

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 08, 2023

Daily Evening Newspaper



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Actor Junior Mehmood dies of cancer at 68



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'Will turn Beirut into Gaza': Netanyahu warns Hezbollah against all-out war



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BRIEFLY

India bans Onion Exports till March 2024

NEW DELHI, Dec 8 (Agencies): The Government has banned exports of onion till March next year with a view to increase domestic availability and to keep prices in check. "Export policy of onions... is amended from free to prohibited till March 31, 2024," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade said in a notification.

Intense cold grips Kashmir, Srinagar records season's coldest night at minus 2.6°C

SRINAGAR, Dec 8 (Agencies): There was no let up in severe cold weather conditions in Jammu and Kashmir as Srinagar recorded season's coldest night at minus 2.6°C on Thursday.

A meteorological department official here said that further drop by 1-2°C is expected in next three days before some relief from the freezing cold conditions.

Till December 10, he said, mainly dry weather is expected in J&K.

On December 11, he said, weather is expected to be generally cloudy.

From December 12-15, he said, weather is likely to be generally cloudy with light rain/snow at isolated higher reaches.

"Fall in Minimum temperature by 1-2°C is expected during next 3 days over all the stations and thereafter slight improvement till December 15," he said.

Regarding the minimum temperature, he said, Srinagar recorded a low of minus 2.6°C, the coldest so far this season, against 2.0°C on the previous night and it was 2.0°C below normal for this time of the year in Srinagar.

Qazigund recorded a minimum of minus 2.2°C against minus 2.0°C on the previous night, he said. The minimum temperature was 1.4°C below normal for the gateway town of Kashmir, the official said.

Pahalgam recorded a low of minus 4.9°C against minus 5.1°C on the previous night

Police to ensure strict compliance of SoPs to avoid Eidgah like attacks: ADGP Law & Order

SRINAGAR, Dec 8 (Agencies): Jammu and Kashmir Police Friday said all the officers and other ranks have been directed to follow Standard Operating Procedure (SoPs) in spirit while on leave or on duty to avoid incidents like the one in which a police inspector was attacked on October 29 at Eidgah, Srinagar.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of the wreath laying ceremony slain police inspector



Masroor Ahmed Wani, who was injured in a terrorist attack while playing cricket at Eidgah on October 29, and succumbed yesterday at AIIMS, at DPL Srinagar,

ADGP Law and Order Vijay Kumar said and the officers and other ranks have been directed to follow the SoPs in spirit. "Fresh directions passed to one and all

to follow SoPs while on leave or while performing the duties to avoid becoming soft targets," Kumar said, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO). Inspector Wani succumbed at AIIMS yesterday after battling for life for 39 days. A bullet had stuck his head. Wani's body was brought to Srinagar from AIIMS this morning.

ADGP Kumar while replying to a query admitted that police had

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I am servant of Law And Constitution: CJI D Y Chandrachud

NEW DELHI, Dec 8 (Agencies): Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Friday said that as a judge, he is a "servant" of the law and the Constitution and has to follow the position that has been laid down.

As soon as a bench headed by the CJI assembled for the day's proceedings, advocate Mathews J Nedumpara mentioned a matter



before the court.

The lawyer then told the bench, also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj

Misra, about the need for reforms in the collegium system as well as abolition of the senior advocate designation.

"You have the freedom to pursue your heart's desire. As the Chief Justice of India, but more importantly, as a judge first, I am a servant of the law and the Constitution," Justice Chandrachud said.

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UPI payment limit to hospitals, Educational institutes raised to Rs 5 Lakh: RBI

MUMBAI, Dec 8 (Agencies): In a major decision, the RBI on Friday announced to raise the UPI payment limit to hospitals and educational institutions to Rs 5 lakh from Rs 1 lakh presently and hiked the cap for e-mandates for recurring payments to Rs 1 lakh.

Unveiling the December bi-monthly monetary policy, Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das said the limit for various categories of



Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions

has been reviewed from time to time.

"It is now proposed to enhance the UPI transaction limit for payment to hospitals and educational institutions from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh per transaction," he said.

The enhanced limit will help consumers make UPI payments of higher amounts for education and healthcare purposes.

He further said that e-mandates for making payments of a recurring nature have become

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Arms, ammunition recovered during searches in Rajouri



JAMMU, Dec 8 (Agencies): Security forces in Friday recovered arms and ammunition in Nowshera area of Rajouri district.

An official said that a search operation was launched by joint team of Police and army in the Patrari Rajalkote forest area. During searches

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DSEJ announces winter vacation in phased manner from Dec 11

SRINAGAR, Dec 8 (Agencies): Directorate of School Education Jammu (DSEJ) Friday announced winter vacations in winter zones in a phased manner from December-11 to February-29.

DSEJ in an order said that all government schools and recognised private schools upto Higher Secondary Level of winter zone of Jammu Division shall observe winter vacations.

DSEJ said that the classes upto 8th standard shall observe the vacations from December-11-2023 to February-29-2024 and the classes from 9th to 12th standard shall observe the vacations from December-18 to February-29 respectively.

The directorate further ordered that the Chief Education Officers shall ensure online classes for Class 10 and 12th

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LG Ladakh grieved over loss of lives in Zojila accident

LEH, Dec 8 (Agencies): Lieutenant Governor, Ladakh, Brigadier B D Mishra (Retd) on Friday expressed grief over the tragic road accident near Zojila, in which five Kargil residents lost their lives.

"My heartfelt condolences to the grieving families in Sankoo who lost their loved ones in the tragic road accident at Zoji-la on Thursday. May the soul of the departed ones rest



in eternal peace and may their families find strength in these challenging times" the office of Lieutenant Governor Ladakh posted on X.

Notably, in a tragic road accident near Zojila Pass on Srinagar-Leh highway on Thursday five persons died after a vehicle they were travelling in met with an accident after it rolled down into a deep gorge near Zojila Pass.

The ill-fated vehicle was on way from Sonamarg to Kargil. All the deceased were residents of Kargil district. This was the second fatal accident in three days.

Five arrested with weapons in separate incidents in J&K

JAMMU, Dec 8 (Agencies): Five people were arrested with weapons in separate incidents in Jammu and Kashmir, police said on Friday.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team raided the Ramgarh area in Samba district and arrested hardcore criminal Vivek Singh on Thursday night. A country-made pistol and a 12-bore gun were recovered from him, they said.

A case was registered against him under the Arms Act at Vijaypur police station, they said.

Singh was arrested in 2018 with three others in connection with a kidnapping and attempt to murder case, according to police.

In the second incident, police received information that some people were collecting royalty from the mining mafia at the cricket ground in Sum Toph, Phallian Mandal area. A team rushed to the spot and arrested four people who were identified as Abhishek Singh, Ravi Singh, Harbax Singh and Sachin Singh, officials said.

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'Two Crore Tourists visited JK upto Nov this Year', Says Union Minister

SRINAGAR, Dec 8 (Agencies): Union Tourism Minister G Kishen Reddy Thursday said that for the first time after Independence, Jammu and Kashmir has recorded the arrival of two crore tourists up to November this year.

Replying to a query in the Parliament, Reddy, said that for the first time after India's Independence, Jammu and Kashmir has seen two crore tourist arrivals including foreigners up to November this year. "The figure is set to go up further by December end," he said.

He said that there has been a 155 percent

increase in the overall tourist arrivals in 2023 compared to 2021 and 2022. "85 lakh foreign tourists visited India this year so far," he said.

The Union Minister said that PM Narendra Modi has played a huge role in showcasing India's tourism potential and tourism industry. "PM Modi has been the brand ambassador of India's tourism industry. In his (PM's) every foreign visit, Modiji showcased India's huge tourism potential that attracted lakhs of tourists to India," he said.

The Union Minister said G-20 meetings have played a great role

in promoting India's tourism. "The ambassadors rather than the representatives sent by over 30 countries were the cream of foreign countries. Almost 200 meetings of G-20 were held across India including one in J&K. The participants went back to their respective countries as ambassadors of tourism," he said, adding that the Tourism Industry of India got a big push after a successful G-20 meeting this year.

Interestingly, Tourism officials in J&K believe that the G-20 Tourism Working Group meeting held in Srinagar in May

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Shiv Sena meets Chief Secretary, submits memorandum



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: Party State Chief Manish Sahni along with Vice President Sanjeev Kohli visited the office of Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo in Jammu Secretariat and gave him a memorandum regarding the above demands. Sahni said that the

local students should have the first right for admission in colleges and universities of every state and union territory including Jammu and Kashmir. Along with this, Sahni demanded to determine the CUET examination centers at the state and district level. He said that in 2023,

around 24,000 students of Jammu and Kashmir had found CUET exam centers in other states. Due to which the students had to face a lot of problems, hundreds of students could not even reach the examination centres. Sahni said that the Chief Secretary assured to consider the above demands.

Increase in theft cases creates scare in border areas: Rajesh Kesri

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: Notwithstanding best efforts made by Police regarding foolproof safety and security of masses and effective check on anti-social elements, especially in border areas, it has been observed that the scenario on ground level is quite scary. This was stated by Shiv Sena Hindustan J&K President Pt Rajesh Kesri in a press conference organized here in Arnia today.

Addressing media persons, Kesri said that although, a theft or burglary is not a new thing for border areas but from last few days, an unexpected rise has been witnessed in the theft cases, which are being reported from various parts of border areas depriving innocent people of hard-earned money and other valuable assets.

The further matter to worry is that despite reporting of theft cases,



that too at regular intervals, the Police though have initiated some stern action against the accused responsible for the same and arrest or recovery have been made but recurring theft cases is matter of serious concern, said Kesri. Police, which is responsible for the ensuring safety of life and property of people doing their best, thieves are ruling the roost,

without any fear of law. Moreover, looking at the scenario and on directive of the high-ups, the patrolling should be increased and the need of the hour is to activate all sources and carryout a massive operation against thieves or the gang active in area, so that such incidents may not reoccur.

Kesri said thieves are stealing fearlessly, especially the thieves have

created terror in the empty houses. There has been panic among the people.

He requested the government and top police officers to take serious cognizance and put a check on thieves. He demanded constituting special police team so that these thieves can be caught and dare not to target bedding houses.

Kesri asked the resi-

dents to maintain strict vigil at their ends and install CCTV cameras at their homes and report the suspicious movements of anyone in the area to the nearest police post.

Prominent among those present on the occasion include Balveer Kumar, Balwant Fouji, Rajkumar Baba Ghara Ram, Captain Omprakash, Darshana Devi, Anju Devi, Neeru Devi and Rajni Devi.

Sky Warrior, Shankar Nagar Club win in Chaar Sahibzaade T20



Top News Report

POONCH, Dec 8: Sky Warrior and Shankar Nagar Club defeated opponents in the ongoing Chaar Sahibzaade T20 Cricket Tournament, organized by Sikh Youth of Poonch at Sports Stadium Poonch, here on Friday.

In today's first match, Sky Warrior defeated Kunyian Rangers by eight wickets.

Batting first, Kunyian Rangers scored 140 runs for the loss of eight wickets, Mohd Yousaf played a knock of 65 runs off 37 balls including six powerful shots and Nazakat contributed 29 runs off 33 balls. JD Javaid took four wickets for 22 runs for Sky Warrior.

In reply, Sky Warrior chased the total in just 11 overs losing only two wickets scoring 143 runs.

Shoib Shaikh hit 47 runs off 17 balls smashing 5 huge sixes while Danish remained unbeaten at 41 runs off 25 balls hitting 3 sixes. Saleem Jaffar took 1 wicket for 22 runs. JD Javaid's exceptional bowling performance earned him the Man of the Match award.

Professor Satinderpal Singh graced the match as the Chief Guest encouraging and motivating the players to actively participate in games and sports.

In another match,

Shankar Nagar Club beat Star Club Arai by 17 runs.

Shankar Nagar Club, batting first, scored 129 runs for the loss of six wickets. Sorab scored 30 runs off 30 balls while Kabal made 17 runs off 14 balls. Abrar claimed four wickets for 30 runs.

In reply, Star Club Arai could only manage 112 runs for the loss of eight wickets resulting in a 17-run defeat. Haq Nawaz and Saleem Raza were the top scorers with 24 and 17 runs respectively. Waqar Younis and Bunty took 2 wickets each. For his all-round performance Waqar Younis was declared the Man of the Match.

MBA students attended 5-day Residential 'Advanced E-SDP Programme' at IIT Jammu



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: The students of MBA (International Business), International Centre for Cross Cultural Research and Human Resource Management (ICCCR & HRM), University of Jammu attended 5-Day residential 'Advanced E-SDP Programme: Building Entrepreneurial Excellence: The Manufacturing Mindset for Make in India' programme at IIT Jammu.

The programme was specifically designed for aspiring entrepreneurs who wish to learn about the growing opportunities in India's manufacturing sector. Focused on fostering a manufacturing mindset, the program had key components such as strategic planning, supply chain management, and oper-

ational efficiency. The participants throughout the programme were engaged in case studies thereby gaining insights into effective decision-making, innovation, and risk management in the manufacturing sector.

With sessions over five days, the program aimed to provide a platform to the new generation of entrepreneurial leaders capable of contributing to the success of the Make in India initiative. It is pertinent to mention that the programme is fully sponsored by MSME, Government of India and is curated by organizations such as IIT Jammu, IIT Kanpur, IIT Delhi, and IIM Jammu.

The students of MBA (International Business) shared that their experiences and narrated that the programme enabled

them to connect with the resource persons, incubation experts, and industry personnel all across the India. Besides, networking, the programme immersed them in the entrepreneurial pedagogy, cases and experiential activities followed by visits to manufacturing setups and incubation cells.

Prof. Hardeep Chahal, Director, ICCCR & HRM, University of Jammu, deliberated that such like experiential residential programme, train students with neoteric skill sets, competencies and lifelong learning that further shape their overall personality and career choice.

The programme was coordinated by Dr. Isha Sharma and all faculty members at ICCCR & HRM, University of Jammu.

Lecture on 'Poet's work and poetry' organized by Hindi Deptt, JU

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: A one-day lecture on the topic 'Poet's work and poetry' was organized by the Hindi Department, Jammu University, Jammu.

Prof. Durga Prasad Gupta, senior poet and critic, Department of Hindi, Jamia Millia Islamia University, was present as the keynote speaker. The program started with the formal welcome of the keynote speaker which was done by Dr. Bandana Thakur.

The main speaker explained the sattvik nature of love in the context of poetry analyzed the language of feelings between relationships. They said that the music of love has taken over the reins of their relationship. To save the future, it is necessary to create and establish tradition. Talking about poetic work, he

said that he does not believe in imitation in the context of poetry. He also said that language can be made more mature through practice. His poems are poems that come out of family relationships. Talking about his poetic work, he also recited a self-composed poem.

Head of Department, Hindi Department, Dr. Throwing light on the liveliness of the poem, Rajni Bala gave subtle views on the language of the poem. Formal thanks Dr. Purushotam Kumar did it. Dr. Bhagwati Devi conducted the stage.

This program was done under the efficient direction of the chairperson of the department. Dr. Koshi-sha Sharma took care of the arrangements of the auditorium. More than 70 students and researchers benefited from this program.

CSU Shri Ranbir Campus celebrates Bhartiya Bhasha Utsav



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: Central Sanskrit University (CSU), Shri Ranbir Campus Jammu, celebrated Bhartiya Bhasha Utsav under the leadership of campus Director Prof Shreedhar Mishra.

Director of this campus told that our 12 campuses running under the Ministry of Education Govt of India

so it is our duty to promote the Indian language and culture that also vision of our Prime Minister so that various competitions are organized in five Languages Sanskrit, Hindi, Odiya, Dogri and English for 100 students.

Dr. Madan Kumar Jha, coordinator of this program, told that 1st 2nd and 3rd will be given to winners.

Dimple welcomes CJI for announcing verdict on Article 370, on Monday



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: Sunil Dimple, president of Mission Statehood, has welcomed and thanked the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and the constitutional bench of the Supreme Court for announcing the verdict on their petitions related to Article 370, Article 35-A, and Jammu and Kashmir statehood. The judgment is scheduled for Monday, December 11 at 10:30 AM.

Dimple, while addressing a press conference, expressed confidence that the Supreme Court will uphold the dignity and integrity of the Indian constitution

and reverse the decisions made on August 5, 2019, regarding the abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35-A, as well as the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's princely state.

He emphasized the mission's sincere struggle to preserve the identity, culture, demography, and history of Jammu and Kashmir, along with the standstill agreement and conditions of the instrument of accession.

Dimple along with people from all religions in Jammu and Kashmir, has strived from the streets to the Supreme Court to protect the region's identity.

He expressed confidence that the Supreme Court, CJI, and constitutional bench will deliver justice and safeguard the lands, jobs, and overall identity of the people.

Dimple highlighted the importance of the standstill agreement and the implementation of the instrument of accession conditions signed by Jammu and Kashmir's Dogra Maharaja Hari Singh with India.

He stressed that this agreement is crucial for the happiness and progress of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Dimple mentioned specific demands, including the protection of Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC), Jammu and Kashmir state subject, protection of land and jobs, and the unification of Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, POK, Gilgit, and Baltistan in the Jammu and Kashmir state.

Dimple announced his plans to be present in Delhi and at the Supreme Court during the announcement of the verdict.

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EDITORIAL

ILLITERACY-
A CURSE

The old times were simple and easy. At that time neither life was so dynamic nor the mean of living were so complex. The needs were very limited. A person used to sleep peacefully after earning two meals a day.

Now desires and aspirations challenge the limits of the sky. In such a situation, a person being deprived of reading and writing is a curse. An illiterate person will neither be able to keep up with the fast-paced era nor will his range of thinking expand. Literacy is the basic mantra of human progress and development. If an illiterate and illiterate person cannot do good for himself, then of what use will he be to the society and the nation. Before attaining independence, the number of illiterate people in our country's population was very high. But due to the tireless efforts of the government, today the society is moving towards the goal of educating every person.

Education is being promoted from house to house and village to village so that the intellectual level of every person improves. He doesn't have any fingerprints, no one can cheat him. Every person of every class should understand his good and bad and take decisions wisely in his daily life. May his vision expand. May he be freed from superstitions and exploitation.

Education is a blessing, illiteracy is a curse. Today, the target of 100 percent literacy has been achieved in many states of our country by encouraging mobile schools, free education, adult education and women's education. But a lot more efforts still need to be made in this area. How important will be the day when every Indian will be educated. We all should provide full cooperation in this direction.

The importance of literacy is not only in the personal development of an individual but also in the social and economic development of the society. Educated individuals become more conscious, positive and dedicated participants in the society. They not only have adequate knowledge of their own prosperity, but they are also aware of the issues in their society and actively work for the improvement of the society.

On the occasion of World Literacy Day, we should be reminded that while education is a part of the mainstream of our society, it is also the key to our personal development. We need to promote literacy through a dedicated effort so that we can provide leadership to the society in a positive direction.

Literacy is a power that can help us move towards a more prosperous, socialist and developed society. World Literacy Day reminds us that the importance of education is not just in studies but in all areas of society and we should remain committed to promoting it.

Will 2028 COP in India help us to battle climate change?

By: Sunanda K Datta
Ray

No one would dream of questioning the importance of the international climate conferences during what the United Nations

Secretary-General, António Guterres, calls an "era of global boiling". But many people may wonder if India can afford to host one of these high-powered jamborees of captains and kings such as the latest summit in Dubai that Britain's King Charles III also attended.

One must also ask if Prime Minister Narendra Modi's generous offer at the Dubai COP28 (Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) to host COP33 in 2028 was at all linked with India's general election due to be held next year. Basking in the afterglow of the G-20, which reportedly cost a phenomenal Rs 4,100 crores, Mr Modi appeared to claim in Dubai that India was especially qualified to play host because its population of 17 per cent of the world's accounts for only four per cent of the global carbon emission.

That is precisely the problem, prompting misgivings about the extent of industrialisation and per capita car ownership in a country whose GDP ranks 139th internationally and which languishes 132nd in the UN Human Development Index. Given the state of public health, India is understandably coy about signing the declaration linking it with climate change. The actual cost of COP28 is not known but it was a collective effort with the initial funding estimated at \$475 million. The host, the United Arab Emirates, pledged \$100 million, as did Germany. The European Union promised \$275 million, the United States \$17.5 million, Japan \$10 million and Britain £\$2 billion to the

Green Climate Fund.

Funding COP33 may have seemed less formidable if India had not been burdened with other commitments and extravagances. One such is the world's tallest statue, the \$450-million figure of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, whose "made-in-China" accessories make it a less than national monument. Another is New Delhi's ongoing Central Vista project, which is reported to cost \$1.8 billion and which seems intended to recast the past in unreal terms to cater to present political proclivities.

It's not that other countries do not also indulge in global public relations exercises for domestic reasons. The American saying that "all politics is local" associated with the former House of Representatives Speaker Tip O'Neill could not be more apt. People suspect that the offer by Turkey's authoritarian President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to host COP31 in 2026 has more to do with his consolidation of personal power and Eurasian prestige than concern for global warming. His announcement at the Dubai gathering put Turkey in the race against Australia, whose candidacy was announced earlier this year by the Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, and won instant support from most West European governments.

However, the Pacific community that Australia traditionally leads is not quite as enthusiastic about Mr Albanese's role. "The Australian government has promised to 'stand shoulder to shoulder' with its Pacific family in response to the climate crisis," said a group advertisement in the Fiji Times. "Yet the response to our natural disasters, sea level rise, heat [and] food insecurity has been to pursue more gas and coal projects -- the very thing driving the climate crisis."

The competition between Turkey,

a candidate for European Union membership, and Australia, which formerly had Asian ambitions but is now a key member of the AUKUS (Australia, UK, US) security pact set up in 2021 primarily as an American instrument to contain China, has interesting implications. AUKUS was announced ahead of the Quad summit, of which India and Japan are members, and promises Australia nuclear-powered submarines.

Although India is not part of the nuclear deal and is silent on containing China, there seems little doubt that Quad membership also expresses the Narendra Modi government's pro-US stance. When the Prime Minister says "We do not have much time to correct the mistakes of the last century", he is ostensibly addressing the threat of global warming, the need for rich countries to transfer technology to help emerging economies fight climate change, and achieve non-fossil fuel targets ahead of deadlines all over the world. But his strong support for Israel in the war on Gaza indicates that Mr Modi might also have in mind those non-alignment years when Jawaharlal Nehru bluntly told Loy Henderson, the American ambassador: "If there is friction between an Asian and a non-Asian power, I must be on the side of the Asian power". Mr Modi certainly will not endorse Nehru's sweeping view that the fewer Indians who visited the United States the better.

Ideology apart, India's government has so many administrative tasks on its hands that it cannot possibly be involved in one exciting global circus after another without being charged with neglecting the domestic responsibilities for which the BJP was elected to power.

The minister of state for space, Jitendra Singh, boasts that "the Russian moon mission, that was

unsuccessful, cost Rs 16,000 crores, and our (Chandrayaan-3) mission cost just around Rs 600 crores". That may be true but the crucial question is: What has the Rs 600 crores spent in landing a craft on a neglected patch of the moon's surface achieved for Indians? Has it reduced a 47 million-strong army of unemployed people by creating a single job? Has it established more schools, public buses or hospitals? Has it even improved the appalling arrangements for disposing of India's dead?

Of course, lavish infrastructure spending accounts for the high 7.6 per cent growth during the July-September quarter. But not all the signature projects on New Delhi's agenda are productive investments. Some, indeed, carry a whiff of party or personal propaganda. Reports that the Chenani-Nashri road tunnel, India's longest, which was ostentatiously dedicated to the nation, was conceived under Dr Manmohan Singh, prompted jibes that Mr Modi might next inaugurate some scheme that the UPA had already launched. Some wondered if a Rs 3,600-crore Chhatrapati Shivaji memorial served any utilitarian purpose. Others feared that a bridge across the Chenab may have been selected in a spirit of one-upmanship to beat the railway bridge across the Beipan river in China. And, of course, the controversial and apparently ill-advised Rs 12,000-crore Char Dham highway from which 41 workers were rescued may have placed religious sentiment above human safety.

Global warming threatens man's future. It deserves to be met seriously with all the resources at our command. It should not be treated as an opportunity to win friends and influence people for political advantage.

Equipping Youth with New skills



By: Vijay GarG

By embracing transformative approach to upskilling youth, we can ensure that they not only thrive but also lead us toward a more sustainable future

In a world marked by rapid evolution and constant change, it is imperative to recognise the significance of preparing our youth for the future. With over 1.8 billion individuals aged between 10 and 24, as highlighted by the United Nations, the potential of this demographic to drive progress and transformation is immense. But it is equally important to acknowledge the challenges they face in a job market that is constantly in flux.

The statistics are revealing: in 92 countries, nearly three out of four young people aged 15-24 lack the emerging skills needed for employ-

ment, as per estimates by the Education Commission and UNICEF. This challenge is particularly pronounced in developing countries where access to education and resources can be limited. This glaring disparity underscores the urgency of providing our youth with skills that are not only relevant but also adaptable, transcending borders and empowering. Let's consider India, a nation with a vast talent pool in the information and technology sector. India has the potential to become a hub of technology and innovation, expanding beyond its role as one of the biggest IT exporters globally. However, it is imperative to transition from merely acquiring new skills to creating well-rounded individuals with the capacity to address social issues.

Changemakers Mindset: Fostering a Changemakers mindset leveraging entrepreneurial thinking and problem solving is essential to equip the next generation for the 21st century's challenges and opportunities. Global leadership programs and initiatives offer a unique platform to instill this mindset in young students. By immersing them in a curriculum that emphasises on innovation and entre-

preneurial thinking around some real life challenges, we can prepare students to excel in the 4th Industrial Revolution. Programs aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals provide students with a sense of purpose and responsibility, reinforcing the importance of change making in creating a more sustainable and socially conscious future.

Nurturing Digital Skills: Technology is a crucial tool for transformative education. It connects students to a wealth of knowledge and experts worldwide, enabling innovative problem-solving. Beyond job readiness, it empowers youth to address pressing issues using advanced tools like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Augmented Reality (AR), and Virtual Reality (VR).

The focus should shift to a holistic, interdisciplinary education, preparing youth for a tech-centric future in various sectors even in traditionally non-technical fields like medicine or psychology.

Beyond the Classroom: Learning extends beyond the confines of a traditional classroom. Students acquire knowledge and skills through experiential opportunities, such as engaging in projects centred around

environmental sustainability, social justice, and community involvement. Empowering Youth: Involving youth in shaping their own education is crucial. Instead of imposing a strict, top-down approach, a more flexible, bottom-up method is desirable. This means listening to the ideas and opinions of young people about what they're learning. By equipping youth with new skills, we empower them to pass on their knowledge to the next generation in their communities. This results in a collaborative system where everyone has a role in making sure young people gain valuable skills.

The path to equipping our youth for the future is multifaceted. It involves fostering a changemakers mindset, nurturing digital skills, emphasising socio emotional growth, empowering youth to take charge of their education, and extending learning beyond the classroom. By embracing these transformative approaches to upskilling our youth, we can ensure that they would lead us toward a brighter, more sustainable future.

(Vijay GarG Retired
Principal Educational
columnist Malout)

President SGPC Amritsar to inaugurate Sant Khushal Singh Gurmat Vidyalya at Marh on Dec 9

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: J P Singh Retd, along with Manjit Singh, Balvinder Singh Vice President DGPC Jammu, T P Singh, Rajinder Singh Sudan, Janak Singh, Jatinder Singh Ex Vice Chairman Cantonment Board, while addressing the press conference highlighted the upcoming inauguration of Sant Bhai Khushal Singh Gurmat Vidyalya & Khoj Khendra (Educational Research Centre) at Marh Bagh on 9th December.
The Gurmat Vidyalya (Centre) has been constructed with the hostel facilities in a big chunk



of land with wonderful surroundings of natural habitat.

The Gurmat Vidyalya Educational Research Centre aims to provide free CBSE education along with religious studies, especially the Knowledge of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, to underprivileged children in

6th, 7th, 8th & 9th grades in the school run and managed by Sant Puta Danna Charitable Trust at Domana.

The aim of the research center is to produce eminent scholars and researchers of Sikh ideology which focuses on humanity & oneness of mankind.

The knowledge and study will be provided by learned Parcharaks, historians, and renowned religious personalities. Distinguished guests, including Advocate Harjinder Singh Dhami President Shiromani Gurudwara Parbhandak Committee Amritsar (SGPC) and Rajinder

Singh Mehta Gen Secretary SGPC Amritsar will grace the inaugural function.

The event signifies a significant step towards empowering young minds with quality education and spiritual guidance.

SGSD charitable trust urges upon civil society of JKUT and community members to attend the inaugural ceremony on 9th December from 11.30 AM to 3 PM to make the event a grand success and to witness the event where Gurmat Centre will be dedicated to the Community. Guru Ka langar shall be served there.

KC College of Education conducts plantation drive



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: The Environmental Club of K.C. College of Education conducted Plantation Drive in the college premises as a part of annual event on December 8, 2023 considering the manifold benefits of trees including that they release oxygen, absorb harmful gases, protect us from UV rays, provide us with food, prevent soil erosion, maintain ecological balance and most especially in lessen the effects of global warming.
The students of semester III participated in the drive where in, first of all the students demarcated the area with

the help of college gardeners and other helpers, they dug the ground for plantation. Then the students and the faculty planted the fruit trees there.

Speaking on the occasion, Principal of the college, Dr. Sanjay Tickoo appreciated the initiative taken by Dr. Puja Sharma, Convenor of the club, who convened the whole programme and further said that tree plantation is not just something that should be done, instead, it is a necessity, the urgent need of the hour.
To this end, the club members, faculty and students participated in the plantation drive with zeal and enthusiasm.

Immediate Release Bandi Singhs: Varinder Jeet

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: BJP JK UT Vice president Varinder Jeet Singh has advocated release of Sikh political prisoners or Bandi Singhs, who were in jails for the last 2 or 3 decades in militancy related cases.
Many Sikhs booked during militancy continue to remain in jails, although they have completed their prison terms. They are aged and pose no threat to society rather they need family support.
"I appeal to all state governments to sympathetically consider all such cases, the BJP senior leader said. Several Sikh bodies including Gurudwara Prabandhak committee, Delhi Sikh Gurdwara management committee and different fac-



tions of Shiromani Akali Dal have been raising similar demands," he said.

They have also criticized the government for such actions of not releasing them. Chief of Dera Sacha Sauda has also been given Parole six times in two years and many people are drawing contrast between this and release of Sikh political prisoners.

Varinder Jeet Singh has appealed to Centre

Govt to intervene and release these prisoners who have long completed their jail term.

Gurdial Singh Bali General Secretary National Sikh Front said that on December 10th, known as Human Rights Day, we'll observe BLACK TURBAN DAY. To support Devinderpal Singh Bhullar's release, I'll wear a black turban. He's been in Amritsar's Central Jail hospital for over 28 years for a Delhi State case. For 12 years, he's been treated there for schizophrenia. Decision to release is pending with the Sentence Review Board of Delhi Government led by Arvind Kejriwal.

They urged everyone to show support by wearing a black turban on December 10th, 2023.

Danger on Bonigam—Baihama Link Road, citizens demand action

Top News Report

KULGAM, Dec 8: Bonigam-Baihama Link road of South Kashmir's Kulgam district has suffered a significant collapse, posing a grave threat to the safety of commuters.

A delegation of commuters told that the portion of retaining wall of Bonigam-Baihama link road collapsed suddenly on October 12 this year but since



then authorities are not fixing it. Thus leaves commuters to suffer, adding that despite the dangerous condition of the road, we (commu-

ters) and locals continue to use it as there is no alternative road, raising the possibility of a major accident.
"It has been months now that the road is in dilapidated condition. Commuters face a lot of hardships as the road is full of danger that end up hindering smooth traffic movement," said Bilal Ahmad, a commuter.
The commuters said that despite the road catering to a huge traffic influx, authorities are not fixing it.
"The residents now live in constant fear. We urge the authorities to

take immediate action before any untoward incident occurs," the locals said.
When contacted Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) of R&B Division Devsar, Rayees Ahmad said, "We have sent a project plan to higher ups for repairing of the road which is yet to be approved."
"Once project is approved, work will be started on the road," he said.

Unemployment at Chenab Valley is at alarming stage: Ajeet Bhagat

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Dec 8: Jammu and Kashmir National Conference leader Ajeet Bhagat said during different under construction Hydroelectric Power Projects under the banner of different mul-

tinational companies our skilled, unskilled, semiskilled employee are not recruited as par their desire skill due to that youth of Kishtwar, Doda and Ramban Districts of Chenab Valley Zone diverted it's mind towards frustration, drugs, and in different

criminal activities. Bhagat said that the constructed different online offline recruiting scheme still haven't any result on ground for proper free and fare recruitment processes by districts administration Kishtwar, Doda and Ramban Districts



of Chenab Valley Zone and multinational companies from past so many years.

Ajeet Bhagat request to Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Secretary to intervene this issue and recruit our talented and needy youth as earlier as possible only for betterment and developmental point of view in different departments.

Int'l Conference on Inter-disciplinary Probabilities in Music concludes at GLDM GDC Hiranagar



Top News Report

HIRANAGAR, Dec 8: The two-day International Conference, hosted by Girdhari Lal Dogra Memorial Government Degree College Hiranagar has concluded on a harmonious note by bringing together music enthusiasts, scholars, and practitioners from around the globe.

The conference titled Interdisciplinary Probabilities in Music provided a dynamic platform for the exchange of ideas and insights of music with all other academic disciplines.

The conference witnessed an impressive lineup of speakers and presenters, featuring experts from various disciplines and fields. Prominent of whom were Pandit Vidhadhar Vyas, former Vice-Chancellor Bhatkhande Institute of Music,

Rakesh Minhas, Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Prof. Pankaj Mala Sharma from Punjab University Chandigarh, Prof. Lawanya Kirti from Darbhanga, Bihar, Prof. Bharat Bhushan Sharma former Principal Higher Education Department, J&K on the first day of the conference.

The second day of the conference also embraced a wide spectrum of speakers, experts and participants.

Dr. Arvind Jasrotia, Rector Kathua Campus and a prominent academician from University of Jammu was Chief Guest and Prof. Lalit Magotra, a prolific Dogri writer and an academician was the Guest of Honour.

After the ceremonial lighting of the lamp Dr. Pragya Khanna, the Principal of the College presented a formal wel-

come address.

The Principal emphasized on the need of such collaborations to make a lasting impact on academics and society.

Second day also featured expert views by Prof. Lawanya Kirti, a Hindustani Classical Vocalist from Darbhanga, Bihar, Dr. Bharat Bhushan Sharma, former Principal Higher Education Department, J&K, Dr. Luca Moretti and Dr. Lucia Oliva are eminent artists and choreographers from Muscat, Oman.

A number of papers by the participants from different parts of the country were also presented offline and also through online mode. Participants engaged in thought-provoking discussions on the relation and influence of Music on other subjects taught in the country.

The conference facili-

tated meaningful dialogues on cross-cultural collaborations in music, fostering a spirit of unity and understanding. The proceedings of the conference were handled by Prof. Rakesh Sharma, Dr. Arun Kumar and Prof. Shapia Shameem. The Conference was also attended by Principals of the adjoining Colleges, participants from different regions, faculty and students of GLDM GDC Hiranagar.

The programme ended with the phenomenal performances by students of the College.
In his closing remarks, Dr. Bharat Bhushan, convenor of the conference expressed gratitude to all experts, Speakers, participants and especially to the Principal of the College Dr. Pragya Khanna for her support in making the conference a success.

BLSKS presents musical play "Nasha Je Karge Be Mouti Marge" at RP Public School Bantalab

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: In order to continue 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 393th Dogri Musical Play "Nasha Je Karge Be Mouti Marge" at Raja Public School, Bantalab Jammu today under the overall Directions of Dr. M.L Dogra.

A pledge was also administered by more than 300 students / teachers by Chahat Chadha and the certificate by the Ministry of Social Justice was presented to the Principal of the Host School.

The program inaugurated by the Chief Guest Swarn Lata, Chairperson, Raja Public School, Bantalab Jammu.

Among the Guest of Honors present were Priya Jamwal, Principal, Omesh Manhas, Vice principal, Pradeep Kumar, Senior Teacher of the host school.

The day commemorated as well with sole aim of rejuvenating the traditional, Primitive Folk, Art, Culture of J&K Region.

The items prepared on the theme "Nasha Khorii Ghar Bimari Chutki", "Ko ache Ram



koi alha", "Nasha Nai Kario Munde Kureio", "Swachh Bharat Ho", "Mere Hikdu Gald-bad", "Kali Mata Bawe basdi- Bajan", "SavdhanSavdhan ae Bhart vasiSavdhan", " Mere Ghar Parbhu aye Hai", Nukkad, Skits, Songs and Dances were presented to aware the masses.

The Chief Guest in his speech said the Nasha Mukat Bharat Abhiyan launched by Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment the Nodal Ministry for Drug Demand Reduction was launched on 15th August 2020, as most vulnerable in terms of usage of drugs in the country. These vulnerable districts were identified on the basis of findings from the Comprehensive National Survey and the inputs provided by the Narcotics Control Bureau. The risk of addictions lurks for everyone.

Although some people have higher chances of getting addicted than others it depends on multiple factors.

Some of them are Genetics: If you have a family history of

addictions you are more likely to get one Environmental. Lack of parental involvement or abuse/neglect increase chances of addictions, Peer pressure can lead a person to try hazardous and more addictive substances, and availability of alcohol or drugs in your social circle also increase chances of addiction Psychological. Adolescents and young adults are more likely to getting addicted to substances type of drug used: drugs like cocaine and heroin have severely painful withdrawal symptoms and so are much more addictive than alcohol. Drugs that are smoked or injected into your body tend to be more addictive as they directly go to the bloodstream and brain than those that you swallow through passing through liver can lead to some filtration Mental Illness were lauded the efforts of the organizers in making such awareness programmes colorful and effective/
The artists of BLSKS presented theme based songs written by

Dr.M.L.Dogra and the music was the composed by Raju Bajgal, Music Instructor, BLSKS.

The program was also recorded & uploaded online on Social Media for benefit of the peoples.
Welcome speech was given by Dr. M.L.Dogra, Chairman, BLSKS 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. These are usually unpleasant experiences which make it difficult to reduce or quit the substance.

The singers, musicians and actors who performed were Usha Raina, Zulekha Farid, Raju Bajgal, Chahat Chadha, Bindia Okheda, M.C. Kotwal, Rahul Kumar, Vandana Gupta, Rajeev Salotra, Akshara Salotra, Daksh Salotra.

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

The band KISS, which has rocked the world for 50 golden years, will now be seen in AI-generated avatars. However, celebs opine that although artificial intelligence is taking over, the human mind will

Fire-breathing, blood-spitting acts, smoking guitars, levitating drum kits; 30 gold albums, 14 platinum albums...one of the best metal and hard rock bands KISS recently gave their last performance as a 'human band'. They had entertained the world with pyrotechnics for 50 years, but saved the most shocking revelation for the last show!

After their last concert of End of the Road farewell tour at Madison Square Garden last week at New York, they staked an astonishing claim — that it was their last outing as a band in 'human form', as they will continue as 'virtual avatars' in future.

"KISS army, your love, your power has made us immortal! A new KISS era starts now," singer Paul Stanley's avatar said in the video before the virtual band took over to play God Gave Rock 'N' Roll to You II.

Balancing act

The move has come as a surprise, but not a shock as AI increasingly becomes accessible. Actor Angad Hasija sees artificial intelligence as a smart sidekick for ideas in creative fields. "Digital avatars can let



artistes stick around, even when they're not here anymore. It's like leaving a cool mark that lasts way into the future. We're on this exciting tech-ride, but it's important to keep an eye on how much we let AI do. It's great for improving things, but we humans should stay in-charge. We don't want machines stealing the spotlight; we need to find the right balance," he insists.

Last year, AI-generated piece Théâtre D'opéra Spatial won the first prize at the Colorado State Fair Fine Arts Competition.

Humanoid robots too thrive from the surge in AI development. Nadia, the next genera-

tion humanoid, with real-time perception, compliant locomotion, autonomous footstep placement and dexterous VR-telemetered manipulation, is ready to challenge humans in a boxing ring!

AI is limited

Right from sports to fiction, AI is increasingly knocking on our lives. "The use of artificial intelligence is undoubtedly amazing. But again it is the result of programming done by humans. AI is limited, while the human mind has no limits," says actress Ekta Saraiya. "We just need to move with new finds. There would always be humans in the loop for this world to function," she

adds.

It's about time to embrace the change sans much distress, feels actor Charrul Malik. "Similar to all other innovations in the past, we need to continue to stay motivated to adapt. Today, we can use AI to write scripts and compose music, but we will always need to review its performance. AI can never match human senses. Since we create content for humans, it's imperative that humans continue to stay involved in the process."

Embrace and adapt

Every new technology always comes with pros and cons, says entrepreneur-turned-filmmaker Nikhil Nanda, "AI brings in a lot of advantages. When computers had just arrived, the shorthand typists lost their jobs. People thought it was the end of manual labour, but over time it has increased and improved efficiency. In the case of AI also we are going to see more advances, but even for the Chat GPT to work you need a human to put in the right input to get the right output. I don't think it would cause any major job losses, but it's going to be a big disruptor; it's time we embrace and adapt."

Eva Longoria's confidence comes from her identifying as 'ugly duckling'



Actress Eva Longoria feels like the 'ugly duckling' because she didn't 'identify as a beauty growing up'. The 48-year-old actress has admitted she didn't mind being cast as

Gabrielle Solis on Desperate Housewives in a role that focused a lot on her looks, and joked she's "riding that wave to the beach."

Asked where her confidence has come

from, she said, "For me? The ugly duckling. I did not identify as a beauty growing up and so I don't have a very healthy relationship with it because it didn't define me... When people are like 'You know you're sexy and beautiful and you're on this list,' I'm like 'bring it yes, yes.'"

Longoria joked that being recognised for her looks is 'better than the alternative' and revealed her family keeps her in check. She recently noted how it's unfortunate that young women often compare themselves to others because of "unattainable images" on sites like Instagram and TikTok. She said, "I was lucky not to grow up in a time of social media. I never had that relationship with beauty that I think a lot of young girls grow up with, especially today."

Esha Deol pens adorable birthday wish for her 'darling papa' Dharmendra

As the 'He-Man of Bollywood' Dharmendra turned 88 years old on Friday, he received a special wish from his daughter Esha Deol.

Esha took to Instagram and shared a priceless picture with her dad on this special day.

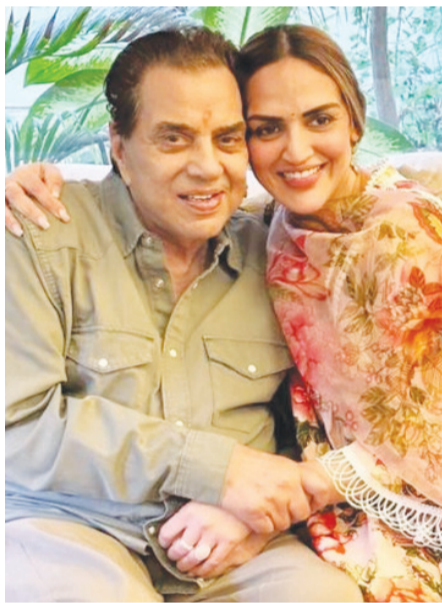
In one of the pictures, Dharmendra is seen planting a kiss on Esha's forehead.

Sharing the pictures, she wrote, "Happy birthday my darling papa, love you... I pray for you to always be happy, healthy & strong [?] I just love you so much."

As soon as the pictures were uploaded, fans and industry friends chimed in the comment section to wish the actor on birthday.

Bobby Deol dropped red heart emojis. One of the users wrote, "God bless to He-Man."

Another user commented, "Happy Birthday dharam paaji." Dharmendra is considered one of the



best action heroes of Indian cinema and has delivered remarkable performances in films like 'Sholay', 'Pratigya', 'The Burning Train' and many more.

Actor Junior Mehmood dies of cancer at 68

He was suffering from stomach cancer and was not keeping well for the past few days

Character actor Junior Mehmood, known for his roles in 'Caravan', 'Haathi Mere Saathi' and 'Mera Naam Joker', died on Friday following a battle with cancer, his son Hasnain said.

The actor was 68.

"My father passed away at 2 am following his battle with stomach cancer. He was in a critical condition for the past 17 days. He had lost 35-40 kg in a month," Hasnain Sayyed, Junior Mehmood's younger son, told agency.

Junior Mehmood, whose real name was Naeem Sayyed, began as a child artiste with 'Mohabbat Zindagi Hai' (1966) and 'Naunihal' (1967). He was given the name Junior Mehmood by late comedy icon



Mehmood after they starred together in 1968 film 'Suhag Raat'.

According to the actor's close friend Salaam

to take him to Tata Memorial hospital.

"They did a check-up and the doctors said he had cancer in his lung and liver, and a tumour in his stomach. He was also diagnosed with jaundice," Kazi added.

Actors Jeetendra and Sachin visited the actor at his residence on Tuesday after he expressed a desire to meet them. Jeetendra had shared screen space with the actor in several movies, including 'Suhag Raat' and 'Caravan'.

In a career of over four decades, Junior Mehmood featured in over 260 films across seven languages. His other popular films include 'Brahmachari', 'Kati Patang', 'Hare Raama Hare

Krishna', 'Geet Gaata Chal', 'Imaandaar', 'Baap Numbri Beta Dus Numbri', 'Aaj Ka Arjun', 'Gurudev', 'Chhote Sarkar' and 'Judaai'.

The actor also appeared on TV shows such as 'Pyaar Ka Dard Hai Meetha Meetha Pyaara Pyaara' and 'Ek Rishta Saajhedari ka'.

The actor's burial will take place later in the day at the Santa Cruz cemetery, Kazi said.

"He will be buried in the same cemetery as his mother. Other noted personalities like Dilip Kumar and Mohammed Rafi are also buried there," Kazi added.

Junior Mehmood is survived by wife and two sons.

'Animal': Triptii Dimri says cinema is about free artistic expression, it should be that way

Actress Triptii Dimri, who has created a big impact with a small role in the blockbuster movie 'Animal', said that cinema is about free artistic expression and added that she submitted to the director's vision for the film, although it has been tagged misogynistic.

The film is filled with violence, romance, and intimacy. With polarised views coming on 'Animal', does she feel the film was misogynistic in any way?

Triptii, who has been crowned as the new national crush, told agency: "I think cinema is about free artistic expression, and it should be that way."

She then cited two examples. "When I did the rape scene in 'Bulbul' and when I did the suicide scene in 'Qala', there were a lot of people who reached out to me and said that I should not have performed that scene because it's not a pleasant scene, or you should not have done the suicide scene because it can make people take that step in life."

Triptii Dimri plays an important role in 'Animal':

The actress said that if those scenes were not added, then it would not have made sense.

"So, I think similarly, here, the scenes that people are talking about, they were an integral part of the story, and we had to add those. Those things had to be there for the entire film to feel complete," added Triptii.

The 29-year-old actress, who in just seven days from the release of 'Animal' went from over 600K followers to 2.4 million, said that for her, it is really important as an actor, to not judge the character that she is playing.

"I think this is something that I've learned in my acting classes from my acting coach: that every time you do a character, you're given a character to play, play it with utmost honesty," said the actress, who made her debut in 2017.

She added: "Even if your character is killing people or your character is doing something bad or harming someone, you have to feel everything that the character is supposed to feel because he's also coming from someplace, and in his head, the actions that he's taking



are justified."

Triptii said that she is not like her characters 'Qala', 'Bulbul', or 'Zoya' and she as a person doesn't agree with what they have done. "I would not have done in my life. But in that situation, in that moment, I have to submit to the director's vision, and I have to do what the character and the script demands of me and do it with full honesty, because people have a right to present their opinion. That is why we make films; that is why every film should be discussed," said the actress, who featured in Forbes Asia's 30 Under 30 list of 2021.

Triptii agrees that people can have views about their likes and dislikes. "There can be people who love the film; there can be people who don't like the film; there can be people who have issues with the film, and it's okay. Everybody's opinion is equally important. People who do not like the film and who are finding problems in the film, they are as correct as people who are not finding anything wrong with the film," she said.

Triptii finds it great that people are talking about the film.

Aadhya Anand loves the praise for Crushed S3



Aadhya Anand, who plays the role of Aadhya in the Amazon miniTV's riveting rom-com series Crushed S3, has expressed her joy regarding the love garnered by the latest season of Crushed. She said, "The response to Crushed S3 has been truly invigorating, exceeding all our expectations. As actors, it is the most rewarding experience to see our work resonate with the masses."

The love we have received from the audience for our portrayals in Crushed S3 has been heartwarming, to say the least. We are immensely grateful to our viewers for their overwhelming support. Sending lots of love and hugs to each one of them for showering us with so much love."

The talented actress added, "Other than my character, Aadhya Mathur, I would have loved to play the role of Zoya. She is full of life, carefree, sorted, confident and talks her mind. Her straightforward approach to doing things she believes in makes her an utterly endearing character."

ICC rates Ahmedabad pitch which hosted ODI World Cup final as 'average'

ICC match referee and former Zimbabwe batter Andy Pycroft, however, rated the outfield as 'very good'

NEW DELHI, Dec 8 (Agencies): The pitch at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad which hosted the ODI World Cup final between India and Australia on November 19 has been rated "average" by the International Cricket Council (ICC).

ICC match referee and former Zimbabwe batter Andy Pycroft, however, rated the outfield as "very good".

Australia had won the World Cup final after beating India by six wickets on a pitch which was slow and sluggish.

Opting to bowl, India could score just 240 in 50 overs with Australia achieving the target in 43 overs, with opener Travis



Head making a 120-ball 137.

The pitches used in India's league matches against South Africa, England, Pakistan and Australia in Kolkata, Lucknow, Ahmedabad and Chennai respectively were also rated as

'average' by the ICC.

However, the Wankhede Stadium pitch on which India face New Zealand in the semifinals received a 'good' rating. There were media reports ahead of that match, suggesting that the

hosts had switched pitch, offering a used surface instead of a fresh one.

The ICC also gave an "average" rating to the Eden Gardens pitch in Kolkata which hosted the second semi-final between Australia and South Africa.

It turned out to be a low-scoring match where Australia dismissed South Africa for 212 in 49.4 overs. Australia then managed to overhaul the target in 47.2 overs, losing seven wickets.

ICC match referee and former India pacer Javagal Srinath, however, gave a "very good" rating to the outfield at Eden Gardens.

SA return just a process at moment, my operated arm needs to regain strength: Du Plessis



the leagues are growing in terms of the pedigree that players are coming in. I think both are equally important for the game," said Du Plessis.

However, Du Plessis said the cricket boards should find a middle-path.

"So, it's happening more and more. I think it's important that the countries realise that (players opting for T20s), and make sure that you keep your players playing international cricket."

"The last thing you want is guys stopping playing international cricket when they're 28-29 years old when they are supposed to be reaching their prime," he said.

The 39-year-old is currently playing in the Abu Dhabi T10 for Samp Army, and he wants to sharpen his skills and fitness, leveraging on that experience to impress the South African establishment.

In that context, Du Plessis said playing in an all-out attacking format like T10 helped him regain touch with his own game.

"I was here probably about three years ago. As someone who had a template on how to play T20, I was surprised how different T10 was. The first time I was around, I didn't understand how to play the format. So, there's this huge emphasis placed on maximising the power play. And I find that quite tricky."

"But this time around, I got a better expectation around what it looks like in terms of playing those first two overs and now I am certainly a bit more open to attacking," he added.

BENGALURU, Dec 8 (Agencies): While a return to South African national team remains an enticing proposition for him, former captain Faf du Plessis wants to regain his peak fitness and game-touch before seriously nourishing such ambitions.

Recently, Proteas coach Rob Walter had indicated that doors to the national team are open for senior pros like Du Plessis, Quinton de Kock and Rilee Rossouw.

But for that, Du Plessis wanted to reach his highest point of fitness after an elbow surgery that he underwent in September during the Caribbean Premier League (CPL 2023).

"I wouldn't say the process is not on (his SA comeback). I mean, international cricket is still the pinnacle. You still feel like that's where cricket comes with the most pressure and that's what makes you really feel alive as a sportsman," Du Plessis told agency.

"But now, it's just about getting back into cricket after my operation, and a long layoff with my arm. So yeah, just taking the pressure off and just really enjoying playing some cricket again, and allowing my arm to get back to where it needs to get to," he said.

"It (SA return) is just the process at the moment. South Africa

has come out and said that there will be some T20 contracts coming out in March. So, then it's up to the players to perform and do well (in leagues and other international matches) to make sure that they are eligible for selection." In fact, Du Plessis has been one of the early-moving freelance cricketers hopping across T20 leagues, and he opined that the governing bodies will have to find a way to make international cricket co-exist with franchise cricket.

Du Plessis cited the example of New Zealand cricketers Trent Boult and Jimmy Neesham, who declined NZC Central Contracts recently to honour commitments to foreign leagues.

Even England Test captain Ben Stokes declined a three-year contract with the ECB, settling for a one-year deal instead.

"I find that cricket has changed so much now, you have all these amazing cricketers playing around the circuit. Things that's changed probably over the last couple of years or so that there weren't those T20 contracts (earlier)."

"Now if you look at the world, there's a lot more players doing it (moving over to T20s). You know guys like Boult and Neesham from New Zealand recently went that way. So, it's good to see that

Junior World Cup: Sunk by Spanish Armada

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 8 (Agencies): Spain were superb and played a close-knit game to crush India 4-1 in a pool match of the FIH Junior Men's Hockey World Cup.

Spain are leading Pool C with six points from two wins, while South Korea are ahead of India on goal difference, with both sides on three points. Dohyun Lim scored all of South Korea's goals in their 4-1 win over Canada earlier.

Canada are yet to open their account after two losses. India will play their last pool match against Canada on Saturday.

Uttam Singh's side, after starting the prestigious tournament on a high with a 4-2 victory against South Korea, were brought down to earth by the tactically superior Spain, who made full use of their opportunities and tight-

ened their defence resolutely to deny India penalty corner conversions.

Pol Cabre Verdiell (1st and 41st minutes) and Andreas Rafi (18th and 60th) were on target for the Spaniards, while for India, the consolation goal came from the stick of Rohit, who converted a penalty corner in the 33rd minute.

Most contests between India and Spain have gone to the wire but today it seemed the two-time champions were low on energy.

Spain's searing pace helped them take the lead in the first minute itself. Cabre Verdiell, who was unmarked just in front of the India goalkeeper, made a lovely deflection.

India tried rotating the midfielders following the jolt but were unable to pierce the sturdy Spanish. Uttam's side did manage a few circle penetrations with their aggressive play but the



equaliser eluded them. Just when India seemed to be finding their bearing, captain Rafi's powerful drag-flick from a penalty corner beat the goalkeeper all ends up.

India did pull one back after missing two penalty corner opportunities in quick succession when Rohit slotted home the third to make it 1-2. But the joy was short-lived as Cabre Verdiell struck

his second goal of the match to regain the two-goal lead.

Spain goalkeeper Jan Capellades stood out for his pluck and anticipation, saving at least three-four strikes from Indian forwards.

India earned three penalty corners between the 55th and 57th minutes but Capellades deny them success.

Spain earned a penalty stroke in the last minute

and Rafi didn't miss the opportunity to add to India's misery.

Player of the Match Capellades called on his defence to improve. "What I try to do on every save is to watch the ball a lot, stay calm, and don't lose my position. I think that the team has to improve during the penalty corners, we only have 14 seconds to dress up and we are very late," he said.

Returning Naomi Osaka Targets Paris Olympics, More Grand Slam Titles

PARIS, Dec 8 (Agencies): A "nervous" Naomi Osaka has targeted a place at next year's Paris Olympics and more Grand Slam titles after she makes her eagerly anticipated return to tennis. The 26-year-old former world number one is set to return to competition at the Brisbane International starting at the end of the month, having not played on tour since September 2022. The four-time Grand Slam champion gave birth to daughter Shai in July and she has also struggled with her mental health and the pressures of tennis.

She told Japanese broadcaster NHK that she feels "nervous and also happy and excited" as she prepares to return.

And Osaka, who lit the cauldron to open the pandemic-postponed Tokyo Olympics in 2021, hopes her comeback takes her all the way to next summer's Paris Games.

"In the first chapter of my tennis I kind of got away with just being myself and playing with my instincts," she said. "I think I want to be someone that understands the game a lot more. I definitely want to win



more Grand Slams and I guess put in more time in the French Open and Wimbledon, and play the Paris Olympics," she added.

Playing for Japan at the Tokyo Games, where spectators were mostly banned because of Covid, Osaka lost in straight sets in the third round to Marketa Vondrousova of the Czech Republic.

She has won four major titles, triumphing in the 2019 and 2021 Australian Opens, and winning the US Open in 2018 and 2020.

Osaka will make her return to Grand Slam tennis at the Australian Open in January and says she will have a different mindset now that she is a mother.

"I've never been a person that's really good at playing for myself, if that makes sense," she said.

So I kind of like the feeling of having the responsibility of having to take care of Shai and wanting to show her around the world.

"I kind of feel more like I'm playing for her."

Ukraine 'Very Concerned' Over Russian Olympics Call: Sports Minister

KYIV, Dec 8 (Agencies): The Ukrainian government is "very concerned" by the call from sports federations and National Olympic Committees to allow Russian and Belarusian athletes to compete at next year's Paris Olympics, its acting sports minister has told agency. Matviy Bidnyi said Kyiv was concerned that the move gave the impression that the International Olympic Committee (IOC) "does not want to demonstrate the necessary leadership in the matter of Olympic fairness and justice." Bidnyi -- who replaced his former boss Vadym Gutzeit when he was fired in November -- was reacting after the request to the IOC on Tuesday considerably boosted the hopes of Russian and Belarusian athletes to compete as neutral athletes in Paris.

The IOC is yet to make a final ruling on whether competitors from Russia and Belarus, a key ally of Moscow in its Ukraine offensive, will be permitted to take part in the Games that run from July 26 to August 11.

The IOC has said it will decide "at the appropriate time".

Bidnyi said he hoped the IOC would act in as responsible a fashion as it has done on previous occasions since the war began when Russian President Vladimir Putin launched the invasion in February last year. "As aptly stated by President Volodymyr Zelensky: 'Obviously, any neutral flag of Russian athletes is stained with blood'," said Bidnyi.

"We count on a responsible decision and leadership of the IOC, which will not allow Russia to use sport for military propa-



ganda. "Even if it's sport under a neutral flag."

He cited how the IOC had decided not to formally invite Russia as a team to the Games and more recently that the IOC had shown "responsible leadership" by suspending the membership of the Russian Olympic Committee.

"I remind you that Russia is the only country that has violated the Olympic truce three times," said Bidnyi, referring to 2008, 2014 and 2022.

"They do not respect the fundamental values of Olympism: excellence, respect, and friendship. Instead, we respect the principle of neutrality, but 'neutrality' is possible only in peacetime."

"When there is a war and one nation with its passports is destroying another nation, then 'neutrality' becomes irresponsibility."

Bidnyi said there was only one way that including Russian and Belarusian athletes was accept-

able. "Refusal of the Russian passport -- this is the only possible way today for an athlete to prove Olympic excellence is his first priority, and the athlete does not take on a share of responsibility for the killings of Ukrainians," said the 44-year-old.

He said Ukraine welcomed the IOC's move to allow athletes who had previously competed for Russia to switch nationalities.

"These athletes have proven by their actions that they do not support the Russian war."

- 'Touched everyone' - Bidnyi claimed that Ukraine's desire for Russian and Belarusian athletes to be banned has support from 40 countries.

However, the threat to boycott the Paris Games appears to have receded as many Ukrainians have expressed their wish to strike a blow for their country by beating the Russians in the sporting arena.

Bidnyi says he cannot imagine how Ukrainian athletes feel

when they face Russians and Belarusians. "Morally, it is very difficult to enter the arena with those who want to kill you," he said. "Not figuratively, but literally kill you. Our athletes constantly face provocations from the Russians and cannot be in a normal emotional state because of this. I can't imagine how I would feel if I had to compete with the Russians. It's very difficult."

Bidnyi argued it was likely Russian athletes were not far removed from the battlefield, even if they are not linked to the military. "There is a well-known sociological theory that any two people on the planet are separated by only six handshakes," he said.

"Imagine that you enter the arena, and in front of you stands a person, behind whom, a few handshakes away, stands a Russian soldier who shot children in Bucha. Just imagine this."

Bidnyi says the war "has touched everyone" and taken a heavy toll on the sporting community, including prospective Olympians.

"We have confirmation that 397 athletes and coaches were killed," he said, including athletes who could have gone to the Olympics, such as shooter Yegor Kigitov or boxer Maksym Galynichev.

JKMEF Deputation calls on Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: Deputation of JKMEF under the chairmanship of Sheikh Mehraj-Ud-Din along with Sushil Sudan President JKMEF Jammu met Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo and congratulated him for holding responsibility of prestigious. Post as Chief Secretary of JKUT. Shiekh Meraj-ud-Din and Sushil Sudan expressed hope that

retary Atal Dulloo and congratulated him for holding responsibility of prestigious. Post as Chief Secretary of JKUT. Shiekh Meraj-ud-Din and Sushil Sudan expressed hope that

JKUT will make tremendous progress under the administration of Atal Dulloo.

Others who accompanied the delegation include Syed Showkat Andrabi, Bharat Bhushan Bhagat President JK GPA Kashmir/Jammu, Parfulat Singh Gen Secretary JKMEF, Jaswinder Singh President JK OT Tech, Mohd Aslam Sr Vice President JKMEF, Neelam Devi President JKFMPPHW, Anila Bhagat Sr Vice President JKMEF and Tejinder Singh, Publicity Secretary JKMEF.

Reserving single seat for PoJK DPs in J&K Assembly nasty blow to community: Narinder



Top News Report

R S PURA, Dec 8: Social and political activist Narinder Sharma today strongly resented Union Government's decision to reserve a single seat for displaced persons from PoJK in the J&K Legislative Assembly.

He termed reservation of one seat as nasty joke affecting the 17 lakh-strong PoJK community.

In a handout issued here, Sharma said entire PoJK community had been demanding eight seats in the J&K Legislative Assembly for decades.

He argued that this move was a grave injustice and humiliation for the PoJK community, especially since the nominated seat would be chosen by the Lieutenant Governor rather than elected by the community.

Sharma urged the Centre to fulfill the

package announced for PoJK refugees in 2014, including compensation, reservation in professional and technical colleges, and job creation.

He raised concerns about the denial of Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to PoJK DPs in specific districts, alleging a deliberate attempt to create divisions within the community.

He appealed to the Centre to reconsider their demands, emphasizing the community's anger and hurt over the decision.

Sharma expressed dismay that the PoJK community was denied their legitimate rights in the Parliament despite that a number of recommendations were made in their favour. He demanded that the Government should in principle fulfill the package announced for PoJK refugees before the formation of the BJP-led Government at the Centre in 2014.

"The package announced for PoJK DPs included Rs 25 lakh compensation for each PoJK community family, reservation in professional and technical colleges of the country for our youths and a provision of creation of 8500 jobs for the youths belonging to PoJK community," Sharma said.

Biotechnology Students and Faculty undertake Industry Visit



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: A one day industry visit as an essential part of the study curriculum was organized by the School of Biotechnology, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, The undergraduates and post graduate students pursuing Biotechnology visited the Kingfisher mineral water bottling unit and food processing unit at Panthal (Katra). Students had the opportunity to explore the different units of a distillation/ food processing plant and engage in insightful discussions with industry experts and were provided with a comprehensive briefing on the essential entrepreneurship skills required for establishing units under the start-up programs initiated by the Government of India. Students were provided with valuable insights into the intricate workings and processing methods involved in the production of various beverages. The students visited the various bio processing sections and had a firsthand experience of the various steps involved including pasteurization, filling, quality control checks etc. The students and the faculty also had an opportunity to interact with the founder chairman of this industry who encouraged the students to go in for start ups and emphasized on starting an industry at the local level generating livelihood opportunities for the local population. The visit was conceptualized and managed by the coordinator of the industrial and educational visits, SoBT, Dr. Indu Bhushan with coordination of Dr. Ratna Chandra, Head of the School of Biotechnology. The other faculty members accompanying the students included Dr. Vinod Singh, Dr. Parvez Singh Slathia, Er. Arvind Yadav, and Mr. Pankaj Suden. Prof. Pragati Kumar, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, expressed satisfaction towards the efforts of the faculty of the School of Biotechnology towards overall grooming and development of their students as able professionals. The visit was conceptualized and managed by the coordinator of the industrial and educational visits, SoBT,

Dr. Indu Bhushan with coordination of Dr. Ratna Chandra, Head of the School of Biotechnology. The other faculty members accompanying the students included Dr. Vinod Singh, Dr. Parvez Singh Slathia, Er. Arvind Yadav, and Mr. Pankaj Suden. Prof. Pragati Kumar, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, expressed satisfaction towards the efforts of the faculty of the School of Biotechnology towards overall grooming and development of their students as able professionals.

Nandan Tent House & Decorations opened at Patiyali Chak

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: A brief function was held at Rakh Nagbani Patiyali Chak near Shiv Mandir here today by Nandan Tent House & Decorations on account of its Grand Opening Ceremony, in which all members of Jammu and Kashmir Batwal Sabha and a large number of people from Civil society actively participated.

All congratulated the owner Rohit Nandan on his new business venture and wished that his



business may grow and bring him prosperity.

Prominent among those present on the occasion included Messrs Rachpal Kaith, R.L.Kaith, Duni Singh

Motan, Subash Chander Nandan, Mohan Lal Kaith, Raghav Nandan, Sham Lal, Nand Lal, Munish Kaith, Gourav Kaith, Goldi Kumar and Ankit Kumar.

Jan Kalyan Sangathan acknowledges swift action by DSEJ, CEO Jammu

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: Vinod Sharma, Chairman of Jan Kalyan Sangathan, RS Pura expressed gratitude towards Chief Education Officer (CEO) Jammu and Director School Education, Jammu for their prompt intervention in addressing the cleanliness and maintenance issues at Government Boys' Higher Secondary School, RS PURA.

Following a media report by our Sangathan, shedding light on the deplorable conditions attributed to the inefficiency of incumbent Principal Suman Lata, CEO Jammu took immediate action.



A committee of six lecturers was formed under the guidance of CEO Jammu and the overall direction of the Director School Education Jammu to oversee cleanliness, maintenance, and discipline at the school.

Vinod Sharma commended the committee's dedication and reported substantial

improvements in the school's condition since their intervention. He highlighted that the committee, having diligently collected funds from staff members, exhibited commendable initiative in ensuring the school's revitalization.

"Jan Kalyan Sangathan remains committed to advocating for the welfare of educational institutions, and we appreciate the collaborative efforts of CEO Jammu, Director School Education Jammu, and the dedicated committee in revitalizing Government Boys' Higher Secondary School, RS PURA," Vinod Sharma told the media.

PG department claimed I/C KHO-KHO (WOMEN) title

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 8: PG. Department, JU outplayed GCW Udhampur by (07) with match score (17-10) and lifts the Inter-Collegiate Kho-Kho (Women) Trophy in the ongoing Inter Collegiate Kho-Kho (Women) Tournament 2023-24 organized by the Directorate of Sports & Physical Education, University of Jammu at University Kho-Kho Ground.

Earlier, in Semi-final matches: GCW Udhampur defeated GDC Ramnagar by (10) points with match score (20-10). PG. Deptt. JU defeated GDC Kathua by (05) points with match score



(15-10). Dr. Vinod Bakshi (In Charge Director Sports Cluster University

Jammu) was the Chief Guest of the final match who awarded Trophies & Medals to the winner

& runner up teams in the presence of Dr. Daud Iqbal Baba, Mr. Vimal Kishore, Dr. Dinesh

Sharma, Dr. Vikesh Kumar, Dr. Mukesh Kumar, Sdr. P.D. Singh, Sh. Ravish Vaid, Sh. Vikas Karlopa, Sh. Raj Kumar Bakshi, Sh. Jai Bharat, Mr. Harinderpal Singh, Mr. Inderjeet Singh, Dr. Mahak, Mr. Rishiv Sharma, Ms. Richa Mandla and Ms. Manu Singh Pawar. The Inter Collegiate Kho-Kho (Women) Tournament 2023-24 was organized under the supervision of Dr. Daud Iqbal Baba, Director, Directorate of Sports & Physical Education, and University of Jammu.

The matches were officiated by Sh. Dheeraj Sharma, Sh. Anil Kumar, Sh. Palbinder Singh, Ms. Pooja Sharma, and Sh. Gagan Kumar.

One-Day Awareness Program on "Cyber Crime and Safety" organized at SMVDU



Top News Report

KATRA, Dec 8: A one day awareness program on "Cyber Crime and Safety" was conducted by the faculty members, comprising Dr. Vijay Kumar Sharma, Mr. Ashish Suri, and Mr. Shashi Bhushan Kotwal of the School of Electronics and Communication Engineering, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Katra. The faculty members have visited Government High School, Sirah and

Government Degree College, Kakryal for this awareness program. The key objective of the program was to spread awareness and possible safety measures against cyber-frauds. The program coordinator, Dr. Vijay Kumar Sharma, Assistant Professor, SoECE, SMVDU Katra, highlighted the possible reasons and causes of cyber fraud. Mr. Ashish Suri, Assistant Professor, SoECE, SMVDU, has focused

on the importance of this awareness program. Mr. Shashi Bhushan Kotwal, Assistant Professor, SoECE, SMVDU, over-viewed the technical depth of the cyber-crime reasons. The program coordinator, Dr. Vijay Kumar Sharma, is thankful to the Honorable Vice Chancellor, Prof. Pragati Kumar and Registrar, Shri Ajay Sharma for their kind approval to organize this awareness program for the benefit of society.

Kathua campus (JU) organises 5th hands-on training on information technology

Top News Report

KATHUA, Dec 8: Kathua Campus, University of Jammu organized 5th hands-on training on Information Technology under dynamic educational series. The students of Government Higher Secondary School Sallan embarked on a transformative educational journey to the esteemed Kathua Campus. The students were afforded a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in an interactive learning environment, fostering connections and exchanges that transcended classroom boundaries of Kathua Campus.

The students were able to gain unique insights into various academic disciplines, social dynamics, and campus life, which enriched their perspectives and broadened their understanding.

Professor Arvind Jasrotia, Rector, Kathua Campus, University of Jammu in his message



commended the initiative and emphasized the importance of such educational tours in facilitating holistic learning experiences. He further expressed his delight at the enthusiastic participation and meaningful exchanges witnessed during the visit. He encouraged the continuation and expansion of such initiatives, highlighting

their pivotal role in nurturing a culture of knowledge exchange and fostering academic growth beyond traditional classroom settings. Moreover, Prof. Jasrotia acclaimed the Kathua Campus for its ongoing efforts in organizing and hosting such impactful programs, underscoring the institution's commitment to nurturing an environment

conducive to comprehensive learning beyond conventional boundaries.

Mr. Pranav Ratta, Dr. Sunny Sharma, Dr. Seema Jamwal, Dr. Nisha Choudhary, Er. Sushant Gagat, Er. Archana Salaria, Er. Puneet Kour, Er. Komal Khadotra, Er. Vishawjeet Singh delivered diverse talks throughout the training sessions.