

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, TUESDAY, AUGUST 08, 2023

Daily Evening Newspaper



ENTERTAINMENT | 6

I felt sense of purpose when I read 'Koi...Mil Gaya' script: Hrithik Roshan



NATIONAL | 7

Atishi to hold charge of services, vigilance; Delhi CM forwards file to L-G for approval: Govt sources

INTERNATIONAL | 8

Pakistan ex-PM Imran Khan kept in bug-infested jail cell, given C-class facilities: Report



e-paper: www.topnewsjk.in

RNI No. JKENG/2010/39369

Regd. No. JK-435

Vol.-14 Issue-216 Pages-12 Rs.-2/-

BRIEFLY

Fresh Batch of pilgrims leave for Amarnath Yatra from Pantha Chowk Base Camp in Srinagar

SRINAGAR, Aug 8 (Agencies): Another fresh batch of pilgrims left from Pantha Chowk base camp in Srinagar for their onward pilgrimage to Amarnath cave shrine on Tuesday morning.

The pilgrims left from the Pantha Chowk base camp to Baital and Pahalgam routes to reach the holy Amarnath Cave.

A batch of pilgrims had earlier left from Pantha Chowk base camp in Srinagar for their onward pilgrimage to Amarnath cave shrine on Monday morning.

The pilgrims were heard shouting 'Bam Bam Bhole' Slogans on their way to the holy shrine.

"The arrangements made for the yatra are very good. I have not seen such a facility anywhere, I would like to thank our Army for this. I will come here every year" Devi Lal Kumawat, a pilgrim said.

"Administration has helped in every way; local people are also very cooperative. Everyone should come and see Kashmir, we are very happy to be here," another pilgrim said.

The 62-day-long Amarnath Yatra, which began on July 1 will culminate on August 31, 2023.

Woman's body fished out from Jhelum river in Srinagar; suicide suspected

SRINAGAR, Aug 8 (Agencies): A woman's body was fished out of Jhelum river in Rajbagh area of Srinagar on Tuesday, reports said.

They said that the body was seen floating on the water body by some locals who informed the police.

The body was retrieved from the river and taken to a hospital for medico-legal formalities.

Some reports said that the woman, whose identity is not being revealed, had jumped into the river. Further details are awaited.

Village head dies in fire incident at Udhampur

JAMMU, Aug 8 (Agencies): A village panch died after a fire broke out at his residence in Udhampur's Panchari tehsil late at night Monday, officials said.

Officials identified the deceased as Panch Gyan Chand son of Dhani Ram of Panchayat

Lt Governor reviews preparedness for Independence Day celebration across the UT

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Aug 8: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday chaired a meeting with the senior Administrative and Police officers to review the preparedness for Independence Day celebration across Jammu Kashmir UT.

The meeting was attended by Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Administrative Secretaries; ADGPs; Divisional Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, SSPs and senior officers, in person and through video conferencing.

The Lt Governor took appraisal of the cam-



paigns and events planned by the District Administrations and Government Departments in the run-up to the grand celebration on Independence Day.

We all must work together as a single unit for the successful conduct of 'Meri Mera Desh', 'Har Ghar Tiranga' across the UT and 'Tiranga Yatra' in Jammu and Srinagar,

the Lt Governor said. I am confident that this year too people in huge numbers will participate in Independence Day events, he said.

He further directed the District Administration and departments to organise activities under 'Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan'.

The Lt Governor also asked for active involvement of common citi-

zens, Public representatives, Youth Clubs, Civil Society, Self Help Groups, NCC Scouts and Guides, Army veterans, ex-servicemen, prominent citizens and educational institutions in the celebration of Independence Day. He emphasised that the Independence Day celebration is not a government function

Turn to page 9

"Too Little Too Late" Say Judge Ganjoo's family as J&K Police reopen 1984 murder case

MUMBAI/SRINAGAR, Aug 8 (Agencies): After a fresh probe was initiated into the 1989 murder case of Kashmiri Pandit judge Neelkanth Ganjoo, his family has said that it is "a little too late" and they don't want "wounds to be scraped again."

On Monday, the State Investigation Agency (SIA) in Jammu and Kashmir initiated a fresh investigation into the 1989 murder of retired judge Neelkanth Ganjoo, marking a significant step towards seeking justice for the long-standing case.

"It's too little too late after 34 years of the incident. Now we don't want our wounds to

be scraped again," SK Ganjoo, the son of the slain former judge said.

Meanwhile, former Jammu and Kashmir Deputy Chief Minister, Kavinder Gupta, has welcomed the probe, stating, "It is good that he (Neelkanth Ganjoo) will get justice. The BJP government had already said that such things should be investigated. This was a conspiracy... The people should cooperate in this so that the conspiracy can be exposed... I appreciate the move."

Reacting to the reopening of the probe into the over three-decades case, Kashmiri Pandit writer and political activist Agnishekhar

said, "Genocide has happened to Kashmiri Pandits. This is one big thing, justice should be done for Neelkanth Ganjoo, who was reportedly killed by Yasin Malik, leader of Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF).

"For 34 years, we have been talking about investigation a probe a SIT. 1500 Kashmiri Pandits have been killed. Now we welcome this news of investigation after 34 years."

"It was a selective killing, kill one and scare ten. Neelkanth Ganjoo was a reputed personality," Agnishekhar said.

The SIT of Jammu and Kashmir Police has

Turn to page 9

Machail Mata Yatra progressing smoothly in Kishtwar

JAMMU, Aug 8 (Agencies): The annual Machail Mata yatra in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district is picking up pace with over 30,000 devotees already paying obeisance at the 9,705-feet-high shrine, officials said on Tuesday.

With the partially-constructed Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) road en route now accessible, the devotees can trek on foot to the shrine, cutting travel time by about two hours

and making the journey less fatiguing compared to the steep and challenging terrains, they said.

The 43-day yatra in the scenic Paddar valley of Kishtwar commenced on July 25 and is scheduled to conclude on September 5.

The footfall at the temple is likely to witness manifold increase with the arrival of holy "Charri Yatra" from Jammu to Machail on August 18.

"The yatra has been

transformed into a more comfortable, enjoyable and safe journey for on-foot pilgrims with the opening of the PMGSY road by district administration Kishtwar on August 5," an official said.

This year, the district administration led by Deputy Commissioner Devansh Yadav has taken far reaching measures to facilitate the devotees to make their yatra a lifetime memorable experience, he said.

Turn to page 9

Advisor Bhatnagar reviews performance, functioning of JKHC, JKHDC



Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Aug 8: Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar on Tues-

day chaired a meeting at Civil Secretariat here in which he conducted a comprehensive review of the performance and functioning of Jammu

and Kashmir Handicrafts (Sale and Export) Corporation (JKHC) and Jammu and Kashmir Handloom Development Corporation (JKHDC).

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Vikramjit Singh; Managing Director JKHC/JKHDC and other senior officers of both these corporations in person and through video conferencing.

During the meeting, the Advisor held an extensive assessment aimed to evaluate the progress made by these corporations in promoting and

Turn to page 9

2 BSF personnel, 21 civilians held for involvement in infiltration attempts Since 2021: Govt In Lok Sabha

NEW DELHI, Aug 8 (Agencies): Two Border Security Force (BSF) personnel and 21 civilians involved in infiltration attempts have been apprehended since 2021, Lok Sabha was informed on Tuesday. Union Minister of State

for Home Nisith Pramanik said that to stop infiltration along the Indo-Pakistan and Indo-Bangladesh borders, the government has adopted a multi-pronged approach which includes round-the-clock surveillance and patrolling on

the borders and establishment of observation post, increase in number of the BSF personnel, construction of border fencing and floodlighting.

Use of water crafts and boats and floating

Turn to page 9

SC dismisses plea on exemption of token tax

SRINAGAR, Aug 8 (Agencies): The Supreme Court has dismissed the plea of Government challenging the judgment passed by High Court directing Government not to demand further token tax from the outside sold vehicles.

The Apex Court dismissed the plea on latches as the judgment was passed way back in 2021 and Government of J&K approached the apex court on a belated stage with the application seeking con-



doning the delay in filing the Special Leave Petition before the high-

est court of the country. "There is an inordinate delay in filing the Special Leave Petitions. The same are dismissed on the grounds of delay. Pending applications stand disposed of", a bench of Justice Kishan Koul and Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia concluded.

Pertinently the High Court on November 9, 2021 while allowing the plea whereby the order of imposition of fresh token tax was directed to

Turn to page 9

Media in J&K hijacked by BJP and political syndicates: Harsh Dev

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 8: Emphasizing on media neutrality, Mr. Harsh Dev Singh, State President JKNPP and Former Minister said that several newspapers in J&K having become marketing agencies in the hand of ruling party and some political syndicates, the Fourth pillar of democracy was getting debilitated and weakened. He said that truth was being suppressed and factual details concealed by these media houses



only to subserve their personal interests for money and power and also to avail the ruling party's favours. Asserting that the media had a very significant role as an enabler of democracy and in facilitating a

better educated society, Mr. Singh said that only a selected media houses were acting as true guardians of democracy and were performing their role as watch-dogs to protect public interest. He said that such media houses needed to be complimented for their bold and fearless reporting thereby enabling the public to form a fair opinion about the functioning of the govt. He said that several newspapers and media houses had incurred the wrath of the

Turn to page 9

EDITORIAL

SAVE FUEL

Food acts like a fuel to run four lives. Let us understand what fuel is after all, and what is its utility in our lives. Fuel is the means or resource from which energy is obtained. It is the basic element of any country's economy. The more fuel the country has today, the more developed that country is. We need various things to keep ourselves alive, the most important of which is food. We need fuel for cooking. Therefore, fuel is very important and its role is indispensable. For example, food acts like fuel in the human body. It gives energy to the human body as well as helps in the growth and maintenance of life of human beings and animals. Fuel means a substance that is burned to provide nuclear energy, heat, or power. When materials such as coal, wood, oil or gas burn, heat is released. The types of fuel are methanol, gasoline, diesel, propane, natural gas, hydrogen etc. Nuclear power is generated by burning plutonium. By fuel efficiency or fuel economy, we can measure how long any vehicle can travel, which is the opposite of fuel consumption. Fuel consumption is the amount of fuel a vehicle uses to travel a particular distance. Fuel efficiency is measured in kilometers per litre. The efficiency with which a fuel converts energy is known as fuel efficiency. Due to the increasing population, the demand for fuel is also increasing day by day. In view of the requirement of increasing amount of fuel equally for the production of goods and other facilities, there is a need to find innovative means. Otherwise, the way we are using fuels unnecessarily, the day is not far when these natural fuels will run out from the earth. And at the same time, the balance of nature will also deteriorate due to this. Saving fuel is as important as producing fuel. Saves fuel, also saves our money. Fuel conservation should be practiced as a daily habit. Fuel is needed almost everywhere in cooking, in vehicles and many other things. Sadly nowadays the amount of fuel is decreasing day by day and for that reason, fuel is imported in India at high prices which can really affect the economy of India and that is also not good, that we are buying products from other countries.

We should save fuel, we should follow some important rules, some driving guidelines like car driving. Car pooling can be of great help in conserving fuel. If we are going to a single destination then we can go in one vehicle instead of 2-3. This will not only save fuel but also reduce pollution and stop traffic jams.

Testing time lies ahead for the 'mother of democracy'

By: Aakar Patel

Democracies are fragile", wrote Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, academics and best-selling authors, in their 2018 book *How Democracies Die*. India is no exception. Of the three pillars that contain and uphold democracy, the judiciary — from the district court in Surat to the Supreme Court in New Delhi — has worked on how the balance is maintained.

One more test of its fragility or strength will play out from August 8 in the Lok Sabha, when the no-confidence motion tabled by the Opposition now in a newly-formed alliance, INDIA, is inevitably defeated. The test, therefore, is neither in fact that the motion was tabled, nor in its predictable defeat. The test will be on the quality of the debate in the Lok Sabha, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi will face Rahul Gandhi, now that his disqualification has been rescinded by the Speaker, Om Birla. The disqualification of the Wayanad MP was based on the Surat court's conviction and two-year sentence that automatically triggered his exclusion under the Representation of the People Act 1951.

Disqualifying Rahul Gandhi within 26 hours of the Surat court's verdict was an act as much in indecent haste as it was not in good faith. The Surat court had concluded that the maximum sentence should be imposed on Rahul Gandhi for a statement that was as tasteless as it was a meaningless, sweeping generalisation. As it happens, the two-year jail term handed down to Rahul Gandhi as an MP triggered a harsher punishment; under Election Commission rules the Wayanad MP was dis-

qualified for eight years as a contestant in any election.

Acting in good faith, lifting the disqualification before the no-confidence motion debate was politically necessary for the ruling BJP. A head-to-head debate between Mr Modi and Rahul Gandhi will be the high point of the debate. Mr Modi has managed to duck being present in the Lok Sabha for most of the Monsoon Session, even as the INDIA alliance demanded that he speak on the now three-month horrific carnage raging in Manipur. The Speaker, having wrestled with the Opposition over the duration of a debate on Manipur, where the BJP is also in power, the formality of a no-confidence motion is a critical moment for Prime Minister Modi.

Having declared that India is the "mother of democracy", it is up to Mr Modi to demonstrate that it is indeed so. Democracies are not only about winning majorities that put the BJP in power in the "double-engine" model that Mr Modi values so much. Democracies are also about debate and accountability.

The Supreme Court verdict and the rescinded disqualification allows Rahul Gandhi to be a candidate in the 2024 general election. The sooner Rahul Gandhi returns to the Lok Sabha the better.

The Speaker and his office have set a seriously bad precedent for future office-holders intent on acting in bad faith. Mr Birla is singularly partial to a large number of alleged wrong-doers even as he has been extraordinarily tough on Rahul Gandhi. Under Mr Birla's watch, there are some 116 MPs from the BJP, 29 MPs from the Congress, 13 MPs from the Janata Dal (United), 10 from the DMK and nine from the Trinamul Congress

who have criminal cases against them. It can be safely assumed that many on this list, put together by Association of Democratic Rights in 2019, long before Rahul Gandhi was found guilty, continue to serve as MPs because there are stay orders issued by a judicial authority pending final disposal of the case.

The neutrality of the Speaker is a difficult matter; it has been tested in India's Parliament. It cost Somnath Chatterjee his membership of the CPI(M) when he refused to resign from his post as his party wanted him to do, in line with its withdrawal of support for the Manmohan Singh-led United Progressive Alliance government over the civil nuclear deal with the United States in 2008. Mr Chatterjee was adamant that as Speaker, he belonged to no party. Mr Birla is being tested against Mr Chatterjee's standard.

The larger question that the Supreme Court in its judgment has raised is about the rights of the people. For the Supreme Court, Wayanad's non-representation because of the automatic disqualification triggered by the Surat Court decision was a "relevant factor". Rightly so; the automatic disqualification penalised people living within the Wayanad constituency and not only the MP, an individual.

The Supreme Court has raised another question: can the judiciary fail to justify its decision? Clearly, the apex court felt that it was irrational of the Surat court to hold the position that Rahul Gandhi was a habitual offender, because "except the admonition to the petitioner by this court (Supreme Court) in a contempt proceeding, no other reason has been granted by the

learned trial judge". In doing so, the Supreme Court has drawn attention to the duration of the punishment and an alternative scenario had the Surat court handed down a punishment for 729 days instead of 730 days.

The over-the-top labelling of Rahul Gandhi confirms that in India's democracy today, the ruling side considers the Opposition, especially the Congress Party, as an enemy, an object to be despised and hated rather than a rival and a competitor. There is serious danger to the institutional structure as well as the expectation that those who work within these institutions will act, at all times, in good faith. The issue is not limited to the efficacy of the mechanism of balance and the checks that hold it in place; it goes deeper than that.

The 13 cases of criminal defamation filed against Rahul Gandhi are about the BJP's perception on the distance that separates Narendra Modi from the rest of his class, that is, MPs of the Lok Sabha. Its obsession with power and the prestige that cocoons the powerful have been on display for a while.

To them, Mr Modi is not first among equals, which is how parliamentary democracy defines the office and the office-holder. To the BJP, Mr Modi is the person who keeps it in power. He is not just another political leader, with a fixed term in office. He is so up and above the rest, so far removed from the ranks of mere MPs, like Rahul Gandhi, that he has acquired cult status. Democracies are cruel in that everyone is equal and no one is special. Any exercise, direct or indirect, that attempts to make an individual special increases the danger to the fragility of democracy.

In order to Create a Better Future, We have to develop Interest in Reading Books among Children

By: Vijay Garg

By the way, the word library itself is a word with a wide meaning. The library is also called the treasure of knowledge, which has a great contribution in the progress and development of human life. From the past, the school education department has been giving a lot of attention by establishing libraries in primary schools across the state. Efforts are being made to connect children with books, which is commendable. There should be a separate room for the library. It is said that when a child starts reading books outside the syllabus, i.e. joins the library, he goes on the path of becoming a scholar. If young children are interested in reading books through inspiration at the primary level, then it will be a golden thing. Library corners have come into existence for every school in Punjab. For this work, the teachers need to contribute their due. First of all, if possible, there should be a separate room for the library in the school,

so that the children can sit there and study the books comfortably. Increases The collection Reading books increases children's vocabulary. They have a strong grasp of knowledge. Vocabulary growth is helpful for exams. Young children must attend the morning meeting. It is a subject of general knowledge and epistemology. In case of having external knowledge, children can answer every question in a correct way, so the support of books is very important. Significant steps will have to be taken. If a better future is to be created, children will have to develop interest in reading books. Proper arrangements have to be made for them. children Effective steps have to be taken to connect with the library. The support of children's parents, SMC committees and social support organizations etc. can also be taken for this work, which is more needed these days. Make sure to read the books. Children should be encouraged to read by taking them to the library and telling them about its benefits.

Children should be taught stories, jokes and riddles in the early stages. This will increase their interest and interest in reading. Essay composition for fourth and fifth class children, stories, essays and poems etc. should be given for reading. Books should be issued to children throughout the week. Be sure to read them as well. After this reaction can be taken. Necessary guidance for this work should be provided by the class in-charge and library in-charge teacher. Increase in mental and intellectual capacity Books are a means of learning as well as enjoyment for children. Children who read books never get bored. With this, concentration of reading is made in children. Going forward with this It is very helpful for their studies. Books are guides for children. By connecting with the library, children are fascinated by many literary forms such as novels, monologues, travelogues, essays, poems, stories. It teaches the test of successful living. Books increase the mental and intellectual

capacity of children. Books that teach life examination Along with studying the syllabus, it is also very important to develop moral qualities in children. Books fulfill this function. Children are taught a good way of life They create a sense of decency in them. To become a good speaker on the stage, the study of knowledge-enhancing books is very important. This interest should be developed at the primary level itself. The child will develop leadership qualities in the future and will be able to lead well. The need for inspiration in the early stages Children need inspiration in the early stages. Later they will like to read themselves. Books are our true friends. Their knowledge is practical and permanent. To provide children with guidance for the future are a good resource.

*(Vijay Garg Retired
Principal Educational
Columnist Malout
Punjab)*

I felt sense of purpose when I read 'Koi...Mil Gaya' script: Hrithik Roshan

The film clocks 20 years on August 8

His blockbuster debut "Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai" was behind him and the road ahead stretched uncertain for its star Hrithik Roshan as he tried to keep up with audience's expectations. That was when "Koi... Mil Gaya" came along, an idea he says excited him instantly and helped "break the loop" he was caught in.

Twenty years after the release of the film, centred around a friendly alien, broke new ground in Hindi cinema, Hrithik recalls in detail how it turned his career around when he was in a lean phase and wondering what lay next.

"When my father shared the idea of 'Koi...Mil Gaya', it excited me instantly. It had all the elements that motivated me as an actor. I felt a sense of purpose when I read the script, because here the script was the star, not me. Realising that gave me a sense of freedom. I was finally breaking the loop and nourishing the desires of the actor within me," Hrithik told agency.

He said the film, aimed at children and adults alike, gave Indian storytellers hope to view "sci-fi as a genre that was commercially viable in India".

Directed by veteran filmmaker Rakesh Roshan, "Koi... Mil Gaya" released on August 8, 2003, three years after he made "Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai",



his son's debut film.

"Koi...Mil Gaya" won me over and being part of this film was a wholehearted decision. After "Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai", I had put a lot of pressure on myself to keep up with all the expectations people and the audience had. It was my overthinking mind that was driving my career. I found myself in a loop," Hrithik said.

"Koi...Mil Gaya" revolved around Rohit Mehra (Hrithik), a developmentally challenged young man, and his chance encounter with an alien called Jaadoo who gives him powers. Also starring Preity G Zinta and

Rekha, it was an instant box office success.

Hrithik also acted alongside then child actors Hansika Motwani, Omkar Purohit, Jai Choksi, Mohit Makkad and Pranita Bishnoi.

The 49-year-old star said the film was created as a community experience and its success was a result of the team effort.

"Koi...Mil Gaya" was a movie made for kids and families to have a community experience. The concept was very fresh... Once the film was released, it spoke to the audience at an emotional level, with the mother-son track, Rohit and Nisha's

(Preity) pure friendship, the child artists and Johnny Lever's quirky part... It all added up and contributed to the film's success," he said.

Rakesh Roshan roped in Australian artists James Callner and Lara Denman to create Jaadoo and there was minimal use of VFX in the rest of the film.

According to Hrithik, the team would take close to six hours to shoot scenes featuring the alien, which was an animatronic character (an electro-mechanical puppet), operated via remote control.

"During the shoot, we would often take four to six hours for the scenes featuring Jaadoo as his eyes and hands needed to be in perfect sync with the situation. We all had to be patient and it was all a part of teamwork to get each scene right," the actor recalled.

The love "Koi... Mil Gaya" received motivated Rakesh Roshan and Hrithik to take the story forward as a film franchise with "Krrish" (2006) and "Krrish 3" (2013).

There has been a lot of speculation around the upcoming instalment of the franchise.

"We are taking this franchise forward responsibly. There is a lot of hard work ongoing to ensure the franchise is at par with global standards," he added.

Elnaaz Norouzi most excited about acting with Nawaz in Sangeen



Iranian actress Elnaaz Norouzi, who has made a place in Bollywood with her talent, said she is very excited to work with Nawazuddin Siddiqui for the second time in the film Sangeen.

Elnaaz, who impressed everyone with her debut show Sacred Games, is slowly carving a niche for herself in the indus-

try.

The actress, who will next be seen in Made In Heaven Season 2, is very excited for the show.

About her future projects, Elnaaz said: "I will be soon seen in a movie titled Sangeen with Nawazuddin. Then there is a dance number in Telugu film Devil. There is also a

special appearance in a Bollywood film. I have a series coming up next month. All I want to say is I am so thankful and grateful to my fans who have accepted me in their country and the Bollywood world."

About her character in Made in Heaven Season 2, she said, "Zoya changed my character after meeting me. Earlier, she had written an Indian character but after meeting me she said she wanted to change my character. As I am from Iran, so it worked. It was fun to play this character because at some places I resonated with the character and at some places I am totally different from her. Some things were easy to act on while some were difficult. I am very excited to see the reaction of the people to my character."

About the most challenging role till date, the actress said, "The most challenging role for me has been Sara Khan, the wild butterfly in Sony Liv show Chutpah. I had to seduce the camera for this character. It was tough in the beginning but eventually it became better."

Shrenu Parikh completes a decade in the industry

Zee TV's Maitree follows the journey of Maitree (Shrenu Parikh) and Nandini (Bhaweeka Chaudhary), who have gone through many ups and downs in life together.

Shrenu recently completed more than a decade in the television industry.

Shrenu says, "Not everyone knows, but I started my career with a modelling assignment, for which I got only Rs 700. Since I was five years old, I have always wanted to become an actor. I would enact scenes from many shows and mimic the actors, thinking of myself as an actor. No one actually knew me back then, but through a lot of hard work and dedication, I feel I have made a comfortable space for myself in the television industry. However, I am not taking it for granted,



and even after a decade in the industry, I will continue to entertain viewers by experimenting with my characters. I remember that in the initial days, I used to

travel from Vadodara to Mumbai, give six-eight auditions and return to my hometown the same day. My parents also used to travel with me every time."

Emily Blunt talks about missing out on playing Black Widow, what she thinks of Scarlett Johansson

Hollywood star Emily Blunt could've joined the Marvel Cinematic Universe as Natasha Romanoff, the Black Widow, in Iron Man 2.

The actress is now opening up about what she thinks of Scarlett Johansson who ended up playing the role across multiple films.

"Come on, the best girl got it," Blunt said on the Happy Sad Confused podcast about Johansson adding that she was "amazing", reports Deadline.

Johansson would go on and reprise the superhero role in films like 'The Avengers' (2012), 'Captain America: The Winter Soldier' (2014), 'Avengers: Age of Ultron' (2015), 'Captain America: Civil War' (2016), 'Avengers: Infinity War' (2018), 'Captain Marvel' (2019), 'Avengers: Endgame' (2019) and the standalone



'Black Widow' movie in 2021.

Furthermore, Blunt has been rumored to have been offered other roles in the MCU.

Roles that Blunt was reportedly up for included 'Captain Marvel' which ultimately went to Brie Larson, Peggy Carter who Hayley Atwell ended up playing and Sue Storm from 'Fantastic Four' which went to Jessica Alba and Kate Mara in different adaptations of the franchise.

"Rumors. Talk. Queries. That kind of thing," Blunt said of the rumours noting that she never met with producers or directors of the films.

Since 'Black Widow' first made an appearance in the MCU in 2012, Blunt has starred in films like 'The Five-Year Engagement' (2012), 'Looper' (2012), 'Edge of Tomorrow'

(2014), 'Into the Woods' (2014), 'Sicario' (2015), 'The Huntsman: Winter's War' (2016), 'The Girl on the Train' (2016), 'A Quiet Place' (2018), 'Mary Poppins Returns' (2018), 'A Quiet Place Part II' (2020), 'Jungle Cruise' (2021) and most recently 'Oppenheimer'.

In an interview from 2019, Blunt said on the Howard Stern show on SiriusXM that she was "contracted to do Gulliver's Travels" in 2010 despite not wanting to do it.

"It was a bit of a heart-breaker for me because I take such pride in the decisions that I make, and they mean so much to me, the films that I do, so that was tough," she said of turning down the Marvel role. "They (Fox) kind of have a bit of a hold over you. There were other movies that I would want to do."

Pariva Pranati loves cats



Pariva Pranati, who portrays Vandana Wagle in Sony SAB's Wagle Ki Duniya, is known for her deep affection for cats.

With International Cat Day just around the corner, Pariva talks about her connection with these charming creatures.

She says, "I've had a deep love for animals since my childhood. I would rescue any creature in need, from squirrels to birds.

My first encounter with rescuing a cat was in Film City, and since then, I've continued to rescue many others, ensuring they find loving homes through adoption.

I have around six at home, and they are incredibly warm and welcoming.

They have become a source of solace that immediately eases my worries the moment I step through the door."

Arjun Bijlani speaks about women's safety



Zee TV's recently launched show presents a modern take on the Shiv-Shakti dynamic and the concept of healing through love. In a recent gripping action sequence, Arjun's character, Shiv, fearlessly takes on a bunch of goons who are seen eve-teasing Shakti.

Inspiring others to create a secure environment for women and upholding their honour, Arjun Bijlani says, "The only reason evil in the world grows is when good people choose to remain silent or passive. It is essential for each of us to display courage by taking a stand against all forms of harassment we see around us and definitely raising our voice when a matter concerns the dignity and safety of women. When four hands rise to tarnish a woman's honour, ten hands should unite to protect and preserve it. Only by standing united can we sculpt a society where safety and respect become an inherent norm and our women can live fearlessly."

Tanvi Dogra talks about her character Neetii in Colors' 'Parineetii'

Colors' show Parineetii narrates the story of two best friends, Parineet and Neetii, who discover that they are married to the same man, leading to a complicated love triangle.

Talking about her character, Tanvi Dogra, who plays Neetii, says, "When I agreed to be part of Parineetii, I didn't know the extent of Neetii's transformation. It has been an incredible journey, peeling away the layers of her character.

Neetii is a unique persona, exuding joy and independence while also possessing a cunning side. Playing her has been a refreshing and I find immense joy in exploring her complexities. As an actor, I'm thrilled to witness Neetii's journey and



how her relationships with other characters

evolve throughout the show."

PM Modi takes dig at opposition alliance ahead of no-confidence motion

Modi noted that some opposition members had described the voting in Rajya Sabha as a semi-final before the 2024 Lok Sabha polls as he exuded confidence about the BJP's prospects.

NEW DELHI, Aug 8 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday that the no-confidence motion brought by the opposition is a reflection of mutual distrust among INDIA bloc parties as they want to test who is with their proposal and who is not, sources said.

In his address to party MPs at the BJP parliamentary meeting, he described the opposition alliance as 'ghamandia' (marked by arrogance) and congratulated the party's Rajya Sabha members for the "semi-final" win in voting on the Delhi services bill.

Modi noted that some opposition members had described the voting in Rajya Sabha as a semi-final before the 2024 Lok



Sabha polls as he exuded confidence about the BJP's prospects in the national elections.

The Delhi services bill secured parliamentary approval on Monday after the Rajya Sabha

passed the contentious measure that will give the Centre control over bureaucracy in the national capital, with the BJP-led NDA thwarting opposition challenge in the keenly-watched

numbers game.

With the ruling party certain to defeat the no-confidence motion in Lok Sabha, where it enjoys a strong majority, Modi told party MPs hit "sixers" on the last ball before the 2024 polls.

He also referred to his 2018 speech in which he had wryly wished to the Opposition to bring a no-confidence motion against his government in 2023.

In a swipe at opposition parties, the prime minister said their leaders speak of social justice but harmed it most with their dynastic, appeasement and corrupt politics.

He reiterated his call for corruption, and dynastic and appeasement politics to quit India.

Couple among three dead in Vizag as speeding car hits two-wheeler



VISAKHAPATNAM, Aug 8 (Agencies): Three people, including a couple, died here when a speeding car with six partying youngsters onboard allegedly crashed into a two-wheeler, police said on Tuesday. The accident occurred late on Monday night near Radisson Hotel on the beach road leading to Bheemili from the port city.

"Out of the six persons in the car, one person died and the couple going in the opposite direction on their two-wheeler also died," Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Vidyasagar Naidu told agency.

Meanwhile, one more person travel-

ling in the car was injured and admitted to the hospital while the remaining four are absconding, Naidu said.

According to police, the occupants in the car, who are unemployed locals, were in an inebriated condition. Police recovered beer bottles from the car.

Prior to the crash, the six persons travelling in the car grabbed a person's mobile phone as he reportedly saw one of them throwing out a beer bottle.

Naidu said that they thought the bystander could inform the police so they grabbed his mobile phone but just a few moments later, the accident occurred.

He said the accused persons have been identified and noted that the accident happened due to rash driving in a drunken condition.

"Absconding persons will be taken into custody while a case has been registered under IPC Section 304 (punishment for culpable homicide not amounting to murder)", said Naidu.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao's Ambassador Accuses In-Laws Of Dowry Harassment

GWALIOR, Aug 8 (Agencies): A brand ambassador of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Rani Rana, a woman wrestler accused her in-laws of dowry and physical harassment in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior district, a police official said.

The wrestler, Rani Rana, a resident of Suriya Pura in Murar locality, lodged a complaint at Murar police station. Acting on it, the police registered a case under various sections and started an investigation into the matter.

The wrestler alleged that she was beaten by her in-laws for the dowry and was physically harassed that adversely affected her game as well.

City Superintendent of Police (CSP) Vinayak Shukla told ANI, "Wrestler Rani Rana, who is also the brand ambassador of Beti Bachao and Beti Padhao had filed a complaint against her in-laws for demanding dowry and physical harassment. Acting on it, the police registered a case against her husband, mother-in-law and father-in-law under various sections and started investigating the matter soon."



The victim's husband is a director of a gym and had been demanding money from her to open a gym and she was beaten up for not providing the money. "The case has been registered and further legal action will be taken into the matter soon, added Shukla. Notably, Rani Rana started her wrestling career with great struggles and brought laurels not only to her family but also to Gwalior in the country. She has won many medals, including Gold in the National Wrestling Tournament.

IIT-Hyderabad woman student from Odisha dies by suicide in hostel room

HYDERABAD, Aug 8 (Agencies): A 21-year-old postgraduate student of IIT-Hyderabad allegedly died by suicide in her hostel room on the institute's campus in Sangareddy district of Telangana, police said on Tuesday.

This is the second suicide of an IIT-Hyderabad student in a span of a month.

In the latest incident, the first-year M-Tech student, hailing from

Odisha, who had joined the course on July 26, was found hanging from the ceiling fan in the hostel room on Monday night by some of her classmates, they said.

According to a police official of Sangareddy Rural police station, some worried classmates went to the room and found her hanging after she did not come for lunch and dinner on Monday.

The IIT authorities

informed the police about the incident and a case was registered.

In a suicide note purportedly written by the student, she mentioned about "some financial problem in the family" and reportedly took the extreme step as she was depressed about it, police said.

In July, a second-year B-Tech student of IIT-Hyderabad allegedly died by suicide in Visakhapatnam.

Atishi to hold charge of services, vigilance; Delhi CM forwards file to L-G for approval: Govt sources

Atishi was given additional charge of the revenue, planning and finance departments in June after Saxena approved a proposal to rejig the Cabinet.

NEW DELHI, Aug 8 (Agencies): Delhi Minister Atishi will be given additional charge of the services and the vigilance departments, a government source said, with Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal forwarding a proposal to L-G VK Saxena for approval.

The move comes a day after the Delhi services bill secured parliamentary approval after the Rajya Sabha passed the measure that will give the Centre control over the bureaucracy in the national capital.

The two portfolios were earlier held by Ati-



shi's Cabinet colleague Saurabh Bharadwaj.

Atishi was given additional charge of the revenue, planning and finance departments in June after Saxena approved a proposal to rejig the Cabinet. These three depart-

ments were earlier with Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot.

Atishi -- the only woman minister in the Delhi Cabinet -- will now hold 14 portfolios, the highest among all ministers in the city government.

Kerala Assembly unanimously passes Resolution against Uniform Civil Code

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, Aug 8 (Agencies): The Kerala assembly on Tuesday unanimously adopted a resolution urging the BJP-led central government to refrain from implementing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in the country.

Earlier in February, the Mizoram assembly had unanimously adopted an official resolution opposing any move to implement the UCC in the country.

On Tuesday, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan moved a resolution in the House against the UCC by terming it a "unilateral and hasty" action on the part of the Centre.

Vijayan contended that the UCC as visualised by the Sangh Parivar was not according to the Constitution, rather it was based upon the Hindu legal text 'Manusmriti'.

"That has been made clear by Sangh Parivar long back. They are not trying to implement something that is there in the Constitution. There is no need to mis-



understand it like that," he said.

Vijayan contended that the ruling BJP government at the Centre only criminalised the divorce laws under the Muslim personal law, but has not done anything to ensure the safety and security of women or take steps for the welfare of the marginalised.

After the resolution was moved by the Chief Minister, several amendments and modifications were suggested by the Congress-led opposition UDF that welcomed the Left government's move.

After taking into account the modifications suggested, the Chief Minister read out the finalised resolution in which he said that the state assembly was con-

cerned and dismayed with the Centre's move to impose UCC as it was a unilateral and hasty decision that would take away the secular character of the country.

Vijayan said the Constitution refers to having a general civil law only as a directive principle and it is not mandatory.

He said that when the freedom of religion is guaranteed under Article 25 of the Constitution and includes the right to follow and practice religious personal rules, any legislation prohibiting that would be a violation of the constitutional right.

The Chief Minister further contended that Article 44 of the Constitution merely states that the State shall endeavour

to establish a common civil code.

He said that any such move has to be preceded by debates and discussions to create a consensus among the people and not doing so was concerning.

He said that the Kerala assembly too shares this concern and believes that the imposition of UCC is a "non-secular move" to attack the unity of the people and the nation as a whole.

Vijayan said that even in the Constituent Assembly debates, there were differences of opinion with regard to the UCC and B R Ambedkar's position at that time was that the Parliament can try to bring a general civil law, but he did not insist that it should be compulsory. "He only indicated a possibility," the Chief Minister contended.

The CPI(M)-led government's decision to move the resolution came amid an ongoing campaign against the UCC by both the ruling Left and the opposition UDF in the state, as well as various religious

organisations in the state.

Both fronts had organised seminars separately in Kozhikode recently against the UCC, in which the representatives of various religious outfits took part.

The Law Commission of India had last month received submissions from the public regarding suggestions for implementing the UCC in the country.

In a recent statement, the Chief Minister alleged that the "electoral agenda" of the BJP was behind raking up the issue of the UCC and urged the Centre to withdraw from the move to impose it.

Vijayan, who is also a senior leader of the CPI(M), has said the Centre's move can only be seen as a plan to implement the "majority communal agenda of 'one nation, one culture' by wiping out the cultural diversity of the country".

"The Central government and the Law Commission should withdraw from the move to impose the Uniform Civil Code," he has said.

Man Dies By Suicide After Wife Asks For Divorce In Maharashtra's Nagpur

NAGPUR, Aug 8 (Agencies): A 26-year-old man allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself at his house in Maharashtra's Nagpur city, after his wife sought to divorce him, police said on Tuesday.

The incident occurred at Ranteke Nagar under Ajni police station area

on Monday afternoon, an official said.

Mohit Sukhchand Choudhary, a native of Balaghat district of neighbouring Madhya Pradesh, hanged himself from the ceiling at his rented accommodation, he said.

The victim, who worked as a painter, got married last month. But



the couple fought and argued frequently, and his wife returned to her

parents' house, the official said. Choudhary's wife

eventually sought a divorce from him, he said.

The police recovered a suicide note from the spot, in which Choudhary cited his wife's intention to divorce him as the reason for the extreme step, the official said, adding that a case of accidental death has been registered.

Centre Invites Applications For Chief Information Commissioner Post

NEW DELHI, Aug 8 (Agencies): The Centre has sought applications from eligible candidates for the post of the Chief Information Commissioner in the Central Information Commission (CIC).

Transparency watchdog CIC is headed by the Chief Information Commissioner and can have a maximum 10 Information Commissioners.

At present, Y K Sinha is working as the Chief Information Commissioner. He is due to complete his tenure in early October, an official



said.

"It is proposed to appoint the Chief Information Commissioner in the Central Information Commission," an order issued by the Union Personnel Ministry said.

Persons who have attained the age of 65 years shall not be eligible for appointment, it said.

The Right to Information (RTI) Act provides that the Information

Commissioner shall be a person of eminence in public life with wide knowledge and experience in law, science and technology, social service, management, journalism, mass-media or administration and governance.

Persons fulfilling the criteria and interested for appointment to the post of Chief Information Commissioner may send their particulars in a prescribed proforma up to 5 pm, August 29, 2023, said the order dated August 7.

"Persons, who are serving under the state/

central government or any other organisation, should send their particulars through proper channel (administrative ministry/department/state/UTs) only before the due date," it added.

The Personnel Ministry had in December last year sought applications from eligible candidates to fill six posts of Information Commissioners in the CIC.

At present, there are four Information Commissioners in the Commission against the sanctioned strength of ten.

WI vs IND 3rd T20I preview: India look to avoid rare series defeat as West Indies eye history

India will look to make amends for their below-par performances in the previous two T20Is and prevent the West Indies from clinching a rare series win.

PROVIDENCE (GUYANA), Aug 8 (Agencies): Under-fire Indian batters would look to make amends for their below-par performances in the previous two T20Is and avoid West Indies from securing a rare series win when they take on hosts in the third T20I international in Guyana on Tuesday. Thanks to their 4-run win in Trinidad and a two-wicket heist in Guyana, West Indies have already secured a 2-0 lead in the five-match series and find themselves on the brink of achieving a historic feat – a series win against their formidable opponents.

India have been a formidable opponent for West Indies in recent times and are yet to lose a bilateral international series against the West Indies since August 2016, when the latter emerged victorious in a two-match T20I series, albeit by a 1-0 margin due to one match being abandoned. This remarkable streak of 15 successive series wins across various formats against the Caribbeans underscores India's dominance.

India's performance in the T20I series against West Indies has been less than stellar. Despite having a favourable winning record against the West Indies in T20Is, with 17 wins and seven losses, India has struggled in this series. They have lost the first two matches and are now



on the brink of a series defeat.

WI last defeated India in a bilateral international series that lasted more than two matches in 2006. WI won that five-match ODI series 4-1. They haven't done so in over a decade.

BATTING WOES FOR INDIA
Too much talk of intent, fresh attitude and fearlessness, but all these three things have not been visible in India's batting in the first two T20Is. The Hardik Pandya-led side will need to bat with the fearlessness that it often preaches if it is to avoid a series defeat against the West Indies in the third T20 International on Tuesday.

The slow pitches available have not been ideal for batting, but as skipper Hardik Pandya pointed out after the loss on Sunday, India should have found a way to score an extra 10-20 runs. The shortest format requires batters to attack from

ball one, which India's top order, which includes Ishan Kishan, Shubman Gill, and Suryakumar Yadav, has failed to provide.

BOWLERS MUST STOP POORAN

Bowlers must find a way to contain a rampaging Nicholas Pooran. The southpaw has been batting with contempt against Yuzvendra Chahal and Ravi Bishnoi. Axar, the left-arm spinner, was not even used in the previous game. Hardik and Arshdeep Singh were able to swing the new ball in the second game, and they hope to do so again on Tuesday.

Chahal has been impressive in the series despite returning after a two-month absence. Bishnoi's frequent googlies were ineffective in putting pressure on the opposition, forcing him to reconsider his plans. Pacer Mukesh Kumar has leaked the most runs for India, and he could

be replaced by Avesh Khan or Umran Malik.

HIGH STAKES

As the teams prepare for the third T20I, the stakes are high. India are under pressure to avoid a rare series defeat, while the West Indies are eyeing a historic series win. The upcoming match promises to be a thrilling encounter, with both teams eager to prove their mettle on the cricket field.

West Indies will be drawing inspiration from their past victories and looking to capitalize on their current momentum. On the other hand, India, despite being down by two matches, will undoubtedly bring their A-game to the table, aiming to break WI's two-match winning streak.

Squads

West Indies Squad: Brandon King, Kyle Mayers, Johnson Charles, Nicholas Pooran(w), Rovman Powell(c), Shimron Hetmyer, Romario Shepherd, Jason Holder, Akeal Hosein, Alzarri Joseph, Obed McCoy, Odean Smith, Shai Hope, Oshane Thomas, Roston Chase.

India Squad: Ishan Kishan(w), Shubman Gill, Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma, Sanju Samson, Hardik Pandya(c), Axar Patel, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, Mukesh Kumar, Kuldeep Yadav, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Umran Malik, Avesh Khan.

'Bumrah is a quality bowler, expect him to be fine': Aussie legend McGrath on pacer's comeback



SYDNEY, Aug 8 (Agencies): Australian pace legend Glenn McGrath, who is the Director of the MRF Pace Foundation and along with chief coach M Senthilnathan is there to coach upcoming fast bowlers, said that the lay-off will help India pacer Jasprit Bumrah on his comeback during the Ireland tour later this month.

"It depends on how the injury is and the sort of expectations he has. I think he will be fine since he is a quality bowler. The lay-off will help him. Fast bowlers need that lay-off and time to get the strength back in their bodies. It depends on the work he has done off the field, how his back is and if he has done anything to his action. I think he has been there before and he has achieved it," McGrath said in a media interaction.

The former pacer, however, felt that it is up

to individuals whether or not to test themselves in domestic cricket before international games on comeback. "He's got enough experience. He has enough games before the World Cup to test himself. Eleven months is a long time out of the game, but if you are coming off an off-season and you want to get into it, hopefully, that only takes a few games," he added.

Coming to the ODI World Cup to be held later in India McGrath picks Australia as one of the four teams to make it to the semifinals. "The Australian Test team is a lot different to the one-day and the T20 teams, but I think they'll do well in the World Cup in India. They are in my top four teams to make it to the semis. I put India, Australia, England and I put Pakistan in there as well," added the former Australian pacer.

As has been the case throughout the year,

Rohit Sharma's captaincy will be in focus as India has not won a World Cup since 2011. While McGrath refrained from commenting on Rohit's captaincy, citing that he has not seen that much of the Indian captain, he said that the best way to lead in a global tournament is to be proactive like former Australian captains Steve Waugh and Ricky Ponting.

An Ashes veteran himself, McGrath said that the recently concluded series between England and Australia was a good advertisement for Test cricket. He complimented England captain Ben Stokes' attitude to declare time and again in order to work towards a positive result, rather than play out dull draws.

"I liked Ben Stokes' mindset (declarations) where he has a positive attitude and wants to go for a result. He is not afraid to take risks in order to press for a win. The Ashes was a great contest. The fact that it was so close every day was exciting. Although my prediction 5-0 (in favour of Australia) didn't quite work out to have a series like that, I think it's great for Test cricket," he said.

Wrestling great Kartar to contest in WFI polls

NEW DELHI, Aug 8 (Agencies): Indian wrestling great Kartar Singh is among five candidates in the fray for four vice-president posts in the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) elections, scheduled for August 12.

Kartar, the two-time Asian Games gold medallist (1978 and 1986), is a former WFI secretary general with years of administrative experience.

The contest for the post of president will be between outgoing WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh loyalist Sanjay Kumar Singh and 2010 Commonwealth Games gold medallist wrestler Anita Sheoran.

The 38-year-old Sheoran, it is learnt, has the backing of the six wrestlers, including Bajrang Punia, Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi Malik, who led the protests against Brij Bhushan at Jantar Mantar here. Sheoran, interestingly, is also a witness against Brij Bhushan in the sexual harassment case.



As per the official list issued by the returning officer for the elections, Justice (retd) MM Kumar, there are four contestants in the fray for two joint secretary posts, while seven candidates will vie for five executive committee posts.

Asian Champions Trophy: Unbeaten India secure nervy win over S Korea, qualify for semis

CHENNAI, Aug 8 (Agencies): Already through to the semi-finals, hosts India maintained their dominance in the Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament with a nervy 3-2 victory over South Korea in their fourth round robin fixture here.

With 10 points from three wins and one draw, India top the league table. They had already qualified for the semis before the match.

Nilakanta Sharma put India ahead with his sixth-minute strike. Sharma was at the right place as he put the ball into the goal after Sukhjeet Singh did all the hard work with a brilliant run along the baseline and an inch-perfect pass.

India's joy was short-lived as the Koreans came back with the equaliser barely six minutes



later, Kim Sunghyun managing to beat goalkeeper Krishan Pathak, who was playing in his 100th international game, with a mistimed hit. It was a soft goal for Pathak, who misjudged the line of the ball in anticipation of a deflection that never came. India, however, regained their

lead as Harmanpreet Singh struck off a penalty corner in the 23rd minute. The skipper's drag-flick went in after a deflection off a defensive runner wrong-footed the goalkeeper.

Mandeep Singh, who was named the Player of the Match, made it 3-1 in the 33rd minute.

The striker received a bouncing ball near the top of the semi-circle, made a sharp turn and unleashed a tomahawk into the bottom corner.

Yang Jihun pulled one back off a penalty corner in the 58th minute but India held on to the lead in the final two minutes. South Korea earned 11 penalty corners, while India could get just four. The hosts also got a penalty stroke after Harmanpreet's drag-flick hit the foot of the post-player, but the captain was denied by the Korean goalkeeper.

Earlier, Malaysia fought off a late surge from Japan to secure a 3-1 win and advance to the semis, while Pakistan eke out a 2-1 victory over China to stay in the race for the semifinals.

Role of Pakistan chief selector very tough due to ODI World Cup 2023: Inzamam-ul-Haq

KARACHI, Aug 8 (Agencies): Inzamam-ul-Haq, a former captain of the Pakistan cricket team and a member of the 1992 World Cup winning squad, has been appointed for a second term as the chief selector of the men's national team. This announcement comes with high expectations, as Inzamam's first tenure saw the team clinching the 2017 Champions Trophy in England. The cricketing legend is optimistic about his second stint, hoping to surpass the success of his previous term.

Inzamam's appointment was announced on Monday, 7 August and he was immediately tasked with his first assignment - selecting the one-day squad for an upcoming three-match series against Afghanistan, set to take place in Sri Lanka later in August. This assignment marks the beginning of a crucial period for Pakistan cricket, with the Asia Cup and the 50-overs World Cup

scheduled for this year. As such, Inzamam's role will be pivotal in shaping the team's performance in these significant tournaments.

In a statement released by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Inzamam acknowledged the challenges that come with his role, especially given the upcoming major tournaments and the subsequent tour of Australia.

"Heading a selection committee is already a tough job in Pakistan, but it is going to be more challenging this time with the Asia Cup and World Cup around the corner followed by the tour of Australia," Inzamam said in a statement.

"But, I know I can deliver in this role and I will try to do better than I did the last time. Despite the paucity of time, we will announce the best possible sides."

Inzamam, who boasts an impressive cricketing career spanning from 1991 to 2007, played 499 international match-



es for Pakistan. His previous term as the chief selector, from 2016 to 2019, was marked by his ability to identify and nurture talent, which now forms the core of the current team. His return to this role is seen as a strategic move to leverage his experience and expertise to further strengthen the team.

PCB Chairman Zaka Ashraf expressed his delight at Inzamam's acceptance of the role. He praised Inzamam as a legend who has served the game with dignity and expressed confidence in his ability to bring more talented cricketers to light. Ashraf believes that Inzamam's second innings as the

chief selector will add to the laurels of Pakistan cricket and help unearth more talent.

In conclusion, the reappointment of Inzamam-ul-Haq as the chief selector of the Pakistan men's cricket team signals a new chapter in Pakistan cricket. With major tournaments on the horizon, his role will be instrumental in shaping the team's performance. His experience, coupled with his proven track record in identifying talent, makes him a valuable asset to the team. As the cricketing world watches, Inzamam is set to embark on this challenging journey, aiming to steer Pakistan cricket to new heights.

Steve Smith To Open For Australia Against South Africa In T20 Career First

It is a remarkable renaissance for Steve Smith, who was largely overlooked for Australia's starting XI at last year's failed T20 World Cup campaign

SYDNEY, Aug 8 (Agencies): Steve Smith will open the batting when Australia meet South Africa in an upcoming Twenty20 series, selectors said, putting him in the box seat to do the job alongside David Warner at next year's World Cup. It is a remarkable renaissance for the 34-year-old, who was largely overlooked for Australia's starting XI at last year's failed T20 World Cup campaign. Smith, who usually bats at three or four, relaunched himself as an opener for the Sydney Sixers in a short Big Bash League season, smacking two sizzling centuries.

Chairman of selectors George Bailey said it earned him the right to do the same for the first time at international level in the sport's shortest format, filling a hole left by Aaron Finch's



retirement.

"He'll open in South Africa and I guess he's the one guy out of those multi-format players who is heading across that we wanted to give him that opportunity," Bailey said after announcing the squad.

"It was pretty exhilarating, his innings in the Big Bash, and highlighted his skillset and what he can do.

"The way he played in the Big Bash, that's something we want to see replicated internationally, so it's important that he gets an opportunity to have a crack at that."

"He was really keen to come across and be a part of that."

It gives Smith the chance to cement the spot ahead of the 2024 World Cup in the

West Indies and United States.

Finch's long-time opening partner Warner is being rested for the three T20s in Durban from August 30 to September 3.

In Warner's absence, any of Mitchell Marsh, Travis Head, Marcus Stoinis or even big-hitting debutant Matthew Short could open alongside Smith.

Former captain Finch's retirement also opened the door to a new T20 skipper, with Marsh getting the nod after his own career revival in the format.

"We're excited to see what he does with the titled leadership next to him," said Bailey.

"The personality and the way he drives the culture with the team is excellent, so looking forward to seeing what extra he brings from a tactical point of view."

FICCI FLO core team meets VC JU to foster start-up ecosystem



TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 8: A delegation of the Core Team FICCI FLO Jammu-Kashmir Ladakh, the women's wing of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), led by Chairperson Varuna Anand, recently engaged in a productive dialogue with Prof. Umesh Rai, the esteemed Vice Chancellor of Jammu University. The meeting centered around the shared goal of nurturing the start-

up ecosystem and promoting entrepreneurial endeavours in the region.

During the interaction, Varuna Anand expressed her heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Umesh Rai for the successful collaboration with the Institute of Music & Fine Arts for their collaboration in the Art Camp held by FLO JKL at Octroi Post, Suchetgarh. This collaboration has not only enhanced artistic expression giving great exposure to the young

artists and their crafts but also showcased peace and prosperity in J&K and highlighted Suchetgarh as a must visit tourist spot in Jammu.

As a token of appreciation and gratitude, FICCI FLO JKL presented Prof. Umesh Rai with a stunning painting created during the Art Camp. The painting symbolizes the harmonious collaboration between academia, BSF, and art, reflecting the spirit of innovation and cooperation that FICCI FLO JKL

and Jammu University aim to cultivate.

The meeting between FICCI FLO and Prof. Umesh Rai marks a significant step towards strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region. The shared commitment to nurturing start-ups and encouraging creative expression sets the stage for promising collaborations that will contribute to the socio-economic development of the region.

Ranjeet Kalra, teaching faculty at UGC-

HRDC University of Jammu also attended the meeting.

The Vice-Chancellor on this occasion also shared Jammu University's newly launched 'Design Your Degree' undergraduate program's concept and details with the visiting delegation. The four-year undergraduate degree was recently also endorsed by the UGC on its official Twitter handle. Also in the course of the discussions, a strong commitment was expressed to tackling the destabilization of youth caused by drug abuse in Jammu.

Both organization expressed their eagerness to collaborate on effective strategies aimed at countering this issue and ensuring a brighter future for the younger generation.

The delegation from FLO JKL included Varuna Anand, Ruchika Gupta, Sona Mehta, Mona Saraf & Chandni Kapoor.

Bahu Branch initiates plantation drive at Trikuta Nagar

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 8: Bahu Branch Celebrates "Vanmahotsav" (plantation drive) in Shakti Park, today in Sec 9 Trikuta Nagar of Bahu Constituency. By planting flowers, medicinal and ornamental plants for its beautification and healthy environment. All prominent persons present enthusiastically participated in the plantation of plants like

Hibiscus China Rose, Gulmohar, Yakima Stan, Chinara, Red Nerium, Rat ki Rani, Panjtra, Tulsi, etc.

President Bahu Branch Vijay Arora highlighted that for good health we need a healthy environment and for that trees act as a primary source of energy and a big healer of diseases as they expel oxygen and absorb harmful gases from the air also conserve soil from eroding and provide shelter to living beings. She stated that its greenery and fragrance of flowers are the feast for the eyes and of course livelihood for the People. Trees



bring rain and maintain the ecological balance in the atmosphere and much more.

We should bring awareness to our children and grandchildren and encourage them to plant trees and nourish them. It will not only give them a feeling of joy but inner contentment also when it bears fruits she added. We celebrate plantation drive as a festival and try to inculcate such like Sanskar in the society.

Present amongst the gathering were Prant President Bharat Bhushan, Prant Secretary Shiv Ram Sharma, Madhu from State Sunil Singh Manhas and staff

along with his team from Forest Department were present.

Rekha Mahajan District President Jammu South, Trikuta Nagar Mandal President and Councillor Neeraj Puri, Treasure Mohini Manhas, and other members of the branch were Prominent among those were Pariyavaran Parmukh Ajay Gupta, Branch Coordinator D P Arora, Purshotam Gupta, DGM security from RBI Social Media Parmukh R K Kakroo, Raju Bhatia, Rohit Mahajan, Dr. Kohli and Avdesh Gupta, Rajinder Gupta, Rajesh Gupta and others partakes in the program.

Anti Crime Bureau distributes ration

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 8: Non Government Organization Anti Crime Bureau (Regd) on Tuesday under the leadership of its Chairman Sham Lal Gupta Provided Ration items to the Needy people at Bawe Mata Temple Jammu.

Gupta along with Bharatiya Janata Party Senior Leader and Convenor Tourism Cell Jammu Ravi Bakshi and Co Convenor Sports Cell Ritika Mahajan and Incharge of Police Chowki Bawe were also present.

Ration was distributed among the needy people



by Chairman Sham Lal Gupta and Chief Guests, which included Handicap, Elderly people and women, they were given bags of flour and rice by the organization.

Gupta told that organization works without

any government help and believes in helping people.

People were happy after getting the food items and thanked the members of the organization.

Gupta along with Councillor Sahil Gupta

from Municipal Committee Bishnah, Panch Balwinder Singh from Sarore Panchayat, and Members Rohit Kumar, Tushar Digra, Rakesh Sharma, Abhishek Rajput, Ankush Verma and other were present.

SJS blocks highway, demands stop installation of Smart meters

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 8: Activists of Shurveer Jammu Sangathan (SJS) along with the residents of Muthi areas staged protest against the installation of smart meters.

The protest was led by Arun Seekey (General Secretary SJS) along with Ravi Tangotra, Kewel, Dheeraj, Bhanu Partap against the move by the J&K Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JKPDCL) to install Smart Meters is facing stiff resistance from various Jammu areas.



Aggressive peoples blocked the ever busy Akhnour Highway at Muthi more than one hour.

During the protest Partap Singh Jamwal (Sr. leader) and Rajan Singh Happy (Ex Presi-

dent YRS) joined the protest.

Protesters said that they belong to poor families and cannot afford smart meters, which they said generate exorbitant bills.

They said that they

want genuine rates and not the smart meter-generated power bills. They said that given their economic condition, they won't be able to afford exorbitant bills.

They demanded that the installation of Smart Meters should be halted. The protestors said that the hike in cooking gas, Petrol price and other commodities has already made life difficult for them.

Others present were Dheeraj Koul, Sajjan Sharma, Ayush, Sumit, Jhony, Deepak, Abishek and Shubam Aakash.

ALANKRITA of DPS Jammu secures first rank in AICF Smart Girls Tournament



TOP TIMES NEWS

JAMMU, Aug 8: Alankrita Sharma (III-K), a student of Delhi Public School Jammu brought laurels to the school and her parents by securing first position in "AICF Smart Girls" Tournament held at Nekk Hotel, Jammu from 27-31 July, 2023. The event was organized by Crown Trust under the aegis of AJKCA and J&K Sports Council. A total of 142 players from 10 States participated in this event out of which the child stood first. In addition to this, she

had also secured the rank of "Best Women" in "AICF Chess for Everyone" Tournament held at Jammu from 22-26 July. The event was played under FIDE Laws of chess with latest international rules. Alankrita received huge appreciation along with Certificates of Merit and mementoes in both the events.

It is also pertinent to mention here that in 2019, Alankrita had topped World Chess Rating among children below six years in European Style Round Robin FIDE Rating Chess

Championship held in Jammu.

Principal-DPS Jammu, Ms. Ruchi Chabra congratulated Alankrita for the achievement. She also extended her appreciation to their parents for their unwavering support.

Hon'ble President-RCT, Sh. M.K Ajatshatru Singh Ji, Hon'ble PVC, Dr. Kuwarani Ritu Singh Ji and Hon'ble Director, Sh. S.S Sodhi Ji extended their heartfelt congratulations to Alankrita. They also conveyed their best wishes to her in all their future endeavours.

Shiv Sena protests against inflation, highlights soaring prices of essential commodities

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 8: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu and Kashmir unit staged a protest against the escalating prices of vegetables, fruits, and food items, compelling the attention of the government.

The protest, marked by participants donning garlands of vegetables and adorning a tomato crown, took place at Badi Brahmana, Sidco Chowk in Jammu.

Under the leadership of Manish Sahni, State President Shiv Sena, the protesting brandished placards bearing slogans such as "Citizens Struggle with Inflation, Government Remains Unconcerned," "Waiting for Acche Din", "Tomatoes at ₹250, Ginger at ₹320, Cauliflower at ₹100, Brinjal at ₹80, Bitter Gourd at ₹100," to express their dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs.

Sahni drew attention to the staggering rise of prices, emphasizing that the cost of essentials



like wheat, pulses, and rice has surged by up to 30% over the past year. Even the ordinary vegetables, once staples of common households, have vanished from the everyday plate due to the relentless inflation. The prices of commonly used vegetables such as tomatoes, ginger, cauliflower, brinjal, garlic, and bitter gourd have skyrocketed, with even cumin seeds witnessing a fivefold increase. The household budgets

of homemakers have been severely disrupted by these soaring prices, he added.

Sahni lamented the absence of a concrete strategy from the government to control inflation and stabilize food prices. Despite India being one of the largest producers of tomatoes after China, the skyrocketing tomato prices have left the public in distress.

He highlighted the paradox of Prime Min-

ister Narendra Modi designating tomatoes, onions, and potatoes as priorities, yet the government's inability to curb their soaring costs.

The protesters urged the government to address the pressing concerns of inflation and ensure affordable access to essential commodities for the general populace.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration, which is busy collecting revenue by

installing smart , pre-paid meters property tax etc. , has proved completely unsuccessful in cracking down on black marketeers and providing relief to the public. Many leaders and workers including President Kamgar Wing Raj Singh, Vice President Shashipal & Mangu Ram, Rajesh Sharma, Neeraj, Jagbir Singh, Bishan Das, Santokh Devi, Pooja Devi, Meena Devi were present on this occasion.