his bowling. So, he was banned from the

local tournaments. Dar ka mahoul tha (there was fear all around). Akash used to go outside of Roorkee and play," Ashish said.

At present, however, Ashish is extremely happy seeing his brother gaining popularity all over the country.

"But yeah, his tennis ball days are done. He is so, so happy right now," the elated elder brother added.

"Rohit Sharma takes 50 percent of his tensions. Just look at the bond that they share (points to TV)," Ashish concluded.

Health & Medicare sector of J&K in shambles: Rattan Lal

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, May 26: Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) Jammu while accusing the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory Administration of misleading the Centre regarding the deplorable condition of Health, and Medicare including Ayush sector of J&K has sought Centre's intervention so that adequate measures are taken to address this significant and most sensitive issue of people.

In a statement issued to media here today, the senior National Conference leader said that it is an irony of the people of Jammu and Kashmir that while the Prime Minister keeps on reiterating the commitment to provide benefits of Govt schemes to the last man standing in line, the ground realities in this Union Territory especially viz-a-viz Health and Medicare sector are quite contrary. He said that the deplorable condition of this sector can be well gauged from the fact that this Union Territory is facing a huge shortage of doctors and paramedical staff



as a result of which the people continue to suffer badly.

Elaborately divulging the details, Rattan Lal Gupta said that presently in J&K there are 269 Public Health Centres out of which 165 centres are running completely at the mercy of God. These 165 centres have no qualified doctors and are being solely run by paramedical staff. The condition of the rest of 84 Health Centres is no good too as these are having no sanctioned strength of doctors available for the patients visiting these centres. The condition of village dispensaries are more in

worse conditions and many are closed.

The senior NC leader further informed that 1000 posts of doctors and 5000 posts of para medical staff are lying vacant in J&K due to which the people are facing huge deficit in medical services. He claimed that during the National Conference regime in the erstwhile State of J&K led by Omar Abdullah J&K

Health Deptt bagged 2nd position across the nation for providing best health services and the Department's performance but today health and medicare is totally in shambles and people have to go out of J&K for availing medical services incurring huge costs.

Rattan Lal Gupta appealed to the centre administration to look into the most urgent and sensitive matter of the people and direct the LG Administration to take adequate steps for filling all the vacant posts in Health and Medical Department at the earliest so that people of J&K get the optimum health services specially far flung areas of J&K which are totally ignored.

BJP Talab Tillo Mandal organises Working Committee Meet

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, May 26: BJP Talab Tillo Mandal under the Presidentship of Mandal President Keshav Chopra Organised Working Committee meeting at Talab Tillo. The meeting was attended by Vibagh Sangathanmantri Jammu Poonch Inderjeet Sharma, Municipal Councillors Jeet Angral, Sardar Sucha Singh, Neelam Nargotra, JKUT Secretary Ayodhya Gupta, JKUT BJP Training Department Incharge Dr Parneesh Mahajan, District General Secretary Kuldeep Kandhari, Shakti Kendra Pramuks, Booth Presidents and others leaders of Talab Tillo.

Speaking on the agenda of meeting, Keshav Chopra said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is completing 9yrs as PM and Talab Tillo Mandal will celebrate it from 30th May to 30th



June and also planning to hold different programmes as Maha Jan Sampark Abhiyaan at Booth Level.

Addressing the workers Inderjeet Sharma discussed the Programmes to be done by the Party activists to aware the Common masses about the Achievements of Modi Government during their 9yrs of Tenure.

Speaking on the occasion, Ayodhya Gupta and Dr Parneesh Mahajan said that under the leadership of PM Modi lot of work has been done for the common man.

Sucha Singh and Neelam Nargotra said that Modi Govt is Completing 9yrs tenure in Centre and to make Maha Jan Sampark Abhiyaan a big Success every leader of the party must ensure their Active Participation during the Mass Contact Campaign.

Mandal General Secretary Munish Gupta Conducted Proceedings of the Programme and Paramjeet Presented Vote of thanks

District Cell Convenors K. L Sharma, Arun Khajuria, Anupam Gupta, SC Morcha President Chaman Lal Bhagat,

Dr Makson Tikoo, Anil Angral, Pratibha Sharma, Dr R.K Gupta, Rahul Nargotra, Deepak Kumar, Deepak Sharma, Varinder Dogra, Ramesh Kumar, Parveen Ghai, Manohar Lal, Geeta Sodhi, Bablu Chand, Bhubesh Sharma, Rakesh Sharma, Swaran Samyal, Ritesh Peer, Jatinder Khajuria, Ravinder Khajuria, Meena Jamwal, Vikas Kumar, Lovekesh Gondi, Sanchit Sharma, Omkar Verma, Gurcharan Singh, Tarun Angral, Kusum Gupta, Ramesh Sharma, Ashish and others were also present.

Two-day Intra-College Sports Meet concludes

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, MAY 26: The two-day Intra-College Sports Meet organised by Govt. College of Engineering and Technology under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav and to make the students more fit both mentally and physically to achieve their goals was successfully culminated today. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from the students of all branches of engineering.

The principal of the college Prof. (Dr.) Samer Sharma, congratulated all the participants for their sportsmanship and said that sportsmanship is not simply to win, but to pursue victory with honour by giving one's best effort. She also



briefed the students that sports can teach values such as fairness, team-building, equality, discipline, inclusion, perseverance and respect. Sport has the power to provide a universal framework for learning values, thus contributing to the development of soft skills needed for

responsible citizenship. On day two of the sports meet quarter final, semi-final and final matches were conducted in which more than 80 students participated in various events. In badminton the winner was Vishal Verma of 6th CSE in boy's category and Krishma Raina of

4th CSE won the final in girl's category, in table tennis Anuj Dutt of 6th civil was the winner whereas team Civil Tigers remained winner in volley ball.

In carom Loyal Seth of 2nd CSE won in boy's category and Mehak Bhagat of 2nd CSE won in girl's category. In

chess the final was won by Angad Singh Sodhi of M.Tech. The events for both the days were coordinated by the Physical Director and convenors of different committees.

The staff members who were present during the meet included Prof. Sumeer Khajuria, Prof. Baldev Raj, Prof. Shami Kumar, Dr. Raman Gupta, Sh. Balbir Singh, Dr. Heera Saini, Dr. Rajinder Singh, Prof. Altaf Ahmed, Er. Surinder Salathia, Er. Amit Pandoh Er. Neeraj Gupta, Er. Yogesh Gupta and Er. Karan Kapoor.

The principal also congratulated all the convenors and members of their committees for successfully conducting the sports meet.

Apni Party leaders stage protest seeking construction of culvert over Nallah



TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, May 26: Apni Party leaders and workers today staged a protest demanding construction of Nallah culvert and small bridge as pathway for the residents of ward number 61 and 67.

The protest was led by District President Jammu Rural - 'A', Pushap Dev Kumar Uppal in which Hoshiyar Singh, a local resident along with others participated in the demonstration.

Pushap Dev Kumar Uppal and Hoshiyar Singh while addressing the protesters highlighted hardships being faced by the resi-

dents that a tender has already been floated by the UEED Department in the month of November 2022 yet nothing has been done.

They said that the land mafia with support allegedly from the Revenue and Municipal Corporation authorities is bent upon encroaching the nallah land for their commercial deeds.

The residents also raised their voice that they have an apprehension that the land mafia may target and manhandle them as done earlier so many times.

It was also reported on spot that the Corporators are hand in glove to encroach the nallah

land and appealed the authorities to come into rescue before the rainy season so that the culvert and pulley for pathway is constructed and the residents are protected from the water of the nallah during rainy season and their children avail the facility of the pulley for going to school and markets for daily needs.

A later demonstration was also held on the spot raising slogans against the Authorities for meeting their demands at the earliest otherwise the people of the concerned area shall be forced to come on streets and belling the cats for their wrongdoings.

BJP Govt has ruined Jammu city: Bhalla, Sawhney

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, MAY 26: District Congress Committee Jammu (Urban) on Friday held a meeting at Congress office Jammu (Urban), and appointed Ward Presidents and Secretary of DCC Jammu (U).

Raman Bhalla, Working President PCC and Former Minister J&K Yogesh Sawhney, General Secretary PCC I/C District President Jammu (Urban) handed over the appointment letters to the newly appointed members. The appointees included Surinder Kumar as Ward President No 2, Munish Kumar as President Ward no 24, Gulshan Kumar as President Ward No 12 and Manmeet Singh as Secretary DCC Jammu Urban.

Along with Raman Bhalla, and Yogesh Sawhney senior Congress leaders Dwarka Choudhary, Varinder Manhas, Pawan Dev Singh, Vijay Malhotra, Pawan Sharma, Satpaul Sapolia, Ram Parkash Magotra, Jugal Kishore, Rakesh Sharma, Anil Kumar, Ravi Panotra, Manmeet Singh,



Gulshan Kumar, Munish Kumar and Surinder Kumar were present at the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, Working President PCC Raman Bhalla congratulated the newly appointed and stated that the party looked forward to their contribution in the light of their new roles. Bhalla then said that Congress is focussed on organisational strengthening at the grassroots level so that the party can defeat the BJP in the upcoming elections. Congress win is important for people, he said, as the Modi Govt is openly ruining the country. More so, people in Jammu & Kashmir

have been battered by the ugly policies of the BJP government. Starting from the Smart City Program which is a huge scam, BJP is trying to gain goodie points from the public. He highlighted the various failures of BJP in meeting expectations of people, whether it was in creating jobs, making infrastructure, giving development or even facilitating the needs of the public. They snatched the statehood and left the people in a helpless state, stated Bhalla.

Former Minister Yogesh Sawhney welcomed the members on their new designations. He encouraged the members to

connect with the locals and solidify a strong support base. He asserted that all members of the party must focus on the upcoming local body elections. It is high time that people get better opportunities, infrastructure and facilities. This cannot happen without the defeat of corrupt BJP leaders. Jammu is being neglected at all levels and the longer people will stand by it, the more danger we will be in of a worse economy and society, he said. Sawhney further said that the people are in dire need of a government, authority which will take action in their benefit and for their welfare, he said.

2 prominent SC leaders join Apni Party

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, MAY 26: Two prominent Schedule Caste leaders, Rishi Kumar and Kewal Kishore Bhagat vice president Thathar welfare committee on Thursday joined the Apni Party in presence of senior leaders here at Gandhi Nagar Office, Jammu.

The joining programme was organized by OBC Coordinator, Bhagat Ram in which State General Secretary, Vijay Bakaya, Provincial President, Jammu, S. Manjit Singh, Senior Provincial Vice President Jammu, Ex-MLA Faqir Nath, Provincial Secretary/District President Jammu Urban, Dr Rohit Gupta, Hans Raj Dogra District President Udampur SC State Coordinator, Bodh Raj Bhagat, State General Secretary Youth Wing/ Spokesperson, Abhay Bakaya, Provincial President Youth Wing, Vipul Bali, District President Youth, Shivam Choudhary, District Secretary Youth Abinav Gupta and others.

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