

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, FRIDAY, AUGUST 04, 2023

Daily Evening Newspaper



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BRIEFLY

Amarnath Yatra | Fresh batch of 1181 pilgrims leave from Jammu Base Camp

JAMMU, Aug 4 (Agencies): A fresh batch of 1181 pilgrims amidst the chants of 'Bam Bam Bhole' on Friday left from Bhagwati Nagar Base camp here for Shri Amarnath Cave Shrine in South Kashmir Himalayas. An official said that 1181 pilgrims left the base camp in a convoy of 46 vehicles.

A group of 706 pilgrims comprising 570 males, 95 females, 35 Sadhus and six sadhvis left for Pahalgam in a convoy of 24 vehicles. For Baltal, 475 pilgrims comprising 327 males and 138 females and ten children left in a convoy of 22 vehicles amid tight security arrangements.

The yatra started on July 1 will conclude on August 31.

Soldier among two drown in Doda

DODA, Aug 4 (Agencies): Two persons including an army man drowned in River Chenab near Doda, Police said.

They said that an Army man, Rohit Singh, 25, and Sunil Kumar, 24, both residents of Durga Nagar Khallani in Doda, drowned in River Chenab near the Durga Nagar village while they were washing their hands after performing the last rites of their relative on the banks of the river.

"A rescue operation has been launched by Police," they said.

MeT predicts hot and dry weather in J&K

SRINAGAR, Aug 4 (Agencies): Weather department on Friday forecast mainly hot and dry weather in Jammu and Kashmir but isolated late afternoon or evening showers has not been ruled out.

"Mainly hot and dry weather is expected today. Rain may occur at isolated to scattered places of Jammu & Kashmir towards late afternoon/evening," a meteorological department official said.

He said that no large change was expected **Turn to page 9**

Supreme Court stays Rahul Gandhi's conviction in Modi surname defamation case, restores MP status

NEW DELHI, Aug 4 (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Friday stayed Rahul Gandhi's conviction in a 2019 criminal defamation case over his "Modi surname" remark, restoring his status as a member of Parliament. The stay will also allow him to contest the national elections due next year.

Pronouncing the verdict, Justice BR Gavai said the ramifications of Gandhi's conviction are wide since it will also affect the right of the electorates who elected him.

"No reason has been given by the trial judge for imposing maximum sentence, the order of conviction needs to be stayed pending final



adjudication," the bench said. Purnesh Modi, a former minister in the Gujarat government, had filed a criminal defamation case in 2019 against Gandhi over his "How

come all thieves have Modi as the common surname?" remark made during an election rally at Kolar in Karnataka on April 13, 2019.

Representing Gandhi, senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi contended that the case filed by BJP MLA Purnesh Modi was "strange" against the Congress leader was strange since not a single person he had named during his speech sued.

"Interestingly, everybody who is aggrieved in this very 'small' community of 13 crores, only people suing are BJP office-holders. Very strange," he said.

"In that **Turn to page 9**

NIA raids five places Kashmir in terror conspiracy case

SRINAGAR, Aug 4 (Agencies): The National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted raids at five places in Kashmir on Friday in a terror conspiracy case, officials said.

These raids are going on in several districts in the valley.

Officials said the raids are part of the ongoing investigation into a terror conspiracy case registered in 2022 in Jammu.

"Searches are underway in five locations in RC 5/2022/JMU," they said.

The case relates to the hatching of a conspiracy, both in physical and cyberspace, and plans by the proscribed terrorist organisations to unleash violent terrorist attacks in J&K with sticky bombs, IEDs, and small arms.

The plans are part of a larger conspiracy by these terrorist outfits to commit acts of terror and violence, in association with local youth and underground workers, to disturb peace and communal disharmony in J&K.

Himachal monsoon mayhem: 199 people dead, 31 missing till now

SHIMLA, Aug 4 (Agencies): Nearly 200 rain related-deaths were reported and 31 people went missing during the past 41 days since the onset of the monsoon in Himachal Pradesh, the state disaster management authority said.

Out of 199 deaths, 57 were due to landslides and flash floods while 142 people died due to road accidents during **Turn to page 9**

Tax Evaders Penalised: Rs 1.63 Cr imposed in four months

SRINAGAR, Aug 4 (Agencies): Over the last four months, the State Taxes Department has taken strict actions against tax evaders, resulting in the imposition of a penalty of Rs 1.63 crore.

These enforcement activities were conducted under the guidance of Commissioner State Tax Rashmi Singh and the supervision of Additional Commissioner State Taxes (Administration & Enforcement) Namrita

Dogra, along with DC Enforcement Samba and Udhampur (Additional charge) Sanjay Gupta.

Deputy Commissioner State Taxes Samba reported that the Department imposed a penalty of Rs 98.70 lakh in Samba, Rajouri, and Poonch regions, and Rs 65.57 lakh in Udhampur region on vehicles within the period of April 2023 to July 2023. The penalties were imposed on those found to be lack-

ing proper documentation required for the transportation of goods.

These checks and enforcement actions were carried out by the State Tax Officers of the Enforcement wing in Samba, Udhampur, Rajouri, and Poonch districts. Additionally, a significant number of 1, 75,395 E-way bills were verified by various teams of STOs, which played a crucial role in controlling tax evasion.

Turn to page 9

JK has nearly 13.50 Lakh Drug users: Parliament Panel

SRINAGAR, Aug 4 (Agencies): A total of 13,48,700 persons are drug users in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, suggests a report prepared by the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment based on the projected population in 2018.

As per media reports, **Turn to page 9**

No Govt advertisement to be sent directly to media: GAD

JAMMU, Aug 4 (Agencies): Taking serious note of violation of its instructions, the government, in a reiteration of its earlier orders, Thursday directed all Administrative Secretaries, Heads of Departments and Managing Directors of PSUs, Corporations, Boards and organizations not to issue any official advertisement directly for publication in print or electronic media.

General Administration Department (GAD) Commissioner Secretary Sanjeev Verma, in circular instructions, instructed them to ensure that no "government advertisement, under any circumstances, should be sent or referred directly to print or electronic media without routing the same through the Information Department."

He further cautioned that any violation in this regard would be dealt with appropriately under rules or norms. "Further, the Information Department shall closely monitor the matter and report violations of these instructions, if any, to the General Administration Department for initiation of disciplinary action," Verma directed.

Circular instructions were issued after noticing the elaborate set of guidelines on the **Turn to page 9**

Kharge lashes out at BJP, says only 12.2 lakh formal jobs added in 5 Years

NEW DELHI, Aug 4 (Agencies): Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday claimed that India under the Modi government has added only 12.2 lakh formal jobs in the past five years, and said that for the survival of the poor and middle class, the BJP needs to be "thrown out of power". Kharge charged that the BJP has "miserably failed" to provide employment.

"India under Modi Govt has added ONLY



12.2 Lakh Formal Jobs in past 5 years! That means an average of JUST 24,400 Jobs per year!" he said in a tweet. "We are not inventing this figure. It is the

Modi government which created this narrative that EPF Regular Contributors = Creation of Formal Jobs! The EPF data corroborates this," Kharge said.

The BJP promised two crore jobs per year which means 18 crore jobs could have been created in nine years, the Congress president said.

"Our youth is staring at a dark future," he claimed.

"No wonder, there **Turn to page 9**

High Court permits virtual production of Yasin Malik in terror funding case

NEW DELHI, Aug 4 (Agencies): The Delhi High Court on Friday directed that separatist leader Yasin Malik be virtually produced before it from jail in connection with the NIA's plea seeking death penalty for him in a terror funding case.

Allowing an application by the jail superintendent citing security concerns, a bench headed by Justice Sidharth Mridul said the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front chief,

who is presently serving a life term in the case, need not be produced in person and modified an earlier order seeking his physical presence.

"In view of the matter, the order dated May 29, 2023 is necessarily modified to the extent that the jail superintendent is directed to produce Yasin Malik in the present appeal through video conferencing alone on August 9 and not in person," ordered the bench, also comprising Justice Anish Dayal.

The high court had, on May 29, issued warrants for production of Malik, who is presently serving a life term in the case in Tihar jail, on August 9 when NIA's plea for enhancement of sentence is listed for hearing.

The Delhi Government standing counsel informed the court there was an order by the President directing that Malik cannot be "moved from the Tihar Jail".

The Supreme Court also expressed its displeasure when he recently appeared before it in person, he added.

In the application, the jail authorities said Malik was a "very high risk prisoner" and it was imperative to not physically produce him in court to maintain public order and safety.

Recently, the jailed separatist leader arrived in the Supreme Court in **Turn to page 9**

J&K| Zoya Khan's murals amplify voices of Kashmir's unsung Heroines



SRINAGAR, Aug 4 (Agencies): In an effort to promote the work of Kashmiri artisans and acknowledge the significant contributions of women in the artistic field, Zoya Khan, an architect-artist leading

the international organization Fearless Collective, has unveiled a groundbreaking mural in Srinagar.

The mural, a first of its kind in Kashmir, features the portraits of women karigars (craftswomen)

who have made a profound impact in the handicraft industry.

The awe-inspiring artwork, now the 52nd mural created by the community-driven Fearless Collective, serves as a celebration of the unsung heroines of the city.

Funded by the NGO itself, the mural art has quickly become the talk of the town, with numerous visitors flocking to the site to inquire about its origin and significance.

Zoya Khan, the **Turn to page 9**

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SCAN ME!

Body Mists!

In Loving Memory of
Sh. Brij Nath Kher

(18 November 1936 - 27 July 2023)

With heavy hearts, we inform that our beloved **Sh. Brij Nath Kher**, left for his heavenly abode on July 27, 2023.

He enriched the lives of everyone around him and lived a remarkable life filled with love, joy, and cherished memories. His legacy is etched in our hearts forever.

The **Tenth Day Kriya** is planned at Murad Nagar, Ghaziabad on August 5, 2023 at 5:30 AM followed by gathering at residence (C-34, Sector 52, Noida, UP) at 11 AM.

Left to mourn his loss, his grief-stricken family members:

- Grief Stricken:**
Asha & Bansilal Kher (9419642651) (Bhabhi & Brother)
Renu (9811123977) & Ramesh Kher (9811120307) (Daughter-in-Law and Son)
Swati & Hemanshu Kher (Granddaughter-in-law & Grandson)
Zoya & Sahil Kher (Granddaughter-in-law & Grandson)
Shobha & K.K. Zutshi (Brother-in-law & Sister)
Veena & Ramesh Dhar (Sister-in-law & Brother-in-law)

The Kher, Dhar, Bali, and Zutshi families are united in their sorrow.



Sh. Brij Nath Kher
(18 November 1936 - 27 July 2023)

10TH DAY AND RASAM PAGRI

With profound grief & sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Smt. Kiran Gupta** W/o Sh. Raman Kumar Gupta M/o Akash Deep Gupta (Advocate) R/o Ward No. 10 Near Calvary Mission School Samba, who left for heavenly abode on 25/07/2023.

10th Day shall be performed on 03-08-2023 Thursday From 10 AM to 11 AM at Dina Nath Memorial Hall (Mahajan Hall) Samba Near New Bus Stand Samba.

Rasam Pagri will be performed on (Monday) on 07-08-2023 from 4 PM onwards at our residence Ward No. 10 Near Calvary Mission School Samba.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-

Pakhtra Family 9419149874. 9796243572



Smt. Kiran Gupta

OBITUARY AND 10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Mrs. Sarla Kachroo** W/o. Lt. DySP Sh. Abhimaneu Kachroo originally resident of Raj Ghat, Baranulla, presently at Block A, Qtr no. 3, Police Line, Channi Himmat, Jammu left for heavenly abode on 28th July 2023 at Jammu.

10th Day Kriya will be performed on 5th August 2023 (Saturday) at 9:00 am at Muthi Ghat, near Directorate of School Education, Jammu.

Grief Stricken:

- Vasishth Kachroo and Vasundra Kachroo (Son and Daughter-in-law)
Vishal Kachroo and Meenakshi Kachroo (Son and Daughter-in-law)
Mrs. Gayatri Mittal (Sister-in-law)
Mr. Kunj Bihari Tisai (Brother)
Mrs. Santosh Labroo (Sister)
Grand children: Richi, Tally, Niya & Rudra
Contact no: 700653004, 788947828, 8826012941



Mrs. Sarla Kachroo

10TH DAY/KRIYA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW, WE REGRET TO INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED **SMT SARLA KAUL** ON 28TH JULY 2023 AT FLAT NO 33, SECTOR 19, POCKET 2, GREEN VIEW APPTT DWARKA, NEW-DELHI.

10TH DAY KRIYA WILL BE PERFORMED AT GARH-GANGA, MURAD NAGAR (UP) ON AUGUST 6, 2023 (SUNDAY) AT 7 A.M.

GRIEF STRICKEN:

- TAPAN KUMAR KAUL - **HUSBAND**
YOGESH KAUL - **SON**
SEEMA KAUL PANDITA - **DAUGHTER**
SOMESH PANDITA - **SON-IN-LAW**
KIRTI KUMAR KAUL - **BROTHER-IN-LAW**
PERMELA KAUL - **SISTER-IN-LAW**
GIRIJA KAUL - **SISTER-IN-LAW**
SHIBAN KRISHAN KAUL - **BROTHER-IN-LAW**

GRAND CHILDEN: SANCHITA & SHIV



SMT SARLA KAUL

OBITUARY AND 10TH DAY KRIYA

With deep grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Anil Kumar Koul** S/o Late Mohan Lal Koul of Veeri Nowbugh, Anantnag Kashmir, presently residing at Flat No. 03, Block No. 101, Lane No. 19, Jagti Colony, Nagrota, Jammu (J&K) on 30/07/2023 at about 7 PM.

The **MOURNING** will be held at his parental house, H. No 2, Lane No, 2, Kailash Vihar, Udhewwala, Jammu, opposite K C Sports Club.

The **10TH DAY KRIYA** will be performed at Muthi Ghat, Jammu on 08/08/2023 at 8.30 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

- Rashmi Koul - **Wife**
Prisha Koul - **Daughter**
Chetresh Koul - **Son**
Bimla Koul W/o Late Mohan Lal Koul - **Mother**
Parmeshori Koul W/o Late Badri Nath Koul - **Aunty**
Paray Lal Koul - **Uncle**
Archana Koul and Rakesh Kumar Koul - **Bhabi and Brother**
Dazy Koul and Sanjay Kumar Koul - **Bhabi and Brother**
Usha Pandita and Ashoni Pandita - **Sister and Jija Ji**

AND SAMAST KOUL PARIVAR OF VEER NOWBUGH, ANANTNAG. CONTACT NO. 9419148433, 9796826927, 9419122083



ANIL KUMAR KOUL

TENTH DAY / KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform you that the sad demise of our beloved **Smt Santosh Gupta** W/o Sh Shambu Dutt Gupta R/o Nagrota Gujroo (Billawar) on 27th July 2023.

Tenth Day will be performed on Saturday 5th August 2023 at our residence at 11 AM **Kriya** at our residence on Tuesday 8 August 2023.

GRIEF STRICKEN:

- Sh Shambu Dutt Gupta (Husband)
Sons and Daughter-in-laws
Sh Parveen Gupta & Smt Anuradha Gupta
Sh Sanjeev Gupta & Smt Atul Kanotra
Sh Rajesh Gupta & Smt Sheetal Gupta
Daughter & Son in law
Suman Gupta & Gopal Chowdhary

9697259825, 6005277674, 9469566116, 7006368270



Smt Santosh Gupta

MOURNING FROM MALYUN SIDE

With heavy heart and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **Smt. Chander Kanta Razdan** W/o Shri Aumar Krishan Razdan originally resident of 85 Shalakkadal, Srinagar (Kmr) and at present 149/B, Wazirbagh Bohri Jammu on 1st of August 2023.

Mourning is being held at 149/B, Wazir Bagh, Opposite Anand Nagar Bohri Jammu.

Tenth Day will be performed on 10-08-2023 at Muthi Ghat at 8.30 am.

GRIEF STRICKEN

- Smt. Nancy Thathoo W/o Lt. Sh. Mohan Lal Thathoo R/o Sopore (Kmr) -Bhabhi
Smt. Sony & Sh. Shubhan Lal Thathoo R/o Sopore (Kmr) - Bhabhi / Brother
Smt. Jiga Thathoo W/o Lt. Sh. Ashok Kumar Thathoo R/o Sopore (Kmr) - Bhabhi
Smt. Vijay Bhat W/o Lt. Sh. Vijay Kumar Bhat R/o Bandipora (Kmr) - Sister
Smt. Shoky & Sh. Opinder Krishan Lidhoo R/o Sopore (Kmr) -Bhabhi / Brother

Thathoos / Bhats/ Lidhoos 7889586461, 9796430988, 9596919466



Smt. Chander Kanta Razdan

BHOG & ANTIM ARDAS

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved **S. Kehar Singh Ji**, S/o Late S. Basant Singh, R/o Basti Bhanteen, Railway Patri, Tali Morh, Miran Sahib, Jammu who left for heavenly abode on 29-July-2023.

Arambh Sri Akhand Path Sahib at our residence on 04/08/2023 (Friday) at 9 AM.

Bhog Sri Akhand Path Sahib on 06/08/2023 (Sunday) 9 AM at our residence followed by **KIRTAN & ANTIM ARDAS** at Gurudwara Sahib Basti Bhanteen, Tali Morh, Miran Sahib, Jammu from 10 AM to 12 Noon.

GRIEF STRICKEN

- Sdn. Harcharan Kour (Wife)
(Daughter & Son in Law)
Sdn. Harmeet Kour & S. Zorawar Singh
Sdn. Pardeep Kour & S. Amrik Singh (Daughter & Son in Law)
S. Harpreet Singh & Parvinder Kour (Son & Daughter in Law)
S. Balvinder Singh (Son)
S. Arvinder Singh (Son)
Sdn. Satwant Kour W/o Late S. Amrik Singh, Retd. SSP (Bhabi)
Sdn. Satwant Kour & S. Janak Singh (Sister & Brother in law)
Sdn. Tara Kour & S. Tarlochan Singh (Sister & Brother in law)
S. Gurcharan Singh & Sdn. Surjeet Kour (Brother & Bhabi)
S. Ramneek Singh & Sdn. Jasbir Kour (Brother in Law & Bhabi)

Contact No.- 9858115116, 7006302311, 9149663977



S. Kehar Singh Ji

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow we inform that our beloved **Sh. Roshan Lal Koul (KAS)** S/o Lt. Sh. Niranjan Nath Koul & Lt. Smt Janak Rani Koul R/o Rangtang Ali Kadal Behind Rishi-Peer A/p H. No 285 Niranjan Kutir Laxmipuram Chinoore, Near Telephone Exchange Bantalab Jammu passed to Heavenly abode on 01-08-2023 at 11.25 PM.

Cremination took place on 02-08-2023.

10th Day Kriya will be performed on 10-08-2023 (Thursday) at 8.30 A.M at Muthi Ghat Near DSE Jammu.

GRIEF STRICKEN

- Smt Shakuntala Koul (Wife)- **6006836472**
Sh. Makhan Lal Koul (Uncle)
Smt Bimla Raina W/o Lt. Sh. Vijay Kumar Raina & Family
Smt Arti Koul & Sh. Shaleen Koul (Son & Daughter in Law)
Shashank Koul & Sukant Koul (Grand Children)
Smt Sheela Mattoo (Mother in Law)
Smt Piarey Sharabi & Sh. Lal Ji Sharabi (Koul)

MOBILE NO: 9796223635, 7006970018



ROSHAN LAL KOUL (KAS)
(SABA JI)

OBITUARY AND 10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt Santosh Koul** W/o Lt Jagger Nath Koul original residents of Seer Hamdan district Anantnag A/p Lane No. 22, Flat 08, Block 135, Jagti Nagrota.

10th Day Kriya will be observed at Hanuman Mandir Ghat, Srinagar on 06-08-2023 (Sunday) at 9.00 am.

GRIEF STRICKEN

- Subash Koul -**Son**
Indu Priya -**Daughter-in-law**
Chander Lata -**Daughter**
Geetika Koul -**Grand Daughter**

And Samast Koul Parivar Mob: 9419003012, 8899954669



Smt Santosh Koul

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the Tenth Day Kriya of our beloved **Shri. Shibhan Lal Shishoo** S/o Late Sh. Onkar Nath Shishoo R/o 176/D Lower Shiv Nagar, Jammu will be held at Muthi Ghat, near Director Education Office on 6th Aug, Sunday at 9.00 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

- Santosh Shishoo Kar (Wife) (Sister in law)
Neelam Shishoo W/o Late Shri. T.K.Shishoo (Son & Daughter in law)
Sidhartha Shishoo & Aarti Kachroo (Daughter and Son in law)
Supriya Razdan & Rohit Razdan
Shri. D.N. Tiku H/o Late Ratni Tiku (Brother in law)
Girja Sapru and Shri. G.L.Sapru (Sister and Brother in law)
Sushma Kaw and Shri. Ashok Kaw (Sister and Brother in law)
Grand Children - Krish, Raunak and Saina
Shishoos and Kars.
Mobile : 9682660170, 9886520287, 9923089188



Shri. Shibhan Lal Shishoo

TENTH DAY

With heavy heart and profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Vinod Kumar Koul** S/o Late Mohan Lal Koul R/o Drabiyar present-ly Durga Nagar Sec-1, Near Park Jammu on 31-07-2023 (Monday).

Tenth Day will be performed on 9-8-2023 at Muthi Ghat at 9 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

- Kaki Koul - **Wife**
Son & Daughter-in-law
Vishal Koul & Shweta Koul
Bipin Koul - **Brother**
Brother-in-law & Sister-in-law
Ashok Tickoo & Sarla Tickoo
K.K. Khushu & Gudi Khushu
R.S. Ticku & Nimi Ticku
Kuldeep Kaul & Sunita Kaul
Dhar's, P.N. Raina, Bamzai & Raina's
Mob.No: 9810908984, 9419241541



SH. VINOD KUMAR KOUL

10TH DAY

Our angel the soul of our family passed away in a tragic road accident to merge with eternity on 27-07-2023.

10th Day will be performed/held at our residence H.No. 301, Patoli Magotriar (Thathar) on Saturday 5th Aug. 2023.

GRIEF STRICKEN

- Devi Dass Verma - **Father-in-law**
Rakesh Kumar - **Husband**
Smarth & Agastya - **Loving Sons**
Vermas (Gagwal wale), Abrols (Dinga Amb wale) & Taggars (Samba wale)
9797458374, 9419235346



Bandhana Taggar (Bandhu)
26-08-1982 - 27-07-2023

TENTH DAY KRIYA/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform sad and untimely demise of **Sh. Sudesh Banotra** S/o Sh. Prem Nath Banotra on 29-7-2023.

10th Day Kriya will be performed at our residence H.No.5 VPO Bantalab Sec-1 Moh. Lakhnotran Jammu on 07-08-2023 at 10.30 am, followed by Bhog and Satsang.

GRIEF STRICKEN

- Smt. Sunita Rani - **Mother**
Smt Mansa Rani (Jr Manager HP) - **Wife**
Sh Suresh Banotra (Contractor) - **Brother**
Smt Sushma Rani - **Bhabi**
Er. Rajesh Banotra (Superintendent ITI, Rasooli) - **Brother**
Dr. Shakti Devi (Medical Officer, Katra) - **Bhabhi**
Sh. Bodh Raj (Cashier, J&K Bank) - **Brother-in-law**
Smt. Kamlesh Rani - **Sister**
Nephews/Nieces
Ragav, Ragni, Kaama, Nabbu, Piyush, Manik



Sh. Sudesh Banotra

OBITUARY

Dearest **Mohan Lal Pandita (Bhoba Sahab)**, your death on 31st July 2023 has created a void in our hearts - we cherish your blessings and sayings. We have lost an institution in you who was there to guide, help and correct us. Our hand folded namam for all the things you have done for us. We all pray for the eternal peace of your soul. **TENTH DAY** will be performed on 9th of August.

Deeply remembered by

- Smt. Sharika Pandita (Huangalund) - **Wife**
Brothers and Sister-in-Law
Lt. Sh. Roshan Lal Pandita H/o Smt. Jyoti Pandita
Sh. Shubhan Lal Pandita H/o Smt. Sudesh Pandita
Sister's and Brother's-in-Law
Lt. Smt. Sharika Raina
W/o Lt. Sh. Damodar Lal Raina (Banpora Akingham)
Smt. Sarika Koul W/o Sh. Bhanraj Bhushan Koul (D.H. Poras)
Smt. Sudesha Pandita W/o Bhanraj Pandita (Ramhall)
Smt. Sushma Mirza W/o Opendar Mirza (Karanagar)
Sons and Daughter-in-law
Pankaj Pandita & Shaily Pandita
Neeraj Pandita & Priyanka Pandita
Deeraj Pandita & Malvika Pandita
Avinash Pandita
Daughter's & Son's-in-law
Meenakshi Raina W/o Sanjeev Raina
Rachna Koul W/o Atul Koul
Sujata Pandita



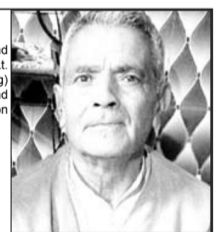
Mohan Lal Pandita (Bhoba Sahab)

OBITUARY

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **Sh. Omkar Nath Raina** S/o Lt. Sh. Sarwanand Raina originally resident of Sagan (Anantnag) presently H. No. 51 Lane No. 4(A) Laxmi Vihar Tolmal Anand Nagar Bohri. **The Tenth Day** will be performed at Muthi Ghat on 11.08.2023 at 09.00 hrs.

GRIEF STRICKEN

- Smt. Shama Ji (Wife)
Son and Daughter in law
Sh. Anil Raina and Anju Raina
Sh. Sunil Raina and Shikha Raina
Daughter and Son in law
Smt. Sunita Pandit and Sh. Ajay Pandit
Brother and Bhabi
Sh. Ratan Lal Raina and Babi Raina
Sh. M.K. Raina and Dina Raina
Sh. Raj Nath Raina and Sheela Raina
Sister and Sister in law
Smt. Kishori Pandita and Lt. P. N. Pandita
Smt. Phooli Pandita and Lt. Soom Nath Pandita
Smt. Jeta Koul and P. K. Koul
Smt. Sonu and Daleep Ji Pandit
Contact No:- 7889660819, 7006915172, 9149617112, 9149432822



Sh. Omkar Nath Raina

UTHALA

With Profound grief & Sorrow, We regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Om Parkash Suri** Ex. President BJP Srinagar Walle on 02/08/23.

Uthala will be performed at Hanuman Mandir near Digana Pully, Jammu on 5th August, 2023 (Saturday) from 3 to 4pm.

Grief Strickens:-

- Smt. Rani Suri - **Wife**
Son & Daughter in law:
Sh. Ashok Suri & Late Smt. Neelam Suri
Sh. Vinod Suri & Smt. Aruna Suri
Sh. Ravi Suri & Late Smt. Sheetal Suri
Sh. Raj Suri & Late Smt. Poonam Suri

Daughter & Son in law:
Smt. Ranjana Ghai & Sh. T.S. Ghai



Sh. Om Parkash Suri

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Cong protests against installation of Smart Meters, Property Tax

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 4: Congress today held a massive protest demonstration over the pre-paid smart meter system, unprecedented price rise, record unemployment and property tax, besides seeking restoration of statehood and political rights besides holding early assembly elections. There was a minor scuffle with the police when the later forcibly tried to prevent the march from proceeding towards Raj Bhawan.

A large number of congress workers including women carrying play cards and raising slogans denouncing the pre-paid electric meters system, property tax, unprecedented price rise, record unemployment, whole sale opening of wine shops in every nook and corner and other anti-poor steps of the Centre Govt. and the UT Administration.

Led by PCC President Vikar Rasool Wani along with Working President Shri Raman Bhalla and other senior leaders of PCC, Former Ministers, Legislators, Dist.



Presidents, Corporators, Leaders of Frontal Wings took out a massive protest march from Shaheed Chowk towards Raj Bhawan via residency Road where Police had a tough time to prevent the march from proceeding ahead.

The protest was organized by DCC Jammu Urban and Jammu Rural. The Protestors raised strong slogans against the BJP led Centre Govt. and the UT Administration for harassing the poor people who are already crushed under the unprecedented price rise of all essential commodities, large scale unemployment and tax terrorism of BJP Govt. The Congress workers

also strongly raised the demands of restoration of statehood on the eve of completion of four years of downgrading the state into UT, besides seeking restoration of rights for the protection of jobs and lands for local and holding of assembly election. Speaking to the reporters JKPCC President Shri Vikar Rasool Wani lashed out at the BJP for harassing the poor and common people by imposing huge taxes leading to unprecedented price rise, and introduction of prepaid smart meters besides record unemployment, imposition of property tax and various other such anti people actions. He said that the poor

people are unable to bear the huge taxes on all items including petrol and diesel and the poor people are finding it difficult to meet the both ends of life. He said the congress will strongly raise the voice of people and fight against the anti-poor and anti-people decisions of the BJP and UT administration.

Raman Bhalla said that the BJP Govt. is skinning the poor and common man through tax terrorism and there is record unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir. The anti-people decisions of Centre Govt. has snatched the livelihood of the people in J&K at the cost of outside mafia and locals are deprived

of small business and trade.

He sought restoration of statehood at the earliest and the holding of assembly elections without delay as people are strong against the bureaucratic resume which is far away from the common people.

Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Sharma while talking to media persons said that people are fed up with the anti-poor policies of the BJP Govt. and the huge tax terrorism unleashed on the common people and the unemployed youths and demanded immediate holding of assembly elections and restoration of statehood.

Prominent others include Th. Balwan Singh (Ex-MLA), Yogesh Sawhney (Ex-Minister), Treasurer Rajnish Sharma, T.S. Bajwa (Ex-MP), Ved Mahajan (Ex-MLC), Gurbachan Kumar Rana (Ex-Minister), Indu Pawar (Ex-MLA), Krishan Bhagat (Ex-MLA), Ashok Dogra (Ex-MLA), Vinod Sharma, Th. Manmohan Singh, Hari Singh Chib, M.K Bhardwaj, Dwarka Choudhary, Shiv Kumar Sharma, Pawan Raina

, Shashi Sharma, Kapil Singh, Pranav Shagotra, Narinder Gupta, Sanjeev Panda, Gurmeet Singh, Parveen Sarwar Khan, Thomas Khokhar, Manjeet Singh Jatt, Ashwani Puri, Amrit Bali, H.S. Mehta, Satish Sharma, Narinder Sharma, Karan Bhagat, Suresh Dogra, Bhushan Dogra, Sandeep Dogra, Bilal Ahmed, Rajinder Singh Nathu, Rajvir Singh, Ajay Lakhota, Kamal Singh, Ritu Choudhary, Bhanu Mahajan, Rajinder Singh Jamwal, Satish Sharma, Bhupinder Singh, Ajaib Motin, Vijay Shastri, Jatinder Raina, C.L. Manyal, Mohan Choudhary, M.Y. Lone, Badri Sarpanch, Gurmeet Singh, Parshotam Mehra, Camres David Babloo, Michael Wazir, Dr. R.K. Khajuria, Virinder Manhas, Balbir Singh, Pawan Dev Singh, Ram Magotra, Dewan Chand, Kewal Jogi, Rajesh Paul, Jatin Vashisht, Chander Shekar, Atul Sharma, Ricky Dalotra, Hoshiar Singh, Anoop Gupta, Balbir Singh, Tirath Ram Bhagat, Munish Sharma, Mangat Ram, Deepu Singh Nassir Masih Om Parkash and others.

Army conducts career counseling for girls

TOP NEWS REPORT

RAJOURI, Aug 4: To motivate and guide the girls of the region, Indian Army conducted a Career Counseling Session at Government Girls High School, Kalkote, District Rajouri (J&K). The talk informed them about various employment avenues and welfare schemes such as National Education Policy & National Programme for education of girls at elementary level, Army entry through NDA, Agnipathi etc. The talk was aimed

at actively pursuing measures towards welfare of the populace. Women empowerment was also discussed and various schemes to impart skills to women so as to make them self-reliant were discussed. The students were also encouraged to participate in the coaching and training being imparted by the Indian Army Units at different locations in the region. The attendees appreciated the initiative undertaken by the Indian Army to motivate and guide them towards a brighter future.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice

The Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, Firozpur Division invites applications for allotment of halt contract for sale of tickets for the following stations:-

1	Name of work	Allotment of Halt contract at Jamsheer Khas, Sham Chaurasi, Khatkar Kalan Jhanda Ji, Jainon Doaba, Garshankar, Malupota, Salla Khurd, Dudwidi, Gama Sahib, Chakdoyala, Sindhar, Butewala & Hiller Shahabad Halt Stations over Firozpur Division.
2	Tenure of contract	5 (five) years.
3	Last date & time of submission and opening of applications	On 05.09.2023 Up to 15:00hrs. (Applications will be opened on 05.09.2023 and in case the day on which the applications are to be opened is a holiday, the same will be opened at the same time on next working day).
4	Address of the office & date from which application forms will be available	Office of Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, Firozpur. Date 03.08.2023 to 05.09.2023
5	Northern Railway's website	Applications can also be downloaded from Northern Railway's official website www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in

The notice for inviting application forms and other related information is also available on the official website of Northern Railway www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in 2395/2023

Serving Customers with a Smile

Bar protest against lodging of FIR against Samba Bar Association members

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 4: The J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu led by its President Vikram Sharma, Sr. Advocate held a massive demonstration in protest against the lodging of FIR against the members of Samba Bar Association.

It may be recalled that the Samba Bar Association has been on protest against the high headedness exhibited by SDM Ghagwal holding the charge of Sub Registrar Ghagwal.

The President of J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu strongly asserted that instead of redressing the genuine grievances of members of Samba Bar Association, the lodging of FIR against them is itself reflective of sheer arrogance of the officer concern. It was stated that Advocates have an onerous responsibility of pursuing cause of justice and for seeking the upholding of law and therefore their valuable assistance cannot be snubbed by implicat-

ing them in false FIRs. It was unfortunate that even female Advocates have been implicated in the FIR.

Sharma lamented that by lodging the FIR against the Advocates, the said officer is only adopting and instigating the confrontation which is not a healthy sign for the overall working, growth and delivery system of the institution.

He urged the Government to implement the Govt. Order no. 117 (Rev) of 2019 dated 24-10-2019 by which a separate and independent registering department for the purposes of Registration Act, has been sanctioned. The executive officers with whom the power of Registration has been vested as of now, it is admitted, are busy in their other administrative meetings / schedules, thus making the public and the Advocates to wait endlessly for registration of the documents. Establishment of separate and independent registering department shall, therefore, work as a lasting

solution to the grievances of general public and advocates.

While expressing the unstinted solidarity with their colleagues of Samba Bar Association, Sharma exhorted the fraternity to strive for ensuring that the dignity of the advocates, the legal profession and the institution is not trampled upon by anyone, not the least by high headed SDM.

Vikram Sharma, Senior Advocate & President J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu thanked the Bar Association of Reasi, Udhampur, Katra, Akhnour, Bishnah, Kathua, Hiranagar and other Bar Associations, for their prompt support to the cause of lawyers fraternity.

The other members joining the protest included Amit Gupta (Vice-President), Parvesh Singh Salaria (General Secretary), Chetan Misri (Joint Secretary), Utkarsh Pathania (Treasurer) and Rohit Sharma (President, Young Lawyer Association), Gagandeep Singh

Lucky (Vice President) YLA, Yaseer Farooq Khan (General Secretary YLA), Karanjeet Singh Johal (Joint Secretary YLA), Naresh Kumar (Treasurer) the other who spoke in the Protest demonstration S./ Sh. Babu Ram Sharma, Harbans Singh, Monish Chopra, Jasbir Singh Jasrotia, Umesh Sharma, Raghubir Singh Sandyal, Kamal Kishore, Narinder Sharma, Ghara Kumar, Daljeet Singh Manhas, Mandeep Singh, Manpreet Singh, Matloob Saleem Qureshi, Rohit Bhagat, Vikram Aditya Singh Jamwal, Ajay Sharma, Azhar Usman Khan, Rajinder Singh Thakur, Bhanu Partap Singh Rakwal, Zamir Muslim Qureshi, Leena Devi, Preeti Charak, Surinder Jamwal, Atul Raina, Bhavishya Sudan, Atul Sharma, Tara Chib, Parvesh Thakur, Manjeet Singh Sarkaria, Nischal Sharma, Raja Ramanee, Sachin Dev Singh, Ranjodh Singh, Manav Sharma, Amit Manhas, Akhil Tandon and many others.

Director Education pitches for strong ECCE leadership among Education Officers

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 4: Director School Education Jammu Ashok Sharma Pitched for strong leadership among Education Officers, Particularly CEOs ZEOs and HOIs, for effective implementation of early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) as envisioned in National Education Policy 2020. He was speaking after inaugurating a one-day ECCE leadership workshop with Education Functionaries organised in Collaboration with the Directorate of Samagra Shiksha J&K, Directorate of



quality Samagra, Sh. N P Singh, Head ECCE SCERT; Sayeed Fayaz, Assistant Coordinator Quality Samagra, Ms. Jaswinder Kour, Coordinator Pre-primary; Dr. Sarita Sharma, Assistant Coordinator Pre-Primary and Mr Sunny Kumar Programme Manager National Development Foundation, acted as resource persons and interacted with the participants and also addressed their queries. Jagdeep Padha AO Samagra In his address

apprised about various initiatives of Samagra Shiksha with a special focus on ECCE. He also highlighted the Outcomes of Three years of NEP. CEO Jammu Mr Suraj Singh Rathore lauded the role of the National Development Foundation and called upon the participants to share the learnings of this workshop with fellow Colleagues and implement in their schools. Rajiv Kumar Khajuria, President National Development Founda-

tion, termed Early Childhood care and education as the basic Right of Children, without which the Right to free and compulsory Education Cannot be effectively realised. He said that coming up with the NEP 2020 Govt of India has clarified ECCE as the fundamental right of Indian Children.

Director Education Ashok Sharma, in his address while pitching for the ECCE leadership among education officers, called upon for

the coordinated efforts and joint working of Anganwari centres and kindergartens of the school education department. He informed that Govt. is opening 100 Kindergartens in each district this year. Many are already working and delivering good results, added the director. He called upon the teaching community to dedicatedly work to make govt schools premier institutions of learning. He said that those who are doing good work and teaching will be rewarded, but those whose results are not good and rare not taking their work seriously will be dealt with strongly. He appreciated the role of the National development foundation in organising the children and youth for National character building. He assured full support of the School Education department for the positive work NDF is doing in the best interest of the Children.

JALSHAKTI DEPARTMENT, JAMMU

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) CITY DIVISION NO-1, JAMMU

0191-2543654 (Fax) E-Mail:-xenphcity1@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

E-NIT No. JS/PHECD-1/ 69 of 2023-24
Fresh of E-NIT No. JS/PHECD-1/ 59 of 2023-24

For and on behalf of The Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Jammu, of J&K Union Territory, E-Tender (Item Rate Based) is invited by the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) City Division No-1, Jammu, from approved and eligible contractor of appropriate class registered with UT of Jammu and Kashmir/ other UT's or State Govt./CPWD/MES registered firms/contractors under two cover system, Cover 1 comprising of technical bid and cover 2 comprising of financial bid for the following work:-

S. No.	Name of work	Cost of Tender (In Rs.)	Cost of Tender document Fees (In Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit	Class of Contractor	Time of Completion
1	Improvement of water supply from main road to the house of Sardari Lal at toph in ward no.39 under UT Capex (financial assistance of JMC).	Rs.3.11 laes	Rs.200	Rs.6220/-	A to D	45 days
2	Improvement of the distribution system by way of laying of new distribution line in Ashram mohalla enclave B in ward no.64 under UT Capex (financial assistance of JMC).	Rs.2.26 laes	Rs.200	Rs.4520/-	A to D	45 days
3	Improvement of water supply at Gurha Brahmana Bantlab in Ward no.65. under UT Capex (Financial Assistant to JMC)	Rs.5.15 laes	Rs.500	Rs.10300/-	A to D	60 days

Position of funds : Partially Available
Position of Ts: Accorded
Position of AAA: Accorded

- Date of publishing:-01-08-2023 (1800Hrs)
- Bid documents can be seen and downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in from 01-08-2023 (1800Hrs) onwards.
- The bids shall be uploaded on the website www.jktenders.gov.in from 01-08-2023 (1800Hrs) to 10-08-2023 upto (1200Hrs).
- The complete bidding process shall be online.
- The technical bids received shall be opened online on 10-08-2023 after (1200Hrs), or any other convenient later date in the office of The Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) City Division No-1, Jammu.
- Furnishing of hard copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders has been dispensed with as per Govt. order no. OM No. A/24 (2017)-651 Dated 07-06-2018. The same shall be obtained only from the bidder, who is declared as L1 after opening of financial bids.
- A copy of CDR/FDR duly pledged to the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) City Division No-1 Jammu, against the earnest money deposit, should be uploaded by the bidders. However before allotting the work, the original CDR shall be obtained from the bidder declared as lowest bidder and shall be kept in record till the allotment process is finalized. The earnest money shall be released on receipt of the performance security or CDR/FDR against the EMD can be retained after accepting the balance amount in the shape of CDR/FDR to meet the requirement of the amount of the Performance security. **The CDR / FDR used for one tender shall not be entertained for other tender; which are under the process of tendering and the validity of such CDR / FDR shall remain till the outcome of such tender only. The CDR / FDR used for one tender shall have to be released from the Divisional Office before using for another tender.**
- The Lowest Bidder shall be intimated through e-mail on his registered e-mail ID to deposit the performance Security equivalent to the 5% of the allotted amount.
- Cost of bidding/tender fees receipt in the shape of e-challan/ single window challan of JMC shall have to be deposited online, through the JMC link <http://www.jmcjammu.org/online-payment.html> and no cash shall be entertained at any cost. Further, bidders are requested to mention name of the work upon the particular Challan/e-receipt. Under no avoidable circumstances the work is to be tendered. The contractor need not to deposit the tender document Cost for rebidding for the same work.
- Any such Challan deposited on back dates or any irrelevant date shall not be accepted.
- The Successful bidder shall be liable to deposit the performance security as envisioned in the GFR 2017.
- The financial bids of the qualifying bidders shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) City Division No-1, Jammu on same date of opening of technical bid or any other convenient date.
- The bid for the work shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of bids.
- The opening authority reserves with him the right to accept/reject/cancel, any or all tenders without assigning any reasons thereof.
- The successful bidder shall be responsible for providing all safety measures at site during execution of work.
- The quoted rates should be inclusive of all taxes. The department will deduct income tax/labour Cess/GST/ or any other tax as applicable during payment at prevalent rates.
- The Contractor shall approach the Department for getting the "Nishandehi" of the work within seven days from the date of allotment.
- If the contractor fails to start the work within 07 days of its allotment, work shall be treated as cancelled without serving any notice to the contractor /firm and the work shall be offered to 2nd lowest bidder at the rate offered by 1st lowest bidder.
- The delay in completion of the works shall attract penalty aggregating to 10% of the cost of such works and shall be reckoned per month, with recommended percentage of Engineer-in-Charge. If the work remains unattended in the completion period, the contractor shall be recommended for his black listing.
- In case the billed amount increases the allotted amount due to increase in the advertised quantity or addition of non-advertised items during execution, the same shall be paid on the allotted rates after revising the cost of the work/Scheme and getting revised AAA accorded and technically sanctioned from the competent authority.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) City Division No-1
Jammu

No: PHECD-1/3525-3530
Dated:-01-08-2023

DIP/J-6227/23

EDITORIAL

RAINY SEASON

The earth was heating up, the sun was spewing fire. All the trees and plants were drying up. Birds and animals were helpless without water. Everyone was excitedly waiting for the monsoon. Then surprisingly the weather changed. The sky was covered with clouds, it started raining moderately with strong wind and thunder. The sweet fragrance of the soil started filling the breath. New life has come in the trees and plants.

Rainy season is lovely season for all of us. Generally: It comes in the month of July and goes in the month of September. It comes after the intense summer season. It brings a hope and life to every living being on the earth which gets destroyed due to the heat of the sun. It gives great relief to the people because of its natural and cool rain water. The rivers and ponds which dry up due to the heat, get filled again with rain water, giving new life to the aquatics. It gives back their greenery to the gardens and grounds. Rain gives a new beauty to our environment, although it is a pity that it lasts only for three months.

Apart from the common life, the rainy season is of utmost importance for the farmers because there is a great need of water for agriculture so that there is no shortage of water for the crops. Generally: Farmers keep many pits and ponds so that they can use rain water at the time of need. In fact, the rainy season is a boon given by God to the farmers. When there is no rain, he prays to Indraraj Dev for rain and finally: he gets the blessings of rain. The sky is cloudy because black, white and brown clouds keep moving here and there in the sky. The moving clouds carry water with them and when the monsoon comes, it rains.

The beauty of the environment increases with the arrival of the rainy season. I love greenery. I usually go out with my family to enjoy the rainy season. Last year I went to Nainital and it was a great experience. Several watery clouds fell on our bodies in the car and some went out the window. The rain was falling very slowly and we all were enjoying it. We also enjoyed boating in Nainital. Nainital full of greenery looked amazing.

Too much rain does not always bring happiness, sometimes it also becomes the cause of deluge. In many places, due to excessive rains, villages get submerged and there is loss of people's wealth. Due to excessive rains, the fields get submerged, the crops are also destroyed and the farmers also suffer a lot.

Look within, hate now spreading like wildfire

By: Parsa Venkateshwar Rao Jr

The beginnings of the violence seem to follow a classic pattern -- a provocative procession by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad/Bajrang Dal through Nuh, a Muslim-majority area in Haryana's Mewat region, the reaction of the Muslim crowd, and the retaliation of the Bajrang Dal workers against Muslims. The violence spreads out of Nuh, into Sona, Palwal and Gurgaon. Two home guards die, 70 people are injured, including some policemen, a mosque is torched and a naib imam, or deputy imam, is killed. That the violence has spread is not surprising. Haryana's BJP government seems to have been caught off guard because it thought that the VHP/Bajrang Dal procession with its provocative intent would pass off peacefully.

There are many underlying assumptions behind the state government's complacent attitude. One of them is that the Muslims would lie low in the face of provocation in an area where the poorest Muslims with high crime rates live. And it was easy for the Bajrang Dal to retaliate, and target Muslim shops beyond Nuh. The state government refused to take into account that there are communally-sensitive areas and there was a need for additional forces to be in place. More important than the breakdown of law and order, which it would take days and weeks to bring back to normalcy, is the intent of the Hindutva groups to unfurl provocative politics.

The BJP's dilemma is quite acute. On the one hand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asks the party leg-

islators to go to Muslim homes and get a rakhi tied by Muslim women to mark the Rakshabandhan festival, and on the other hand the VHP and the Bajrang Dal are out on the streets to provoke the Muslims. Once the provocation is triggered and the cycle of violence begins, the provocateurs argue that the violence was triggered by the other side. So, some of the media are focusing on why Haryana's Nuh is the bad place it is, and how dangerous the presence of Tabligh-e-Jamaat working on the ground is, and how illegal Rohingyas are finding shelter in the place. The VHP and Bajrang Dal get off the hook. The reports have not mentioned what was the reason that the VHP/Bajrang Dal procession had to go through Nuh, and what were the slogans that the processionists were using. The reason for the attack on the processionists is being attributed to a false video on a social media platform that Monu Manesar, the person responsible for the lynching of two Muslim youth on suspicion of trading in cows, was going to be present at the procession. In a well-managed situation, the police would have kept both sides on the leash, as it were, but there were no police at hand. It has become a costly miscalculation for the state government.

The anti-Muslim animus of the BJP and its Hindutva ideology affiliates is quite out in the open though it turns out to be an embarrassment for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has been playing down the right-wing elements of his party's ideology in the run-up to the G-20 summit in the first week of September, and he doesn't want untoward incidents

like the ones in Manipur and in Haryana, both involving the minority communities, Christian Kukis in Manipur and Muslims in Haryana. Mr Modi has been quite effective in his manner of promoting Hindutva. He has been doing all the things that send out a signal that the glorious ancient culture and civilisation was Hindu, with barely a nod to the millennium of Muslim dominance in the country. He is sure that his two decisive victories in the parliamentary elections of 2014 and 2019 have pushed to the margins the concept of secularism, which is what the Congress and other Opposition parties are wedded to. He feels that he can push Hindutva ideology without falling back on a direct face-off with the Muslims and Christians. The VHP and Bajrang Dal have upset the Mr Modi's subtle Hindutva strategy of harping less on Muslims and Christians while implementing the majoritarian ideology.

Subtle or not-so-subtle, direct or indirect, Mr Modi remains a prisoner of Hindutva, and he and his colleagues know too well that their default position is Hindutva, and they owe their victory to Hindutva at the end of the day. Mr Modi can never go to the people on basis of his government's economic and political achievements. That is why, in his latest monthly radio chat, Mann Ki Baat, he talked about the developments made at the major temple towns of Somnath, Varanasi, Ayodhya and Ujjain, and how tourist footfalls have increased in these places, and they will soon attract foreign visitors as well. So, he has to fall back on what he did for popularisation of Hinduism

more than on how his foreign tours have turned India into one of the leading countries in the world.

Friends of the BJP and the supporters of Hindutva want the religious and ideological thrust to be a little slow because they feel that ultimately the victory would be achieved and there is no danger of secularism making a comeback. But the ideological platoons of Hindutva may not settle for such slow progress. They want to make it a loud and forceful affair. The victory has to be declared over the ruins of enemy bastions. A majority of Muslims are willing to make peace with the Hindutva forces, but there will be some pockets of rebellion, such as in Nuh. And Muslims will be made to pay the price.

Is the policy of subduing religious minorities the right thing to do in the long run? The talk of long term is dismissed as unrealistic. What is of importance is of here and now. So, the militancy of the majority community would continue in big and small ways. Railway Police Force constable Chetan Singh killing three Muslim passengers and his boss, a man from a different caste, on the Jaipur-Mumbai express is an example of how Hindu hate crimes will be committed, without hesitation and without apology. And everyone will be still looking for radical Islamic elements who are supposed to be creating trouble, when the real problem is right within the majority community.

Hindutva is turning into a way of nurturing hatred and violence in society, and it will spread like wildfire.

Need for the establishment of Mathematics University in India

By: Vijay Garg

There have always been fine intellectuals in India. Great mathematical scientists like Ramanujan and Arya Bhatt belonged to India. They have given India a different identity by researching mathematics. This topic has evolved greatly with time. But still many students are not interested in this topic. They describe this topic as being difficult, complicated, and boring. The main reason for this is ignorance of the math are students, parents and every person who comes in contact with students. Not only students but teachers too present this topic in difficult terms to the students. To motivate students to pursue Mathematics as a subject, it has become very important to give them knowledge of mathematical topics, its elements, math courses, jobs in

the field of mathematics, and employment opportunities. Therefore, it is necessary to celebrate mathematical week, math month, mathematical year for understanding the importance of mathematics and explaining its importance to students. There is a need for special focus on this subject. This is possible only if there are people with knowledge, place, organizations which focus solely on this subject. A mathematical university should be set up where intellectuals and experts related to Mathematical subjects, related mathematical materials, mathematical literature etc. are available and where ways to make mathematics easier, interesting can be found.

Large scale research related to mathematics is needed. This work is possible only and only in a mathematics university. There is a need to do something to bring about a change.

The demand for mathematics is very high today. Without it, every person, every state and every country is incomplete. There should be some books and experts, who make this topic easier. Children do not know what the real purpose of reading is, like algebra, trigonometry etc. But when they realise the actual situation, they get afraid. Then they say how easy it was in the 10th grade, simple and in their mother-tongue. But as soon as they are in Eleventh grade, students get disheartened due to new syllabus, new topics and foreign language and then lose. Only a few percent of the students succeed. This University may send these experts to schools and colleges and guide the students and teachers from time to time. This type of field should not be ignored. Rather, there should be every possible effort to main-

tain this glorious gift from intellectuals. Time always requires a change. Governments are heavily involved in this change. For example, Medical University, Technical University, Veterinary University, Agricultural University, Ayurvedic University, Homeopathic University have been established. Similarly, a mathematical university should also be established. The government should look into it completely. Central Government should take initiative for Mathematical University. If the state government takes initiative in this matter then with the help of the Central government, the first university of mathematics can be established in India.

(Vijay GarG Retired
Principal Educational
Columnist Malout
Punjab)

BLSKS presents musical play 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 4: In a spirited tribute to the "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" (Celebration of 75 Years of Independence), Bhartiya Lok Sangeet Kala Sansthan (BLSKS) presented a mesmerizing 369th Friday Series Musical Play titled "AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV." This event, aimed at promoting the rich and traditional Duggar Culture of Jammu & Kashmir, unfolded in partnership with Sangam Tru Art production during the period of quarantine. The spectacular showcase took place at Durga Bhawan, Disco More, Janipur, Jammu.

Distinguished personalities graced the inauguration ceremony, including Sh. J.K.Raina, a Freelance Producer and Director of films; V.K.Magotra, Former Regional Director of Directorate of Field Publicity, Government of India; and Dr. Tara Singh Charak, Former Deputy Director, J&K Health Department. The event



commenced with the resonating notes of the National Anthem, "Jan Gan Man," followed by captivating performances that showcased the essence of "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" through music, dance, and patriotic fervor.

The compositions, written and directed by Sh. M.L.Dogra, Former Assistant Director of Song and Drama Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, brilliantly captured the spirit of the occasion. The musical pieces were brought to life by the talented artists of BLSKS, with music composed by M.C Kotwal, the Music

Director of BLSKS.

The riveting performances, encompassing music, dance, and skits, left the audience and dignitaries deeply moved and appreciative. The chief guest commended the organizers for their exceptional efforts in creating an engaging and impactful awareness program. He underscored the significance of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, an initiative by the Government of India, in commemorating 75 years of India's progress, cultural heritage, and achievements. This celebration pays homage to the Indian populace, acknowledging their pivotal role in

India's journey and their potential to embody the spirit of an empowered India (Atmanirbhar Bharat).

In the digital realm, the thematic songs of the event were made accessible on social media platforms, extending the impact to a wider audience.

M.L.Dogra, Chairman of Bhartiya Lok Sangeet Kala Sansthan, in his welcome speech, echoed the sentiments of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, emphasizing that the festival should weave together the essence of both ancient and modern India. He envisioned the festival as a tapestry that showcases the wisdom

of ancient sages, the achievements of contemporary scientists, and the valor of unsung freedom fighters. Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, a series of events orchestrated by the Government of India, resonates as a "Jan Mahotsav," a people's festival, where citizens participate and shape the celebration themselves.

The event concluded with a collective pledge by renowned artists and students to combat social ills and nurture national unity. The musical concert featured captivating performances by acclaimed singers, musicians, and actors, including Usha Raina, M.C.Kotwal, Rajni Gupta, Raju Bajgal, Bindia Arora, Sunil Kumar, Rajeev Salotra, Chahat Chadha, Sanjeev Sodhi, Vandana Gupta, Naiya Digra, Renu Bala, and numerous others. The closing ceremony witnessed Master Deepak Kumar extending heartfelt gratitude for the successful execution of the program.

Congress celebrates SC verdict staying conviction of Rahul Gandhi

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 4 : Congress today celebrated the verdict of Supreme Court staying the conviction of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

As the news report on the stay on conviction was heard a large number of congress leaders and workers rushed to the party HQ Shaheedi Chowk Jammu where sweets were distributed amidst beating of drums. They raised slogans in favour of Rahul Gandhi and the Supreme Court.

JKPCC President Vikar Rasool Wani while speaking to the media persons outside party HQ welcomed the decision of the Supreme Court and said that truth has prevailed in the matter. Shri Rahul Gandhi will continue raising the

voice of the poor and the downtrodden like before and no body will be able to stop him.

Vikar Rasool said that Congress under the leadership of Shri Rahul Gandhi will defeat the BJP Govt and there shall be change in the 2024 election.

He was flanked by Working President Raman Bhalla, Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Sharma, Ex-MP T.S. Bajwa, Ex-MLC Ved Mahajan, Vinod Sharma, Narinder Gupta, Pawan Raina, Narinder Sharma, Sanjeev Panda, Kapil Singh, Rajvir Singh, Dr. R.K. Khajuria, Balbir Singh Sarpanch, Jatinder Raina, Atul Sharma, Dewan Chand, Gurmeet Singh, Aijaz Choudhary, Nassir Masih, Om Parkash Sharma, Parshotam Mehra and others.

CUJ organizes National Seminar on Bharat Centric Research: Opportunities and Challenges



TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 4: Department of Educational Studies, Central University of Jammu organizes "Two-Day Seminar on Bharat-Centric Research: "Opportunities and Challenges" with an objective to have a worthwhile knowledge and understanding about various opportunities in research with specific reference to Bharat Centric context.

Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Vice Chancellor, Central University of Jammu has provided oversight and assistance for the entire workshop. He recommended the organizers to maintain this spirit of doing research-based events, focusing on Bharat-Centered Research. Further, he called upon all the participants to apply all the knowledge and understanding for doing the research in Bharat based circumstances and context. The inaugural session of the workshop is graced by Prof. Saroj Sharma, Chairperson, NIOS, New Delhi, Prof. Chand Kiran Saluja, Director-Academics, Samskrit Promotion foundation New Delhi, Prof. Girish Nath Jha, Chairman,

Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminiology, MoE, GoI, New Delhi; School of Sanskrit and Indic Studies, JNU, New Delhi, Prof. Vishal Sood, Professor, Dept. of Education, Central University of HP and Dr. J.N. Baliya, Head Department of Educational Studies, Central University of Jammu.

Prof. Saroj Sharma in her keynote address focuses on the fact that ancient Bharat had a very rich civilization which includes 18 Vidyas and 64 Kalayan, Chath Darshan and many more. She further stressed that there is a vast diversity of areas where research can be done in context to Bharat-Centric Research which includes Bhartiya Architect, Physics, Chemistry, Shilpa Kala, Natya Kala etc. Furthermore, she urged in her address that there is a need to integrate sciences with the social sciences and concludes by saying that there should be emphasis on researchers in Bhartiya Gyan and Vigyan.

Prof. Girish Nath Jha in his special guest remarks said that education should be imparted in one's own language

which is also beautifully described in NEP. He further exclaimed that this is only possible if the content designing and content creation to be done in native languages along with technology development. Prof. Jha also stressed upon the promotion of Indian languages in education. While addressing, he throws light on the integration of Indian education with the recent advancement in technology like artificial intelligence and machine learning.

Prof. Chand Kiran Saluja in his inspiring and motivational deliberation urged teachers to teach the curriculum and content of the subject with real-life activities and practices. He also said that each and every thing of life is in the form of a text book so we need to connect the things through our pedagogical practices. Earlier to this, Dr. J.N. Baliya, Head Department of Educational Studies, CUJ formally welcomed the keynote speakers in the inaugural session. He also thanked and appreciated all the participants and resource persons to make this seminar more successful.

Dimple protests against Govt orders on Property Tax & Prepaid Meters

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 4: Sunil Dimple, President of Mission Statehood, spearheaded a robust protest rally joined by a multitude of individuals, vehemently opposing the recent government directives in Jammu and Kashmir. The protestors, in a display of defiance, symbolically burned copies of the notifications concerning property tax returns scheduled for August, as well as the notifications related to prepaid metering.

Addressing the gathered protestors, Sunil Dimple called for the immediate cessation of the government's orders mandating property tax returns for the month of August and the activation of prepaid metering. Dimple contended that both property taxes



and prepaid metering are outcomes and dividends of the abrogation of Article 370 and 35-A.

Dimple accused the BJP-led government of exploiting the aftermath of Article 370's abrogation by imposing burdensome taxes, such as house and property taxes, and initiating

the recharge of smart metering across Jammu and Kashmir cities.

Highlighting the government's actions, Dimple disclosed that the J&K government has issued directives for the filing of returns and mandated the JMC (Jammu Municipal Corporation) to initiate surveys and

measurements of residential properties for the imposition of house and property taxes. These actions are slated to take place in the month of August 2023.

Dimple issued a stern warning of an impending massive agitation against the prepaid metering system, under-

scoring the hardships it could impose on daily wage earners who struggle to afford daily necessities, let alone recharge their electricity connections.

Among his demands, Dimple urged Prime Minister Modi to provide free electricity of up to 500 units per month to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and requested the return of power projects to the region. Additionally, he implored LG Manoj Sinha to waive off past electricity bills.

Prominent figures participating in the protest included Mohan Lal, Swarn Lal, Lahori Shaha, Arun Verma, Sham Sharma, Vijay Virdi, S. Kala Singh, Babu Singh, Tilak Raj, Sunil Kumar, Deepak Kumar, Vikas, Sachin, and many others.

Awareness programme held at Anganwadi Centre Bhaboore Ghat

TOP NEWS REPORT

DODA, Aug 4: As a part of the celebration of World Breastfeeding Week to be celebrated from 1-7 August to encourage breastfeeding and improve babies health around the world, an awareness programme was organized by BMO Ghat at Anganwadi Centre Bhaboore in Medical Block Ghat on Friday.

The programme was held under the supervision of Chief Medical Officer Doda Dr Ab Hamid Zargar and guidance of BMO Ghat Dr Ab Gafoor Ahmed, which aims to promote and start breastfeeding in all babies within one hour after birth irrespective of mode of delivery.

While speaking on the occasion, BMO Ghat Dr Gafoor said that World Breastfeeding Week is celebrated globally to



encourage breastfeeding and improve the health of babies. He also said that it is one of the most effective and impactful interventions to decrease under five mortality and morbidity.

Further, BMO said that breastfeeding has tremendous advantages for mothers as it burns extra calories and helps in losing weight gained during pregnancy and also lowers the risk of breast and ovarian cancer.

The experts sensi-

tized the participants and focused on special nutritional care during pregnancy, the need of lactation, importance of breast milk, importance of colostrums, about the nutritional care, importance of hygiene and sanitation, importance of balanced diet, prevention of anaemia etc.

Similar programmes were also held in other parts of the District as a part of week-long celebration.

The programme was attended by Sr Assis-

tant Zahid Sharief Wani, Sh Mashhood Latif (BMEO), Sh Rehmatullah Wani (Sr Phst), Ms Rani Devi (MLHP), Local ASHAs besides pregnant womens, lactating mothers of the area.

Meanwhile, awareness on Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 5.0 was also given among the participants which shall commence in the district from 7th August 2023, to cover the left out childrens and pregnant womens.

HDFC Bank inaugurates over 100 Banking Correspondent Centers across India

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 4: HDFC Bank, India's leading bank, announced the inauguration of more than 100 Banking Correspondent Centres (BCC) in Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Bihar, Assam, Telangana, Odisha, and across many other states in India. These centres will function as a mini branch, with Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) assisting customers to avail banking products digitally. The VLEs, who are existing micro-entrepreneurs and are delivering Government-to-Consumer (G2C) services, now will additionally provide banking products and services to deeper geographies of the country. With access to a wide range of banking products, the BCs can now tap into a new revenue stream.

This transformative opportunity opens doors to sustainable growth, further strengthening their role as key drivers to unlock financial inclusion. The launch is aimed to provide a seamless banking experience to SURU customers to help fulfill their unmet financial needs. These centres will raise awareness of HDFC Bank products at the grass-root level and promote

customer interest.

They will offer a wide portfolio of banking services, including account opening with biometric, FD/RD, AePS enabled cash deposit & withdrawals, loans, social security schemes and even EMI Collection facility. All HDFC Bank products and services will be seamlessly integrated into CSC's Digital Sewa Portal, providing BCs with a comprehensive suite of banking products at their fingertips.

Smita Bhagat, Group Head, Government and Institutional Business, Alternate Banking Channels and Partnerships, Inclusive Banking Group and Start-Ups, HDFC Bank said, "We are delighted to inaugurate Business Correspondent Centres in over 100 pin codes across the country. These centres will offer a wide range of banking products and services digitally across India's towns and villages. This launch is another example of HDFC Bank's unwavering commitment towards financial inclusion".

Sanjay Rakesh, Managing Director, CSC e-Gov, said, "We are pleased to announce an empowering initiative aimed at furthering financial inclusion and enhancing

the capabilities of our performing Business Facilitators (BFs). The decision to extend this opportunity comes as a testament to the invaluable contribution made by our performing BFs in enabling seamless financial services delivery to underserved communities across the nation".

HDFC Bank spearheaded this phydigital inauguration along with CSE e-Gov. Harish Oberoi, Vice President, CSC e-Gov, Satyen Modi, Business Head-CSC, HDFC Bank, and Vimal Tripathi, Head-BC Management, HDFC Bank were present at the inauguration. The local dignitaries, community members and neighbourhood customers joined the ceremony on-ground at these BC Centres.

HDFC Bank has always been at the forefront of providing superior banking services to its customers. Its extensive network stood at 14,743 BC centres, 7860 branches, 20,352 ATMs nationwide as on June 30, 2023. The introduction of the Business Correspondent Centres reinforces the bank's commitment to expanding its reach and catering to the diverse banking needs of an ever-growing customer base in the rural markets.

In Chandigarh, the young cast of Udaariyaan, Alisha Parveen, Anuraj Chahal and Aditi Bhagat, share how despite the pressure of filling into the shoes of their predecessors after a 20-year leap in the

For Indian daily soaps, time leaps are an indicator of success and the first pan-India show to be entirely shot in Punjab, Udaariyaan, is set for a 20-year leap!

Once part of television industry, Ravie Dubey and Sargun Mehta, may have found bigger platforms to showcase their acting skills, but as they turned producers with Udaariyaan, not only did they create a successful show, but also continue to give opportunities to fresh faces. The three new actors — Alisha Parveen, Anuraj Chahal and Aditi Bhagat — in Chandigarh on Thursday, admit that it's a big challenge to fill the shoes of their predecessors.

Aditi Bhagat, who was also part of the previous audition rounds of Udaariyaan, explains, "I was like no matter the role, I am not leaving until I get a break. Thankfully, I got the role of Aasmaa Dhillon. I am in love with my character. Most importantly, I feel blessed that Ravi and Sargun saw the potential in me. They are so humble and down-to-earth."

Three states



While Aditi is from Bihar and looking forward to working in Punjab, another co-star Alisha Parveen, is happy to find work closer to her home in Delhi. Born in West Bengal, Alisha says, "I have been brought up in New Delhi and due to my work location being Mumbai, it has been tough to find time for family. But with this project, it would be easier to commute to Delhi on off days." Alisha will be seen portraying the role of Alia Randhawa and is looking forward to brushing up her Punjabi.

Opposite these two heroines is Punjabi gabru Anuraj Chahal

from Ferozepur. Anuraj has worked in Punjabi music videos and the film Mcooca. In Udaariyaan, he will portray the character of Armaan Gill. Anuraj says, "That I know Punjabi will work in my favour. At the same time getting a break in a pan-India show on a reputed channel like Colors is no less than a dream. Of course, keeping the viewers hooked while we take the story further is a challenge, but as an artiste I am prepared to take it head on."

Aditi has already explored the tricity. "I have tried chur chur kulcha, seen mini Eiffel Tower

(Leisure Valley) and explored the gedi route in Chandigarh," she says. Aditi has also binge-watched previous episodes to get a fair idea of Udaariyaan's USP. "While Alia (Alisha) and Aasmaa (Aditi) are connected to the earlier characters, I have no strings attached. So in a way, I get to explore the psychology of a Punjabi guy who very well knows how jugaad can work in any situation. Luckily, having lived in Punjab and Chandigarh all my life, it's something that I am aware of and sure can bring it on to the screen."

Know the Producers' verdict Producers Ravie Dubey and Sargun Mehta, Dreamiyata Entertainment, say, "The success of Udaariyaan has been an incredible journey, and we owe it all to the unwavering love and support of our loyal audience. Taking the legacy of the show ahead, we are all set to bring to viewers the third generation of Udaariyaan. As we continue the shoot in Mohali, Punjab, we look forward to captivating our audience once again with enthralling storytelling and moments that tug at the heartstrings."

Shraddha Kapoor walks the ramp in lehenga designed by Rahul Mishra



Actress Shraddha Kapoor made a magical appearance in ace designer Rahul Mishra's ensemble on the last

day of India Couture Week 2023.

The Stree star walked the ramp in a shimmering silver lehenga. Her stun-

ning outfit was teamed with a cute blouse and a cape. She definitely set bridal goals with her outfit, which was a part of Rahul Mishra's collection We, The People.

With the collection, Mishra paid a tribute to all the karigars out there. Shraddha shared, "For me to be wearing this piece makes it so much more special because this is a testament to that craft that has existed... So, I would say that I'm feeling most fashionable right now because I am a representation of the artisans. And for me to be that is a very proud moment."

Meanwhile, on the film front, Shraddha will be seen in Stree 2, which will also star Rajkumar Rao and Aparshakti Khurana. The film recently went on the floors.

Jigyasa talks about her audio show, Majburi Mein Bandha Ek Rishta

Jigyasa is a 22-year-old who discovered her passion for writing during the challenging days of the lockdown. Hailing from Katihar in Bihar, Jigyasa balanced her studies with her love for writing, particularly for the audio series, Majburi Mein Bandha Ek Rishta.

Talking about the same, Jigyasa says, "During the depths of the lockdown, I discovered a glimmer of hope and a path to my dreams."

Pocket FM became my sanctuary, where my words found wings. Majburi Mein Bandha Ek Rishta is a heartfelt tale of emotions and



resilience, narrated through the canvas of audio. I'm grateful for the blessings."

First look of Mithun Chakraborty as Kabuliwala unveiled

Jio Studios and SVF Entertainment released the first look of the Bengali film Kabuliwala, based on a story penned by the legendary Rabindranath Tagore.

Mithun Chakraborty will play the role of Rahmat in Tagore's masterpiece. This production is helmed by SVF Entertainment and produced by Jyoti Deshpande, Shrikant Mohta, and Mahendra Soni. Kabuliwala is the story of a middle-aged Afghan man whose heart overflows with fatherly love for a little girl, Mini, in the bustling city of Kolkata, set in the year 1965. The film captures the period



that encapsulates the essence of heartwarming connections and the deep significance of love that knows no boundaries, transcending both borders and cultures.

Speaking about his role as Rahmat, Chakraborty says, "Regarding my portrayal of Rahmat in Kabuliwala, I anticipate a deeply emotional journey. The character's unwavering affection and strong bond with Mini evoke profound nostalgia and resonate with audiences universally."

Director Suman Ghosh says, "Drawing inspiration from Tagore's immortal opus, Kabu-

liwala, our film pays homage to the 1957 Bengali adaptation, which captivated the hearts of cinephiles through the unforgettable portrayal of the protagonist by the esteemed Bengali actor, Chhabi Biswas. Our cinematic endeavour shall gracefully encapsulate the essence of love and yearning as Rahmat discovers solace in the innocence of the young girl, evoking tender memories of his own child, whom he had parted from in his homeland."

Kabuliwala is scheduled to commence on August 1 and is set to release on Christmas this year.

Bhumi Pednekar says, 'my work will immortalize me'



Actor Bhumi Pednekar has made a mark for herself in Bollywood through her determination and commitment that set her apart.

Bhumi's passion for acting undoubtedly runs deep and she wants her work to make her immortal in the annals of acting.

Talking about her love for her work and acting, Bhumi said, "I'm a workaholic and I'm in love with the fact that I am an actor spending

every second of my life trying to create something that will stay on forever. Acting is a special profession and one that cannot be taken lightly. Whenever I set foot on a film's set, I am filled with gratitude that my work will immortalize me in some way. So, I give my 200 per cent in any project that I do."

Time and again, Bhumi has proven her mettle with awe-inspiring performances that have left both critics and audi-

ences spellbound. With every role, she delves deep into the essence of her characters, bringing authenticity and sincerity to her portrayals."

Bhumi added, "I feel I'm responsible to leave a mark through my movies because films are a part of our cultural legacy. What we create now, will be remembered and be dissected in the years to come just as films from before stand the test of time or are questioned now for what they tried to say. Art is almost immortal."

Bhumi has been gathering appreciation ever since her debut in 'Dum Laga Ke Haisha' and has emerged as an artist who has carved a niche for herself. "I have always wanted to be a female actor who had a cultural impact through my films and the kind of roles that I played. So, I have and I will always pick projects that inspire me to deliver my best. I'm very well aware that I'm creating a legacy for myself through my work and I want to be proud of the work that I do on screen."

Bhumi was recently seen in Sudhir Mishra's film 'Afwaah', which also starred Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Sharib Hashmi and Sumeet Vyas. She will now be seen in 'The Lady Killer'.

Saiyami Kher trained with cricketer Murali Karthik to prepare for her role in Ghoomer



Saiyami Kher, who plays the role of a cricket prodigy in her upcoming movie Ghoomer, has been taking training to make herself physically fit for the role. And to get the cricket part of it correct, she trained with former cricketer Murali Karthik.

Saiyami says, "I have been obsessed with cricket and have played the game since school. I used to try playing the sport with both my hands, but the dominant one was my right hand. But in Ghoomer, the challenge was to train and become a left-hander. It was very kind of Karthik sir to step in, help me with my action, and give me those key points that make the difference. I always loved his classic, orthodox action as a kid. So it was so much fun training with him."

Ghoomer, which is written and directed by R. Balki, also stars Abhishek Bachchan, Angad Bedi and Shabana Azmi. The story is co-written by Rahul Sengupta and Rishi Virmani, and is inspired by the story of Karoly Takacs, the late Hungarian right-hand shooter who won two Olympic gold medals with his left hand after his other hand was seriously injured.

Rani Mukerji to deliver masterclass at Indian Film Festival of Melbourne

Bollywood star Rani Mukerji will deliver a masterclass detailing her career and life as an actor at the upcoming Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM).

The special event will take place on August 10, a day ahead of the 14th edition of the film festival. Mukerji will talk about some of her iconic roles and films, and share insights into her craft and experiences as an actor, a press release stated.

"I'm honoured to have been invited to the 14th Indian Film Festival of Melbourne. As an actor, I have been fortunate enough to receive incredible love from people in Australia and I'm looking forward to sharing my journey in Indian cinema through a masterclass that I have been invited to conduct," the 45-year-old actor said in a statement.

Mukerji made her debut at the age of 18 with the 1996 drama 'Raja Ki Aayegi Baraat', and made a name for herself with films such as Aamir Khan-starrer 'Ghulam' and Karan Johar's 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai', co-starring Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol.



Over the years, she starred in many critically and commercially successful movies such as 'Saathiya', 'Hum Tum', 'Veer-Zaara', 'Black', 'Bunty Aur Babli' and 'Mardaani'.

"It will be a beautiful experience to connect with my fans and cinephiles during this event. I'm ready to delve into some of the most memorable characters from my filmography and try to peel off layers of emotions and nostalgia attached to those char-

acters and scenes.

"I'm humbled that the film festival feels such roles and films have had an everlasting impact in the history of Indian cinema and that they should be discussed with audiences, fans and media in Australia," Mukerji added.

At the 14th edition of the IFFM, Mukerji is nominated for the best actress for her performance in 'Mrs Chatterjee Vs Norway'.

The film gala will run from August 11 to 20.

Supreme Court dismisses plea challenging appointment of Arun Goel as election commissioner

The bench refused to entertain the plea filed by the NGO Association of Democratic Reforms and dismissed it.

NEW DELHI, Aug 4 (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Friday dismissed a plea challenging the appointment of bureaucrat Arun Goel as election commissioner, saying the Constitution bench of the apex court had already examined the issue in its verdict dated March 2.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and SVN Bhatti said that the five-judge constitution bench headed by Justice (now retired) KM Joseph had perused the file of Goel's appointment but had refused to quash it even though it had made certain observations.

The bench refused to entertain the plea filed by the NGO Association of Democratic Reforms and dismissed it.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the NGO, said Goel's appointment was arbitrary as due process was not followed.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the



Centre, said the NGO cannot be allowed to have a second bite to the cherry as the Constitution bench has perused the file of appointment but refused to quash it.

On March 2, in a far-reaching verdict, the Supreme Court had ruled that the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and ECs will be done by the President on the recommendation of a committee, comprising the prime minister, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the CJI, to maintain the "purity of

election".

The Constitution bench verdict had said the court was mystified as to how Goel applied for voluntary retirement on November 18 last year if he was not aware about the proposal to appoint him as an election commissioner.

The top court noted that a vacancy in the post of election commissioner arose upon the appointment of Rajiv Kumar as the Chief Election Commissioner with effect from May 15, 2022.

The apex court said the appointment to the post of election commissioner was made apparently on the basis that there was no hindrance to the making of the appointment as there was no specific law.

It had earlier questioned the "haste" and "tearing hurry" with which the Centre appointed Goel as an election commissioner, saying his file travelled at "lightning speed" within departments in 24 hours.

The Centre had vehemently resisted the observations, with Attorney General R Venkataramani contending the whole issue pertaining to his appointment needed to be looked at in entirety.

The top court had asked how the Union law minister short-listed a panel of four names that was recommended to the prime minister for appointment as election commissioner when none of them would have completed the stipulated six-year tenure in office.

12 missing after flashfloods wash away shops near Gaurikund in Uttarakhand

The flash flood occur on Thursday night following heavy rain



RUDRAPRAYAG, Aug 4 (Agencies): Twelve people have gone missing after a flash flood in a waterfall swept away three shops near Gaurikund on the Kedarnath yatra route, officials said on Friday.

The flash flood occurred on Thursday

night following heavy rain, they said.

Relief and rescue operations were launched by National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) personnel but none of the missing people have been found

yet, Circle Officer Vimal Rawat told agency from the spot.

Heavy rains coupled with boulders falling intermittently from the hillsides are hampering relief and rescue efforts, they said.

Information regarding the missing people, including some from Nepal, is being gathered, he said.

Those missing have been identified as Vinod (26), Mulayam (25), Ashu (23), Priyanshu Chamola (18), Ranbir Singh (28), Amar Bohra, his wife Anita Bohra, his daughters, Radhika and Pinki, and sons Prithvi (7), Jatil (6) and Vakil (3), officials said.

Minor crushed to death by speeding truck in Kolkata, massive protests erupt

KOLKATA, Aug 4 (Agencies): A minor boy died and his father was critically injured on Friday morning after a speeding truck hit them at Behala Chowrasta area here, triggering massive protests by locals who torched several vehicles, officials said.

RAF personnel in large numbers were deployed, and police baton-charged protesters and fired tear gas shells to bring the situation under control, they said.

A few policemen, including Kolkata Police Joint CP (Traffic) Rupesh Kumar, suffered injuries, the officials said.

The father of the



deceased boy, Souranil Sarkar, is undergoing treatment at state-run SSKM Hospital. Souranil was a student of Class 2 at Barisha High School.

The accident took place around 6.30 am, shortly after which protests erupted, with locals setting fire to a number of police vehicles and private buses, they said.

Traffic was disrupted on the busy Diamond Harbour Road for at least two hours, a police officer said.

The truck driver has been apprehended from Santragachi and the vehicle was impounded, he said.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has sought a report about the incident from Kolkata Police Commissioner Vineet Goyal.

"The traffic police were present at the spot when the accident took place. We will launch a detailed investigation, which will also ascertain whether there was any lapse," Goyal told reporters.

India on course to reclaim historical primacy as global economic powerhouse: Hardeep Puri

NEW DELHI, Aug 4 (Agencies): India is on course to reclaim its historical place as a global economic powerhouse and broad indices required for the attainment of developed nation status would be in place by 2047, senior government minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Friday.

Speaking on the eve of the G-20 Leaders' Summit in New Delhi under India's presidency on September 9 and 10, Puri said India had displayed the capacity to heavy lift and was discharging its global role in addressing climate change and disaster relief extremely well.

Puri was speaking as part of an ongoing government public outreach on ten years of the UPA government versus nine years of the ruling NDA.

The minister quoted British historians to recall how India contributed 24.4 per cent to the world economy in the 1700s



and came down to just 4.2 pc by 1950 as a result of years of colonial subjugation.

"By the end of 2023, India would have become a 3.8 trillion dollar economy whereas at the end of 2014, our GDP was just about two trillion dollar. Global expert estimations suggest India could be a 26 trillion dollar economy by 2047," said Puri.

Noting India's rise from the world's 10th largest economy in

2014 to the world's fifth largest today, the minister said, "We will be the third largest in NDA's third term like PM Narendra Modi has said. Five trillion dollar economy goal by 2026 is looking at us.

"Ten trillion dollar economy goal by 2030 is no longer a matter of debate," he said, adding that UN Sustainable Development Goal targets will succeed because India will succeed just as MDGs succeeded because developing nations rose to the occasion.

The minister also said that top financial institutions in the world had projected positive growth for India in the bracket of 6.1 pc in 2023 as against the world's leading economies that are currently struggling.

"Well, before 2047 we will have all broad indices in place to attain the developed country status.

Look at the changes. "To be able to take the fruits of

development to most vulnerable sections is the most revolutionary change," he said dismissing Opposition scepticism on India's social, human rights and economic outlook.

He said the Opposition had made up its mind to stay in opposition.

Tabling one statistic to make his point about India's positive outlook going forward Puri, Union Minister handling urban affairs and petroleum, said against Rs 1,57,000 crore spent on urban spaces in India between 2004 and 2014 under the Congress-led UPA, the NDA has in nine years spent Rs 19 lakh crore.

The change we have witnessed in the last nine years is somewhat extraordinary, he said in a crucial election year with the government intensifying its outreach on achievements of nine years led by the Prime Minister.

Thinker, writer, activist and more: Gujarat's Achyut Yagnik dies at 78

AHMEDABAD, Aug 4 (Agencies): Achyut Yagnik, a well-known intellectual from Gujarat, passed away at the age of 78 on Friday morning in Ahmedabad. He was the founder and secretary of SETU: Centre for Social Knowledge and Action, a voluntary organisation based in Ahmedabad that has been working with marginalised groups since the early 1980s.

Achyut Yagnik worked as a journalist in Ahmedabad from 1970 to 1980 and was an active member of the Working Journalists Union and Press Workers Union. Following that, he served as the Gujarat Coordinator of the Lokayan Project of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies in Delhi, as well as the General Secretary of



the Gujarat People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL).

He was a renowned thinker, author, visiting faculty member, social worker, journalist, unionist, and activist in a variety of people's movements. He has written several books in Gujarati and English, including "Creating a Nationality:

Ramjanmabhoomi Movement and Fear of the Self" (1995). In addition, he is a co-author of "The Making of Modern Gujarat."

Achyut was also a consultant and Fellow at the United Nations University in Tokyo from 1986 to 1987. He was also the founder editor of the Centre for Social Studies' Gujarati research journal "Arthat" and the Gujarat correspondent of the Economic and Political Weekly.

The distinguished thinker and writer-activist was also a guest faculty at the Post-Graduate Department of Development Communication, at Gujarat University and has given lectures at the Universities of Columbia, Chicago and Berlin.

He is survived by his wife and son Anand Yagnik, a well-known lawyer of the Gujarat High Court.

Odisha floods: Over 1.2 lakh people affected following deluge in Mahanadi river system

BHUBANESWAR, Aug 4 (Agencies): At least 1.20 lakh people have been affected in 762 villages of 15 districts and 66 wards of 17 urban local bodies in Odisha so far following flood in Mahanadi river system. Over 6,834 people in flood-affected districts have been shifted to safer places.

The intensity of the flood has dropped lately. However, a breach in an embankment was reported at Teramanpur in Jagatsinghpur district on Friday. The Special Relief Commissioner's (SRC) office said about 7.43 lakh cusec water is passing through the Mundali barrage.

So far, the floods have affected at least nine panchayats in the Banki and Tigiria blocks of the

Cuttack district. The SRC office said the water level is rising in the Daya River and it could affect the low-lying areas in Puri and Khurda districts on the day.

"Water has receded at Mundali barrage. The peak flood water is currently passing through Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur and Puri districts. A breach took place in Teramanpur and water entered into the agricultural fields, while small breaches (piping) were reported in three to four places of Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara districts," said SRC Satyabrata Sahu. The water level is increasing in Daya and Bhargavi rivers and the Collectors have been asked to closely monitor the situation, he said.

Piping was also reported in the

Makara River in the Khurda district. The flood in the Baitarani river system has also affected several villages in Bhadrak's Dhannagar and Bhandaripokhari blocks. However, the river's water level is receding.

Meanwhile, the water level in Hirakud dam stood at 615.21 ft at 8 am on Friday and it has been rising since the last few hours.

"The inflow in Hirakud dam is increasing and most likely some gates will be opened later in the day. The water discharged from the dam will reach Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara districts in two to three days and it will not create any problem as there is no heavy rainfall forecast for the next five days," said Sahu.

ASI begins survey of Gyanvapi mosque

The survey begins at around 7 am, ASI sources say

VARANASI (UP), Aug 4 (Agencies): The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) on Friday resumed its scientific survey of the Gyanvapi premises here to determine whether the 17th-century mosque was constructed over a pre-existing structure of a Hindu temple.

The Allahabad High Court had on Thursday allowed the ASI to conduct the survey.

The survey, which was boycotted by members of the Anjuman Intezamia Masjid committee, began at 7 am, ASI sources said.

In view of Friday prayers, the survey has been halted for two hours between 12 pm and 2 pm.

Subhash Chaturvedi, a lawyer of the Hindu side who is inside the complex along with the ASI team for the survey, said, "The ASI team began the survey work at 7 am and stopped it at 12 pm for two hours in view of the Friday prayers. The survey work will resume again after 2 pm."

Additional security personnel have been deployed by the district authorities to ensure law and order near the



complex. Representatives of the Hindu petitioners in the legal dispute involving the mosque, were present inside the complex during the survey.

However, representatives of the Anjuman Intezamia Masjid committee, who were to accompany the ASI team for the survey, kept away.

The Hindu side's lawyer Madan Mohan Yadav told agency that a 43-member ASI team is conducting the survey work.

Yadav said the survey work is likely to continue for five-six days.

He added that during this period the plain-

tiffs of the case Laxmi Singh, Sita Sahu, Rekha Pathak and Manju Vyas along with their lawyers will be present on the spot along with the ASI team.

Rakhi Singh, another litigant in the case, was not present on Friday for the survey.

However, her counsel was present.

Syed Mohammad Yasin, secretary of the Anjuman Intezamia Masjid Committee, told agency that the lawyers of the Muslim side did not participate in the survey as the decision to conduct the survey has already been challenged in the Supreme Court.

"The High Court has

ordered the ASI to conduct a scientific survey of the Gyanvapi without any demolition. The Anjuman Intezamia Masjid had appealed against this order in the Supreme Court on Thursday itself, which is to be heard on Friday. We have informed the senior officials in Varanasi about this," he said.

"Our request was that the survey should be postponed till the order of the apex court. Our advocate from Delhi had also sent a letter to the same effect to the officials here, but after not getting a response, the committee met on Thursday night and decided to abstain from this survey," he added.

The survey began after the Allahabad High Court upheld a Varanasi district court order and ruled that the proposed step is "necessary in the interest of justice" and will benefit both sides.

The order came after the Anjuman Intezamia Masjid committee, representing the Muslim side to the legal dispute, moved the Supreme Court against the Varanasi district court order.

The mosque stands next to the Kashi Vishwanath temple.

Trump pleads not guilty to charges of plotting to overturn 2020 election

The former president was arrested and arraigned on four felony counts outlined in special counsel Jack Smith's indictment

WASHINGTON, Aug 4 (Agencies): Former US president Donald Trump has pleaded not guilty before an Indian-American judge to the charges accusing him of orchestrating a criminal conspiracy to remain in power despite losing the November 2020 election.

It was Trump's third court appearance in four months. Trump, who is seeking to contest the 2024 presidential election from the Republican Party, entered the not-guilty plea before Magistrate Judge Moxila A Upadhyaya as he appeared at the courthouse that sits just blocks away from the Capitol, where his angry supporters stormed the US Congress on January 6, 2021.

Wearing a dark blue suit and a red tie, Trump, 77, arrived at the courthouse in a motorcade after he flew in from Bedminster in New Jersey.

The former president was arrested and arraigned on four felony counts outlined in special counsel Jack Smith's indictment: conspiracy to defraud the United States, conspiracy to obstruct an official proceeding, attempting to obstruct an official proceeding, and conspiracy against rights.

The 45-page indictment was filed in Washington, DC earlier this week by Smith, who has led investigations into the former president on behalf of the US Department of Justice.

"As to counts one to four, how does Mr Trump plead?" Judge Upadhyaya asked the former president in the courtroom. Trump, flanked by his lawyers, said: "Not guilty."

The former president spoke little during the hearing, answering questions about his name and age, while rarely glancing



at prosecutors. When asked whether he understood that his words could be used against him, he replied in the affirmative.

The judge told Trump that he would be released but there are certain conditions that he has to abide by and appear in the court as and when required. Trump's next scheduled appearance is on August 28 before US District Judge Tanya Chutkan. But he has the option not to appear in person.

"Despite having lost, the defendant was determined to remain in power. So for more than two months following election day on November 3, 2020, the defendant spread lies that there had been outcome-determinative fraud in the election and that he had actually won. These claims were false, and the defendant knew that they were false," the indictment reads.

The indictment was issued by a grand jury of citizens in the District of Columbia and sets forth the crimes charged in detail. It caps an inquiry into events surrounding the January 6, 2021 riot at the US Capitol.

"The attack on our nation's capital on January 6, 2021, was an unprecedented assault

on the seat of American democracy. As described in the indictment, it was fuelled by lies," Smith said.

During the tense 27-minute proceeding, Trump was seated just 20 feet from Smith. A significant point of tension during the proceeding was how soon will Trump stand trial.

Thomas Windom, the prosecutor helming the trial team for Smith, said the case should move quickly. "This case will benefit from normal order, including a speedy trial," Windom told the magistrate judge overseeing the arraignment.

But John Lauro, an attorney for the former president, said Trump's legal team might need a long time to go through the evidence that prosecutors are required to hand over to the defence.

"These are weighty issues," he said, adding that the Justice Department has had years to investigate the case. "All I'm going to ask, Your Honour, is the opportunity to fairly defend our client. But in order to do that, we're going to need a little time."

Magistrate Judge Upadhyaya replied: "I can guarantee everybody that there will be a fair pro-

cess and a fair trial in this case."

The Trump campaign has charged that Smith "has conducted a dirty, politically motivated investigation of President Trump to prevent him from winning back the presidency".

Smith sat in the courtroom throughout the proceedings. "At around 4 PM EDT, Biden's weaponised Department of Justice will once again have its leading opponent (me) ARRAIGNED despite having committed NO CRIME. It sounds like a chapter you'd read out of an old history book on the Soviet Union or Maoist China... But sadly, it's taking place right here in America," Trump wrote in an email before he left New Jersey for the court appearance in Washington DC.

So far, federal prosecutors have filed cases against 1,077 people for the January 6 riots at the US Capitol. This is Trump's third indictment but marks the first time that he has been formally held accountable for his efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election in the run-up to the violent riot by his supporters at the US Capitol.

In April, Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg indicted Trump on charges related to payments in 2016 to porn star Stormy Daniels. In June, Trump was indicted in Miami for allegedly retaining White House documents, including classified documents.

In addition to the newest case accusing him of seeking to overturn the 2020 election, Smith's team has also charged him in Florida with hoarding classified documents after he left the White House. The trial in that case is scheduled to begin on May 20, 2024.

Thailand train collision with pickup truck kills 8 people and injures 4, railway agency says

Truck driver slowed down after seeing the train; passengers urged him to keep going

BANGKOK, Aug 4 (Agencies): Eight people were killed when a freight train struck a pickup truck crossing the tracks in an eastern province of Thailand early Friday morning, authorities said.

The accident at 2:20 am also injured four people in the Muang

district of Chachoengsao province, according to the State Railway of Thailand.

The 54-year-old driver, Wichai Yulek, told authorities he saw the approaching train and heard a warning horn. He slowed, but passengers in the vehicle urged him to keep going. When he

realized the truck was headed for a collision, he could not stop in time, the railway agency said.

The deceased include an 18 year old, two people in their 20s and five people over 55, while the injured victims included four men in their 20s, the railway said.

Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif announces dissolution of National Assembly on August 9



ISLAMABAD, Aug 4 (Agencies): Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced the dissolution of the National Assembly on August 9. The decision came after he met with parliamentary leaders at a dinner in honour of the Members of Parliament, where the country's political situation was thoroughly discussed, news agency reported.

During the meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz sought their input and discussed the arrange-

ments for the caretaker prime minister and the caretaker set-up.

On August 9, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will send formal advice to the President for the dissolution of the National Assembly. According to constitutional provisions, the President must sign the advice within 48 hours to effectuate the dissolution. If, for any reason, the President does not sign the advice, the Assembly will be automatically dissolved, agency reported.

Furthermore, Prime Minister Shehbaz assured that after three days of consultation with the Opposition, he will submit the name of the caretaker prime minister to the President.

However, if no agreement is reached, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) will step in and nominate a candidate for the caretaker prime minister position from the proposed names, agency reported.

Notably, he highlighted the successful negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), underscoring the importance of economic stability for the nation's progress. Earlier this week, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that the upcoming elections in Pakistan would be held on the basis of the 2023 digital census, Dawn reported.

South Korean police pursue suspect in 2nd stabbing attack in 2 days

SEOUL, Aug 4 (Agencies): A man rammed a car onto a sidewalk Thursday in the South Korean city of Seongnam, then stepped out of the vehicle and began stabbing people at a shopping mall, leaving at least 14 people wounded.

Just hours after South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol on Friday called for "ultra-strong" law enforcement measures in response to that attack, police found themselves chasing the suspect in another stabbing incident at a high school in Daejeon city.

Cho Byeong-tae, an official at the Daejeon metropolitan police department, said the attack at Songchon High School left at least one teacher hurt. He did not identify the victim or provide details about the victim's health.

At least five people were hurt by the car and nine others were stabbed during Thursday's attack in Seongnam that occurred in a crowded leisure district near a subway, according to Yoon Sung-hyun, an official from the southern Gyeonggi provincial police department.

Authorities arrested a 22-year-old suspect at the scene and were questioning him. Police did not identify the man or offer any immediate information about a potential motive.

According to Park Gyeong-won, an official at Gyeonggi's Bun-

dang district police station, the suspect during police interviews talked incoherently and said he was being stalked by an unspecified source. The suspect's family told police he had a history of mental illness.

While the suspect had purchased the two knives he used in the stabbings from a different shopping mall on Wednesday, there isn't clear evidence he planned the attacks in advance, Park said. The attack was South Korea's second mass stabbing attack in a month. Last month, a knife-wielding man stabbed at least four pedestrians on a street in the capital, Seoul, killing one person.

Yoon called for closer monitoring of social media to detect threats, deploying more law enforcement officers for prevention and equipping them with better suppression gear, according to Seoul's presidential office.

An official at Gyeonggi's provincial fire department, Ha Donggeun, said at least two of those who were wounded after the suspect drove the car onto the sidewalk were hospitalized in critical condition. Among the nine who were stabbed, eight were being treated for injuries seen as serious.

Photos from the scene showed forensic units examining the halls of the AK Plaza, where the stabbings took place. A

white Kia hatchback with a broken front window and ruptured front tire could be seen on a sidewalk near the subway station.

South Korea's Kyunghyang Shinmun newspaper published a video on its website that it said was sent by a witness. The footage showed a man wearing sunglasses and a black hoodie walking up the mall's escalator with an object in his hand.

A witness named Hwang Hee-woon told YTN television that he "heard a sound from the first floor that seemed like a scream, so customers and shop workers were gathering on the rails of the second-floor near the escalator to see what was happening below."

"Suddenly, someone told us the person who committed the crime was coming up to the second floor, so we ran away in panic," he said. He ended up hiding inside a refrigerated storage room with some mall employees.

The National Police Agency held an online meeting Thursday with regional police chiefs to discuss ways to deal with stabbings and other attacks against random targets. Officials discussed increasing nighttime patrols in leisure districts and other crowded areas and strengthening security camera surveillance, according to the agency.

Russia Says It Blocked Overnight Ukraine Attacks On Black Sea Naval Base

MOSCOW, Aug 4 (Agencies): Russia's defence ministry said early on Friday that it had thwarted overnight Ukrainian attacks on a naval base in the Black Sea and the Crimean peninsula.

"Tonight, the Armed Forces of Ukraine, with the use of two unmanned sea boats, attempted an attack on the Novorossiysk naval base of the Russian Armed Forces," the ministry said on Telegram.

Russian ships destroyed the naval drones, it said.

The Black Sea port of Novorossiysk hosts the terminus of a pipeline that carries most



Kazakh oil exports through Russia.

The fuel artery's operator Caspian Pipeline Consortium said it was continuing to ship oil to moored tankers at the terminal, Russian state media reported Friday.

But "a temporary ban has been established on the movement of

ships in the port", said the company, as quoted by Interfax news agency.

Russia's Black Sea Fleet has been targeted since the beginning of Moscow's military campaign in Ukraine more than a year ago, but attacks have increased in recent weeks.

On Tuesday, Russia's

defence ministry said it foiled a Ukrainian drone attack targeting patrol boats in the Black Sea, where tensions have been building after Moscow exited a deal protecting Ukrainian grain exports.

A similar attack was repelled a week earlier.

The ministry also said Friday it had downed 13 drones over the Crimean peninsula.

There were no casualties or damage in either attack, the ministry said.

Crimea, annexed by Russia in 2014, has been targeted by Kyiv throughout Moscow's Ukraine offensive but has come under more intense, increased

attacks in recent weeks.

Ukrainian drone attacks on Crimea in July blew up an ammunition depot and damaged a strategic and symbolic bridge linking Russia's mainland to the peninsula.

Kyiv has repeatedly said it plans to take back Crimea, which is a regular target for its forces.

On Sunday, Russian-installed authorities in Crimea said 25 Ukrainian drones were destroyed over the peninsula.

Kyiv says Russia, meanwhile, has repeatedly attacked Ukraine's Odesa region, on the shores of the Black Sea.

Niger Military Junta Leaders Urged To Restore Order Before Deadline

NIAMEY, Aug 4 (Agencies): West African defence chiefs were set to wrap up discussions about possible intervention in Niger on Friday, as mediators from the regional bloc push coup leaders in Niamey to restore constitutional order before an approaching deadline.

The military junta in Niger is locked in a standoff with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which has taken its hardest stance yet on last week's ouster of President Mohamed Bazoum - the seventh coup in West and Central Africa since 2020.

In a blow to hopes of restoring the previous status quo, the junta revoked a raft of military cooperation agreements with France late on Thursday. There was no immediate response from France.



The move echoes similar moves by juntas in neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso in the wake of their coups and could drastically reshape a joint fight against an Islamist insurgency.

France has between 1,000 and 1,500 troops in Niger, helping to fight an insurgency by groups linked to al Qaeda and Islamic State that has destabilised West

Africa's Sahel region.

An ECOWAS delegation is in the Nigerien capital Niamey, hoping to secure "a conclusive and amicable resolution" to the crisis, although the bloc has also imposed sweeping sanctions and warned it could authorise the use of force if Bazoum is not reinstated by Sunday.

Niger's self-declared leader

Abdourahamane Tiani has rejected the sanctions and said the junta will not back down against any threats.

Later on Friday, the region's defence chiefs will officially end a multi-day meeting in the Nigerian capital Abuja about a possible military response that they have said would be a last resort.

The junta on Thursday said any aggression or attempted aggression by ECOWAS would be met with an immediate riposte on any ECOWAS member-state except those friendly to Niger.

Tiani has won the backing of the juntas in Mali and Burkina Faso and cited persistent insecurity as his main justification for seizing power, even though data on attacks shows that security there has actually been improving.

Passing out parade of Ladakh Scouts Regimental Centre held

Top News Report

LEH, Aug 4: A magnificent Passing Out Parade was held at The Ladakh Scouts Regimental Centre, Leh on 04 August 2023 to mark the entry of 141 well trained Agniveer recruits into the Ladakh Scouts Regiment as Young Soldiers. The impressive ceremony conducted in consonance with the highest traditions of the Indian Army was reviewed by Brig Dr B D Mishra (Retd), Hon'ble Lt Governor, UT Ladakh as the Chief Guest and was attended by a spectrum of military & civil dignitaries and parents of Agniveers.

The young Agniveers, hailing from all regions of Ladakh, enthusiastically participated in the parade and are now ready to serve for the supreme cause of the Nation. The Review-



ing Officer congratulated the Young Soldiers for the impressive parade and meticulous turnout and urged them to devote their life in service to the Nation as proud soldiers of the

Indian Army. He also congratulated the proud parents to have motivated their wards to join the Regiment. He complimented the Ladakh Scouts personnel for their outstanding performance

in all spheres and praised their exceptional valour and sacrifice while upholding sovereignty of the Nation. He exhorted the Young Soldiers to continue to strive hard in pursuit of excellence in all spheres and take a solemn vow to defend the sovereignty of the Nation against all odds in the true spirit signified by the ethos of the Indian Army.

Seven young Agniveers were awarded medals for their outstanding performance during the training. Gaurav Padak was also presented to the proud parents who are either serving or have served in the Army and whose wards joined the Regiment as Agniveers. It was indeed a proud moment for the kin of these recruits who had arrived from far flung areas to witness the grand ceremony.

Saima Jan thanks LG administration for development works of B.K Pora

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Aug 4: DDC BK Pora District Budgam Saima Jan thanked the LG administration for the development works in B.K Pora area of Budgam district.

It listens to all the genuine demands of the people in their respective areas like



water, electricity, ration, roads and other issues. Saima Jan has every

time highlighted the problems of the people of B.K Pora area of Budgam district before the LG administration and with the help of God she fulfilled the demands of the people of B.K Pora Budgam. Those demands which are still pending will be resolved as soon as possible.

Unnat extends helping hand to deaf and dumb children

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 4: Non Government Organization, Unnat, known for doing acts of philanthropy, visited Udheywala Deaf and Dumb Home by its office bearers headed by its General Secretary, Neena Abrol and distributed eatables, stationery items amongst deaf and dumb children.

The program was presided over by the President of Unnat Organisation, Sudarshan Kumar Abrol whereas

General Secretary of the Home Satish Sharma was the Chief Guest.

While speaking on the occasion, Satish Sharma lauded the efforts of Unnat for doing such a wonderful job to help needy children.

Neena Abrol, while addressing, reiterated the resolve of Unnat Organisation to continue its efforts exclusively aimed at helping indigent and poor people. She said that Unnat has been working to augment such activities on a massive scale since last over one year.

Indian Army Conducts Medical Veterinary Camp in Pir Panjal, Parore Gurjan

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Aug 4: In continuation of its efforts, the Indian Army at Parore Gurjan, District Rajouri (J&K) organised a veterinary camp for Gujjars and Bakarwals to ameliorate

the lives and provide medical care to Gujjars and Bakarwals who practice trans humane pastoralism, which involves regular and cyclical seasonal movement to higher reaches of Pir Panjal Ranges.

To restrict long dis-

tance travel for treatment of livestock's, Veterinary Camp was conducted with a sole motive of providing a healing touch to the poor and backward Gujjar & Bakarwal community at remote locations.

Veterinary support to

the live stock was provided by Civil Veterinary doctors from Naushera and Rajouri. Conduct of Medical Camp by Indian Army Doctor, along with Veterinary Camp' made the event more exciting and impressive.

A total of 83 livestock

were treated. Villagers, Sarpanchs, Panchs & prominent locals have appreciated and expressed their profound gratitude towards the Army for organizing such a beneficial and special event for Gujjars and Bakarwals.

JKBS urges Govt to control inflation

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 4: A meeting of the Jammu and Kashmir Batwal Sabha was held at Surya Vihar here today under the chairmanship of JKBS General Secretary R.L.Kaith.

JKBS members in the meeting said that every eatable thing especially the vegetable, is going to be costly day by day and it has become extremely dif-

icult to a common man and a mediocre family to survive. Adding further they said that a small bottle of olive oil which was being sold at a rate of Rs 179 a few weeks ago, is now of Rs 215.

Members urged the govt to control the inflation and also provide some relief to the poor people by giving them 200 free units of electricity, as is being done by the Delhi and Punjab Govts for their people..

FROM PAGE 1

Supreme Court stays Rahul Gandhi's conviction in Modi surname defamation case, restores MP status

13 crore, there is no uniformity, homogeneity, identifiability, no boundary line... That is first point. Second is that [Purnesh Modi] himself said that his original surname was not Modi," he added, as reported by Live Law.

Senior advocate Mahesh Jethmalani, appearing for Purnesh Modi, said that the petitioner must have a very strong point for the court to negate the sentence without reassessing evidence since the appeal is pending before the sessions court.

Justice BR Gavai mulled whether the Wayanad constituency being unrepresented due to the petitioner's conviction was a relevant factor, saying the right of an electorate was being affected. Gavai said that the trial judge has to explain why he granted the maximum sentence.

"One of the factors is .. if a constituency in parliament goes unrepresented, is it not a ground? There is no whisper by the trial judge for the need to impose the maximum sentence. You are not only affecting the right of one individual but an entire electorate of a constituency," Justice Gavai said, as per Bar and Bench.

In an affidavit filed before the top court, Rahul Gandhi once again refused to apologise for his Modi surname remark that led to his conviction in the defamation case and subsequent disqualification from the Parliament but urged the Supreme Court to stay his conviction asserting he is not guilty. "Using the criminal process and the consequences under Representation of People Act to arm twist the Petitioner into apologising for no fault is gross abuse of the judicial process and ought not to be countenanced by this Court.

"The petitioner maintains and has always maintained that he is not guilty of offence and that the conviction is unsustainable and if he had to apologise and compound the offence, he would have done it much earlier," Gandhi said in the affidavit.

Himachal monsoon mayhem: 199 people dead, 31 missing till now

the monsoon period. "So far 199 people have died in the monsoon due to various reasons. In which 57 people have lost their lives due to landslides and flash floods. 142 people have lost their lives due to road accidents or other reasons. In Himachal Pradesh, 31 people are missing and 229 people are injured," state disaster management authority.

Tax Evaders Penalised: Rs

1.63 Cr imposed in four months

To address the issue of stranded vehicles due to uncertain climatic conditions, the Taxes Department issued specific SOPs/guidelines to taxpayers, transporters, and business establishments, offering necessary assistance.

JK has nearly 13.50 Lakh Drug users: Parliament Panel

the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment informed the Parliament that there are estimated 13.50 lakh drug users in Jammu and Kashmir and most of them are in the age group of 18 to 75 years.

The Committee stated that 1,68,700 children in the age group of 17-18 years are drug users in Jammu and Kashmir and they are taking Cannabis, Opioids, Sedatives, Cocaine, Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (ATS), inhalants and Hallucinogens.

It further reported that, in the age group of 18-75 nearly 11,80,000 adults are drug users in Jammu and Kashmir and majority of them are addicts of Opioids followed by Cannabis, Sedatives and Inhalants. With this, a total of 13,48,700 persons are drug users in Union Territory and number might be higher as these estimates are based on the projected population in 2018.

"Seven types of psychoactive substances viz Cannabis, Opioids, Cocaine, Amphetamine Stimulants, Sedatives, Inhalants and Hallucinogens were found to be used by the victims, besides alcohol which is the most common psychoactive substance used by adults", the Committee has mentioned in its report.

India: The Cost of Cyprus Investments Might Surprise You

Cyprus Investments | Search Ads

The Standing Committee was informed by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment of the Government of India that funds are being provided for identification, motivation, counseling, de-addiction, after care and rehabilitation of the drug users so as to control the drug menace after the introduction of National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR).

During the financial years 2020-21 and 2021-22 meager funds were released to Non-Governmental Organizations and others in Jammu and Kashmir under NAPDDR but during 2022-23 the financial assistance was increased to Rs 2.37 crore, which is substantially high as compared to previous two years.

About establishment of District De-addiction Centres, the Department has informed the Standing Committee that all out efforts are being made in this direction in consultation with the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. The Standing Committee has laid stress on coordination among all the concerned agencies in Jammu and Kashmir to control the trafficking, production and distribution of drugs.

No Govt advertisement to be sent directly to media: GAD

issue, certain departments, Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and autonomous bodies were "issuing official advertisements in stark violation of these instructions." "The matter has been viewed seriously by the authorities," Verma said.

He stated that the General Administration Department (GAD) and Finance department notified detailed instructions, mandating routing of all government advertisements through the Information Department.

"In terms of Government Order No 671-GAD of 2007 dated June 8, 2007 and Government Order No 201-F of 2018 dated April 6, 2018, and Circulars issued by this department vide NO.16-GAD of 2015 dated March 16, 2015, NO 33-GAD of 2018 dated August 7, 2018 and No 28-GAD of 2019 dated May 13, 2019, it has been directed that no government department, Public Sector Undertaking, autonomous body of the government, shall, under any circumstances, issue official advertisements directly for publication in print or electronic media," Verma said.

He said that further, the Media Policy, 2020 notified by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, also clearly prescribed that the routing and release of all advertisements, communications and messages pertaining to government departments, Public Sector Undertakings, autonomous bodies including Local Bodies, Universities and all bodies or organizations supported directly or indirectly, through the government, would be done through the Directorate of Information & Public Relations.

Kharge lashes out at BJP, says only 12.2 lakh formal jobs added in 5 Years

is anger and violence on the streets. The BJP has miserably failed to provide Employment! Unimaginable unemployment, painful price rise and orchestrated hate foisted by BJP has resulted in this DISASTER of a situation," he said in his long Twitter post.

"For the survival of our poor and middle class, the BJP needs to be thrown out of power. India has had enough," Kharge said.

The Congress has been attacking the government over its handling of the economy and alleging that it has failed to generate employment.

High Court permits virtual production of Yasin Malik in terror funding case

connection with a kidnapping case against him, prompting the Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta to flag the "serious security lapse" to Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla.

Malik appeared before the top court bench on July 21 for the CBI's appeal against a September 20, 2022 order of a trial court in Jammu in the 1989 kidnapping of Rubaiya Sayeed, the daughter of then Union home minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed.

He was brought to the high-security apex court premises in a prison van escorted by armed security personnel without the court's permission.

Later that week, the Department of Delhi Prisons suspended four officials over Malik's physical appearance before the top court while ordering an inquiry into the lapse.

On May 29, the high court had issued notice to Malik on the NIA's plea seeking death penalty for him in the terror funding case and said, "Let warrants of production be issued against Yasin Malik, before this Court on the next date of hearing. List on 09.08.2023."

On May 24, 2022, a trial court here had awarded life imprisonment to Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front chief Malik after holding him guilty for various offences under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the IPC.

Malik had pleaded guilty to the charges, including those under the UAPA, and he was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Appealing against the sentence, the NIA has emphasised that a terrorist cannot be awarded life sentence only because he has pleaded guilty and chosen not to go through trial.

While seeking enhancement of the sentence to death penalty, the NIA has said if such dreaded terrorists are not given capital punishment on account of pleading guilty, there would be complete erosion of the sentencing policy and terrorists would have a way out to avoid capital punishment.

A life sentence, the NIA has asserted, is not commensurate with the crime committed by terrorists when the nation and families of soldiers have suffered loss of lives, and that the trial court's conclusion that Malik's crimes did not fall within the category of the "rarest of the rare cases" for grant of death penalty is "ex-facie legally flawed and completely unsustainable".

The agency has emphasised that it has been proved beyond reasonable doubt that Malik spearheaded terrorist activities in the Valley and with the help of dreaded foreign terrorist organisations, had been "masterminding, planning, engineering and executing armed rebellion in the Valley in an attempt to usurp the sovereignty and integrity of a part of India".

"Not giving capital punishment to such dreaded terrorist will result in miscarriage of justice, as, an act of terrorism is not a crime against society but it is a crime against the entire nation; in other words it's an act of 'external aggression', 'an act of war' and an 'affront to the sovereignty of nation'," the plea has said.

The trial court, which had rejected the NIA's plea for capital punishment, had said the crimes committed by Malik struck at the "heart of the idea of India" and were intended to forcefully secede Jammu and Kashmir from Union of India.

It had, however, noted that the case was not the "rarest of rare", warranting death penalty.

The maximum punishment for such an offence is death penalty.

The life term was awarded for two offences - section 121 (waging war against government of India) of IPC and section 17 (raising funds for terrorist act) of the UAPA.

According to the Supreme Court, life imprisonment means incarceration till the last breath, unless the sentence is commuted by the authorities.

The court had awarded Malik 10-year jail term each under sections 120 B (criminal conspiracy), 121-A (conspiracy to wage war against the Government of India) of IPC and sections 15 (terrorism), 18 (conspiracy for terrorism) and 20 (being member of terror organisation) of UAPA.

J&K Zoya Khan's murals amplify voices of Kashmir's unsung Heroines

visionary artist behind the project, emphasised the importance of showcasing the art at such a scale in Kashmir.

She said, "The art of mural painting is universal, but this is the first time we have brought it to Kashmir on such a grand scale. Our objective is to provide recognition and appreciation to the incredible women Karigars of Kashmir, who have played an instrumental role in shaping the name of this region."

The mural vividly portrays women artists who have established themselves in the handicraft industry, symbolizing their artistic prowess and dedication.

Zoya Khan expressed her admiration for the women depicted in the mural, affirming that they have been instrumental in carrying the traditional craft forward.

"In the past three days, we have witnessed a steady stream of visitors coming to the site, inquiring about the mural and expressing their admiration for the women portrayed in it. These women are the real stars of our city, and it was our mission to honour their invaluable contributions," Zoya Khan remarked with a smile.

The Fearless Collective's mural not only showcases the talents of women artisans but also aims to raise awareness about the immense potential and talent in the artistic landscape of Kashmir. The artistic initiative embodies empowerment and pays homage to the rich heritage of the region's handicrafts.

Zoya Khan's Fearless Collective has been leading various such projects across the globe, promoting social causes and empowering marginalized communities through art. With each mural, they strive to create conversations and advocate for the upliftment of underrepresented groups.

MeT predicts hot and dry weather in J&K

with the weather on weekend and same conditions are expected on August 5-6.

He said from August 7-10, "mainly dry weather" is expected.

Markets bounce back in early trade after three days of fall

Bouncing back from a three-day decline, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbs 300.1 points to 65,540.78 in early trade

MUMBAI, Aug 4 (Agencies): Equity benchmark indices rebounded in early trade on Friday after three days of fall amid buying in IT counters and mixed global market trends.

Bouncing back from a three-day decline, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 300.1 points to 65,540.78 in early trade. The NSE Nifty advanced 105.9 points to 19,487.55.

From the Sensex pack, Tech Mahindra, Wipro, HCL Technologies, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, JSW



Steel, Titan and ITC were among the biggest gainers.

Power Grid, Hindustan Unilever, Tata Motors and ICICI Bank were among the laggards.

In Asian markets, Shanghai and Hong Kong were trading in the positive territory

while Seoul and Tokyo quoted lower.

The US markets ended marginally lower on Thursday.

Foreign Institutional Investors offloaded equities worth Rs 317.46 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data.

Elon Musk's Tesla leases space in Pune for first India office

Elon Musk's Tesla has leased an office space in Pune for a period of five years. With a monthly rent of Rs 11.65 lakh, the lease deal includes a lock-in period of 36 months, with a 5 per cent per annum escalation clause.

NEW DELHI, Aug 4 (Agencies): Months after a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Elon Musk in the US, Tesla India Motors and Energy Private Limited leased office space in the Panchshil Business Park of Maharashtra's Pune.

This is seen as a major step towards the entry of EV giant Tesla into the Indian market.

Earlier, senior officials from Tesla also held a meeting with their counterparts of Invest India to devise a plan for setting up a manufacturing plant for electric vehicles in India.



According to data analytics company CRE Matrix, Tesla India Motors and Energy Private Limited has leased an office space covering an area of 5,850 square feet on the first floor of B wing in an under-construction building named Panchshil Business

Park.

Tesla India Motors and Energy Private Limited has also entered into a five-year lease agreement with Tablespace Technologies Private Limited, with a monthly rent of Rs 11.65 lakh and a security deposit of Rs 34.95 lakh for a five-year

period, CRE Matrix said.

The agreement also includes five car parks and 10 bike parks.

According to CRE Matrix, the lease deal includes a lock-in period of 36 months, with a 5 per cent per annum escalation clause. The rental payments will start from October 1, 2023.

With a development size of nearly 11 lakh square feet, Panchshil Business Park is well connected with major areas of Pune, including the airport.

Earlier in 2021, Tesla India Motor & Energy Pvt Ltd was registered as an Indian subsidiary

of Tesla in Bengaluru.

TESLA'S PROGRESS IN INDIA

In July, Tesla hinted at plans to produce up to 500,000 EVs annually, with prices starting at Rs 20 lakh. If accomplished, this development could significantly boost India's emerging EV market.

If accomplished, this development could significantly boost India's emerging EV market.

Earlier in May, electric carmaker Tesla proposed setting up a factory in India to build its electric vehicles for domestic sale and export.

Indian smartphone market declines 6% annually in second quarter

NEW DELHI, Aug 4 (Agencies): India's smartphone market shipments experienced a 6% year-on-year decline, while the overall mobile market in India declined by 2% year-on-year in CY Q2 2023, according to CyberMedia Research (CMR)'s India Mobile Handset Market Review Report. However, the 5G smartphone shipment share in India increased to 47%, with 5G smartphone shipments growing 45% year-on-year. In the 5G section, Samsung dominated the 5G smartphone market in India, securing a 24% market share, followed by Chinese mobile maker OnePlus with a 20% market share.

"This single-digit decline is attributed to the improved macroeconomic condition positively impacting consumer demand

and OEMs' strategic measures to clear their existing stocks in preparation for the upcoming festive season. Despite the overall decline in smartphone shipments, the 5G smartphone segment showed promising performance capturing 47% market share (up from 31% in Q2 2022). The overall feature phone segment grew 9% YoY," said Shipra Sinha, Analyst- Industry Intelligence Group, CyberMedia Research (CMR).

In the overall smartphone segment, Samsung (18%), Vivo (15%), and Xiaomi (15%) captured the top three spots in Q2 2023, followed by Realme (12%) and OPPO (10%). In the Value-for-money smartphone segment (Rs. 7000-Rs. 25,000) was the largest contributor with a 72% share, but its shipments declined



by 16% YoY due to slow demand.

On the other hand, the Affordable smartphone segment, priced under Rs. 7000, recorded significant growth of 51% YoY, driven by Redmi A2 and Infinix 7 HD.

The Premium segment, with prices ranging from Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 50,000, recorded 9% YoY growth, while the Super-premium smartphone segment, priced above Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1,00,000, and the Uber-premium segment, priced above Rs. 1,00,000, saw remarkable growth of 95% and

133% YoY, respectively, leading to an overall smartphone ASP increase of 17% YoY. Samsung led the Premium smartphone segment in the price range of Rs. 25,000 to 50,000 with a 27% share.

American mobile maker Apple captured 5% market share in the smartphone market in Q2 2023, recording a significant YoY increase of 62% in its shipments. Apple was the top contributor in the Premium segment with a 25% share.

In terms of the feature phone segment, overall

feature phone market shipments recorded 9% YoY growth. Although 2G feature phone shipments remained stable, 4G feature phone shipments recorded a remarkable 108% YoY growth primarily driven by notable contributions from Nokia 8000 4G, Nokia 106 4G and itel Magic X ProThe 4G feature phone segment is expected to witness growth in CY2023, fueled by the introduction of phones such as JioBharat. Menka Kumari, Analyst-Industry Intelligence Group, CyberMedia Research (CMR) said that the smartphone market is set to bounce back in the second half of 2023, thanks to the festive season and increased consumer spending. The rise of 5G and foldable phones will also boost the market's recovery.

Saudi Arabia extends cut of 1 million barrels of oil a day, potentially boosting prices at the pump

DUBAI, Aug 4 (Agencies): Saudi Arabia said Thursday it will extend its unilateral production cut of 1 million barrels of oil a day through the end of September in its effort to boost flagging energy prices, a move that could push U.S. gas prices higher.

The Saudi reduction, which began in July, comes as the other OPEC+ producers have agreed to extend earlier production cuts through next year.

The national average for U.S. gas prices stood at about \$3.82 a gallon on Tuesday — about 30 cents higher than a month ago, according to motor club AAA. While today's prices at the pump remain far lower than they were last year, when energy costs soared worldwide in the months following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, experts say such a jump is unusual.

This year's record-breaking summer heat has also had an impact, driving up demand for air conditioning and forcing refineries to operate at reduced capacity.

The kingdom announced the extension in a statement on the state-run Saudi Press Agency, quoting an anonymous official in the Energy Ministry. The official added that the cut "can be extended or deepened" if the need arises.

"This additional voluntary cut comes to reinforce the precautionary efforts

made by OPEC+ countries with the aim of supporting the stability and balance of oil markets," the official said.

The move was widely expected by analysts.

Benchmark Brent crude traded Thursday at over \$80 a barrel.

A series of production cuts over the past year has failed to substantially boost prices amid weakened demand from China and tighter monetary policy aimed at combatting inflation. Brent has largely hovered between \$75 and \$85 a barrel since last October.

The Saudis are particularly keen to boost oil prices in order to fund Vision 2030, an ambitious plan to overhaul the kingdom's economy, reduce its dependence on oil and create jobs for a young population. The plans include several massive infrastructure projects, including the construction of a futuristic \$500 billion city called Neom.

Higher prices would also help Russian President Vladimir Putin fund his war on Ukraine, as Western countries have used a price cap to try to cut into Moscow's revenues.

Western sanctions mean Moscow is forced to sell its oil at a discount to countries like China and India. Its estimated export revenue fell by \$1.4 billion to \$13.3 billion in May, down 36% from a year ago, the International Energy Agency said in a report in June.

Faulty genes linked to obesity in women, had no effect in men

NEW DELHI, Aug 4 (Agencies): Faulty variants of three genes have been linked to obesity-related conditions, while having no effect on men, shedding light on new biological pathways underlying obesity, according to a new study.

"There are a million and one reasons why we should be thinking about sex, age, and other specific mechanisms rather than just lumping everyone together and assuming that disease mechanism works the same way for everyone," said senior author John Perry, a geneticist and professor at the University of Cambridge, UK.

The research team sequenced the exome - protein-coding part of the genome - of more than 4,14,000 adults from the UK Biobank study and looked at variants, or mutations, within genes associated with body mass index (BMI) in men and women, respectively. They have published their findings in the journal Cell Genomics.

Defective variants of three genes - DIDO1, PTPRG, and SLC12A5 - were linked to higher BMI in women, while having no effect on men. More than 80 per cent



of women with DIDO1 and SLC12A5 variants had obesity, their BMI values revealed.

While women carrying DIDO1 variants had stronger associations with higher testosterone levels and increased waist-to-hip ratio, both being risk indicators for obesity-related complications like diabetes and heart disease, those with SLC12A5 variants were found to have higher odds of having type 2 diabetes. Perry and team then repeated the process looking for age-specific factors influencing obesity. They searched for gene variants associated with childhood body size based on participants' recollections.

They identified two genes, OBSCN and MADD, previously not linked to childhood body size and fat.

While carriers of OBSCN variants had higher odds of having higher weight as a child, MADD variant carriers were associated with smaller body sizes, the

researchers said.

Further, the genetic variants acting on MADD were found to have no association with adult obesity risk, highlighting age-specific effects on body size.

"What's quite surprising is that if you look at the function of some of these genes that we identified, several are clearly involved in DNA damage response and cell death," said Perry.

"There's currently no well-understood biological paradigm for how DNA damage response would influence body size. These findings have given us a signpost to suggest variation in this important biological process may play a role in the etiology of obesity," said Perry.

Next, the research team hopes to replicate the study in a larger and more diverse population.

"We hope the study can reveal new biological pathways that may one day pave the way to new drug discovery for obesity," said Perry.

Study gives new insight into cause of inner-ear bone loss

OSAKA, Aug 4 (Agencies): A person's hearing and balance may be impacted by a number of issues and difficulties brought on by persistent middle ear inflammation.

A common issue is the development of cholesteatomas, which are aberrant ear collections of cells that, if addressed, can lead to bone erosion. Consequently, this may result in symptoms including vertigo, facial paralysis, hearing loss, and even

brain infection.

In a study published recently in Nature Communications, researchers from Osaka University have revealed the cause of cholesteatomas, which may help in developing new therapies for patients who are suffering from this disease.

Cholesteatomas are made up of cysts or bumps in the ear that consist of skin, collagen fibers, skin cells, fibroblasts, keratin, and dead tissue.

There are many theories on how these cholesteatomas can cause bone erosion, including the activation of cells responsible for the breakdown of the minerals and matrix of the bone, the presence of inflammatory markers and enzymes, and the accumulation and pressure from dead cells and tissues in the ear; however, the exact mechanism for the creation of cholesteatomas remains unknown.

A cholesteatoma can

still return or happen again even after its surgical removal, so it is important to know what is actually causing, says lead author Kotaro Shimizu.

To investigate this, researchers looked at human cholesteatoma tissues that were surgically removed from patients.

A process called single-cell RNA sequencing analysis was employed to identify cells responsible for triggering bone erosion; these were

called osteoclastogenic fibroblasts. This study demonstrated how these fibroblasts expressed an abundant amount of activin A, a molecule that regulates different physiological functions of the body. The presence of activin A is said to cause bone erosion through a process in which specialized cells initiate bone resorption through a process wherein the minerals and matrix of the bones are broken down and absorbed by the body.

7 exercises that can improve diabetes

NEW DELHI, Aug 4 (Agencies): Regular exercise is crucial for managing diabetes. Experts recommend at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise per week, which can improve insulin sensitivity and lower blood sugar levels.

Diabetes, or rather type 2 diabetes, is a lifestyle disorder that can be managed by making certain modifications.

It's important to monitor blood sugar levels before, during, and after exercise, especially for those on insulin.

Additionally, individuals with diabetes should be mindful of poten-

tial complications and adjust their exercise routines accordingly.

Engaging in physical activity helps manage blood glucose levels, maintain a healthy weight, and reduce the risk of heart disease and nerve damage.

A study published in the journal Diabetes Care found that people with type 2 diabetes who did aerobic exercise for 30 minutes, 5 days a week, for 12 weeks, had significantly improved blood sugar control.

Cycling: Cycling is a low-impact exercise that is beneficial for those with joint pain, a

common issue among people with diabetes. Regular cycling can help meet fitness goals while minimising strain on the joints.

Tai Chi: A study published in the journal Diabetes Care found that tai chi is an effective way to improve blood sugar control in people with type 2 diabetes.

Swimming: Aquatic activities like swimming provide a joint-friendly exercise option. They give your heart, lungs, and muscles a workout, while putting little stress on your joints. Studies have shown that aquatic exercise can help lower

blood sugar levels.

Aerobic dance: Fitness programs that combine dance and aerobic movements, like Zumba, can provide a fast-paced workout. These classes can motivate individuals to exercise regularly, improve their aerobic fitness, and aid in weight loss.

Weightlifting: Building muscle mass through weightlifting can increase the number of calories you burn each day. Strength training may also help improve blood sugar control.

Calisthenics: Calisthenics uses your own body weight to

strengthen your muscles. Common exercises include pushups, pullups, squats, lunges, and abdominal crunches.

Yoga: Yoga can help manage blood sugar, cholesterol levels, and weight. It might also help lower your blood pressure, improve the quality of your sleep, and boost your mood.

A review of studies published in the journal Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews found that yoga is an effective way to improve blood sugar control in people with type 2 diabetes.

Asian Champions Trophy: Drag-flickers Harmanpreet, Varun score braces as India hammer China 7-2 in opener

CHENNAI, Aug 4 (Agencies): Drag-flickers Harmanpreet Singh and Varun Kumar scored a brace each as India began their campaign at the Asian Champions Trophy with a 7-2 win against China here.

Seven of the goals in the game came from penalty corners, with world No. 4 India converting six of their nine and China finishing one of four.

Apart from skipper Harmanpreet (5th and 8th minutes) and Varun (19th and 30th), the other scorers for India were Sukhjjet Singh (15th), Akashdeep Singh (16th) and Mandeep Singh (40th). Interestingly, all the scorers for the hosts hail from Punjab. E Wenhui (18th) and Gao Jiasheng (25th) scored for



world No. 25 China.

The big win took three-time champions India to the top of the table, with Malaysia and

South Korea second and third, respectively. India will play Japan today.

Earlier, Firhan Ashari struck

twice as Malaysia defeated Pakistan 3-1. For Malaysia, Ashari scored in the 28th and 29th minutes, while Shello Silverius found the net in the 44th minute. Pakistan's lone goal was scored by Abdul Rehman in the 55th minute.

The opening match of this edition saw defending champions South Korea beat Japan 2-1 in a close contest.

It all began in the sixth minute when Ryoma Oooka netted the opening goal of the tournament before Cheoleon Park equalised in the 26th, as both the teams went into the halftime break locked at 1-1.

Just five minutes into the third quarter, JungHoo Kim put the Korean side in front.

Australia Open: Sindhu knocked out in quarterfinals

SYDNEY, Aug 4 (Agencies): Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu bowed out of the Australia Open after going down in straight games to USA's world number 12 Beiwen Zhang in the women's singles quarterfinals here on Friday.

Sindhu, who has slipped to world number 17th following a series of early exits, was looking to make her fourth semifinal of the season but found it tough to tame Zhang, losing 12-21 17-21 in 39 minutes in the USD 420,000 super 500 tournament.

In 10 past meetings, Sindhu had won six times against her opponent but she just couldn't get going on Friday against the 33-year-old Chinese-born American Zhang, who showed better control to come up trumps.

Sindhu had beaten compatriots Ashmita Chaliha and Aakarshi Kashyap in the first two rounds but her loss to

Zhang would come as a big disappointment as she heads to the World Championships in Copenhagen, Denmark to be held from August 21 to 27.

The 2019 world champion, Sindhu has been going through a lean patch since her recovery from an injury, and has repeatedly made early exits in as many as seven of the 12 BWF World Tour events this year.

Early this year, Sindhu had parted ways with Korea's Park Tae-Sang and then briefly worked with SAI coach Vidhi Chaudhary. She is currently training under new coach Muhammad Hafiz Hashim, the 2003 All England champion.

Among other Indians in fray, HS Pranoy will face top seed Anthony Ginting of Indonesia, while 2021 world championships silver medallist Kidambi Srikanth will take on compatriot Priyanshu Rajawat later in the day.

IPL: RCB name Andy Flower as head coach, part ways with Mike Hesson and Sanjay Bangar

BANGALORE, Aug 4 (Agencies): Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) on Friday, August 4 announced the appointment of Andy Flower as their head coach. The former Zimbabwe cricketer takes over from Sanjay Bangar, who served as the head coach of the former finalists in IPL 2023.

Andy Flower finds new home in the IPL in Bengaluru after having worked with Lucknow Super Giants over the last two years. Flower joined LSG when the franchise was making its debut in 2022. He worked closely with mentor Gautam Gambhir and captain KL Rahul and led them to the playoffs in their first two seasons. LSG roped in Australian great Justin Langer as their head coach after parting ways with Flower earlier in July.

Meanwhile, RCB also confirmed that they have parted ways with Mike Hesson and Sanjay Bangar.

Notably, Hesson was appointed to lead the RCB team management in 2019 and the New Zealand tactician led them to three successive playoffs before RCB narrowly missed out on the top 4 spot in IPL 2023.

"We are beyond thrilled to welcome ICC Hall of Famer and T20 World Cup-winning coach Andy Flower as the Head Coach of RCB Men's team," RCB said in a statement.

"Andy's experience of coaching IPL & T20 teams around the world, and leading his teams to titles at the PSL, ILT20, The Hundred and Abu Dhabi T10 will help in developing a championship-winning mindset and take RCB's Play Bold philosophy forward," it added.

Andy Flower is all set to work with Faf du Plessis, who has done a fine job since taking over as captain of RCB from Virat Kohli.

Flower, who scored more than 10,000 international runs in 63

Tests and 213 ODIs for Zimbabwe, has had an extensive coaching career.

In 2020, Flower was appointed as the head coach for Multan Sultans and St Lucia Zouks, and as an assistant coach Punjab Kings. The following year, he took up the role of head coach for Lucknow Super Giants. In 2023, he was appointed as the head coach for Gulf Giants in the International League T20.

During his tenure, Flower led the Multan Sultans to their first-ever playoffs in the 2020 season. He also guided the Zouks to their first-ever finals appearance in the Caribbean Premier League.

Before these achievements, Flower had a successful stint as the coach of the English cricket team from 2009 to 2014. Under his guidance, England won the 2010 ICC World Twenty20, and he became the second foreign coach in the team's history.

WI vs IND: India lose in their 200th T20I as West Indies secure 4-run win in low-scoring series opener

TAROUBA, Aug 4 (Agencies): India's 200th T20 International match ended in disappointment as the West Indies held their nerves to secure a 4-run win over Hardik Pandya-led side in the low-scoring series opener at the Brian Lara Stadium in Tarouba. With this victory, West Indies have taken a 1-0 lead in the five-match T20I series over India.

India got off to a poor start as the two openers struggled to get any bat on the ball cleanly. As the pressure was built up by the Windies bowlers, Shubman Gill decided to charge the spinner and was stumped well outside the crease. Ishan Kishan was also dismissed right after he scored a streaky boundary and it was Tilak Varma who changed the momentum as he thumped back-to-back sixes to get his first international runs.

Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma orchestrated a recovery, amassing 39 runs for the third wicket. Yadav scored 21 runs off as many deliveries, while Varma's impressive 39 off 22 balls featured a splendid six and three additional boundaries in his debut international innings.

Yadav's dismissal by Jason Holder just before the drinks break hindered India's momentum. Subsequently, the Indian batsmen encountered difficul-



ties, failing to establish a rhythm and falling short of the target. Hardik Pandya and Sanju Samson struggled with timing, accumulating double-digit scores alongside Axar Patel, but failing to prolong their innings.

In the final stages of the match, Arshdeep Singh showcased glimpses of his batting prowess. The last over, delivered by Romario Shepherd, saw Singh conceding only five runs, though he was run out on the penultimate ball as India's pursuit concluded.

Earlier, Yuzvendra Chahal immediately made his presence felt on the tour with a two-wicket haul, while Rovman Powell led from the front with a strong innings, guiding the West Indies to a total of 149 for six. Powell's contribution stood

out with his well-played 48 runs from 32 balls, accompanied by the impressive performance of Nicholas Pooran, who entertained the audience with his 41 runs from 34 balls.

The Indian pace duo of Mukesh and Arshdeep Singh couldn't apply much pressure on the West Indies' top order during the powerplay as the new ball didn't offer much assistance. It was in the fourth over that Hardik Pandya introduced spin, and Brandon King demonstrated his intent by hitting an inside-out six over cover off Axar Patel.

Yuzvendra Chahal, with figures of 2/24, joined the attack in the next over, creating trouble for the West Indies side. Kyle Myers struggled to connect with a slog sweep and was given an

lbw decision against Chahal's googly, although replays indicated the ball was missing the stumps. Despite this, Myers opted not to challenge the decision. In the same over, King failed to read a straight delivery from Chahal, resulting in an lbw dismissal.

Nicholas Pooran, who had recently impressed with a remarkable hundred in the Major League Cricket final, showcased his aggressive form from the beginning. He punished Axar Patel with a six and a four in the cow corner region, propelling the West Indies to 54 for two in six overs.

Rovman Powell took over from there, smashing three sixes and an equal number of fours to drive the innings forward. However, the West Indies team struggled to accelerate towards the end, managing to add only 42 runs off the final 30 balls while losing two wickets in the process. Arshdeep Singh also played a key role by taking two wickets for the visiting Indian team, finishing with figures of 2/31.

Brief scores:
West Indies: 149/6 in 20 overs (Powell 48, Pooran 41; Chahal 2/24, Arshdeep 2/31);
India: 145/9 in 20 overs (Varma 39; Holder 2/19).

5 sexual harassment complaints filed since 2018



NEW DELHI, Aug 4 (Agencies): As per the Sports Ministry, there have been only five complaints of sexual harassment filed by women complainants with their respective sports federations. This was stated in a written reply by Sports Minister Anurag Thakur in the Rajya Sabha after two MPs, including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, sought replies from the ministry over the safety of women athletes.

Kharge and Jose K Mani from Kerala Congress (M) asked for details on whether the sports federations have constituted an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC). They also asked for details of the number of vacant positions on the ICC panels of the federations. And finally, the actual number of complaints filed with the ICCs and details of the action taken on such complaints.

Thakur replied that 52 federations have constituted the ICC, adding that the ministry had also reminded all the federations — after several women wrestlers complained against the outgoing WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh — to re-examine their structures and policies as defined under the POSH Act.

Further, Thakur informed that since 2018, only five complaints were filed, which led to criminal cases in three complaints. The sixth is the complaint against Sharan Singh, in which the Delhi Police has filed a charge sheet.

Embarrassing moments for Team India as Yuzi Chahal walks in to bat against Windies; Pandya, Dravid wanted someone else to bat

Chahal hurriedly tries to go back to the dugout but is prevented by umpires

TAROUBA, Aug 4 (Agencies): There were some embarrassing moments for Team India in the first T20I match played against the West Indies at the Brian Lara Stadium in Tarouba.

One incident that grabbed everyone's attention from the match was spinner Yuzvendra Chahal walking in to bat at number 10 for India. In the final over of the match, India at 140/7, needed 10 runs to win. On the first ball of the over, Kuldeep Yadav was bowled by Romario Shepherd. With 10 needed off five deliveries, Chahal walked in to bat. This was followed by utter confusion as India captain Hardik Pandya and coach Rahul



Dravid wanted debutant Mukesh Kumar to walk in at number 10.

As soon as Chahal got to know about it by substitute Umran Malik, he walked off the field trying to return to the dugout. However, the two on-field umpires Gregory Brathwaite and Patrick Gustard asked Chahal to stay back and bat enforcing Law 25.2 that deals with

the beginning of a batter's innings.

"The innings of the first two batters, and that of any new batter on the resumption of play after a call of Time, shall commence at the call of Play. At any other time, a batter's innings shall be considered to have commenced when that batter first steps onto the field of play," the law reads.

Not that Mukesh Kumar would have made any great impact with the bat but the team management had little faith in the leg spinner's abilities with the willow. And what followed reflected poorly on Team India's management.

Netizens also had a field day reacting to the chaos.

Injured Tamim Iqbal Steps Down As Bangladesh Captain, To Miss Asia Cup

DHAKA, Aug 4 (Agencies): Left-handed batter Tamim Iqbal has decided to step down as Bangladesh ODI captain after a recurring back injury ruled him out of the upcoming Asia Cup. The continental ODI tournament will be held in Pakistan and Sri Lanka from August 31 to September 2. The 34-year-old, who had announced his shock retirement from ODIs during the home series against Afghanistan before withdrawing his

decision, will be eyeing the rubber against visiting New Zealand to get back into reckoning for the World Cup in India.

"I will step down as captain and concentrate as a player and try to give my best whenever the opportunity comes," Tamim said during a press conference.

"I believe injury is an issue. I took an injection (on July 28), but it is like a hit or miss. I have told them (the board) about the problem. I

have always kept the team over everything else. So keeping that in mind, stepping down is the best possible decision." Tamim had withdrawn his decision to retire the last time after an intervention from Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina but said this time he has informed her.

"I have spoken to the prime minister, and she understood," Tamim said.

Tamim also had dis-

cussions with Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan and cricket operations chairman Jalal Yunus at Hassan's residence regarding his decision.

Tamim has been suffering from an injury in his L4 and L5 (two lowest vertebrae of the lumbar spine) in his back and has been given two injections to relieve the pain. He will be able to return to training only by the end of this month.

Delhi court directs Bajrang to appear in defamation case



NEW DELHI, Aug 4 (Agencies): A local court in New Delhi has summoned Olympics bronze medallist wrestler Bajrang Punia in a defamation case. Metropolitan magistrate Yashdeep Chahal has summoned Bajrang as an accused on September 6 in a complaint filed by wrestling coach Naresh Dahiya.

In his plea, Dahiya stated that Bajrang had made defamatory remarks during a press conference on May 10 at Jantar Mantar wherein he accused Dahiya of being involved in a rape case in the Tis Hazari Court when in fact he was acquitted in 2019.

Dahiya's counsel further said that the alleged statement was made to discredit the coach as he was supporting the outgoing WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh in the sexual harassment complaint made by several women wrestlers. As a result, a lot of Dahiya's trainees left his akhada.

"It appears that the statement made in the press conference was a result of malicious intent and was not made in good faith. In view of the same, let accused, namely, Bajrang Punia be summoned," the order said.

Bajrang, Vinesh return
Meanwhile, Bajrang and Vinesh Phogat have returned from their training camps. While Vinesh, who pulled out of the ranking series in Bishkek last month, completed her training stint in Budapest, Bajrang came back from Kyrgyzstan a few days earlier to help out Anita Sheoran in her quest to become the WFI president.

DDC Chairman kick-start plantation drive at GDC Khour



TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 4: DDC Chairman Jammu, Bharat Bhushan Bodhi today initiated a plantation drive organized by the Social Forestry Department at Government Degree College Khour.

The event witnessed the presence of distinguished dignitaries including Vice Chairman DDC Jammu Suraj Singh Bhatt, DDC Akhnoor Sharda Bhatt,

Chairman MC Akhnoor Deepty Ram, SDM Akhnoor Anil Kumar Thakur, Regional Director Social Forestry Mohinder Gupta, DFO Alok Kumar Maurya, Principal GDC Akhnoor, T.K Sharma, Sarpanch Matto Swarn Singh, Sarpanch Chok Mandal Jyoti Devi, Sarpanch Lower Narayana Sharda Manhas, and R.O Jammu Virander Singh. During the occasion, DDC Chairman Bharat

Bhushan Bodhi commended Lt. Governor's concern regarding the plantation drive throughout the Union Territory. He highlighted that under the leadership of LG Manoj Sinha, J&K UT has achieved a remarkable target of planting 1.5 crore trees. He informed that the government has set a target of planting nearly 1.75 crore trees for the current year i.e., 2023-24.

Encouraging public participation, Bharat Bhushan urged everyone to be part of the drive and contribute to environmental preservation by planting trees in their surroundings. He emphasized the monsoon season as the opportune time for new plantation, with special attention given to selecting the appropriate variety of plants. Highlighting the importance of maintaining

a fine balance in the ecosystem, the Chairman emphasized that the green gold plays a crucial role, and increasing green cover will contribute to preserving ecological harmony on the planet. He assured that the drive wouldn't be limited to planting new trees only; rather, it would focus on providing proper care and attention to the saplings. Special measures such as regular watering, organic manure provision, tree guards, avoiding construction waste, and ensuring well-drained deep sandy soil were emphasized to ensure the healthy growth of the plants.

Bharat Bhushan called upon all PRI members, including DDCs, BDCs, Panchs, and Sarpanches, to unite their efforts in achieving the target of planting 1.75 crore trees in the Union Territory.

Notably, the plantation drive also saw enthusiastic participation from students of Government Degree College Akhnoor.

Residents express dissatisfaction over installation of smart meters



TOP NEWS REPORT

RS PURA, Aug 4: Residents of ShahDul-lah Kotli area continue their Dharna under the leadership of Narinder Sharma (Social Activist) and Mohd. Arif (Prominent Kissan Leader) against the PDD and LG administration. They expressed their dissatisfaction over the installation of smart meters, citing concerns about their ability to afford the high bills generated by these meters. Today Spokesperson J&K,

Partap Singh Jamwal alongwith Satvir Singh Manhas (Social Activist) join protest Dharna. Addressing the protesters, Partap Singh Jamwal said that the majority of households in the area belong to lower-income groups, and the financial burden imposed by the smart meters would be beyond their means.

Partap said that the electricity supply system has totally collapsed in Jammu plains and the smart meters have become a source of harassment for the electricity consumers.

Satvir Manhas said that the people of Jammu plains have been left with no option by the PDD but to face harassment with the overcharged electricity bills, and constant unscheduled power cuts.

He further added that the new meters will burden the poor with hefty electricity bills and demand a survey to assess people's ability to pay.

They demanded immediate roll back of the decision of the UT Government.

Army organises picnic for children of Dalhousie School

TOP NEWS REPORT

KUPWARA, Aug 4: Indian Army organised a picnic for children of Dalhousie School at Saran view point, Khumriyal wherein strength of 40 students attended the same alongwith teaching staff of the school.

The picnic started with the explanation of general area to students and teachers and subsequently different varieties of

games were also there to entertain students and which they played with full enthusiasm. Students participated in Karaoke and dance with zeal and showcased their talent.

Students enjoyed the natural view, games and other activities like boating which were placed at the view point and were really thankful to Indian Army for organising picnic and more such outings and picnics in future.

Chanchal Singh serves Langar to Amarnath Yatris

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 4: In a heart warming gesture of service, National Secretary, Baba Chanchal Singh participated in the langar organized by Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra Welfare Society to provide nourishment to the pilgrims of the Amarnath Yatra. The event was hosted with warm hospitality, and Shri Baba Chanchal Singh was warmly welcomed by Raj Kumar Goyal, the National Executive President of the Society.

Following the distribution of langar to the pilgrims, Baba Chanchal Singh expressed his appreciation for the remarkable arrangements that he witnessed. He lauded the efforts of the organizers and volunteers, highlighting the devotion and dedication with which they served the passengers. Notably, he commended the use of high-quality ingredients and the meticulous care that was evident in every aspect of the lan-



gar's operations.

Baba Chanchal Singh emphasized that the people of the state exhibit a deep-rooted commitment to welcoming and serving the Shri Amarnath Yatris every year. He acknowledged the contributions of individuals like Rajkumar

Goel, an honest businessman, and BJP Hinduist leader Raju Chandel. He underscored the principle that the spirit of service is a reflection of devotion to the divine. Expressing his personal contentment, Chanchal Singh shared his joy in contributing to Bhole Baba's

Langar. Despite his busy schedule involving visits to various Shiva temples and party engagements, he expressed his heartfelt dedication to this service, considering it akin to serving God himself. Rajkumar Goyal, National Working President, articulated the significance of extending hospitable care to pilgrims who come from across the country to partake in the Shri Amarnath Yatra. He emphasized that this langar is a golden opportunity provided by Lord Shiv Shankar to serve the devotees of Bhole Baba. The society has been hosting this service in Jammu and Kashmir for the past 26 years and remains committed to continuing this tradition.

National General Secretary Chandel shared that the former state president of Jammu and Kashmir, Baba Chanchal Singh, has been elevated to the esteemed position of National Secretary by the committee.

Vajr Division flags off a mountaineering expedition to Vajra Top

TOP NEWS REPORT

KUPWARA, Aug 4 : Vajr Division flagged off a mountaineering expedition to Vajra Top, the highest feature of Chinar Corps, at an altitude of 18044 Ft.

The team comprising 15 climbers would summit the majestic feature commemorating Azadi ka Mahotsava and Nation's 76th Independence Day.

The team of climbers would also get rocks and soil of Vajr Top as a contribution to 'Meri Mati Mera Desh'. The confidence and excitement of the team were electrifying and infectious. GOC Vajr Division conveyed his good wishes to the team and exhorted them to keep the spirit of adventure alive and carry the Nation's Flag to even greater heights.

Flag Off Ceremony was conducted in the backdrop of two days long Jashn-e-Gurez, which witnessed unprecedented tourist footfall and adventure sports such as Para Motor, Kis-



hanganga River Rafting and Hot Air Ballooning.

The event was also a precursor to inauguration of 'Shinon Meeras-Shina Cultural Centre', in coming weeks, which has been conceived and established by Indian Army in collaboration with civil administration and J&K Tourism to preserve, promote and celebrate the unique

culture, traditions and identity of Dard-Shina People. The sense of anticipation for the inauguration, was palpable amongst the crowd.

Gurez is unique in its symbiotic relationship between Indian Army and the people, as also synergy amongst stakeholders. This sentiment was evident during the ceremony.

Dogra Front & Shiv Sena workers protest against reinstatement of Art 370 in J&K

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 4: Under the astute leadership of President Ashok Gupta, the dedicated workers of Dogra Front & Shiv Sena staged a substantial protest rally within the city of Jammu. This protest was organized to voice strong opposition against the demand made by certain Kashmiri leaders for the reinstatement of Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir.

During the protest, party members unitedly raised compelling slogans, expressing their deep-seated disagreement with the Kashmiri leaders and condemning what they viewed as hypocritical behavior on their part.

The matter of Article 370 has reached a significant juncture, with a Constitution Bench led by Chief Justice of India, D.Y. Chandrachud, currently deliberating over a petition submitted by the Kashmiri leaders concerning Article 370.

Ashok Gupta, the



esteemed President of our party, articulated that during the time when Article 370 was in effect, the Supreme Court was devoid of jurisdiction in the former state. Any orders or verdicts issued by the court required ratification by the legislative assembly of Jammu & Kashmir, subject to the assembly's discretion. He pointed out the irony that the same leaders are now pursuing a different route by approaching the Supreme Court for a change in decision,

which he perceived as contradictory.

Gupta further underscored the potential consequences of reinstating Article 370, asserting that it could potentially lead to a resurgence of terrorism, stone-pelting, market closures, and loss of innocent lives in the region. He expressed concerns that the reintroduction of Article 370 might perpetuate a sense of historical injustice, particularly towards the Jammu region and its people, who felt marginalized during the pre-

vious era of Article 370.

Highlighting a crucial point, Ashok Gupta emphasized that the passing of the J&K Resettlement Bill by the NC government allowed individuals of Pakistani origin to reclaim properties in Jammu & Kashmir. He regarded this move as a significant security risk for both the state and the nation at large.

Article 370 is widely perceived as a historical source of secessionism, terrorism, nepotism, discrimination, and corrup-

tion, which collectively hindered the development of Jammu & Kashmir. Since its repeal three years ago, the region has embarked on a new trajectory of progress and growth.

The accelerated pace of development, improved socio-economic indicators, remarkable progress across all key sectors, substantial tourism influx, and increased industrial investments stand as testaments to the prevailing peace and prosperity in Jammu Kashmir.

A holistic developmental agenda is underway, signifying a departure from the past. The Kashmiri leaders' aspirations for a return to the past era are at odds with the prevailing momentum towards modernization and equitable progress.

The demonstration was attended by numerous party members, including Abhishek, Ramesh, Rahul, Sandhya, Sushil, Lovely, Vikky, Bhola, Naresh, and many others, all of whom contributed to the fervor of the protest.