

# TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, FRIDAY, AUGUST 25, 2023

Daily Evening Newspaper



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## BRIEFLY

### JPPF extends support for Jammu Bandh

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 25: Jammu Province Peoples Forum (JPPF) an amalgam of various social commercial and other organizations in its recent meeting held on Friday unanimously decided to extend its support in favour of Jammu Bandh call given by different organizations.

M.S Katoch, the Working President, said that in continuation to the conference held couple of days back regarding illegal Sarore Toll Plaza and removal of the same with immediate effect but nothing as of is done by the government so far.

He further added that even the government has not released the members arrested which is a matter of serious concern, the whole Jammu is uniting to fight for the cause by organizing protest and Jammu Bandh call is also given in this regard.

JPPF appeals government to immediately intervene to settle down the issue without any delay, he also demanded the lease of youth arrested immediately.

Members who were present in the meeting were, M.S Katoch, Avinash Bhatia, Ram Rattan Sharma, Resham Singh, Rajiv Mahajan, Balwan Singh, Pawan Sharma, Prof O P Sharma, Surinder Veer, Pawan Chib, Abhimanyu Katoch and Brinder Singh.

### IIT Jammu to host North Tech Symposium from Sep 11

JAMMU, Aug 25 (Agencies): Around 150 vendors will be taking part in the three-day North Tech Symposium to be hosted by the IIT Jammu from September 11.

An official here said that the North Tech Symposium will be conducted from September 11 to 13 at IIT, Jammu. "Approximately 150 vendors are expected to participate in the event that would consist of seminar and exhibition," he added.

The official said that the military equipment display would be conducted on September 13.

The official said that the event also facilitates structured approach for product evaluation, prioritization and acquisition besides providing viable and actionable inputs for formulation.

## Will raise issues of Ladakh people in Parliament, their 'Political Voice Being Suppressed': Rahul

KARGIL, Aug 25 (Agencies): Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday vowed to raise in Parliament the issues of the people of Ladakh as he alleged that their "political voice" was being suppressed and the promises of the central government on employment had turned out to be "false".

Gandhi has been touring the Union Territory of Ladakh for the past week.

"I went to every corner of Ladakh and talked to the youth, mothers and sisters and the poor. There are other leaders who only talk about their 'Mann Ki Baat'. I want to listen to your 'Mann Ki Baat'," the former Congress leader said in an apparent swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's monthly radio broadcast.

"China has snatched away thousands of kilometers of India's land. The prime minister is lying by denying this and every person in Ladakh knows this," Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on X.



He said the main issues of Ladakh are that the political voice of the people here is being "suppressed", all the promises of the government on employment have turned out to be "false" and the lack of mobile network and air connectivity.

"I will raise all these issues in Parliament in the next session," Gandhi said and thanked Ladakh for the welcome and love he had received.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh,

in a post in Hindi on X, said that taking forward the Bharat Jodo Yatra, Gandhi met the people of Ladakh.

In the spirit of the foot march, he listened to their thoughts, he said.

"It is clear after listening to these problems that the Modi government has left Ladakh to fend itself. Leaders who are only interested in their 'Mann Ki Baat' can never allow the people's voice to be heard," Ramesh said.

Gandhi reached Ladakh on August 17,

his first visit to the region since it was granted UT status after being carved out from Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019. The erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir was also turned into a Union Territory with its special status under Article 370 revoked.

Over the past week, Gandhi visited several parts of Ladakh, including Pangong lake, Nubra valley, Khardungla top, Lamayuru and Zaskar, on his motorcycle before reaching Kargil on Thursday.

## Need to find feasible ways to boost adoption of modern technologies in construction: Puri

NEW DELHI, Aug 25: Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Friday said more than 60 crore people are estimated to reside in cities by 2030 because of rapid urbanisation and stressed the need to increase adoption of new technologies in the construction industry.

The minister was addressing a conference on 'Adoption of New and Emerging Building Materials and Technologies in Construction Industry', being organised by realtors' apex body CREDAI, which represents more than 13,000 developer members.

"It is imperative we find feasible ways to increase the adoption of emerging materials and technologies in the construction industry," Puri said.

Talking about the government's commitment in this regard, Puri recalled that the Prime Minister had emphasised the need



to accelerate the movement from these older technologies into new cutting-edge technologies in the construction industry.

On its part, the ministry has short-listed 54 innovative construction technologies from all over the world under the Global Housing Technology Challenge and six light house projects were selected in Chennai, Rajkot, Indore, Lucknow, Ranchi and Agartala under which 6,368 houses are being built using innovative construction technologies.

"With these light house projects, I believe that the Modi government

has laid down the roadmap for the construction industry to reorient itself and support the vision of the Prime Minister in achieving net zero emission by 2030," Puri said.

He cited various benefits of the use of new technologies in these six projects — 50 per cent reduction in construction time, 15-20 per cent saving of cement, 20 per cent reduction in construction waste, 10-20 per cent reduction in cost of construction, 20-25 per cent enhanced thermal comfort, 4-Star green GRIHA rating, low lifecycle cost, 20 per cent reduction

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## CBK files Chargesheet against 8 accused in fake DOB case

SRINAGAR, Aug 25 (Agencies): Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Crime Branch Kashmir (CBK) has filed a chargesheet against 8 accused persons in the court of city Munsiff Srinagar for allegedly producing fake date of birth certificates (DOB).

According to a statement issued on Friday, the chargesheet was filed in case FIR No. 28/2021 of P/S Crime Branch Kashmir against eight accused individuals before the court of city Munsiff Srinagar for their alleged involvement in commission of offences punishable under Sections 420, 420/511, 202, 468 & 471 of RPC.

The statement reads that brief facts of the case are that Crime Branch Kashmir had received a complaint from the Agriculture Production Department (on the basis of a report generated by Director Agriculture Kashmir) alleging therein

that 12 officials of said department had submitted fake DOB certificates at the time of their initial appointment in Government service.

Accordingly, the instant case was registered in P/S Crime Branch Kashmir in 2021 and investigation was started.

During the investigation, it has been established that 8 out of the 12 accused individuals have cheated the department by submitting fake and forged DOB certificates at the time of their initial appointment, as a result of the deceit they continued to remain in service and unlawfully derived the benefits of employment beyond their actual age of retirement on superannuation, the statements reads. It reads that the chargesheet has accordingly been presented against these eight accused persons in the court of competent jurisdiction for judicial determination.

## Khel Gaon emerging as quality sporting facility in Jammu region: Sarmad Hafeez

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 25: Secretary, Youth Services and Sports (YSS) Sarmad Hafeez on Friday remarked that 'Khel Gaon' Nagrota is emerging as quality sporting facility in Jammu region, catering to needs of thousands of sportspersons and youth in general.

The Secretary made these remarks while laying foundation stone of a multi-purpose Indoor Hall at Khel Gaon Nagrota here.

Director Youth Services and Sports Depart-



ment, Subash Chander Chibber; Special Secretary YSS, Naresh Kumar; Joint Director YSS Jammu, Suram Chand Sharma; Deputy Director YSS Central, Jitendra Mishra; Chief Sports Officer JKSC, Mohammad Latief; Divi-

sional Sports Officer (J) JKSC, Ashok Singh and District YSS Officer Jammu, Sukhdev Raj Sharma were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the Secretary said that apart from well established Cricket

ground, Synthetic Football ground, Volleyball Court, Kabaddi Court, the development work of many other allied projects like standard athletic track and hockey turf is in full swing and these facilities will be dedicated for the use of sportspersons soon.

He highlighted that Government of Jammu and Kashmir is committed to raise sports infrastructural facilities at all levels and promote sports culture in every nook and corner of the Union Territory, adding that

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## MeT advises concerned authorities to be cautious against landslides, flash floods in J&K

JAMMU, Aug 25 (Agencies): The weather department on Friday advised concerned authorities to remain cautious till August 26 as "rain over higher reaches may generate landslides, flash floods in vulnerable spots at lower catchments areas".

A meteorological department official said that generally cloudy weather was expected with possibility of intermittent light to moderate rain at scattered places of J&K during next 24 hours.

On August 26, he said, weather is expected to be generally cloudy with possibility of "intermittent light to moderate rain at scattered places."

"Although there's no forecast of heavy rain, still all concerned are advised to remain cautious during August 25-26th as rain over higher reaches may generate landslides, flash floods in vulnerable spots at lower catchments areas," he said.

From August 27-28, he said, weather is expected to be partly to generally cloudy.

## 54 Drug smugglers booked under PITNDPS, PSA in Baramulla

Srinagar, Aug 25 (Agencies): Police booked 54 most wanted and notorious drug smugglers under Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (PITNDPS) Act, and Public Safety Act (PSA) in Jammu Kashmir's Baramulla district during the current year.

Baramulla police in its ongoing operation against drug smuggling and in order to eradicate the menace of drugs from society, has booked 54 drug smugglers under PIT-NDPS Act and PSA in the district after obtaining formal detention orders from the competent authorities and lodged in different jails of Jammu and Kashmir during the current year, a police statement said on Friday.

These hard-core drug peddlers were operating in Uri, Pattan, Baramulla, Kreeri and Tangmarg sub divisions of

the district.

Pertinent to mention that many cases are registered against these drug Smugglers and were involved in promoting drug abuse trade by supplying drugs to local youth of in the district, police said and added despite their involvement in many FIR's they did not mend their activities and were again involved in promoting drug abuse trade by supplying drugs to local youth.

Sustained action against drug peddlers has brought a visible change in the ground situation and drug abuse has seen a considerable downfall in Baramulla district.

Police urged the general People to come forward with the information of drug peddlers in their areas (identity will be kept confidential) in order to support police to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society.

## Iltija granted regular passport with 10-year validity

SRINAGAR, Aug 25 (Agencies): Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti's daughter Iltija Mufti was granted a regular passport with 10-year validity here on Friday, officials said.

The issuance of a regular passport to Iltija came more than a month after she moved the Jammu and Kashmir High Court with a fresh petition seeking its intervention for extending the duration of her passport along with no bar to travel to any country.

"The regional passport officer called Iltija to his office and handed over a regular passport with 10-year validity to her," an official said.

The 35-year-old Iltija, who wishes to pursue higher studies in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), had earlier been issued a country-specific passport valid from April 5, 2023 to April 4, 2025.

Iltija had moved the high court in February for issuance of the passport after her application for the travel document was not cleared initially.





## EDITORIAL

## STOP 3D EVILS

Completing drug addiction is a major and widespread problem in India. Where the family disintegrates due to this problem, the society gets infected, then the nation becomes weak. It is not only a social problem, but also a medical and psychological problem. There is such a quagmire, in which the person who sinks is not only destroyed, but also his whole family is also destroyed.

The side effects of drugs not only destroy the person who is addicted to it, but also destroy the family, society and nation. This is the reason why it is essential to keep the nation free from drugs in order to make it strong. Consumption of drugs, that is, intoxication is the result of 3D evils.

First 'darkness' means darkness in life, second 'destruction' means reaching the point of destruction and third 'devastation' means complete devastation. To save the family, society and nation from the evils and side effects of drugs, we have dreamed of a 'Drug Free India' and strong initiatives have been started to make this dream come true. The Prime Minister of the country Narendra Modi himself has shared his thoughts with the countrymen by calling for a 'drug free India'.

In a general sense, drugs refer to those chemical substances, which when taken have a chemical reaction on the brain and affect the normal functioning of the body and mind. The general meaning of drugs may be medicine or medicine, but in the social sciences this term is used for substances whose consumption is considered illegal.

When a person's physical and mental activities are affected repeatedly due to excessive consumption of these substances, then this condition is called 'drug abuse' or 'drug addiction'. The irony is that anyone who reaches this stage is often unable to lead a normal life. He destroys himself at the physical, mental and economic levels. It is such a blind tunnel that leads to the mouth of destruction.

The spread of the problem of drugs in India ranges from small villages and towns to metropolitan cities.

It would not be inconsistent to say that the whole country is covered by this problem. This problem is not even related to any particular class. Drugs are prevalent in all classes, poor, middle and elite. For some it is a means of enjoyment and a symbol of status symbol, while for some it is a means of relieving fatigue. Some turn to drugs to drown out failure and frustration. Comparatively, the youth are somewhat more in the grip of drugs.

The youth enter the dark alley of drugs for many reasons. Sometimes the reason for this is loneliness of life, sometimes emotional insecurity or lack of love from parents. Domestic discord, life's failures, stress due to various reasons, wrong company, yearning to experience a unique pleasure, influence of western civilization, momentary feeling of relief from problems, pressure of friends or mis-motivation etc. And sometimes even minors are made addicted to drugs.

Apart from this, people involved in the network of drugs mafia spread at the international level also make youths addicted to drugs by misleading them to make their business shine.

There are many side effects of drug addiction. Not only does the addict suffer for them, his family also gets ruined. The society and the nation are also affected adversely. The quagmire of drugs is so dangerous that a person trapped in this quagmire does not live anywhere.

He gets devastated on physical, economic and psychological levels. Once addicted to drugs, this addiction does not go away and when the victim of this addiction becomes financially hollow, then to fulfill the addiction, he commits crimes like theft.

## To the moon and beyond: India at cusp of a new age

By: Indranil Banerjee

“India is on the moon!” declared Sreedhara Panicker Somnath, the unassuming chief of India's space agency Isro at 6.03 pm on Wednesday, August 23, when the Vikram lunar lander made a soft touchdown on the moon's surface. The scientists of the Indian Space Research Organisation monitoring the touchdown roared in joy while Indians across the country and overseas rose to applaud the event, their unbounded elation a reflection of the momentousness of the event.

India had become the fourth country in the world to touch down on the moon, and the first to land near its southern pole. Millions watched the progress of the lunar landing craft, Vikram, as it detached from the orbiter Chandrayaan-3 which had carried it from earth across 384,400 km of empty space following its launch from Sriharikota more than a month ago on July 14, 2023. From 5.43 pm Indian time till the touchdown twenty minutes later, India held its breath. The previous attempt to soft land on the moon about four years ago had proved a disaster. This time around, though, the landing was perfect. The lander Vikram almost immediately began collecting and transmitting data while the robotic rover Pragyan inside it rolled out later to investigate the soil and minerals on the moon.

The lander Vikram houses three kinds of sensors while Pragyan has two. They will operate for one lunar day, which is equivalent to 14 earth days. Both are primarily powered by solar arrays and once night descends on the moon both will quietly shut down having completed the mission they were designed for. Up above the moon,

two Indian spacecraft, Chandrayaan-3 and Chandrayaan-2, will continue orbiting and sending photographs of the lunar surface. The three main objectives of the lunar mission -- soft landing of the lander, demonstrating the rover's driving capabilities and conducting experiments on the lunar surface to better understand the composition of the moon -- have all been met.

This is the culmination of an amazingly successful programme carried out on a shoestring budget. “These are very cost-effective missions... No one in the world can do it like we do,” Isro chief Sreedhara Panicker Somnath said. The New York Times reported that the “mission's budget of about \$75 million was less than the \$100 million budget of the Hollywood space film Gravity”. Not surprisingly, the Indian government has given the green signal to a slew of space exploratory missions to follow, the first of which will be the Aditya-L1, which is scheduled to lift off next month and get into an orbit suitable for studying the sun. There will be more probes sent out to Mars and a mission to ultimately land an Indian on the moon.

The successful moon landing marks a milestone in India's long association with its celestial partner. As far back as 3,500 years ago, long before civilisation had emerged in most other parts of the world, ancient Indians were already studying the moon. Precisely arranged megaliths (huge rock columns weighing a few tonnes) have been found in places such as Brahmagiri in Karnataka, Pokaria in Jharkhand, Arossim in Goa and elsewhere. Scientists believe these pre-historic arrangements of megaliths constitute observatories to record the move-

ment of the moon and the sun.

“What is even more amazing is the scientific accuracy with which these arrangements of rocks are able to predict the lunar cycle”, writes biochemist Pranay Lal, the author of the book Indica. He points out that these rock arrangements could even pinpoint occurrences such as the “lunar standstill”, which occurs once every 18 and a half years when the moon dips below the horizon and remains put for a couple of weeks.

The scientific demeanour of ancient Indians, their learning and discoveries gradually dimmed over the centuries, while other cultures took up that knowledge and further developed it. India sank into superstition, turning its back on scientific progress. Now, as the country seeks to get on to the world stage where science and technology dominate, it desperately needs to shed its baggage of outmoded mindsets and adopt new role models.

One of the most significant effects of Isro's lunar success this week will be its impact on the country's younger generation and a renewed focus on scientific learning and achievement. This, hopefully, will inevitably dent obscurantist tendencies in the country and restore scientific learning to its erstwhile glory.

At the same time, the government's moves to open up the space sector to private players, engage with global space programmes such as Artemis and the promotion of technology to solve everyday problems are certain to crank up the scientific temper in the country. This will perhaps prove to be the biggest dividend of the successful moon landing Wednesday. Suddenly, every bright kid in the country wants to be a rocket sci-

entist!

Unlike in the West, in India science and reason have never been considered antithetical to religion. In fact, Swami Vivekananda once said that “science and spirituality are two sides of the same coin”. He, like the ancients of this country, did not believe that superstition and dogma could be the foundation of religion: “Is religion to justify itself by the discoveries of reason, through which every other science justifies itself? Are the same methods of investigation, which we apply to sciences and knowledge outside, to be applied to the science of religion? In my opinion, this must be so, and I am also of the opinion that the sooner it is done the better. If a religion is destroyed by such investigations, it was then all the time useless, unworthy superstition; and the sooner it goes the better.”

This is the scientific spirit that imbued Indian culture in the distant past. In his 1896 lecture in London, Swami Vivekananda only reaffirmed what was accepted by the rishis of old: “Believing certain things because an organised body of priests tells him to believe, believing because it is written in certain books, believing because his people like him to believe, the modern man knows to be impossible for him.”

It is this scientific spirit that was extinguished in India over the centuries which is poised to be revived. The successful moon landing, the pride and elation it evoked in millions of Indians, the fact that it was one of the most watched events in history, suggests that India has arrived at a cusp. India has touched the moon and inspired millions who are destined now to shape the future of the country. Bravo Isro!

## India remains a diverse nation, but there's little sign of unity left

By: Anita Anand

In November 1949, a month before I was born, the Indian Parliament adopted the Constitution, and it came into force two months later, in January 1950. The document laid down the ideals and modalities of how India, as a new nation, would function. Among these was the principle of “unity in diversity”.

In newly independent India, those were heady days. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India and the leader of the Indian National Congress party, promoted unity in diversity as an ideal essential to nation-building and progress. In his 1946 book, *The Discovery of India*, he wrote of the physical appearances and mental habits and traits of Indians, pointing to the physical difference between the Pathan of the North-West and the Tamil in the far South -- differences in their racial stock -- two extreme examples and all the others that lay in between. All had distinctive features, and still more, the distinguishing mark of India.

“Though outwardly there was diversity and infinite variety among our people, everywhere there was that tremendous impress of oneness, which had held all of us together for ages past, whatever political fate or misfortune had befallen us,” wrote Nehru.

The Cambridge dictionary defines “oneness” as a state of being joined as one thing, and no

longer separate. In 1947, a year after Nehru wrote about this oneness, the land experienced the Partition and India and Pakistan were created as two countries. Some 14 million to 18 million people moved between the newly and randomly created borders, Hindus to India and Muslims to Pakistan, accompanied by bloodshed, violence and unwarranted grief, the memory of which persists to this day.

In 2023, what then is the “distinguishing mark” of India? What is the “oneness”? I believe it is notional. A decade ago, while travelling in the North-east and chatting with a group of young people, I asked if they got to Delhi much. They smiled and said no, as people they met there asked them if they were from China or Korea. I was not surprised.

As a people and government, we have not promoted oneness. It was assumed that by adding it in the Constitution it would happen, just like equality and justice. While the mechanisms were put into place for justice and equality, it was not so for oneness. Lost in the myth of diversity, we deluded ourselves that it was something to be proud of. Side by side, we steeped ourselves in our differences, clinging on to our religious beliefs, foods and customs, guarding them zealously, afraid they would be lost in the sea of diversity. And as a majority of Indians were Hindus, it was assumed that all the others were inconsequential. This is true till today.

Muslims living in Delhi talk about how Hindus will not rent out homes to them. The author Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar wrote a short story in which his Adivasi parents, both professionals, move to Gujarat, but find it hard to get housing as they are non-vegetarians.

Examples abound. Questions about caste, gotra, class, gender and sexual orientation influence our lives after we check each other's complexion and features to determine origin.

The recent incidents of violence in the states of Manipur and Haryana, spurred by false news on the social media but based on decades of conflict in the two states and communities, point to the inability of the government, both Central and state, to promote harmony and oneness. The roots of the conflict existed, aided and abetted by policies of ruling parties. But what about the citizenry?

Let us start with institutions. The family is the first place where seeds of both oneness and differences are sown. When parents see differences as problematic, how can they pass on the notion of diversity as something positive to children? If differences based on caste, class, religion, language and sex are threatening, then how can oneness be promoted? Adult Indians are a product of their upbringing, besides their families, in institutions of education, and religion, which pay lip service to harmony, but practice discrimination. These biases are carried over to the workplace, where they are

reinforced.

Promoting the idea and practice of unity in diversity is a responsibility of all institutions.

Central and state governments can practice and create and broadcast programmes addressing diversity and the importance of peace and harmony via their radio, television and social media platforms. Workplaces and educational institutions can create curricula on how our biases develop and are perpetuated. Families can inform themselves on how to be better examples for young children and raise them differently. It must start with each of us.

When the Constitution was adopted, there was little awareness how to inculcate these values in citizens. Today, with the advent of the Internet, knowledge and awareness are available to us. There is no excuse to be ignorant.

The India of 2023 is vastly different from the India that became independent in 1947. The Constitution is but a piece of paper to guide the nation. Nehru's vision of India was one where differences would be celebrated, and we would be unified. But no mechanisms were set in place, then and even now.

The conflict and violence in India today are not surprising. And it will get worse. The challenges of keeping 1.4 billion people together are huge and the task of building unity in diversity is for each of us, an urgent and compelling task. As in our diversity, there is little unity.

## Secretary JKPC listens to party workers' grievances

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 25: A meeting of Indian National Congress organized by Secretary JKPC Thomas Khokhar in Ward No.7 Premnagar. Hundreds of congress members of ward no.7 attended the meeting including Male and females.

Members of the Observing Committee Jammu Urban Kapil Singh - Spokesperson JKPC and Harvinder Singh Mehta listened to the grievances of the Congress workers.

Speaking on the occasion Kapil Singh said that BJP is undemocrat-



ically ruling on the country by misusing of agencies on the opposition and common masses. He also lashed the BJP Govt. on the inflation in the country. The installation of smart electrical meters and property tax and various types of other taxes has added

more to the miseries of common masses.

Harvinder Singh Mehta said that the people of Jammu should ask the local leaders of BJP, what they have done for the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Why they hesitate to raise the genuine problems of

Jammu people to the Central High Command of BJP.

Thomas Khokhar expressed the full faith on party high command. He also attacked on the BJP for the misuse of power conduct.

The meeting was also attended by Samuel

Gill, youth leader Jeremiah Mattoo, social worker Shezadi Gill, Raju Sandhu and Ajeet Hans.

They all unanimously agreed that Thomas Khokhar has political will and statesmanship quality without vendetta politics, having immense Congress ideology and experience of electoral politics since 3 decades.

Block President Anil Kumar and ward President Ravi Panotra assured the gathering that they will strongly recommend the name of Thomas Khokhar AICC member as the Party candidate for forthcoming elections.

## Dimple leads protest rally on BC road



Top News Report

JAMMU Aug 25: Sunil Dimple President Mission Statehood Jammu and Kashmir led a strong protest rally on BC road in support of Jammu Bandh.

Dimple appealed the Kashmir region people, youths, leaders organizations, chamber, bar, for Kashmir Bandh and support the "Jammu Bandh" on Saturday.

Addressing the protestors, Dimple said

our demands are to restore statehood with special status, immediate release the arrested Rajput Sabha leaders and stop Sarore toll plaza, Immediately waive of all the arrears and the present electricity tariff of the people of Jammu Kashmir.

The prominent leaders present in the protest include Sanjay Sethi, Haneef, Ajeet Singh, Satish Kumar, Amarjeet Singh, Pawan Kumar, Vikram Sharma, Ranjeet Singh, Taran Singh Ramesh Kumar, Madan Lal, Rameshwar Kumar and Ashok Kumar.

## Sports events under "Fit India Mission" organized at GDC Sunderbani

Top News Report

SUNDERBANI, Aug 25: The Sports and Physical Education Department of GDC Sunderbani in collaboration with NSS Wing of the college on Friday organized two events namely Lemon Race and Walk/Race of 400 meters under the banner "Fit India Mission" which is celebrated in honor of the hockey legend Major Dhan Chand.

The main aim is to develop game spirit, team effort and to inculcate the culture and fitness among students. Both the events were separately conducted



for boys and girls. A good number of Students participated in the events. In Girls Lemon race Ishu Sharma, a 3rd semester student finished first while in boys' Lemon Race Sourb Singh Chib a 5th semester student stood first.

In Boys Race Aditya Sharma stood first while in girls' race Surita finished it first. The events

are organized by Mr. Rafiq Ahmad Rather (Librarian) in charge Sports assisted by the members of the sports and NSS Committees.

Prof. Mohd Azam, Prof. Rakesh Kumar, Prof. Rabinder Kumar, Prof. Sham Lal, Prof. Mukesh Kumar, Prof. Beant Singh and a large number of students were present on the occasion.

## BLSKS presents musical play "Nashecha Bacho" at GHS Raipur

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 25: To continuous, the Nasha Mukat Bharat Abhiyan, Bhartiya Lok Sangeet Kala Sansthan (BLSKS), in coordination with Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, Social Welfare Deptt. J&K Govt. and Sangam Tru Art Production, mounts three days special campaign and presented 376th Dogri Musical Play "Nashecha Bacho" at Govt. High School, Raipur Jammu on today under the overall Direction of Dr. M.L Dogra.

A pledge was also administered by more than 200 students and teachers which



was recited by Chahat Chadha and the certificate honored by the Ministry of Social Justice was felicitated to the Principal of the Host School.

The program was inaugurated by the Chief Guest Kamal Kishore, Headmaster Govt. High

School, Raipur Jammu. Among the Guest of Honors present were Pankaj Sharma, Furkanda, Reema Raina, Senior Teachers of the host school.

The day commemorated as well with sole aim of rejuvenating the traditional, Primitive

Folk, Art, Culture of J&K Region.

Dr. M.L Dogra, BLSKS Chairman, said drugs withdrawal symptoms are a combination of physical and mental side effects a person experiences while trying to either stop or reduce the use of the substance

they have been using or are addicted to.

K.K.Joshi, Vice Chairman BLSKS said our volunteers and outreach workers of these organizations have gone from door to door, and nearby localities of Jammu city to educate the people about the ill effects of drug abuse and have assisted the rehabilitation of victims of substance abuse.

The singers, musician and actors who performed were Usha Raina, K.K.Joshi, Raju Bajgal, Rajni Gupta, Chahat Chadha, Bindia Okheda, M.C Kotwal, Rahul Kumar.

Deepak Kumar Dogra, Programme Incharge, presented vote of thanks.

## Udhampur shines in District level Inter zonal Tournament

Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Aug 25: Pool matches for Zone Udhampur, Chenani and Panchari under District level Inter zonal tournament for boys & girls U/14, U/17 years in the discipline Cricket concluded here at Subash Stadium Udhampur.

The tournament was organized by the Department of Youth Services and Sports Udhampur under the overall guidance of District Youth Services and Sports Officer Udhampur and under the supervision of Zonal Physical Education Officer Udhampur/Chenani Jyoti Rani.

On the concluding function, Youth Services and Sports offi-



cer Udhampur Romesh Chander Mishra was the Chief Guest.

He interacted with all the participants and Field staff in the presence of ZPEO Kulwanta Mahraj Krishan Pandit.

Speaking on the occasion the chief guest congratulated ZPEO Udhampur and all field

staff of zone Udhampur for their best efforts for the smooth and successful conduct of the tournament.

He also emphasized upon the participants to channelize their energy in a positive way by taking more part in such types of tournaments to make physically, men-

tally and socially fit in the society.

All the matches were officiated by technical panel of officials of Department of Youth Services & Sports Udhampur --- Rakesh Khajuria, Raman Kumar, Vinod Khajuria, Ranjeet Singh, Pooja Sharma, Kapil Kumar,

Ashok Sharma, Pankaj Bhardwaj, Amit Kumar and Surjeet Singh.

Among others present on the occasion were Jasvinder Singh, Ramesh Chander, Somdev Khajuria, Sanjeev Kumar, Karun Magotra Bikram Singh, Santosh Abrol, Bhupinder Singh, Rishi Gupta, Sanjeev Khajuria, Anshu brat Khanna (Media coordinator), Mukesh kumar, Atul Kumar and Vicky Sharma.

Today's Results BOYS U/14: Udhampur beat Chenani by 10 runs. U/17: Udhampur defeated Chenani by 17 runs.

GIRLS U/17: Udhampur trounced Chenani by 34 runs.

## DYSS conducts U-19 boys trial cum selection at Poonch



Top News Report

POONCH, Aug 25: The Department of Youth Services and Sports District Poonch has conducted trial cum selection under the age group of 19 years Boys in the disciplines of Kabaddi, kho kho, volleyball, chess, carrom and badminton at Sports Stadium Poonch.

Near about 249 number of Boys students participated from 11 zones of District Poonch in the trial cum selection process.

All the conveners and technical incharges of different committees performed their duties with full dedication.

The event was conducted under the supervision of District Youth and Services officer Poonch Mohd Qasim.

The other staff members also remained present during the event.

Pervaiz Malik Afridi said, Sport is an activity involving physical exertion, skill and/or hand-eye coordination as the primary focus of the activity, with elements of competition where rules and patterns of behaviour governing the activity exist formally through organisations.

## SMVDNS Hospital organises free health checkup camp



Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 25: Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspeciality Hospital in association with Mission Shakti District Hub for Empowerment of Women Jammu and support of R.K. Kohli, Shiv Dev Singh and T.R. Sharma (Coordinators of "Golden Days" Day Care and Recreation Center for Senior Citizens) organised free health checkup camp at Golden Days Center Lower Roop Nagar Jammu.

The Camp focused on making awareness regarding Ayushman Bharat Scheme, CGHS, ECHS and ESUC and health checkup by Dr. Imran Ganai Singh, Dr. Swati Sharma and staff of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspeciality Hospital.

During the camp free medicines were provided and Sugar/BP, ECG also done in camp

## JKBS members express shock over demise of Subash Chanjotra

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 25: The Jammu and Kashmir Batwal Sabha at a condolence meeting at Marh today, expressed deep shock over the sad, sudden and untimely demise of Subash Chander Chanjotra who died of cardiac arrest twenty two days after his retirement from Indian army.

While offering heartfelt sympathies and condolences, JKBS members prayed for the peace to the departed soul and patience for the near and dear ones.

The condolence meeting organized by the Sabha was attended by Corporator Rashpal Bhardwaj, Chairman Dilay Ram Kaith, President Rachhpal Kaith, Senior Vice President Birender Kaith, General Secretary R.L.Kaith and Members: Ujjagar Singh Bassa, Darshan Kumar Lakhotra, Ramesh Chand Chanjotra, Panch Joginder Kaith and Madan Kaith, who expressed deep sorrow and grief over the demise and prayed for the bereaved family to bear the loss.

## JU Dept of Economics visits Bajalta Village



Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 25: Under the guidance of the hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof. Umesh Rai to take students to villages adopted under Unnat Bharat Abhiyaan the students from the Department of Economics visited Bajalta Village adopted by the

University of Jammu under Unnat Bharat Abhiyaan.

All students interacted with women working under Self Help Groups and visited different houses and enquired about the facilities provided by the government in the shape of loans to start small business by the women and

poor families in Bajalta. The women are making jute articles for domestic use, printing of Bed sheets, stitching clothes and many other articles which are sold in the local market.

A group from students conducted survey of selected households and collected data on households profile and

availability of basic facilities in the village.

These data will be interpreted and submitted to the department for academic evaluation under their course paper on Indian Economic Policy.

The group was led by Prof. Jasbir Singh. Dr. Nikita Sharma and Dr. Rennie Mahajan, Assistant Professors in the department of Economics accompanied and monitored the group. Earlier Prof. Aroon Sharma, Head, Department of Economics flagged off the students from the Fountain Plaza.

## Sahil Khattar, who will soon be seen in the web series Bajao, talks about his love for acting, roller hockey and all things Haryanvi

Making a move from content creation to acting, Sahil Khattar is in a happy space. If social media won him attention, anchoring and acting paved the way for further possibilities. Soon, he will be seen in a web series Bajao. A quirky comedy was long on his mind, this show just fit the bill.

"If a person with my hairstyle can land a lead part, I have every reason to rejoice," laughs Sahil. Conscious about making a mark in tinsel town, content creation for brands and anchoring has taken a backseat; Sahil wants to focus just on acting. "The spotlight on an actor is the brightest," says the 83 actor (he played wicket-keeper Syed Kirmani in the film). "I have gained about 10-12 kilos for the role, I feel like Rock Dwayne Johnson and Jason Statham combined into one," he shares heartily.

Matter of accent

Playing a Haryanvi guy, he worked on his accent and mannerisms too. He plays Dhaari Punia in Bajao, who is robust, a curious mixture of brain and brawn. He is the one who brings in all jugaad and plans for everybody to get out of problems. "I am originally from Panchkula. So, when I represented India in roller hockey, we had a lot of guys from cities in Haryana, like Kurukshetra, Rohtak, Hissar and Karnal. Having spent time with them, I learnt a lot about Haryanvi dialect. I also attended workshops, watched a lot of shows, films etc and did my research just to get the accent perfect. Guys from Haryana are quirky and they have a very dry humour, so we have tried to inculturate that too."

Bajao charts the journey of three boys, who work towards a comeback of a rapper and how everything goes topsy turvy. "There is



quite a bias in the show that I am sure viewers shall take delight in."

Mumbai home  
Calling Mumbai home

for the last about eight years, Sahil's parents too have moved along. He says, "Earlier only I wanted to be a star, but now there are two

more praying for it. Honestly, I feel very fortunate to have their support." While he loves 'shosha-free' Mumbai that values talent over everything else, he misses his hometown for lip-smacking food, geris, and vella time he had on him. "Chandigarh ka pani hi different hai and that makes food special." He also misses playing roller hockey. "In Mumbai, I have been constantly dreaming of playing roller hockey," avers this DAV-10 college alumnus.

After Bajao's release, Sahil wants to be back in his hometown and play roller hockey to his heart's content. "I have worked very hard for this series, please watch and recommend it. I want to become one of these bankable faces that make the audience go, isne kiya hai to aisa hi hoga!" (Bajao streams on Jio Cinema from August 25)

## Halle Berry to pay \$8,000 per month to former husband for child support



After years of marriage, Halle Berry and her husband Oliver Martinez have finalised their divorce after a bunch of hiccups. According to a Los Angeles court, the actress will have to pay \$8,000 every month in child support. Berry and Martinez, who share nine-year-old son Maceo, reached

an agreement on their divorce and custody.

The custody case, which was filed in Los Angeles Superior Court on August 21, declared that the former couple will share joint legal and physical custody of their son. Berry, 57, has also agreed to pay Martinez \$8,000 a month in child support and 4.3

per cent of all income she makes above \$2 million. The agreement also indicates that the Catwoman actress will pay for Maceo's tuition, uniforms and other supplies as long as he is in private school.

For the custody agreement, it seems the two have worked out a schedule that gives half of the week, Monday to Wednesday, to one parent, and the other half of the week, Wednesday to Friday, to the other, with alternating weekends. Time is also set aside to 'make up time' if work commitments create an inconvenience.

Berry will also be responsible for the cost of Maceo's extracurricular activities, including soccer, which is specifically named in the documents. Berry is also footing the bill for Maceo's private school tuition, his extracurricular activities, his health insurance and his therapist.

## Actress Rani Mukerji is proud of her franchise, Mardaani

With Mardaani, well-known actress Rani Mukerji is the only actress to have a franchise with a titular character to her credit. Her blockbuster Mardaani franchise, in which Rani essays the character of a cop, Shivani Shivaji Roy, has won her acclaim and love.

Rani says, "I'm very proud of the Mardaani franchise. I have tried to show women as ambitious, self-reliant, courageous and go-getters; as uncompromising, feisty and upright individuals. Mardaani fits into my vision for women in cinema aptly and because of this synergy, I have been able to give 200 per cent to this character." Rani feels there is a lot of similarity between her Mardaani character and how she is in real life.



## AP Dhillon begins his journey of song with a cup of 'good chai'

The rise of Punjabi musician Dhillon has been meteoric in true sense. The singer-composer and his team of Shinda Kahlon, Gurinder Gill and Gminxr released their first track 'Fake' in 2019 and since then there has been no looking back for the Canada-based boys.

Songs like 'Brown Munde', 'Excuses' which went crazy viral on Instagram, 'Wo Noor', 'Ma Balle', 'Summer High' have solidified their position. It's not easy to churn songs that turn into chartbusters but for AP and his team, the journey of a song starts with a good cup of tea that opens up all their senses and puts them right on track.

Talking to agency, Dhillon shared: "Making good music starts with a good chai like a good cup of wholesome tea, it just fills the team with so much energy and helps to set the vibe. So yeah chai is a catalyst."

First it's the chai and then the magic follows as Dhillon gets



to designing the beats on his Logic Digital Audio Workstation getting in the right sounds and textures with VSTs like Kontakt library and Omnisphere.

Punjabi language has always appealed to the larger audience both the Indian diaspora and non-Indians as well. Right from Gurdas Maan, Daler Mehndi to the more recent Diljit Dosanjh, Guru Randhawa and Dhillon, Punjabi music and language have disrupted the international scene time and again.

However, Dhillon and Shinda feel that language has got to do very little with the success of a track. If the music is good, people will lap it up regardless of the language.

AP told agency: "I feel any artiste from every language today has equal opportunities. If your music is good, it will connect with people at large no matter what the language is. Primarily, it's your music or the beat that has to appeal to the listeners. If the melody or the beat is good, people will like it and then they will take an active interest in learning that language too. So, as a musician your responsibility lies in making good music, because good music makes the language travel."

Shinda concurred as he said: "With regard to Punjabi, I feel the language is easy to understand and is very sweet, so it easily gets into the listeners' subconscious."

Dhillon recently got his docu-series released on OTT, and is particularly intriguing for his fans because not much has been known about his life.

When asked if he is an introvert by choice, AP told agency: "I'm not an introvert but I wanted to keep it to music. When I started my work in music, I didn't have a roadmap to follow. It would have been easier if I had one, I wouldn't have made the mistakes that I have made."

Dhillon said that the docu-series is more of a roadmap for upcoming artistes so that they could learn and pick up the best and not repeat the mistakes that he has made.

"So this docu-series is kind of a give back to the community of brown artistes, and for all upcoming artistes so that they could take a cue from it and make better choices." AP concluded.

'AP Dhillon: First of a Kind' is streaming on Prime Video.

## Heidi Klum slams reports claiming her extreme diet, says 'there's no real journalism anymore'

Supermodel Heidi Klum has slammed "crap" reports suggesting that she only eats 900 calories a day, commenting that "there really is no real journalism anymore."

Shortly after making headlines due to her alleged extreme diet routine, Klum set the record straight on the matter via social media, reports aceshowbiz.com.

The 50-year-old former Victoria's Secret Angel shut down claims about her eating habit via Instagram Story.

In a video, she could be heard saying: "I just got home, and some friends are sending me these articles that have been written that I only take in 900 calories."

"One, I want to say, I don't think I've ever had to count my calories in my life," the former Sports Illustrated Swimsuit cover model clarified.

She went on to state: "And don't believe everything that you

read, So, I don't count my calories."

In the same footage, Heidi also defended herself for showing off how much she weighs to her followers.

"Someone asked me how much I weigh, and I got on the scale and showed how much I weighed," she recalled. "I don't know. People just put things together and just write a bunch of crap, and it's really sad because there really is no real journalism anymore."

"People just make up stories, one person writes it, and then everyone jumps on it," the former "Project Runway" star continued. "And it's really sad because you know, people read that and they think that, and possibly follow that, and that's not good."

Earlier that day, The Daily Mail reported that Heidi revealed to her followers she only consumes 900 calories each day.

According to the



outlet, the revelation was made during a since-expired Q&A session on Sunday, August 20 through Instagram Story. In addition, the outlet claimed that she shared her usual low-fat breakfast which includes three poached eggs and warm chicken broth.

During the same Q&A

session, the 'Making the Cut' star answered a fan's question about her current body weight. In a slide, she could be seen stepping on a silver glass scale with her bare feet.

"It must have gotten completely dusty. It's definitely not possible anymore," she said about the scale.

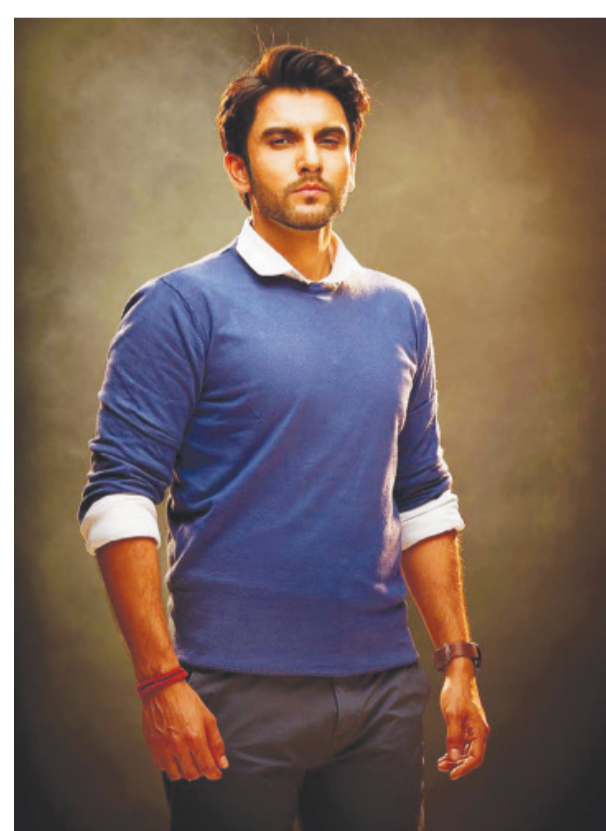
## Ishaan Dhawan talks about his character in Dhruv Tara - Samay Sadi Se Pare

Actor Ishaan Dhawan, who essays the titular character of Dhruv in the show Dhruv Tara — Samay Sadi Se Pare, has shared that the upcoming episodes of the show will see his character take a stand for what he believes in.

However, Tara, who time travels to the 17th century, will be still hurt about her father's death and is careful around Dhruv as she thinks he's connected to what happened to her father.

The show recently completed 150 episodes. In the upcoming week, Tara finally makes her return to Vallabhgarh, taking a step closer to her love, Dhruv.

Talking about the upcoming track, Ishaan said, "In the upcoming episodes, viewers will witness Dhruv taking a stand for what he believes in. Portraying Dhruv's emotions over the past few weeks has been exhilarating. Dhruv's world gets



shaken amid the wedding celebrations and Mahaveer's entrance." In the midst of Dhruv and Shyam Mohini's wedding festivities, an exciting twist takes centre stage. Mahaveer (Krishna Bharadwaj)

dramatically enters and announces that he knows about the scheme to seize control of Vallabhgarh. This revelation shocks everyone and Dhruv openly admits his heart belongs solely to Tara, shattering

Shyam Mohini's hopes of a union.

As tension rises, Tara defies all odds and finally reaches the 17th century despite Shyam Mohini's attempts to destroy Navrang Van. Dhruv is thrilled by Tara's return, but there's a catch, Tara's still hurt about her father's death and is careful around Dhruv as she thinks he's connected to what happened to her father.

"When Tara returns to the 17th century, it's a mix of joy and heartache for Dhruv. Her lingering pain from her father's loss casts a shadow on their reunion, leaving Dhruv with a sense of longing and unspoken regret. I can confidently say that this chapter in Dhruv and Tara's life is a blend of love, uncertainty, and redemption that I'm thrilled our audience will experience," Ishaan added.

Dhruv Tara — Samay Sadi Se Pare airs Monday to Saturday on Sony SAB.

## Manipur ethnic violence: Supreme Court transfers 27 cases probed by CBI to Assam

NEW DELHI, Aug 25 (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Friday transferred to Assam the trials of 27 cases of sexual violence relating to Manipur ethnic conflict being probed by the CBI.

A three-judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud asked the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court to designate one or more judicial magistrates and sessions judges in Guwahati to deal with these 27 cases being probed by the CBI.

The victims and witnesses in these cases will be at liberty to give evidence virtually through video-conferencing from their places in Manipur, instead of travelling to Assam to be physically present in the court in Guwahati.

The order came after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta suggested on behalf of the Manipur government that the trials in the CBI cases be transferred to Assam



as there were security concerns as also certain apprehensions about judges in Manipur belonging to particular communities.

Senior counsel Colin Gonsalves opposed the transfer of CBI cases to Assam and suggested that instead these cases should be shifted to Mizoram.

As Gonsalves said trials should happen in the hills, the CJI said, "There have been victims in valleys, and in hills. It would be difficult for people

who suffered in valleys to travel to hills, and the other way round. We are not on... who suffered more...just the practical difficulty," the CJI said.

The Bench went on to request the Gauhati High Court Chief Justice to nominate one or more Chief Judicial Magistrate/Sessions Judge in Guwahati conversant in one or more languages of Manipur.

It said, "All applications for the production of accused, remand,

judicial custody, extension of custody and other proceedings in connection with the investigation are allowed to be conducted in the online mode bearing in mind both the security and distance issues."

The judicial custody of the accused, when granted, shall be permitted in the state of Manipur to obviate transit and the statements of witnesses under Section 164 of the CrPC are permitted to be recorded in the presence of a local magistrate in Manipur, or as the case may be, the place where the witnesses reside outside Manipur, it ordered.

The top court also asked the Acting Chief Justice of Manipur to designate magistrates for these purposes. The test identification parades would take place in the presence of a Manipur-based magistrate and applications such as arrest and warrant would be made through the online mode, it added.

## Satyendar Jain's interim bail extended till September 1 by SC in money-laundering case



NEW DELHI, Aug 25 (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Friday extended the interim bail of former Delhi minister Satyendar Jain in a money laundering case probed by the Enforcement Directorate, till September 1.

A bench of Justices AS Bopanna and M

M Sundresh granted the relief to Jain after taking note of his medical report.

The top court on July 24 had extended by five weeks interim bail granted to Jain.

Additional Solicitor General SV Raju, appearing for the ED, strongly opposed the extension of the interim

bail. The top court on May 26 had granted interim bail to Jain for six weeks on medical grounds, saying a citizen has a right to receive treatment of his choice in a private hospital at his own expense.

The ED had arrested Jain on May 30 last year on the charge of laundering money through four companies allegedly linked to him.

The agency had arrested Jain in the aftermath of a CBI FIR registered against him in 2017 under the Prevention of Corruption Act. He was granted regular bail by the trial court on September 6, 2019 in the case registered by the CBI.

## 30 Students Hospitalised After Suspected Food Poisoning In Maharashtra School

*The health department has collected the samples of food and water for testing.*

BHANDARA, Aug 25 (Agencies): Thirty students of an ashram school in Bhandara district of eastern Maharashtra were hospitalised due to suspected food poisoning, an official said on Friday.

The incident occurred at Yerali Ashram School in Tumsar town on Thursday, he said.

Talking to agency, Bhandara district health officer Milind Somkuwar said, "Some students of the ashram school complained of vomiting, abdominal pain and fever on Thursday, after which a team of district health department examined 325 students residing in the school



hostel." Of them, 30 students were admitted to the sub-district hospital at Tumsar for treatment, he said.

"We suspect it to be a case of food poisoning as the students took ill after consumption of food served to them at the hostel," he said, adding that all the students are now stable

and will be discharged soon.

The health department has collected the samples of food and water for testing, Mr Somkuwar said.

Ashram schools are residential schools that impart education up to the secondary level to children from tribal communities.

## Sharad Pawar Makes Massive Claim, Says "No Split" In NCP. Explains Why

PUNE, Aug 25 (Agencies): Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar today asserted that there was no split in the party and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar continues to be its leader.

He also said that some leaders have left the NCP by taking a "different political stand", but it cannot be termed as a split.

Sharad Pawar was talking to reporters at his hometown Baramati in Pune district in the morning before leaving for Kolhapur, where he is scheduled to address a rally later in the day.

A day earlier, his daughter and party's working president Supriya Sule called Ajit Pawar a senior leader and MLA of the party. "Now, he (Ajit Pawar) has taken



a stand that is against the party, and we have given a complaint to the assembly speaker and are awaiting his response," Ms Sule, who is NCP's Baramati MP, told reporters.

When asked about Ms Sule's statement that there is no split in the NCP and Ajit Pawar is a leader of the party, Sharad Pawar said, "Yes, there is no question about it."

"How can anybody say that there is a split in

NCP? There's no question that Ajit Pawar is our party leader," he said.

"What does a split in a political party mean? Split occurs when a large group in a party is separated at the national level. But no such thing has happened here. Some people left the party, some took a different stand...In democracy it is their right to take a decision," he added.

Ajit Pawar and eight other NCP MLAs had joined the Eknath

Shinde-led Shiv Sena-Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in the state on July 2.

Replying to a query, Sharad Pawar also said that the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), comprising the NCP, Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) and Congress, will perform better than the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in Maharashtra in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

When asked about a survey that projected the opposition INDIA alliance getting a good response against the NDA in the Lok Sabha polls, Mr Pawar said, "I haven't seen the survey yet. But yes, we are talking with some survey organisations where we can clearly see that MVA will win maximum seats

in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections."

The INDIA alliance is scheduled to hold its third meeting on August 31 and September 1 in Mumbai.

Talking about the onion exports duty issue, the veteran leader said, "The government should reduce the 40 per cent duty imposed on onion exports. There is no benefit to onion growers. Everybody knows that onion is considered an arable crop. Hence, the government should look into this sensitive matter."

"I tried to contact some ministers in the Centre, but could not have a word with them. Talks about limitations on the export of sugar are also underway by the central government," he added.

## Life convicts Amarmani Tripathi, wife set to be released after 16 years in UP jail

LUCKNOW/GORAKHPUR, Aug 25 (Agencies): Former UP minister Amarmani Tripathi and his wife Madhumani, serving life term in poet Madhumita Shukla murder case, are likely to be released from the jail here later in the day, Gorakhpur jail superintendent Dilip Pandey said on Friday.

The prisons department had on Thursday issued an order for the premature release of Amarmani Tripathi, citing the state's 2018 policy on remission, since they have completed 16 years of imprisonment.

The department also cited their old age and good behaviour as Amarmani is 66 and Madhumani 61, the official said citing the order.

At present, both Amarmani and his wife are in BRD medical college. Gorakhpur district jailer AK Kushwaha said that if the formalities get completed, they may be released later on Friday.

Madhumita Shukla's sister, Nidhi Shukla, who had been in the forefront in this legal fight, said she has approached the Supreme Court against the decision and also fears for the life of her family.

Poet Madhumita, who was pregnant, was shot dead on May 9, 2003, in Paper Mill Colony, Lucknow. Amarmani Tripathi was arrested in September 2003 in connection with the murder of the poetess with whom he was allegedly in a relationship.

A Dehradun court had sentenced Amarmani Tripathi and wife Madhumani to life imprisonment for Madhumita's murder in October 2007. Later, the high court and the Supreme Court upheld the sentence of the couple. The case was probed by the CBI.

"I have been telling

everyone that this is going to happen. I have procured the documents through an RTI which clearly state that 62 per cent of the jail term that the two are said to have served had been spent out of jail. I submitted documents to all responsible persons telling them that between 2012 and 2023 he was not in jail.

The government documents, which I have got through the state information commission, after a long fight, bear this out," Nidhi Shukla told agency.

She alleged that Tripathi have misled the

authorities to get a premature release.

Shukla also said she fears for her and her family's life in case the two are released.

Amarmani Tripathi and his wife are currently admitted to the BRD Medical College, Gorakhpur, for health reasons.

Amarmani Tripathi, who was elected from Nautanva constituency, had been a minister in the BJP state government in 2001.

He was with the Samajwadi Party during the Mulayam government and then switched to the Bahujan Samaj Party.

## Girl, 17, kills self over leaked photos in UP's Kaushambi



KAUSHAMBI, Aug 25 (Agencies): A 17-year-old girl hanged herself in her house in a village here after a neighbour leaked her private photos online, police said on Friday.

Her family members had gone to the youth's house to complain against him for upload-

ing the girl's photos online, but they were abused by them, police said.

Additional Superintendent of Police Samar Bahadur Singh said the family had earlier filed a complaint with the police in the matter.

The main accused has been identified as Jai

Singh, who also used to molest the girl, he said.

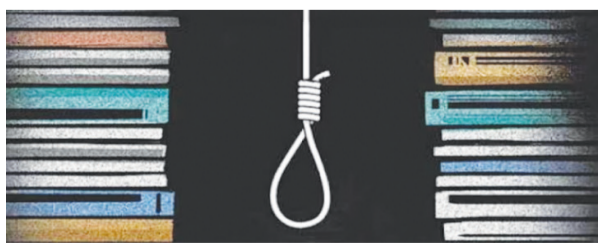
When the girl's family confronted Jai Singh's family, they abused them and also threatened to kill them, police said.

Police have booked six people under sections 147 (rioting), 354 (c) (Voyeurism), 306 (abetment of suicide), 504 (breach of the peace), 506 (criminal intimidation), 509 (insulting modesty of a woman) of the IPC and also sections of the POCSO Act.

Police have sent the girl's body for a post-mortem.

The accused is yet to be arrested.

## Dalit boy in Rajasthan found hanging in classroom, family alleges murder



JAIPUR, Aug 25 (Agencies): A Dalit boy studying in class 10 of Jawahar Navodaya School was found hanging in his classroom in the Pragpura area of Rajasthan's Kotputli-Behror district, police said on Friday.

According to police, the incident occurred

Wednesday and the boy's family has refused to accept his body.

They are holding a dharna demanding the arrest of two teachers, who they have accused of killing the boy and then hanging his body to make it look like a suicide, they said.

Kotputli-Behror's

Superintendent of Police Ranjeeta Sharma said the family has alleged the two teachers used to harass the boy.

"Post mortem of the dead body could not be conducted because the family members have been staging a dharna. Efforts are on to pacify them," she said.

An FIR was filed against the accused teachers under several sections including section 302 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), police said. No arrest has been made so far.

## Sun Mission Is Fine, Centre Should Also Focus On Onion Issue: Team Uddhav

MUMBAI, Aug 25 (Agencies): The Shiv Sena (UBT) on Friday said the Narendra Modi government can send a mission to the Sun, but it should first focus on the onion issue in the country or else the ruling party will not even realise that their 2024 Lok Sabha endeavour will go haywire.

In an editorial in Shiv Sena (UBT) mouthpiece Saamana, the party slammed the Centre's decision to impose 40 per cent export duty on



onion. "The people (of the country) are being

engaged in new missions like Moon Mission, Sun Mission and Venus

Mission. Mission Sun is all fine, but it is very much essential that the onion issue in the state stabilises," the editorial said.

Nashik, Ahmednagar and Pune districts of Maharashtra are known for their onion produce. A section of farmers have been protesting against the Centre's decision to impose a 40 per cent import duty on onion.

"You do send a mission to the Sun, but before that you should ensure

the onion issue is settled or else your mission to 2024 (Lok Sabha polls) will go haywire and you will not even realise it," he said.

Scripting history, the ISRO's Chandrayaan-3 landed on the Moon on Wednesday.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has also planned missions to the Sun, Venus and the Gaganyaan mission which aims to send Indian astronauts to Low Earth Orbit.







## Stock markets fall in early trade tracking weak global equities

The BSE Sensex falls 452.68 points to 64,799.66

MUMBAI, Aug 25 (Agencies): Equity benchmark indices fell in early trade on Friday amid a weak trend in global markets.

The BSE Sensex fell 452.68 points to 64,799.66. The NSE Nifty declined 125.95 points to 19,260.75.

From the Sensex pack, Jio Financial Services Ltd fell 4.98 per cent to touch the lower circuit limit of Rs 205.15, falling for the fifth day running. IndusInd Bank, Larsen & Toubro, Bharti Airtel, Axis Bank, UltraTech Cement and ITC were among the other laggards.



Bajaj Finserv, Tata Motors, Asian Paints and Maruti were among the gainers.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong were trading in the negative territory.

Global oil benchmark

Brent crude climbed 0.20 per cent to USD 83.53 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were buyers on Thursday as they bought equities worth Rs 1,524.87 crore, according to exchange data.

## Zepto becomes first unicorn in 2023; plans to go public by 2025



BENGALURU, Aug 25 (Agencies): Online grocery delivery start-up Zepto has finally ended the country's unicorn drought.

The company raised \$200 million in Series E fundraising, valuing it at \$1.4 billion, and this is the first start-up to join the unicorn club in 2023. This fundraiser brought in new investors onto the cap table with US StepStone Group leading the round.

This is the first direct investment for US-headquartered StepStone in an Indian company. Goodwater Capital, a consumer-focused venture capital firm based in California also joined the round as a new investor.

Existing investors such as Nexus Venture Partners, Glade Brook Capital, Lachy Groom

and more, have doubled down on the start-up. Zepto is also planning to go public by 2025.

The Indian start-up ecosystem faced a challenging first seven months of 2023 as the total funding—\$5.5 billion in H1, declined by over 72% compared to H1 2022.

In May 2022, Zepto raised \$200 million in a Series D round, valuing the start-up at around \$900 million.

Zepto has turned the majority of its dark stores fully EBITDA positive. The start-up's burn has reduced significantly, and it expects to be fully EBITDA positive in 12 to 15 months. The company has grown its sales by 300% Year-on-Year and will likely achieve \$1 billion in Annualized Sales within

the next few quarters.

Founded in 2021 by Stanford University dropouts Aadit Palicha and Kaivalya Vohra, Zepto has delivered over 6,000 grocery products in 10 minutes through a network of delivery hubs across the country.

Aadit Palicha, Co-founder and CEO of Zepto, said, "This business is about execution and we are succeeding because our execution is strong."

Kaivalya Vohra, Co-founder and CTO of Zepto said, "Even with this capital, we want to maintain our discipline, avoid complacency, and push hard to hit EBITDA positivity. In that journey, the biggest drivers of P&L improvement for us are based on technology and product."

ASK Private Wealth Hurun India Future Unicorn Index 2023 was recently launched, and according to the report, Zepto co-founder Kaivalya Vohra is the youngest co-founder in the Index.

## Tesla push: India considers import tax cut if EV makers build locally

NEW DELHI, Aug 25 (Agencies): India is working on a new electric vehicle policy that would slash import taxes for automakers that commit to some local manufacturing, following a proposal by Tesla which is considering entering the domestic market, people with direct knowledge said.

The policy being considered could allow automakers to import fully-built EVs into India at a reduced tax as low as 15%, compared to the current 100% that applies to cars that cost above \$40,000 and 70% for the rest, said two of the sources, including a senior Indian government official.

Tesla's best-selling Model Y, for example, starts at \$47,740 in the U.S. before tax credits.

"There is an understanding with Tesla's proposal and the government is showing interest," said the official, who is familiar with the issue.

If such a policy is adopted, it could amount to a drastic reduction in the cost of imported EVs that local carmakers have been keen to avoid. It could also open the door for global automakers, beyond Tesla, to tap the world's third-largest car market where sales of EVs are less than 2% of total car sales, but growing



rapidly.

The lower import taxes could help Tesla sell its full range of models in India, and not just the new car it wants to make locally, said a third source.

Other countries have taken similar measures to spur EV manufacturing commitments. Indonesia, for example, has offered to reduce import duties from 50% to zero for EV makers planning investments, a move seen aimed at attracting Chinese players and Tesla.

India's commerce and finance ministries, and Tesla, did not respond to requests for comment. The policy is still in the initial stages of deliberation and the final tax rate could change, two of the sources said.

Tesla first tried to enter India in 2021 by pushing officials

to lower the 100% import tax for EVs. Last year, the talks between Tesla and the Indian government collapsed when officials conveyed the company would have to first commit to local manufacturing.

More recently, Tesla has told Indian officials it is keen to set up a local factory and make a new EV priced in the range of \$24,000, around 25% cheaper than its current entry model, for both the Indian market and export.

"LOT OF DELIBERATIONS"

Outside the United States, Tesla currently has a plant in Shanghai - its largest factory worldwide - and one outside Berlin. It is building a new plant in Mexico that will focus on a new mass-market EV platform Musk has said will slash costs

for consumers.

For India plans, Tesla's senior public policy and business development executive Rohan Patel has in recent weeks met top officials privately. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who held talks with CEO Elon Musk in June, has been tracking progress closely, agency has reported.

One of the sources said Tesla told India officials a potential India factory could operate at full capacity by 2030.

Indian officials have conveyed there will be no special incentives for Tesla's market entry, and the proposal for a low import tax, conditional on a manufacturing commitment, was touted by Tesla to keep both sides happy, the sources said.

Still, New Delhi is going to move slowly in considering the policy proposal as any lowering of taxes on imported EVs could disrupt the market and upset local players like Tata Motors and Mahindra and Mahindra MAHM.NS that are investing to build electric cars at home.

"This is going to go through a lot of deliberations even though government is keen on getting Tesla. That's because of the impact on domestic players," the Indian official said.

## Google, Nvidia, Amazon and other tech giants invest in AI startup Hugging Face

NEW DELHI, Aug 25 (Agencies): Hugging Face, an artificial intelligence startup, announced a valuation of \$4.5 billion following a \$235 million funding round, attracting support from global tech giants including Salesforce, Google's Alphabet, Amazon and Nvidia.

This funding underscores the rapid growth of artificial intelligence (AI), positioned as the next tech frontier, drawing significant investment from Silicon Valley's major players.

With the success of OpenAI's ChatGPT, other AI startups like Microsoft-backed Inflection AI and Google-sup-



ported Runway have also secured funding.

The competition among tech leaders has bolstered Nvidia, whose chip designs are pivotal in generative AI like ChatGPT. Nvidia's shares have tripled this year, reaching an all-time high post-Wednesday's results.

Major names like Intel, Advanced Micro Devices, Qualcomm, IBM, Amazon, and Ashton Kutcher's Sound Ventures also participated in Hugging Face's funding round.

The company offers an open-source platform for building applications using machine

learning. The funds will fuel increased hiring and technological investments for its current 170-person team.

Demand surge led to substantial revenue growth, projected to increase fivefold this year, according to Hugging Face's CEO Clément Delangue. He foresees a future where every tech company integrates AI within five years.

After the latest funding round, Delangue said on X (formerly Twitter) that he is excited to welcome the new investors, adding that the company is now valued at \$4.5 billion.

"Super excited to wel-

come our new investors Salesforce VC, Google, Amazon, Nvidia, AMD, Intel, Qualcomm, IBM and Sound Ventures, who all participated in Hugging Face's \$235M Series D at a \$4.5B valuation to celebrate the crossing of 1,000,000 models, datasets and apps on the platform," he said.

"These partners alone already shared over 1,000 open models and datasets and have over 10,000 users on Hugging Face. It takes a village to democratize good machine learning thanks to open-source and we're just getting started!" he added.

"Super excited to wel-

## Some gut conditions may signal risk of Parkinson's disease: Study

Analyses indicated four gut conditions associated with higher risk of Parkinson's disease diagnosis, say researchers

NEW DELHI, Aug 25 (Agencies): Certain gastrointestinal problems, such as difficulty swallowing, constipation and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), may be associated with the risk of developing Parkinson's disease, according to a study.

Parkinson's is a brain disorder that causes unintended or uncontrollable movements, such as shaking, stiffness, and difficulty with balance and coordination.

Previously, some gut problems have been linked to the development of diseases such as stroke or a brain aneurysm, or Alzheimer's disease, the researchers said.

The latest study, published in the journal Gut, used data from a US nationwide medical record network (TriNetX) of 24,624 people who had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease of unknown cause.

They were compared with people who had been diagnosed with

other neurological conditions—Alzheimer's disease (19,046) or cerebrovascular disease (23,942)—or with none of these (24,624).

People with Parkinson's were matched with those in the other groups for age, sex, race and ethnicity, and length of diagnosis to compare the frequency of gut conditions included in their electronic health record for an average of 6 years before their Parkinson's disease diagnosis.

The team, including researchers from KU Leuven University Hospitals, Belgium and Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, US, divided all the adults in the network who had been diagnosed with any of 18 gut conditions into separate groups—one for each condition of interest.

People in these groups were matched with those without the particular gut condition and monitored via their medical records for 5 years to see how



many of them developed Parkinson's disease or other neurological disorders.

Both analyses indicated that four gut conditions were associated with a higher risk of a Parkinson's disease diagnosis, the researchers said.

Gastro paresis (delayed stomach emptying), dysphagia (difficulty swallowing), and constipation were associated with over double

the risk of Parkinson's disease in the 5 years preceding the diagnosis, while IBS without diarrhea was associated with a 17 per cent higher risk, they said.

However, appendix removal seemed to be protective, prompting questions about its potential role in the disease processes leading to Parkinson's disease, the researchers said.

Neither inflammatory bowel disease nor

vagotomy (removal of all or part of the vagus nerve to treat peptic ulcer) were associated with a heightened risk, they said.

Some other gut issues, including functional dyspepsia (burning sensation or fullness of the stomach with no obvious cause), IBS with diarrhea, and diarrhea plus fecal incontinence, were also more prevalent among people who developed Parkinson's disease.

However, these conditions were also more prevalent before the onset of Alzheimer's disease or cerebrovascular disease, according to the researchers.

The team noted that this is an observational study, and as such, can't establish cause. They also highlight several limitations to their findings, including that the monitoring period was relatively short and that the diagnostic information captured in electronic health records might have been incomplete.

## Steel exports continue to see sluggish growth despite duty rollbacks



NEW DELHI, Aug 25 (Agencies): Despite the government revoking duty on steel exports in November 2022, the average monthly exports have not reached the pre-duty levels. As per the Numero Analytics data, the average monthly exports since December 2022 (till July 2023) have been 683,000 tonnes as against 1.089 million tonnes averaged in the first five months of 2022.

A 15% export duty was imposed in May 2022 on a range of finished steel products, which accounted for about 95% of India's overall finished steel exports. The duty was in effect

for over six months, and its removal coincides with a period of reduced demand due to the global economic slowdown.

Exports rose to 5.46 million tonnes in December 2022-May 2023 period from 3.17 million tonnes in June-November 2022 period last year. However, before the duty was imposed in May 2022, exports stood at 5.45 million tonnes in January-May 2022 period.

However, exports in July 2023 saw a 32.5% year-on-year growth at 648,000 tonnes. As per experts, exports haven't yet reached the pre-duty levels due to several factors including slow-

down in specific regions like Europe, and China's realty crisis. Many countries are importing from China due to freight benefits, among others. Experts are confident that domestic demand will compensate for sluggish export demand

The slower growth in exports is not a cause for concern as domestic demand is expected to strengthen from November onwards, feels Anil K Chaudhary, former Chairman of Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL) and the chief executive officer of Essar Capital's Metals and Mining Vertical.

"Domestic demand always gives better realization than in the international markets, making domestic demand more lucrative," he said.

"India's focus on infra spending and green energy will raise demand for steel. Exports are gradually picking up after removal of duty on certain products, but are range-bound due to softening global steel prices," said an industry expert, who didn't wish to be quoted.

## Chess World Cup: Tie (Heart) breaker

Carlsen's experience reigns supreme as Praggnan falls at final hurdle

NEW DELHI, Aug 25 (Agencies): Entering the chess World Cup, Indian prodigy R Praggnanandhaa never imagined he would get to play against world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen.

The only way for the world No. 31 to face Carlsen was if the Indian reached the final. The 18-year-old not only surprised the world but also himself when he became only the second Indian after the great Viswanathan Anand to reach the final of the prestigious tournament.

Beating world No. 2 Hikaru Nakamura and world No. 3 Fabiano Caruana to set up the title clash with Carlsen would have given Praggnanandhaa the belief that he could upset the Norwegian great. After all, it was not an impossible task for Praggnanandhaa, who had beaten Carlsen in an online tournament last year.

Forcing the final into the tie-break after drawing the two classical games would have boosted Praggnanandhaa's confidence further. Notably, Carlsen, a five-time world champion in the classical format, had struggled with the aftereffects of a bout of



food poisoning in the opening two games. He had played for draws, giving himself more time to recover.

Praggnanandhaa would still have given himself a fair chance in the rapid games, having pulled off tie-break wins in the previous two rounds.

Understandably, Praggnanandhaa went into the first game of the tie-break with an attacking mindset. Playing with the white pieces, the Indian went on the offensive but failed to break Carlsen's defence. As the time pressure increased in the endgame, Carlsen's experience as a four-time rapid and six-time blitz world champion

came into play. The Norwegian, realising that Praggnanandhaa was struggling with time, forced the pace to put pressure on the Indian. Praggnanandhaa faltered before resigning after 47 moves.

Having lost the opening game, Praggnanandhaa faced an uphill battle. Playing with black, Praggnanandhaa could not trouble Carlsen, who forced exchanges in a better position before the two agreed for a draw after 22 moves.

Having come agonisingly close after finishing third in 2021, Carlsen succeeded in winning the only major trophy evading him.

For Praggnanandhaa, it was double delight as he also qualified for the Candidates tournament, which will be held in Canada next year to determine the challenger to world champion Ding Liren of China. Even though he could not emulate Anand in winning the World Cup title, Praggnanandhaa is only the second Indian after the five-time world champion to qualify for the Candidates.

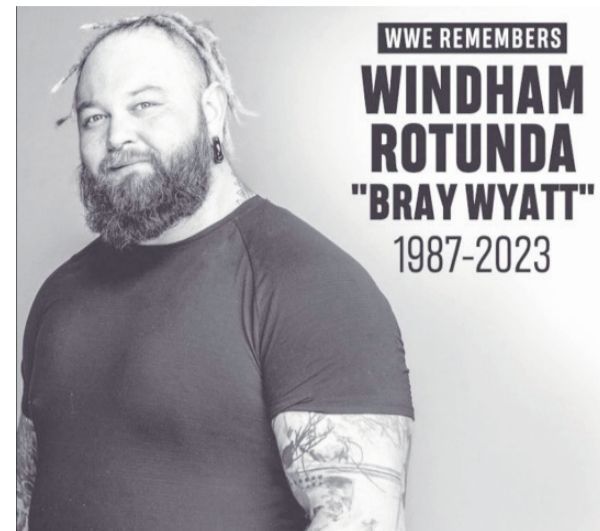
Praggnanandhaa is also the third-youngest player after the legendary Bobby Fischer and Carlsen to make it to the Candidates.

"Praggnanandhaa can come back with a candidates spot and a truly wonderful result," Anand posted online. "In the end, it's Magnus! His persistence is rewarded with a victory in the only tournament that eluded him so far."

Meanwhile, USA's Fabiano Caruana beat Azerbaijan's Nijat Abasov in a tie-break to clinch the third place and secure a ticket to the Candidates. However, with Carlsen reluctant to play in the Candidates, Abasov could get the Norwegian's spot.

## WWE wrestler Bray Wyatt dies of heart attack at 36

Was reportedly suffering from a life-threatening illness and had been out of action for months



WWE REMEMBERS  
WINDHAM  
ROTUNDA  
"BRAY WYATT"  
1987-2023

WASHINGTON, Aug 25 (Agencies): WWE wrestler Bray Wyatt passed away on Thursday after suffering a heart attack, at the age of 36.

Wyatt, whose real name was Windham Rotunda, was reportedly suffering from a life-threatening illness for the last couple of

months.

Wyatt had been missing from in-ring action since January this year.

Former wrestler and WWE chief content officer, Paul Levesque, better known by his ring-name, Triple H, took to X to announce the heart-breaking news.

"Just received a call from WWE Hall of

Famer Mike Rotunda who informed us of the tragic news that our WWE family member for life Windham Rotunda - also known as Bray Wyatt - unexpectedly passed earlier today. Our thoughts are with his family and we ask that everyone respect their privacy at this time," tweeted Levesque.

The news of the former WWE champion's demise comes as a shock to the wrestling community and fans as recent reports suggested that he was on his way to recovery from the life-threatening illness and was preparing for his in-ring return.

Following the sad news, WWE wrestlers and fans took to social media to pay tribute to the third-generation wrestler.

## No one is favourite in Asia Cup: Sourav Ganguly on India's opening clash against Pakistan

NEW DELHI, Aug 25 (Agencies): With the Asia Cup just on the horizon, anticipation is mounting for the much-anticipated group clash between India and Pakistan scheduled for September 2nd. Former India captain and ex-BCCI president Sourav Ganguly expressed the complexity of determining a favorite in the Asia Cup. He emphasized the level playing field, suggesting that any team has a fair shot at victory. Acknowledging the strength of both squads, Ganguly noted Pakistan's prowess while affirming India's undeniable standing as a formidable contender.

"Telling favourite is difficult in the Asia Cup. Anyone can win. Both the teams are good. Pakistan is also a good side. India is obviously a good team," Ganguly told news agency.

Jasprit Bumrah, after an extended absence due to injury, staged a triumphant return



during the Ireland T20 series. Ganguly lauded Bumrah's performance, applauding his accomplishments in the T20 format and emphasizing the new challenge of transitioning to ODI cricket.

"Bumrah has done well in Ireland. He had played T20. Now have to play ODI. Have to bowl 10 overs in a match. So let's see," Ganguly added.

BCCI announced India's 17-man squad for the Asia Cup and Yuzvendra Chahal was a significant absentee as Axar Patel got the nod ahead of the

leg-spinner, showcasing the selectors' trust in his abilities. Sourav Ganguly lent his support to this decision, highlighting Axar Patel's dual skills as a spinner and a capable batsman. Ganguly rationalized the choice within the context of needing only three spinners, and he commended the selection of Axar Patel, emphasizing his additional value as a batsman.

"Its ok. You have to play only with three spinners. I think they had done the right thing by picking up Axar Patel as he can bat," Ganguly further said.

## "Since Yuvraj Singh and MS Dhoni Retired...": R Ashwin's Bold No. 5 Remark Ahead Of Asia Cup 2023

NEW DELHI, Aug 25 (Agencies): Middle-order has been a problem for the Indian team for a long time. After MS Dhoni's retirement, a number of players have been tried in the finisher's role but not many have been able to convince the selectors and team management. As for the No. 4 spot, since Yuvraj Singh's exit from the team, there remains a big conundrum over the position. For Ravichandran Ashwin, the man who has been able to impress in the middle-order since Dhoni and Yuvraj's departures, is



KL Rahul.

"Ever since Yuvraj Singh and MS Dhoni retired, India were desperately looking for a replacement. Rahul has filled that slot with exper-

ience. He is a definite lock at No.5 and is also our wicketkeeper-batsman," Ashwin said in a video on his YouTube channel.

"Before Pant's injury, Rahul was second in line

and now Ishan Kishan is the second keeper, he has grabbed that opportunity with both hands. Rahul has some niggles but hopefully, he will be ready for the first game.

If he is not we have an 18-member travelling with squad in Sanju Samson," Ashwin added.

Ashwin also lavished huge praise on Shreyas Iyer, who according to him, remains India's best bet at the No. 4 position despite Tilak Varma's inclusion in the Asia Cup squad. "Shreyas Iyer is as

important as KL Rahul to this side. One of the best players in the Indian line-up against spin and a consistent No.4 for India.

He has played a crucial part in his success whenever he has played at 4. If he is completely fit to play, there should be no debate on No. 4 position," Ashwin asserted.

The Indian team management would hope both Rahul and Iyer remain fully fit, especially keeping their importance for the ODI World Cup in mind.

## Mohammed Siraj should play ahead of Shardul Thakur or Prasidh Krishna in World Cup 2023: Aakash Chopra

NEW DELHI, Aug 25 (Agencies): Former India opener Aakash Chopra reckons that Mohammed Siraj has a brilliant ODI record and the Indian team management cannot play Shardul Thakur and Prasidh Krishna ahead of him in the upcoming ICC ODI World Cup 2023.

Siraj, Thakur, and Krishna are all part of the 17-man squad representing India in the upcoming Asia Cup, set to start on August 30, to be hosted by Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammad Shami are the other key pacers in the team.

In the 17 ODIs played in the Asian subconti-

nent, Siraj has secured 35 wickets with an average of 16.57 and an economy rate of 4.51. Furthermore, the pacer has accounted for 29 dismissals in 14 ODIs in India with an average of 15.44 and an economy rate of 4.33.

Speaking on his YouTube channel, Aakash Chopra praised Siraj, highlighting that he has taken 43 wickets across 24 matches, with an average of 20.7 and an economy rate of 4.78. These statistics, Chopra noted, are better than those of both Bumrah and Shami.

"Mohammed Siraj is brilliant. He has had a short career. 43 wickets in 24 matches at an average of 20.7 and



an economy rate of 4.78. They are better than both Bumrah's and Shami's numbers. In Asia, his average becomes 16.57 and economy rate is 4.51," Aakash Chopra said in a video shared on his YouTube channel.

Stating that Siraj's performance in Asia

surpasses his numbers outside the continent, Chopra remarked, "You cannot play anyone. You will have to play Siraj only".

"His numbers in Asia are better than his numbers outside Asia. So, people who were talking about whether Shardul Thakur or Prasidh

Krishna can be played instead of Siraj, you cannot play anyone. You will have to play Siraj only. You should play him," Chopra added.

Chopra also lauded Bumrah's ODI performance both overall and in Asia, emphasizing his remarkable stats of 121 wickets across 72 matches, an average of 24.3, and an economy rate of 4.63.

"Jasprit Bumrah has picked up 121 wickets in 72 matches at an average of 24.3 and an economy rate of 4.63. He is brilliant - nearly two wickets per game. In Asia also, his average is 23.9 and he has an economy rate of 4.65. These are phenomenal numbers."

## Former Australia captain Tim Paine joins Adelaide Strikers as assistant coach ahead of BBL 2023-24



SYDNEY, Aug 25 (Agencies): Adelaide Strikers have announced that Tim Paine has been added to the backroom staff as an assistant coach ahead of the BBL season.

Paine had recently announced his retirement from first-class cricket and is one of the most experienced players in Australia, having played more than 400 matches for the Aussies throughout his career. The wicket-keeper played for the Hobart Hurricanes during his time in the BBL and represented them 44 times and scored more than 1100 runs.

Paine also captained the Australian Test team following the Sandpaper-gate scandal and navigated the team through some testing times. The 38-year-old

was also recently announced as the assistant coach of the Australia A side ahead of their series against New Zealand A.

Strikers GM Tim Nielsen said that he was thrilled to have Paine as a part of the backroom staff.

"Tim is a great addition to our team and will help us in so many ways this season," Nielsen said.

"A gifted keeper and Test level batter, Tim will be invaluable working with our players both in the field and with the bat. His ability to provide effective, direct feedback is top class and we really look forward to him getting up to Adelaide."

Strikers head coach Jason Gillespie also welcomed the arrival of Paine and said that the former Australian skipper has all the skills to be a great coach. Gillespie said that Paine's experience will surely help the players at the franchise.

"Tim has all the skills to be a fantastic coach and it is so great for us that he has decided to join the Strikers as we hunt success this summer," Gillespie said.

"The experience he will bring is sure to help our players in all facets of the game and bring more positive elements to the way we play."

## Neymar & Co could be set for Indian odyssey

BENGALURU, Aug 25 (Agencies): A few years ago, stars of this stature, not so far removed from their prime, playing matches of consequence in India would have been unthinkable. But when Mumbai City FC line up for their home AFC Champions League group game against Al Hilal SFC, their opponents may include the likes of Neymar, Kalidou Koulibaly, Ruben Neves, Serge Milinkovic-Savic and Aleksander Mitrovic.

Apart from Al Hilal, Mumbai City FC also drew Iran's FC Nassaji Mazandaran and Uzbekistan's PFC Navbahor Namangan in the 2023-24 AFC Champions League draw. But even before the ceremony, all the chatter was about whether Mumbai would come up against one of the four Saudi teams in fray — the others included Cristiano Ronaldo's Al Nassr and Karim Benzema's Al Ittihad.

"It's an exciting draw, and a very difficult one," said Mumbai City coach Des Buckingham. "It would have been difficult regardless of who we pulled out of the draw. Our target would be to go and play the kind of football



that we want to play, that we can play, that we did last year. We got three results in six games. We'll be representing our club and our region but more importantly, we'll be representing Indian football."

While the mass exodus of stars from European top-flight to Saudi Arabia's oil-money-fueled clubs have been subject to much criticism from Western media, it nevertheless brings a great deal of spotlight on Asian football. And for India, it means an opportunity to rub shoulders with some of football's

biggest names.

That opportunity might be a temporary thing though, with the AFC restructuring the Champions League format from 2024-25. The top tier in Asian Football will be the AFC Champions League Elite, which will comprise 24 clubs. India does not have a slot allocated for this event. The second rung will be the AFC Champions League 2.

The ISL champions will qualify for the group stages of this tournament while the Federation Cup winners will make it to the play-off. There is a chance to come up against a Ronaldo or a Neymar — one Saudi club will qualify for this tournament — but it will not be as pronounced as it is now. It will take sustained good performances by Indian clubs in this tournament to recapture their spot in the top flight.

Also saw the draw for the AFC Cup take place, with Mohun Bagan and Odisha FC finding themselves in the same group, alongside Bangladeshi side Bashundhara Kings and Maldives outfit Maziya.

## Protest rally in Jammu demands reevaluation of Toll Plaza, Smart Meter decisions



### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 25: A powerful protest rally, spearheaded by Dr. Rohit Gupta, Provincial Secretary of Apni Party, Purshottam Chib, Daljit Singh, and other leaders of Yuva Rajput Sabha, resonated through Subash Nagar in Jammu. The protest was fueled by strong opposition against the toll plaza establishment and the installation of smart meters within the city.

Voices of dissent filled

the air as protestors rallied against the toll plaza and the implementation of smart meters in Jammu.

The demonstrators asserted that these decisions would impose undue financial burdens on the local populace and infringe upon their rights.

The primary demands of the protest encompassed the immediate release of leaders affiliated with the Rajput Sabha who had been detained.

The spirited leaders

standing at the forefront of this protest were taken into custody, fueling the determination of the demonstrators to secure their release.

Dr. Rohit Gupta, along with Purshottam Chib, Daljit Singh, and the youth leaders from Yuva Rajput Sabha, led the charge, expressing the concerns and grievances of the community.

The protest garnered significant attention and participation, signifying the intensity of public sentiment against the perceived injustices.

As the protestors stood united in their cause, the rally served as a stark reminder of the power of collective voices in a democratic society.

The leaders urged authorities to reconsider the decisions concerning toll plaza and smart meters, highlighting the potential adverse effects on the lives of the people.

This demonstration showcases the unwavering commitment of the community to safeguard its interests and to hold authorities accountable for decisions that impact the local population.

As the protest concluded, the participants remained steadfast in their resolve, demanding not only the release of their detained leaders but also a thorough reevaluation of the decisions that prompted this significant display of dissent.

## L&IS Deptt celebrates Librarian's Day

### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 25: The Department of Library and Information Science at the University of Jammu marked a momentous occasion on August 25, 2023, by celebrating Librarians' Day with great enthusiasm and reverence. The event was a testament to the importance of librarians in shaping the world of knowledge and learning. The celebration included insightful lectures, a distinguished chief guest and inspirational speeches.

The festivities commenced at 2 o'clock in the afternoon with a warm welcome extended to all attendees by Miss Riya, the moderator for the day. The atmosphere was charged with anticipation as the faculty members, scholars, students, library professionals gathered to honor the contributions of librarians and their commitment to the dissemination of knowledge.

The highlight of the



event was the enlightening lecture delivered by the Head of the Department Prof Sangeeta Gupta who welcomed our esteemed chief guest Prof. Rahul Gupta, Registrar University of Jammu, and eloquently discussed the legacy of Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, a pioneer in the field of library science. The lecture shed light on Ranganathan's innovative contributions and his enduring influence on modern librarianship. It served as a reminder of the continued relevance

of his principles in the digital age.

The event was graced by the presence of Professor Rahul Gupta, Registrar University of Jammu. Professor Gupta, the esteemed chief guest of the event, captivated the audience with his profound insights into the evolving role of librarians in the digital era. His lecture was a thought-provoking exploration of the challenges and opportunities that librarians face in today's information-rich society.

Assistant Professor Ashwin Khushwaha also shared his thoughts, emphasizing the pivotal role librarians play in fostering a culture of curiosity and lifelong learning.

Pooja Rana, Research Scholar delivered the Vote of Thanks, expressing gratitude to Professor Rahul Gupta for his enlightening lecture, to the Head of the Department for her insightful discourse on Ranganathan, and to all attendees for their presence and participation.

The Librarians' Day celebration at the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Jammu, served as a reminder of the vital role that librarians play in shaping the academic and intellectual landscape. The event left a lasting impact on all attendees, fostering a renewed appreciation for the tireless efforts of librarians in nurturing a thirst for knowledge.

## Army, Wushu Association Kupwara organise District Wushu Championship 2023



### TOP NEWS REPORT

KUPWARA, Aug 25: Under Slogan "Meri Maati Mera Desh" Kupwara Wushu Association and Indian Army's 160 Infantry Battalion (TA) jointly organized District Wushu Championship 2023 at Indoor Stadium Handwara.

The event saw participation of over 300 Children and youth including boys and girls of different categories, Sub Junior, Junior and Senior categories.

It was the first time here in Kupwara when about 100 local youth

including boys and girls from remote villages of Warsun, Dardwan and other far-flung areas of Kupwara were trained and prepared by Indian Army to take part in District Wushu Championship 2023.

These Wushu players were trained by a JCO of Indian Army who has played wushu game at international level.

Syed Sleet Shah, SDPO Handwara witnessed the event as chief guest along with the officials from Indian Army and applauded all players for their participation. She particularly

applauded the young girls for not only being competitive but also performing admirably.

All the participants and organisers highly appreciated Indian Army for conducting such events for the youth of Kupwara and they wish that same kind of events be conducted by Army in future also.

Indian Army, Kupwara Terriers remains in the forefront of encouraging sporting events in Kupwara to boost the culture of Sports and enable the youth to come out and participate in sporting activities.

## UGC nominates University of Jammu as Nodal Institution to Implement NEP-2020 in J&K

### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 25: The University of Jammu has recently been designated as the nodal University by the University Grants Commission (UGC) to spearhead the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. This distinction brings great pride and honour to the institution. The University of Jammu has been entrusted with the pivotal responsibility of executing the mandates set forth in the National Education Policy 2020, along with various recommendations and regulations outlined by the UGC. Notably, as part of the larger initiative, UGC has formed five zonal committees to facilitate the voluntary implementation of NEP across higher education institutions throughout the country. With this new role, the University of Jammu will play a central role in creating awareness, arranging

programs, and offering guidance to higher education institutions within Jammu and Kashmir to effectively implement NEP, thereby providing a platform to exchange and adopt best practices. In a recent meeting held on August 18, 2023, the UGC unveiled its comprehensive work plan. As part of this plan, the University of Jammu is slated to organize a symposium under the theme "Skill Development and Employment" very shortly.

Office of Dean Academic Affairs, University of Jammu shall be the Nodal Office to facilitate coordination among various universities within Jammu and Kashmir. This commendable decision by UGC not only highlights the University of Jammu's leadership and commitment to advancing education but also marks a significant step towards the effective implementation of NEP-2020's transformative goals within the region.

## DSS extends support to Jammu Bandh on Aug 26, asks Govt to concede demands

### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 25: Dogra Sadar Sabha (DSS), Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu extended full support to the call for Jammu Bandh on August 26 given by the different organizations of Jammu, in solidarity with Yuva Rajput Sabha in particular and other people of Jammu region in general against the irrational and illegal collection of Toll Tax at Sarore Toll Plaza, despite of the claim by the Union Home Minister in Parliament and assurance by the UT government and the Lt Governor that the Toll Plaza will not be operationalised.

This was stated by former cabinet minister and President of Jammu and Kashmir DSS Th. Gulchain Singh Charak here on Friday.

He said, DSS has always been strongly condemning the arbitrary and rigid attitude of the UT government and use of police force against the national-

ist and peace loving Dogras, particularly the youth of Jammu region, who have been agitating against imposition of harsh measures like installation of electricity smart meters without any mechanism for redressal of public grievances, unjustified collection of Toll Tax, illegal commercialisation of Dogra heritage and monuments, announcements regarding imposition of property tax and callous attitude towards environmental protection.

The DSS has asked the Lt Governor and the Central Government on several occasions to constitute advisory committees at various levels to guide the government and the civil administration in the absence of democratic governance in the UT. Not heeding to the appeals of the DSS has led to this unfortunate situation where several young and innocent people have been put in jails.

Charak has lambasted

the government for mis-governance and alienating the patriotic youth. He has said that it is the responsibility of the Lt Governor to listen to the voice of the people of Jammu immediately, concede their demands, unconditionally release the people arrested during the current agitation and constitute an advisory committee with representation from responsible members of the civil society, so that the situation doesn't aggravate any further.

Th. Gulchain Singh Charak has mean while once again appealed to all social, political and other organisations of Jammu region to come together, irrespective of their affiliations, and peacefully agitate to press upon the government to accept the public demands which are highly reasonable and justified.

He has simultaneously asked the government to accept the demands immediately so that the situation doesn't slip out of control.

## PG Deptt holds 3rd lecture on 'An Overview of Banking Industry in J&K'

### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 25: PG Department of Commerce, University of Jammu organized the third lecture in its ongoing Industry Academia Linkage Series.

The lecture, titled "Overview of the Banking Industry in Jammu & Kashmir," was held on 25th August, 2023 at Seminar Hall for the students of M.Com. This session marked another significant step in the department's efforts to bridge the gap between academia and industry.

The Industry Academia Linkage Series has been designed to facilitate meaningful interactions between students, faculty members and industry experts. By bringing together academic knowledge and practical industry insights, the series aims to provide a comprehensive



understanding of various sectors and their evolving trends.

CA Padma Mishra, Senior Manager, Zonal Office Jammu, J&K Bank Ltd. was formally welcomed by Dr. Deepti Abrol, the Coordinator of the event, where she welcomed the worthy Guest Speaker.

Dr. Jeevan Jyoti, Head of Department, presented a planter as token of respect to

the invited guest.

In this lecture, participants had the privilege of gaining insights into the Banking Industry in Jammu & Kashmir. Esteemed speaker from the banking sector shared her expertise, discussing the unique dynamics of the region's banking landscape. Key topics covered included challenges, opportunities and the industry's crucial role in con-

tributing to the economic growth of the state.

The event garnered enthusiastic participation from students and faculty, showcasing the genuine interest in gaining deeper insights into the local banking industry. Attendees engaged in dynamic discussions with the speaker, raising pertinent questions and enriching their understanding of the subject matter.

Later, formal vote of thanks was presented by Dr. Jeevan Jyoti, Head of the Department along with a token of appreciation.

Among those present during the event were Prof. Neetu Andotra, Dr. Tarsem Lal, Dr. Jyoti Sharma, Dr. Sunil Kumar, Dr. Harleen, Dr. Rupa Mahajan, Dr. Vishal Gupta and Dr. Sumeet Kour.

## Munish congrats PM, ISRO for Chandrayaan-3 success

### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Aug 25: Jammu and Kashmir BJP former General Secretary Munish Sharma, in a statement, said that India has created history by launching Chandrayaan-3 on south pole of the moon. Our Country has become the first nation in the world to register this achievement. He said that the successful landing of the Chandrayaan-3 has also sent a clear message to the world that India is second to none in any field.

Munish Sharma said that the entire team of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) deserve all the

appreciation for its hard work in achieving the landmark in space technology. He said that the Indians are feeling proud of being the citizens of a country, which is making one success after the other in many fields and this has not happened in one day but the result of the consistent, untiring united efforts of years of the people engaged in such missions.

"The success achieved by the ISRO too is not the work of one day but it took years of continuous work of the team members working in different sections of this world class organisation," Munish said and added that India and Indians can do anything

and achieve the desired target when they determine to do it.

Munish Sharma said that the safe landing of Chandrayaan-3 has invited worldwide applaud and the credit to this goes to the ISRO. He said that the Indians living abroad too are celebrating this feat and feeling pride to be the sons of India, a country which is scaling new heights and competing with the world's super powers in all the matters.

The BJP leader also congratulated the Prime Minister and the ISRO team for such a landmark achievement in the field of space technology.