

# TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2023

Daily Evening Newspaper



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## BRIEFLY

### Earthquake of magnitude 3.4 strikes Kishtwar

KISHTWAR, Dec 20 (Agencies): An earthquake of magnitude 3.4 hit Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar on Wednesday.

According to the National Center for Seismology (NCS), the earthquake occurred at 11:57 am on Wednesday.

In a post on X, NCS informed, "Earthquake of Magnitude:3.4, Occurred on 20-12-2023, 11:57:16 IST, Lat: 33.28 & Long: 76.70, Depth: 5 Km ,Location: Kishtwar, Jammu & Kashmir."

### Two J&K cricketers find buyers in IPL 2024 auction

SRINAGAR, Dec 20 (Agencies): Two cricketers from Jammu and Kashmir are set to play in 2024 edition of cash-rich Indian Premier League (IPL).

The IPL 2024 is likely to commence from March 22 next year and is scheduled to run until the end of May, just ahead of the ICC T20 World Cup in June.

The auction of the cricketers for the upcoming 2024 session was held in Dubai on December 19.

Jammu and Kashmir pacer Rasikh Salam Dar is the third cricketer from Kashmir to participate in Indian Premier League after Abdul Samad and Umran Malik.

Rasikh has found a new place in IPL and will be representing Delhi Capitals in the upcoming IPL 2024. He was released by Kolkata Knight Riders ahead of IPL 2024 mini-auction in Dubai.

Earlier, he was part of Mumbai Indians camp in IPL 2019, but soon after making his IPL debut, he was banned by BCCI following a discrepancy with his birth certificate. Rasikh recently took 6-wickets against Chhattisgarh in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. He was acquired by Delhi Capitals for 0.20 Cr.

Abid Mushtaq, an all-rounder hailing from Doda has also made his place in IPL 2024. He has exhibited top performances at the national level. After many hits and misses, the all-rounder has finally found a place in Rajasthan Royals at his base price of 0.20 Cr.

## INDIA bloc MPs stage protest in front of Gandhi statue against bulk suspension

NEW DELHI, Dec 20 (Agencies): Members of Parliament of INDIA bloc parties, including those suspended, are staging a protest in front of the Gandhi statue in the Parliament premises on Wednesday morning over the suspension of 141 Opposition MPs and the 'security breach' incident.

The opposition lawmakers seem unrelenting on the Parliament security breach incident that happened on December 13 and demand a statement from Union Home Minister Amit Shah inside the House. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Congress Parliamentary leader Sonia Gandhi led the protest from the Congress' side while other opposition MPs including those suspended joined in the protest.

Congress MP Karti Chidambaram said,



"This is going to be the trend. It's my way or the highway. If you don't fall in line, we will throw you out because we have the majority. We control both the Houses. They want to turn the Parliament into a stamping House..."

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor said " This is a

dubious record in Parliamentary history and a blot on our democracy. Instead of preserving democracy they have done. The most important responsibility of ministers is accountability to Parliament. The Home Minister should have come to the house and spoken about the

security breach in the house, but this government doesn't want a discussion. They just want to enforce my way or the highway."

Congress Chief Mallikarjun Kharge said " They want to suspend everyone and run a dictatorship by

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## Money doubling scam: Cyber Police file FIR, conduct raids at five locations

SRINAGAR, Dec 20 (Agencies): Cyber Police Kashmir on Wednesday carried out raids at five locations in Kashmir in connection with a "money doubling scam" involving an alleged bogus company which has scammed the local residents, reports said today.

Quoting a police official, newsgathering agency KDC reported that a team of cyber police along with a magistrate has sealed the office of the alleged bogus company located in Karan Nagar locality of Srinagar city.

Today, teams of Cyber police conducted raids at five locations related to the scam involving financial fraud worth crores and seized electronic gadgets and documents during searches, he said, adding that the exact amount which people had invested



across the valley is still under investigation.

It has been reliably learnt that one bogus company has scammed and cheated gullible public by falsely promising them of huge returns on their investments," the report quoted from the FIR registered by the police.

The information has further revealed that subscribers which mostly include students and housewives have been cheated by the said

company after making them to invest their hard earned money against the fake and false promises of returns.

It has been further revealed that after misrepresenting and cheating the said company has left the subscribers in dark. It has also been revealed that the said company has suddenly turned unresponsive which has led to chaos, anguish and protests.

On receipt of this Turn to page 9

### Severe cold grips Kashmir, Minus 4.4°C in Srinagar

SRINAGAR, Dec 20 (Agencies): The minimum temperature in Kashmir stayed several degrees below the freezing point as the valley braces for 'Chilla-i-Kalan' — the 40-day harshest winter period, officials said on Wednesday.

Srinagar city — the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir — recorded a low of minus 4.4 degrees Celsius on Tuesday night, down from the previous night's minus 3.7 degree

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## Union transport Minister Aims for India's road infrastructure to match US in next 5 years

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, Dec 20: India aims to elevate its road infrastructure to match that of the US within the next five years, said Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari.

As part of a comprehensive strategy, the Government seeks to alleviate metro congestion, significantly reduce travel time, and minimise road accidents, he said.

In the preceding nine years, his ministry has allocated projects exceeding Rs 50 lakh



and has streamlined the contract approval process by refining existing policies. "No contractor needs to come to me for sanctioning the contract. We are transparent, time-bound, result-oriented

and quality conscious and fast in decision-making. We consider the ministry, contractors and bankers as one family.

"We encourage good work, and that is why we have seven world records. This is the great achievement of the ministry," he said in an interview published in the Manorama Yearbook 2024.

"I am confident that after five years, our road infrastructure will be equal to the US," he said. The Minister

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### Mysterious blast at police camp in Surankote



JAMMU, Dec 20 (Agencies): A mysterious blast took place inside the premises of an armed police camp in the Surankote area of the Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, police sources here said on Wednesday.

They said that the explosion took place

on the intervening night of December 19-20 inside the armed police camp and damaged the window panes of some of the vehicles parked.

"No injury has been reported in the blast while nature of the blast is being investigated," police said.

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### Covid-19 contractual doctors denied extension, HC upholds order

SRINAGAR, Dec 20 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court turned down a request for relief from contractual doctors who were allegedly looking to continue working after the closure of COVID-19 hospitals. Latest reported.

Notably, the high court ruled against a petition filed by 116 doctors and medical staff who sought to continue their services at temporary coronavirus hospitals even

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## Udhampur farmers embrace hybrid onion seeds to boost income

JAMMU, Dec 20 (Agencies): A farmer in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur is seeding hybrid onions and earning a great profit by selling ready hybrid onion seedlings to farmers.

Stepping away from traditional crops like potatoes and garlic, Som Raj took a leap of faith this year, planting hybrid onion seeds provided by the government.

"We've traditionally grown various crops like potatoes, garlic, turmeric, flowers, and onions. This year, we've taken a step forward by planting hybrid onion seeds. We've already witnessed positive interest from neighbouring



villages, indicating an increased workload but also exciting potential. We received 1 kg of hybrid seeds this year, and we hope to be allocated 2-4 kg next year. The irrigation pond itself was a generous gift from the governor," said farmer Som Raj.

News of Som Raj's success quickly spread to neighbouring villages, sparking curiosity and interest in hybrid seeds. A farmer like Shivratn Goswami from another village, impressed by Som Raj's prosperity, is eager to follow suit.

"We want to take

advantage of this hybrid seed initiative. Seeing farmer Som Raj benefit has motivated us to explore this exciting path. We used to rely on desi seeds, but the hybrid variety, even with its higher price point, promises far greater returns. Local seeds offer limited benefits despite their cost, making the switch to hybrids a wise investment," said Shivratn Goswami.

Sanjay Anand, Chief Agriculture Officer of Udhampur, applauds Som Raj's initiative and highlights the government's efforts to promote crop diversification among farmers.

"We encourage Turn to page 9

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## EDITORIAL

USE RENEWABLE  
ENERGY  
SOURCES

The day by day decreasing quantity of petrol, diesel, coal, gas etc. has forced us to think that we have to find such resources for our tomorrow's energy needs, which never end and our life can run smoothly without any energy. The crisis continues. We know the never-ending resources of energy as sources of renewable energy.

Human is a developing creature. He discovered various sources of energy, which have become an integral part of modern lifestyle. First of all, humans used traditional sources of energy – coal, gas, petroleum etc., which are limited in quantity and are also harmful for the environment.

Renewable energy sources are not only capable of eliminating energy crisis, but are also environment friendly. There are many sources of renewable energy available in India; Such as solar energy, wind energy, geothermal energy, biomass and biofuel etc.

There is great potential for solar energy in India; Because in most parts of the country the sun spreads its rays 250–300 days a year. Photovoltaic cell system is used to obtain energy from the sun. Photovoltaic cell converts the rays received from the sun into energy.

There is a possibility of generating about 5 thousand trillion units of electricity every year in the form of solar energy in our country, for which work needs to be done at a fast pace. Work on solar energy has been going on in India for the last 25–30 years.

Today the telecom towers of the country are using 5 thousand crore liters of diesel every year, this diesel can be saved by using solar energy.

Solar energy is expensive right now, so despite knowing about its utility, people avoid using it. Now solar cookers, solar battery operated vehicles and mobile phones are also being used. People are slowly understanding its importance. A campaign to use solar energy is going on in about one thousand villages of Karnataka. In the coming times, solar energy will definitely be helpful in taking India on the path of progress.

Wind or air energy is another important source of renewable energy. In ancient times, wind energy was used to run boats. There is evidence of use of wind energy in irrigation and threshing of grains etc. about 2 thousand years ago. Wind energy is being used to generate electricity in China, Afghanistan, Persia, Denmark, California.

In India, work of power generation from wind energy is going on in the states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Rajasthan etc. There is a lot of potential for wind energy in India. At present, according to the Ministry of New and Energy Wind Energy in India, India has the potential to generate 48,500 MW electricity from wind, till now only 12,800 MW capacity has been achieved.

The schemes being run by the Government of India in the field of renewable energy; It gives us hope that we will definitely be successful in finding a solution to our energy production and environmental protection problems in the near future. By cooperating with other developing countries in this region, we will not only be able to earn foreign exchange, but will also be successful in establishing ourselves as a strong nation among the world community.

## Threats to free speech rise as global conflicts intensify

By: Shashidhar  
Nanjundaiah

To say that our world has become much more polarised than before after the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine would be to state the obvious. With the Israel-Hamas conflict, the wedge is further in. What lies beneath these political binaries, how our new generations think and act, should be of interest, in particular to those of us who like to watch the interplay between change and constancy.

In the United States, three university presidents have been under fire this month after they faced a congressional hearing as the Republican-controlled House Representatives probed and questioned them to understand where the universities stand on anti-Semitism. That is truly ironic: It is the right-wingers who decry the so-called "cancel culture" and hail free speech. Elizabeth Magill of the University of Pennsylvania, Claudine Gay of Harvard and Sally Kornbluth of MIT suffered through these hearings, stating "it depends" on the context. Contextualisation is precisely the destabilising factor in the discourse. If these presidents encourage academic freedom, they must make it about the context. Contextualisation often brings forth issue-based and informed views rather than culturally or otherwise affiliated opinions. To that extent, the uncertain-sounding replies by the presidents make sense.

This is not to condone any sort of anti-Semitic speech. But the fact that the university presidents hold campuses accountable for conduct and not speech highlights both the fracture and the confusion between free and fair speech. In

the United States, speech is not protected only if the talk about genocide poses a threat of harm to identifiable individuals. I asked Saint Louis-based media law professor and long-time US Supreme Court reporter William Freivogel what all this means. In his opinion, the presidents were right as a matter of law in saying that it depends on the context, but a legalistic answer wasn't going to pass muster at a congressional hearing. Free speech law stops at the gates of private spaces, although most private universities promise to follow the First Amendment to provide a safe learning environment.

Of course, these developments may not go down in history as great flag-bearers of free speech or fair speech. A student leader tried hard in an interview to a television news channel to balance the views and both defend the university's stand on free speech and critique her actions. Harvard student Jacob Miller, who spoke on CNN, struggled to walk that tightrope by stating, in effect, that while academic freedom should be a supreme feature of universities as safe spaces for speech, his university president's refusal to condemn should also be critiqued.

Typically, we use "free and fair" in tandem and it makes sense. But in terms of legal permission to express versus social acceptability, the wedge between the two is growing. Extreme examples that spotlight this wedge are people who stand for the problematic "absolute free speech" and those on the other extreme of that continuum, some of whom stood out during the MeToo and Black Lives Matter movements, for "cancel culture". The consequences of both are often painful: One brings

out the ugliest sides of our societies -- such as trolls and hatemongers -- while the other side can be easily appropriated by vested interests. But more importantly, they operate in tandem and in opposition.

This poses a problem of security for one side of the voices. Politics seems to make it all acceptable and turn us into holders of binaries. The turn of events in American universities is not some situation that is locked in that geography. Nations have been quick to take sides. The police tried to quell the anti-Israel protests in the US -- they have been arresting pro-Palestine protesters or those seeking a cease-fire -- as they have in other prominent countries, including France and India.

It gets particularly tricky when we consider that many of the donors at these universities are Jewish, and resigning might seem to be a hypocritical act of succumbing to commercial demands. The donor pressure shows the controversy in a particularly poor light when we consider it in ethical, not purely monetary, terms. In the face of all this political polarisation on campuses, it is heartening to see groups protesting together even though they represent opposite sides of the political divide. The faculty and students at Harvard have mixed and matched themselves to stand up for their president. Public spaces seem more vulnerable in this regard: In October, Jewish protesters voicing their anger against Israel were arrested in Washington DC. When Jewish and Muslim students speak in one voice, they send out the message of sanity while announcing to the world that the "who" does not matter as much as the "what" -- Unfair justice, who-

ever perpetrates it, should not be tolerated.

In India, we have been making cautious adjustments to our understanding of free speech by watching the goings-on all around us. The arrival of troll-dependent politics, constantly baying for the blood of inconvenient voices, is both an extreme form of free speech and cancel culture. The chilling effect, or the spiral of silence, is palpable, and those who are bold enough to voice their opinion in an unfettered manner as before do so at great peril. We are constantly reminded by political and even public rhetoric that the restrictions to free speech are far more important than speech itself.

We should be heartened to see cultural groups on both sides of the divide protesting together in the face of the political instigation, risking discrediting, hatred and even ostracism. A limitation of free speech in the US is a specific call-to-action, but often this limitation is inadequate in instilling violence and fear. Desensitised behaviour is a result of a normalisation run contra to the invariable claim by societies to practise and promote harmonious living.

The forced polarisation in the Israel-Hamas conflict in countries other than Israel and Palestine by political expediency followed by dominant majoritarian-cultural voices is a symbolic representation of a shrinking space for speech in general. Unless judicial and legislative systems take firm steps to curb hate speech, the intangible damage that we can all feel from such appropriation may only worsen, and yet in the current environment of democratic backsliding, that is unlikely to happen anytime soon.

## Media should, not only Inform and Empower Individuals, Foster social Change

By: Vijay GarG

Media moulds behavioural dynamics and change to generate positive momentum or negative torque. Be it news media, visual media or social media, it has become an instrument for reform and transformation to create awareness in people to cause the paradigm shift and restore the trajectory of growth in a positive direction.

Journalism as per its traditional lexiconic delineation includes aggregating, writing and presenting news or news articles for widespread distribution to inform the audience. The new connotation attached to media reflects its metamorphosis from the broadcasting of news to that of an agent of socio-economic change. Tom Stoppard a Czech-born British playwright expressed that 'I still believe that if your aim is to change the world, journalism is a more immediate short-term solution'. Even Oscar Wilde went a step forward to state 'in America president reigns for four years and journalism governs forever and ever'.

Media renders voice for and voiceless, says for the unsayable (ineffable),

reflects the predicaments of the impecunious and vulnerable groups and projects the path for progress. It has proved to be a crucial factor in connecting, informing and inspiring a society/nation to induce it to traverse the right path for inclusive and holistic development, information engineering for impressive growth has become a synonym for positive media dynamics.

Presentation of unbiased pictures with truthful candour sans fear and favour should be the motto of the media. Though difficult in the age of mundanity and profanity, and media being no exception to the lures, but still media maintains and takes a positive role for the betterment of the nation barring exceptions.

Five golden rules have evolved to form the guidelines for media including social media. Those are to create content value for the audience, focus on the content not on the platform, presentation of news contributions (positive) to the society/nation, the presentation and content with creative favour and guide the people with a positive mode.

In short, it can be stated

that these key roles can be played by mass communication to herald a new beginning. The first one is the dissemination of vital information to the public which is essential for decision-making and awareness. The second one is serving as a crucial tool for education and raising awareness about social and health issues promoting positive behaviour and practices. In a developing country, the media plays a very important role not only by promoting democracy but by providing a platform for political discourse.

Media promotes economic development by flowing information, promoting business, directing growth and vectoring cultural exchanges to make things lively (to pave the way for social change). The social changes are effected by mass communication by highlighting social injustices, gender inequality and human rights violation cases. By mobilizing public opinion, the media can set steps for the cultural renaissance.

Social cohesion can be affected by mass media providing platforms for people to connect and share ideas

– to promote national identity and unity. The important role of media in health promotion and disease prevention cannot be undermined. Media projects the requirements of the people to attract the attention of the government to take up development in a planned way. And most important thing is that mass media can shape the image of the nation on the global stage, promoting foreign investment and tourism.

It is discernible that media has an all-pervasive influence on people in the modern age (social media included) to foster any change. Media can also play a destructive role in all these spheres mentioned above if it becomes biased, partisan and prejudiced. Hence positive, constructive and truthful media is the requirement of the time to project the nation on the path of inclusive, holistic development and affirmative growth.

(Vijay GarG Retired  
Principal Educational  
columnist Malout  
Punjab)



## As 2023 comes to a close, here's remembering those actors, musicians and other famous faces who have passed on



### Hollywood stalwarts

#### Matthew Perry

Best known for playing Chandler Bing in all 10 seasons of Friends, Matthew Perry was found dead at his home in Los Angeles on October 28. He was 54. The Emmy-nominated actor also appeared on shows such as Go On and The Odd Couple, and in the films Fools Rush In, The Whole Nine Yards, and 17 Again. Perry participated in the long-awaited Friends reunion in 2021, and later made headlines again with his 2022 memoir Friends, Lovers, and the Big Terrible Thing, in which he opened up about his drug and alcohol addictions.

#### Tina Turner

The legendary singer, songwriter and actress, known as the 'Queen of Rock 'n' Roll', passed away after a long illness at her home near Zurich in Switzerland. She was 83. The US-born star gave hits like The Best, Proud Mary, Private Dancer and What's Love Got to Do With It.

#### Lisa Marie Presley

Lisa Marie Presley, singer-songwriter and daughter of Elvis Presley, suffered a cardiac arrest and breathed her last on January 12. She was 54. The only child of Elvis and Priscilla Presley, Lisa's debut album To Whom It May Concern, reached number five on the Billboard 200 chart. Her second album Now What also made it to the top 10.

#### Michael Gambon

Sir Michael Gambon, the Irish-born British actor known for playing Dumbledore in the Harry Potter films, died at age 82.

#### Bollywood biggies

#### Satish Kaushik

Veteran Bollywood actor Satish Kaushik passed away

on March 9 after suffering a heart attack. He was 66. His first film role was in the 1983 movie Masoom. However, it was his role as the endearing Calendar in the 1987 classic Mr. India that established Satish Kaushik as a household celebrity. He penned the screenplay for the cult classic Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro, and directed popular films like Roop Ki Rani Choron Ka Raja and Hum Aapke Dil Mein Rehte Hain. He has directed and produced several hit films, including Tere Naam and Milenge Milenge.

#### Nitesh Pandey

Actor Nitesh Pandey, who was best known for his role as Dheeraj Kapoor in Rupali Ganguly's famous TV drama Anupamaa, passed away on May 23. He was 51. Nitesh appeared in shows such as Tejas, Manzilein Apni Apni, Saaya, Astitva Ek Prem Kahani and Durgesh Nandini. He also acted in films like Badhaai Do, Om Shanti Om and Khosla Ka Ghosla, among others.

#### Javed Khan Amrohi

Javed Khan Amrohi, who appeared in many films, including Satyam Shivam Sundaram, Woh 7 Din, Tridev, Aashiqui, Andaaz Apna Apna, Ishq and Lagaan, died on February 14 in Mumbai. He was 74.

#### Rio Kapadia

In his career, Rio appeared in films like Happy New Year, Khuda Hafiz, Mardaani, Dil Chahta Hai, and daily soaps like Sapne Suhane Ladakpan Ke, Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi, as also the web series Made In Heaven Season 2. He died on September 14. Rio was 66.

#### Vaibhavi Upadhyay

From working in TV shows such as Left Right Left, CID, and Ishq Kills, to movies like City Lights, Vaibhavi Upadhyay became a household name with her role

as Jasmine Mavani in the 2017 sitcom Sarabhai vs Sarabhai. Vaibhavi also worked alongside Deepika Padukone in the 2020 film Chhapaak. She was seen in the web series Zero KMS. The actress lost her life in a car accident in May. She was 38.

#### Junior Mehmood

Junior Mehmood had featured in over 200 films in different languages. He was best known for movies like Brahmachari (1968), Mera Naam Joker (1970), Parvarish (1977), and Do Aur Do Paanch (1980). He was battling with stage four cancer and passed away in Mumbai on December 8. He was 67.

#### Pradeep Sarkar

Noted Bengali director Pradeep Sarkar made his debut in the Hindi film industry with the screen adaptation of Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's Parineeta. His last directorial on the big screen was Helicopter Eela. He died on March 24 at the age of 67.

#### Pamela Chopra

Renowned filmmaker Aditya Chopra's mother Pamela passed away on April 20. She was 74. She was last seen on the Netflix special documentary based on YRF titled The Romantics.

#### Gufi Paintal

Veteran actor Gufi Paintal was best known for appearing as Shakuni mama in BR Chopra's TV serial Mahabharat. Gufi was also seen in Bahadur Shah Zafar, Kanon, Om Namah Shivay, CID, Ssshhhh...Koi Hai, Dwarakadheesh Bhagwaan Shree Krishn, Radha Krishn and Jay Kaniyalal Ki. His film credits include Rafoo Chakkar, Dillagi, Desh Pardesh and Suhaag. He passed away on June 5. Paintal was 78.

#### Rajkumar Kohli

The veteran director was known for his films like Lootera, Jaani Dushman: Ek Anokhi Kahaani, Raaj

Tilak, Naagin, Badle Ki Aag and Pati Patni Aur Tawaif. Kohli died of a heart attack on November 24. He was 93.

#### Aditya Singh Rajput

Actor Aditya Singh Rajput, who was seen in reality shows such as Splitsvilla 9, Love, Aashiqui, Code Red, Aawaz Season 9 and Bad Boy Season 4, died in Mumbai on May 22. He was 32.

#### City luminaries

#### BN Goswami

Art historian and critic Brijinder Nath Goswami, a revered name in the art circles, passed away on November 17. He was 90. A scholar of miniature paintings, he authored more than 26 books on subjects like Pahari paintings, miniature paintings, court painters, among others. The Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan awardee called himself an 'accidental art historian', as he gave up his role in civil services to pursue a career in the field of Indian miniature paintings.

#### Surinder Shinda

Popular Punjabi singer Surinder Shinda, described as the 'grandfather of music on console', died on July 26 due to multi-organ failure. He was 64. Shinda was a known for songs such as Jatt Jeona Morh, Putt Jattan De, Truck Billiya, Balburo Bhabhi, and Kaher Singh Di Mout. He is said to have taught music to Amar Singh Chamkila, Maninder Shinda and Gill Hardeep. Known for singing in Kali style, he was given a Lifetime Achievement Award at 2013 Brit Asia TV Music Awards.

#### Mangal Singh Dhillon

Buniyaad actor Mangal Singh Dhillon died of cancer on June 11. He was 65. The Faridkot-based was also part of several projects, including Junoon, Khoon Bhari Maang, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Azaad Desh Ke Gulam etc.

## Taylor Swift booted by US football fans as she cheers for boyfriend

Singer Taylor Swift was booed by American football fans as she cheered for boyfriend Travis Kelce.

Swift was booed by New England fans at Sunday's Chiefs vs. Patriots game as she cheered for boyfriend Travis Kelce and she handled the situation.

"Gillette Stadium is the most joyful place on Earth" - Taylor Swift, a message on the Jumbotron read, before a wave of boos poured out around the stadium, reports people.com.

In response, Swift, 34, kept it cool by smiling, waving and blowing a kiss to the audience, according to a video shared on X, formerly known as Twitter.

In her Times 2023 Person of the Year inter-



view earlier this month, Swift opened up about the impact she's made

on the NFL and the newfound attention as she cheers on Kelce, also

34, at his games.

"I don't know how they know what suite I'm in. There's a camera, like, a half-mile away, and you don't know where it is, and you have no idea when the camera is putting you in the broadcast, so I don't know if I'm being shown 17 times or once," she said.

But "I'm just there to support Travis," the 'Blank Space' hit maker added.

"I have no awareness of if I'm being shown too much and pissing off a few dads, Brads and Chads."

Her appreciation for the game itself has also evolved since she and Kelce began dating.

"Football is awesome, it turns out," Swift said. "I've been missing out my whole life."

## Julia Roberts talks about the plot for a Pretty Woman sequel

Actress Julia Roberts believes her Pretty Woman co-star Richard Gere's character, Edward, died after the end of the film! Roberts in the 1990 film played a prostitute named Vivienne opposite Gere, who essayed a businessman called Edward. He falls in love with her and helps her get off the street.

"I think he Edward passed away peacefully in his sleep from a heart attack, smiling. And now she runs his business," she said on CBS Mornings.

The actors reunited almost a decade later for 1999's Runaway Bride and Roberts said the couple in that movie get a happier ending. The host asked: "Your character Maggie liter-



ally rides off into the sunset with Richard Gere after leaving four other men at the altar. What happens to her?"

The actress then replied: "They stay together. They're going to stay together." Asked about her movie star character from Notting Hill, who fell for a bookstore owner played by Hugh Grant, Roberts said: "She's retired. She has six children and has maintained her waist size amazingly. Anna has also traded glamorous film sets for quiet days behind a shop counter.

William runs the bookshop still and now there's a little knitting annex next to the bookshop that Anna runs."

## It's party time for Karishma Tanna



Karishma Tanna recently hosted a pre-birthday bash at a fine-dining restaurant in the

heart of Mumbai's celeb hotspot, Bandra. The stage was set for an unforgettable evening

as the actress, who is set to celebrate her birthday on December 21, brought together a star-studded guest list from the industry.

Among the A-list attendees were Khushi Kapoor, Chunky Pandey and wife Bhavna, Sonal Chauhan, Siddhanth Chaturvedi, Nupur Sanon, Sussanne Khan, Jackie Shroff, and others. Karishma stole the spotlight with her high-fashion ensemble—a Balenciaga dress that defined glamour. The white satin dress adorned with the iconic fashion house's logo showcased Karishma's flair for style.

The outfit was elegantly cinched with a black belt and paired with chic black boots.

## Scary moment for TV actress Chhavi Mittal as her hair catches fire



Actress Chhavi Mittal recently talked about an incident where her hair caught fire while she was filming. She posted a video of the incident on Instagram, calling it the "scariest" thing that has ever happened to her. She stated in the article that mishaps happen on set, but she also stressed how scared she was when her hair caught fire.

Chhavi expressed her heartfelt gratitude towards Karan Grover for saving her life by extinguishing the fire with his bare hands. The actress gave a first-hand account of the unexpected and terrifying encounter in a Vlog that she also published when it happened.

Chhavi's fans and well-wishers were concerned for her as they posted comments like, "Thank God you are safe, Hope you're OK". Another user wrote, "Be very careful, this year seems to be red zone for you... but at least it's going to end soon."

## Saiyami Kher undergoes mixed martial arts training for Special Ops Season 3

Saiyami Kher took mixed martial arts training for her role in the third season of Special Ops.

Speaking about it, Saiyami said, "I always love shooting for an action project. I have gone through MMA training for my film with Nagarjuna sir I did 2 years ago. It's always special coming back to Special Ops. It's a show that received a lot of love when the first season came out. So, it gets bigger and better this time around. We have a great set of action directors on board. I hope this gets me a full-fledged action role soon."

Special Ops universe is created by Neeraj



Pandey. It also features Kay Kay Menon, Karan Tacker and Divya Dutta.

Meanwhile, Saiyami is basking in the success of Ghoomer.

## Will not tolerate any insult to Parliament, post of Vice President: Jagdeep Dhankhar on mimicry row

In the Rajya Sabha, the chairman says the act of mimicking him and its videography have caused an 'insult' to the honour of the post of the Vice President, the farmers and his own community

NEW DELHI, Dec 20 (Agencies): Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Wednesday said he would not tolerate any insult to Parliament and the post of Vice President while expressing deep anguish over a TMC MP mimicking him in Parliament complex and a Congress MP recording the act.

In the Rajya Sabha, the chairman said the act of mimicking him and its videography had caused an "insult" to the honour of the post of the Vice President, the farmers and his own community.

When the House met at 11.45



am after the third adjournment, Dhankhar expressed anguish over Tuesday's incident and asked the Congress party, including Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge, to ponder

over it.

"I am not bothered if anyone insults Jagdeep Dhankhar but I cannot bear that I could not protect the honour of my post. It is my duty to protect the honour of the House," Dhankhar said.

"You cannot imagine what has happened. Such a big incident took place. The post was disrespected. The farmers' community was insulted. My community was insulted, and you are silent," he said before adjourning the House proceedings again for about 15 minutes.

Earlier, the Rajya Sabha proceedings were adjourned thrice.

## PM Modi, too, used to mimic opposition leaders in Lok Sabha, why make it an issue now: TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee

NEW DELHI, Dec 20 (Agencies): Under fire from the members in the Treasury and the BJP-led Centre over his mock impersonation of Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on the Parliament complex, suspended TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee on Wednesday clarified his conduct saying he did not intend to hurt anyone.

A video went viral earlier showing Banerjee mimicking Dhankhar's mannerisms and physi-

cal limitations during a protest by the suspended Opposition members on the stairs of Parliament on Tuesday.

The viral clip drew sharp condemnation from the ruling BJP. The chairman of the Upper House, too, took a serious view of the mimicry and expressed his anguish over it.

Addressing reporters on Wednesday, Banerjee said, "I did not intend to hurt anyone. I do not know why he is taking this on himself. Does he

act like this in the Rajya Sabha?"

He added that he respects the Vice President as they both belong to the same profession -- law.

"I respect Dhankhar Sahib a lot. He's also a senior advocate, I'm too. I've great respect for Dhankhar-ji. First, he belongs in the same profession as me, and second, because he was formerly a governor (of West Bengal). He is our Vice President,"



Banerjee said. Also, hitting out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the TMC MP said, "Even the PM mimicked Opposition leaders in the Lok Sabha between 2014 and 2019. He did it. But everyone took it as harmless humour, not seriously. Now, if they are taking it seriously in my case, I can't help it."

## 'Ready to look into it'; PM Modi reacts to Khalistani leader Gurbatwant Pannun's 'murder plot' in US



NEW DELHI, Dec 20 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi has for the first time responded to the claims made by the US of an Indian link to an alleged foiled assassination plot against India-designated terrorist Gurbatwant Singh Pannun, and said that he would "look into" any evidence, adding that "a few incidents" would not affect the US-India ties.

"If someone gives us any information, we would definitely look into it," Modi said in an interview with the UK-based newspaper 'Financial Times'.

"If a citizen of ours has

done anything good or bad, we are ready to look into it. Our commitment is to the rule of law," the Prime Minister said.

Pannun, who was declared a 'designated individual terrorist' by the Government of India on July 1, 2020, has been actively exhorting Punjab-based gangsters and youth over social media to fight for the cause of Khalistan, challenging the sovereignty, integrity and security of the country, NIA investigations have shown.

Pannun has been under the NIA lens since

2019 when the anti-terror agency registered its first case against him.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Modi also raised concerns over extremist activities, and said, India was "deeply concerned about the activities of certain extremist groups based overseas", adding, "These elements, under the guise of freedom of expression, have engaged in intimidation and incited violence," Financial Times reported.

He said, "There is strong bipartisan support for the strengthening of this relationship, which is a clear indicator of a mature and stable partnership."

"Security and counter-terrorism cooperation has been a key component of our partnership," he told the FT.

"I don't think it is appropriate to link a few incidents with diplomatic relations between the two countries," Modi added.

## Man kills wife, slashes neck with sword-like weapon after fight over making tea

GHAZIABAD, Dec 20 (Agencies): A man allegedly stabbed his wife to death after an argument over making tea in Ghaziabad. He was arrested after his son filed a complaint with the police in connection with the case.

The incident happened around 8 am on Tuesday when an argument broke out between Dharmveer and his wife Gundayi (50) over making tea.

The argument escalated and Dharmveer attacked his wife on the neck three to four times with a sword-like weapon kept at home. He then fled the scene.

Upon receiving information about the inci-



dent, police arrived at the scene and sent the body for post-mortem. Subsequently, a case was registered based on a complaint filed by the woman's son, following which Dharmveer was arrested.

"We received information about the murder of a 50-year-old woman in Fazalgarh village, at

around 8 am on December 19. The accused had killed her with a sharp weapon kept at home. A case has been registered under relevant sections on the complaint of the woman's son and the accused is being taken into custody for further legal proceedings," a senior police official said today.

## UP physiotherapist arrested for stabbing wife 18 times

The man and his wife used to argue and fight regularly over the woman's extramarital affair and money-related disputes

LUCKNOW, Dec 20 (Agencies): A physiotherapist, who stabbed his wife 18 times and fled the scene about a fortnight ago, has finally been arrested, police said today.

Anandeshwar Agrahari was arrested near Krishna Nagar area of Lucknow.

Rahul Raj, deputy commissioner of police (DCP), said that with the arrest of the 38-year-old man and a father of two, Lucknow police had solved the brutal killing of the woman in which a case was registered under Section 302 (murder) of the IPC on the complaint of the

victim's brother, Aman Sahu, at the Thakurganj police station.

"The knife used in the crime has also been recovered," said the DCP.

"The man gave his wife's affair as one of the reasons for their regular arguments and fights. They also had frequent disputes over money-related problems," the DCP said, adding that the man is an alcoholic and addicted to betting.

While giving the sequence of events during the police interrogation, the man said that he and his wife used to get into arguments over multiple issues,

including an extramarital affair and dispute over money.

"The argument took a violent turn on December 4, and he first cuffed his wife's hands and legs then stabbed her 18 times using a kitchen knife," said the police officer.

The man told the police that he chose the perfect time to kill her -- when his elder son, Tanishq, who is differently abled and cannot speak, was sleeping. In his sleep, he could not hear his mother's screams.

His younger son, Shaurya, 9, was in school. When he went to get Shaurya from school, he fed

him sedatives on the way home.

Shaurya fell asleep as soon as he reached home. Later, Anand fled from the scene.

The victim, Sandhya Sahu, was discovered murdered with multiple stab wounds on December 5 in Lucknow's Roshan Nagar.

The incident came to light when the victim's mother, Kamla, visited the residence and discovered Sandhya's body.

Anand and Sandhya, who had a love marriage 15 years ago, resided in Roshan Nagar with their sons Tanishq and Shaurya.

## Ugandan woman held at Mumbai airport with cocaine worth Rs 8.9 crore



MUMBAI, Dec 20 (Agencies): A Ugandan woman has been arrested at the Mumbai international airport after she was found to be carrying cocaine worth Rs 8.9 crore concealed in her hair wig and undergarment, a DRI official said on Wednesday.

Based on a specific information, the Mumbai zonal unit of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) laid a trap at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport here on Tuesday and apprehended the woman passenger when she arrived from Entebbe via Nairobi, the official said.

Initially, the DRI sleuths did not recover anything on search-

ing her luggage. But when they checked the hair wig and bra pads worn by the woman, they found 890 gm of cocaine concealed in them, he said.

The Ugandan national was trying to smuggle the narcotic substance by adopting unusual modus operandi, which made the recovery challenging, the official said.

After interrogation, the passenger was placed under arrest, he said.

The apex anti-smuggling agency has busted numerous modus operandi adopted by smugglers, ranging from methods like concealment of drug in sanitary pads, liquid cocaine in whisky bottle, cocaine in moisturiser bottles, etc, he added.

## Maharashtra man stabs wife, in-laws to death over adultery suspicion

KALAMB, Dec 20 (Agencies): A man from Maharashtra's Yavatmal has been arrested for stabbing his wife, father-in-law, and two of her brothers-in-law to death over suspicion of adultery.

Police said the accused, Govind Pawar, allegedly stabbed his wife, Rekha Govind Pawar, father-in-

law Pandit Ghosle, and brothers-in-law Gyaneshwar Ghosle and Sunil Ghosle to death at Kalamb on Tuesday night over infidelity suspicion.

Pawar's mother-in-law Rukhma Ghosle also suffered serious injuries in the attack, police added. Superintendent of Police (SP)

Yavatmal Pawan Bansod said Govind Pawar was tracked and arrested by Kalamb police.

The bodies have been sent for post-mortem examinations and the police were investigating the matter.

The accused will be produced in court soon.

## Delhi Police tracks down four suspects in deepfake case of actor Rashmika Mandanna

NEW DELHI, Dec 20 (Agencies): Four suspects involved in uploading a deepfake video of actor Rashmika Mandanna online have been tracked and the hunt is on to nab the main conspirator, police said on Wednesday.

However, the four suspects turned out to be uploaders, not creators, the police said, adding that they were looking for the key conspirator in the case.

Out of the four suspects, three have been tracked based on the details provided by Meta, the company that owns and operates social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.

The investigation encountered an obstacle since the accused had reportedly removed and deleted information from their accounts, making it difficult for authorities to locate them. The Delhi Police's cyber experts are currently searching for the key conspirator behind the post.

The deepfake videos featuring the actor were likely uploaded using a fake identity, and the use

of a Virtual Private Network (VPN) adds another layer of difficulty in tracking the perpetrator.

It's been a month since the Delhi Police registered a First Information Report (FIR) at the Special Cell in connection with the deepfake AI-generated video of actress Rashmika Mandanna.

Earlier, the Delhi Commission for Women had also sought action over the deepfake video of actress Rashmika Mandanna, which circulated widely on social media platforms.

Union Minister for Communications, Electronics and IT Ashwini Vaishnav said on November 18 that notices were issued to all social media platforms directing them to take necessary steps to identify and remove such content.

Delhi Police IFSO (Internet Freedom and Safety for Online Users) unit earlier sent a letter to Meta (formerly Facebook) but the social media company responded by expressing its inability to provide details of the deleted account.

The sources informed that the

police are awaiting a reply from GoDaddy (a publicly traded internet domain registry) since a similar profile was also made through GoDaddy.

Highlighting the danger of deepfakes, Ashwini Vaishnav said on November 18 during an interaction with the media, "Deepfake is a big issue for all of us. We recently issued notices to all the big social media forms, asking them to take steps to identify deepfakes, to remove those content. The social media platforms have responded. They are taking action. We have told them to be more aggressive in this work."

On November 6, a modified video of actor Rashmika Mandanna appeared online, sparking discussions about digital safety. In the viral video, it can be seen that a woman resembling the actress Rashmika was entering a lift wearing a black swimsuit.

The video quickly went viral and several social media users came forward to confirm that it was a deepfake.

## Cop crushed to death by car carrying illicit liquor in Bihar

BEGUSARAI, Dec 20 (Agencies): A police official was killed and another one sustained injuries in Bihar's Begusarai district early on Wednesday after being hit by a car which they tried to intercept.

They were trying to stop the vehicle after receiving a tip-off that it was carrying liquor in violation of the state's stringent prohibition law, a senior official said.

According to a statement issued by Begusarai Superintendent of Police Yogendra Kumar, sub-inspector Khames Chaudhary (52) was posted at Naavkothi Police Station where information reached that a car carrying

liquor was passing by.

Subsequently, Chaudhary took three home guard personnel along and rushed to a bridge on the Budhi Gandak River to intercept the car.

The driver, however, sped away, knocking down Chaudhary, who died on the spot, and a home guard jawan, who has been admitted to a hospital.

The SP said a team, headed by Sub Divisional Police Officer Chandan Kumar, has been set up, to nab all the culprits involved in the crime.

The owner of the car has been tracked down and arrested, the SP added.







## Workshop on Internationalization of Higher Education held at JU

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 20: Office for International Affairs and Malviya Mission Teacher Training Centre (MMTC), University of Jammu organized one day workshop on "Internationalization of Higher Education".

Prof Manisha Priyam, Advisor Internationalization of Higher Education initiatives at University of Jammu and Professor of Education Policy at National Institute of Education Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi was the keynote speaker of the workshop.

In a thought-provoking session, Prof Manisha explored the nuances of Internationalization in higher education, shedding light on its significance and potential impacts.

She highlighted that University of Jammu has immense potential to emerge as a major center for international students in the Northern India because of its strategic location and vibrant landscape. During the lecture



Professor Manisha highlighted key strategies for effective internationalization including curriculum reorientation, faculty exchange programs and partnership with institutions worldwide.

She further underscored the importance of creating a diverse and inclusive environment that equips students with the skills needed to thrive in an international context.

To accomplish this goal of internationalization and increase the footprint of international students, she emphasized the identification of the

key areas, where collaborations for international research projects could be taken up.

Citing the examples of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Sir M. Visvesvaraya, she urged the University's faculty members to interact with students on a regular basis and to hone their persuasive abilities in order to raise the educational system to the level of worldwide standards.

Her lecture was followed by a fruitful question and answer session.

Prof P.K. Srivastava, Director, Directorate of Distance and

Online Education, University of Jammu in his presidential address underlined that thinking should become global citing the examples of 7-8th A.D. when India was the international center of learning, thereby hosting the students and scholars from all over the world.

He further informed that DDOE has already taken initiatives in this regard, where online programs i.e M.A. English and M. Com are open for international students.

Earlier, Professor S.K. Pandita, Director MMTC & OIA, in his welcome address talked in detail about various contours of internationalization, and the vision of the university in this regard.

Ranjeet Kalra, teaching faculty delivered a formal vote of thanks. The event drew a diverse audience including teaching faculty members and officers of the University to gain a deeper understanding of the evolving paradigms of internationalization.

## CUJ students learn about journalism during industrial trip



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 20: Department of Hindi and Other Indian Languages of Central University of Jammu students visited the office of Dainik Jagran located in Jammu city as part of their industrial visit. The visit aimed to provide a firsthand understanding of the dynamics within the media industry and offer students insights into the workings of a prominent newspaper publication. With the inspiration of Vice Chancellor Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Head of the Hindi Department Prof. Bharat Bhushan, fac-

ulty, researchers and students participated in this industrial trip.

During the visit, students had the opportunity to interact with seasoned journalists, editors, and other professionals at Dainik Jagran. They gained valuable insights into the editorial process, newsroom operations, and the technological advancements shaping contemporary journalism.

Anil Gakkad, editor-in-chief of the Dainik Jagran Jammu, welcomed everyone. Head of Department Prof. Bharat Bhushan honored Anil Gakkad

by presenting him a memento on behalf of the university. Thereafter, Gakkad gave information to the students about the basic elements of journalism and also told them about the practical aspect of journalism. During the visit, he cleared every doubt of the students by presenting a practical presentation with machines regarding information collection for the newspaper, editing and publishing. He also boosted the enthusiasm of the students by giving accurate answers to many other questions. The students expressed their gratitude for the enriching experience, citing it as a valuable supplement to their academic journey. Such initiatives align with the Central University of Jammu's commitment to providing students with practical knowledge and industry exposure.

## Training of farmers in 'Art of Fruit & Vegetables Preservation' held

### Top News Report

DODA, Dec 20 A valedictory programme was organised by Horticulture Department Doda to mark the conclusion of one month Training Programme in the 'Art of Fruit and Vegetables preservation' at Thathri.

Chief Horticulture officer Doda Rakesh Kotwal was the chief Guest, while the programme was also attended by MCC Bhaderwah Bharat Bhushan, BPM, Abdul Rouf and other officials of the Department. The programme was organized in collaboration with JKRLM Thathri. The Chief Horticulture officer, in his addresses, asked the trainees to establish their own processing units by availing incentives under CAPEX/MIDH PMFMe and Agri Infrastructure Fund exclusively meant for the post harvest Management techniques and to exploit the available potential in the District. "This will not only make you self reliant but also help in doubling their income and reduce the post harvest losses" he said.

The Manager cum Chemist Bhaderwah stressed the participants to form Self Help Groups in their respective areas and utilise the knowledge gained in the training programme in preparation and marketing of different value added products to become Atmanirbar.

## KVS Jammu Region celebrates Diamond Jubilee

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 20: Diamond Jubilee Celebration of the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan Foundation Day at Regional Level, was organised today on the 20th of December, 2023 in the auditorium of PM SHRI Kendriya Vidyalaya No. 1, Gandhi Nagar.

The gala event hosted by the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Jammu Region was organised by PM SHRI Kendriya Vidyalaya (GC) CRPF, Bantabal.

The event was graced by Nagendra Goyal, Deputy Commissioner, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Jammu Region as the Chief Guest.

Islam Khan, Assistant Commissioner Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Jammu Region; Anil Kumar, Assistant Commissioner, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Jammu Region, Sh. Hari Singh, Assistant Commissioner, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Jammu Region, Sh. Lalit Sharma, Administrative Officer, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Jammu Region, Gajendra Singh, Finance Officer, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan,



an, Jammu Region, various heads of autonomous bodies were among the other dignitaries present on the occasion.

Principals and teachers of various Kendriya Vidyalayas of the Jammu Region, KV alumni, other special guests and members of the press fraternity were also present during the event.

The event commenced with the formal lighting of the traditional lamp and Saraswati Vandana. All the dignitaries were accorded green welcome. Anil Kumar, Assistant Commissioner, KVS RO Jammu welcomed the gather-

ing and said that it's a matter of great pride and honour to host and organise the celebration of such an exemplary organization

There was a spectrum of cultural programmes presented by the students of various Kendriya Vidyalayas of Jammu Region.

Islam Khan, Assistant Commissioner, Jammu Region presented the journey and achievements of KVS RO Jammu. The Chief Guest felicitated the alumni, student achievers in the field of academics, sports, Youth Parliament, Rashtrapati Ekta Parv. KV alumni, Anil

Goswami (Retd. IAS and Ex Union Home Secretary of India) and Dr. Bias Dev (Ortho and Spine Surgeon, GMC Jammu) shared their school time memories and said that it's a very nostalgic feeling to return back to one's alma mater and that it is an incredible and proud experience for them to be the part of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan.

The Chief Guest, Nagendra Goyal, Deputy Commissioner, KVS RO Jammu in his address said that the Kendriya Vidyalayas present the real picture of India in true sense because in these schools, students from different backgrounds rural, urban, rich, poor everyone takes education and the opportunities provided for the all round development of the students here make them different from other schools.

Today students of Kendriya Vidyalayas are in key leadership role in every field, be it administration, sports, science, he added.

The event ended by the vote of thanks presented by Hari Singh, Assistant Commissioner, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, RO Jammu.

## FROM PAGE 1

## INDIA bloc MPs stage protest in front of Gandhi statue against bulk suspension

removing everyone from the house, this won't work in a democracy. This is why we will go to the people. We will continue to protest till they don't revoke suspension and make a statement in the house and initiate a discussion in the house. I am awaiting a response to my letter from the Vice President"

While protesting the opposition MPs were carrying banners of 'save democracy'.

An unprecedented number of MPs, a total of 141, were suspended from Parliament on Tuesday.

Earlier, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi attacked opposition parties on Tuesday and said that they do not want the House to function and they want to do politics in everything.

"Speaker of the House has written a letter to Secretary Home and has instructed me to get a high-level inquiry (on security breach) done. To increase the security of the new Parliament, a committee has also been constituted under the supervision of DG CRPF. On one hand, there is an investigation going on and on the other hand, the opposition does not want the House to function...Rahul Gandhi has been saying that unemployment is the reason why all this took place. Does Rahul Gandhi support all this? What irresponsible statement is this? They (the opposition) want to do politics in everything," Pralhad Joshi told reporters.

## Money doubling scam: Cyber Police file FIR, conduct raids at five locations

information commission of offence U/S 66D IT Act & 420 IPC is prima facie made out. Accordingly, case FIR No. 39/2023 U/s 66D IT Act, 420 IPC Stands registered in this Police Station and investigation of the case was entrusted to Inspector rank

officer, reads the FIR copy.

The scam came to the fore on Tuesday after the "investors" staged a protest against the company and appealed to police to get their hard earned money back.

The protestors said that they were lured to invest in the company as they were promised that the money will get doubled within 15 days. "In the first few months we received the money as promised," they said, adding that "after sometime we didn't get any response from the firm, which created doubt in our minds."

## Severe cold grips Kashmir, Minus 4.4°C in Srinagar

Celsius, the officials said. Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district, which serves as one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath Yatra, recorded a minimum temperature of minus 6.3 degrees Celsius, they said.

The famous ski resort of Gulmarg in Baramulla district recorded a low of minus 4.4 degrees Celsius, the officials said.

Qazigund recorded a low of minus 4 degree Celsius, Kokernag town saw the minimum settle at minus 3.3 degrees Celsius and Kupwara recorded a low of minus 3.5 degrees Celsius. The weather office has forecast generally dry weather over the next few days in Kashmir as the minimum temperature is expected to dip further.

The drop in temperature has resulted in freezing of many slow moving water bodies. It has also resulted in freezing of water supply pipes in some areas.

With electricity supply erratic in many areas of Kashmir, people have resorted to use of 'kangri', an earthen firepot, to beat the chill.

The drop in temperature has resulted in an increase in respiratory problems among the children and elderly.

The 'Chilla-i-Kalan' is the 40-day harshest winter period when a cold wave grips the region and the temperature drops considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies, including the famous Dal Lake here as well as the water supply lines in several parts of the valley.

The chances of snowfall are the most fre-

quent and maximum during this period and most areas, especially the higher reaches, receive heavy snowfall.

While 'Chillai-Kalan' begins on December 21, it will end on January 31.

The cold wave continues even after that in Kashmir with a 20-day-long 'Chillai-Khurd' (small cold) and a 10-day-long 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold).

## Union transport Minister Aims for India's road infrastructure to match US in next 5 years

stressed that futuristic development of infrastructure is the need of the country.

India needs robust infrastructure for attracting capital investment from both domestic and foreign sources, which would remove poverty and generate employment. Dwelling on the country's automobile sector, he said India's automobile industry had recently surpassed Japan to become the third behind China and USA.

"Our industry is worth Rs 7.5 lakh crore and the maximum GST to the states and Central Government is generated from this sector. Till now, 4.5 crore jobs have been created by this industry.

My dream is to double the size of our automobile industry to Rs 15 lakh crore in the next five years. "This is the way in which we are progressing in every sector.

We are already the fastest growing economy and people are more interested in dealing with India," the minister is quoted as saying in a release issued by the Manorama on Wednesday.

He also strongly pitched for introducing electric and flex fuel vehicles to reduce consumption of fossil fuel, whose import bill is Rs 16 lakh crore.

Some vehicles, with flex engines, are now being powered by ethanol instead of petrol. It will bring the average cost of fuel to Rs 15 as ethanol's rate is only Rs 60 and it would also generate electricity. "We are now opening ethanol pumps."

Gadkari further said it would also empower Indian farmers to double up as 'urjadaata' (energy producer) while being 'annadaata' (food producer) as ethanol fuel can be produced from crops like sugarcane and rice stalk.

"The diversification of agriculture to energy and power sector is the most impor-

tant policy which is going to change the future of our country, particularly of rural agriculture and tribal India. Like smart cities, we can have smart villages which is very important for the development of our country and that is the policy change we are bringing in," he said.

As for the future of public transportation, he said India is now making ropeways, cable cars and running public transport on electricity. Efforts are underway to introduce electric buses in more cities.

"Within five years public transport will totally change. It will be a less polluting, more cost-effective substitute," he noted. For decongesting metros, projects have been undertaken to the tune of over Rs 65,000 crore, which include Dwarka Expressway (Rs 9,000 cr), six-lane urban extension road in the National Capital (Rs 8,000 cr), Eastern Peripheral Expressway (Rs 12,000 cr), and Delhi-Meerut Expressway (Rs 8,000 crore).

In support of his ministry's efforts to ensure faster travel time, he cited the instance of Atal Tunnel at Rohtang Pass between Manali and Lahaul-Spiti Valley, which has reduced travel time from three hours to eight minutes.

Similarly, Katra-Delhi Expressway will allow travel between Delhi and Amritsar in four hours, Delhi and Katra (J&K) in six hours and Delhi and Srinagar in eight hours.

In Ladakh, the work has started on the biggest tunnel in Asia at Zojila Pass. He also disclosed that new border roads are being built which are strategically important.

There are 30 roads where airplanes can safely land. Plans are afoot to develop 670 roadside amenities which will also have heliports and drone ports.

Gadkari highlighted the vital role of entrepreneurs and startups in revitalising the Indian economy. "We need to support those who have entrepreneurship and possess new technology," he added.

The Minister, however, conceded that his promise to reduce accidents by 50 per cent has not yielded desired results. Every year five lakh accidents and 1.50 lakh deaths occur which result in a GDP loss of three per cent.

"This is a problem related to automobile engineering, road engineering and awareness of the people. People don't have respect for the law," he said, adding that it is imperative to change the mindset of the people about road safety for which help is

needed from media, social and educational institutions, and NGOs.

## Mysterious blast at police camp in Surankote

Meanwhile, a police spokesman said, "Some low-intensity and low-impact mysterious blast was reported last night in the parking area of the Armed Battalion of J&K Police in Surankote, due to which the window panes of some parked vehicles got damaged." The nature of blast is being investigated, said the spokesman.

## Covid-19 contractual doctors denied extension, HC upholds order

after they were closed down. "The contractual employment has no vested right to continue and it is not open for the Courts to direct an employer to continue the contract or to change the status of the contractual employment in any manner, once the same has been accepted by consent of both the sides," the high court bench of Justice MA Chowdhary said.

## Udhampur farmers embrace hybrid onion seeds to boost income

farmers to diversify their crops, like farmer Som Raj who switched to hybrid onions. Focusing solely on staple crops often yields limited returns. Vegetable cultivation, like onions, offers significantly higher income potential. This year, we've prioritised onion cultivation across Udhampur, covering 340 hectares," said Sanjay Anand, Chief Agriculture Officer of Udhampur.

"We prioritise local farmers but also welcome others who are eager to improve their crops. Introducing hybrid seeds through meetings and showcasing successful examples like Som Raj's has been key to motivating farmers. The excellent market prices for onions further incentivize this shift," said the Chief Agriculture Officer of Udhampur.

## Sensex, Nifty go into tailspin after hitting fresh all-time high levels; tank over 1 per cent

The 30-share BSE Sensex crashed 930.88 points or 1.30 per cent to settle at 70,506.31

MUMBAI, Dec 20 (Agencies): Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty went into a tailspin after hitting their fresh all-time high levels on Wednesday, closing down by over 1 per cent as investors cashed in on the recent rally.

Erasing all its early gains, the 30-share BSE Sensex crashed 930.88 points or 1.30 per cent to settle at 70,506.31. The index opened higher and later gained 475.88 points or 0.66 per cent to hit its all-time high of 71,913.07.

However, selling across the board dragged the barometer down from record highs and it dropped to a low of 70,302.60.

The Nifty fell by 302.95 points or 1.41 per cent to 21,150.15. During the day, it climbed 139.9 points or 0.65 per cent to reach its record high of 21,593.

All the 30 Sensex shares, except for HDFC Bank, closed in the red. Tata Steel fell the



most by 4.21 per cent. NTPC, Tata Motors, HCL Technologies, Mahindra & Mahindra, State Bank of India, Power Grid, Tech Mahindra, Larsen & Toubro and JSW Steel also declined. HDFC Bank was the only gainer from the pack. In Asian markets, Seoul,

Tokyo and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory while Shanghai ended lower.

European markets were trading mostly lower. The US markets ended in the green on Tuesday.

"The domestic market saw a sharp and abrupt sell-off in the

second half, despite the positive trend in global peers. This is attributable to profit-booking from the recent sharp rally stretching valuations of mid and small-cap stocks. The recent uptick in crude prices prompted investors to book profits," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 0.76 per cent to USD 79.83 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 601.52 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge fell 3.42 per cent and midcap index declined 3.12 per cent.

The BSE benchmark climbed 122.10 points or 0.17 per cent to settle at 71,437.19 on Tuesday. The Nifty went up by 34.45 points or 0.16 per cent to 21,453.10.

## Gold jumps Rs 300; silver rallies Rs 800

Gold price jumped to Rs 6,310 per gm in Delhi on Wednesday



NEW DELHI, Dec 20 (Agencies): Gold price jumped Rs 300 to Rs 63,100 per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday amid strong cues in international markets, according to HDFC Securities. The precious metal

had closed at Rs 62,800 per 10 grams in the previous trade.

Silver also rallied Rs 800 to Rs 78,500 per kilogram.

In its previous close, it had settled at Rs 77,700 per kg.

In the futures trade,

February contract of gold advanced Rs 112 to Rs 62,588 per 10 grams on the MCX.

Also, March contract of silver bounced Rs 110 to Rs 74,934 per kg on the exchange.

In the global markets, gold and silver were quoting higher at USD 2,040 per ounce and USD 24.07 per ounce, respectively.

HDFC Securities' senior analyst of commodities Saumil Gandhi said, "Gold extended their gains as traders maintained bets that the US Federal Reserve will start cutting interest rates by next year, despite pushbacks from central bankers on such expectations.

## Tesla's recall of 2 million vehicles to fix its Autopilot system uses technology that may not work

DETROIT, Dec 20 (Agencies): Tesla's recall of more than 2 million of its electric vehicles — an effort to have drivers who use its Autopilot system pay closer attention to the road — relies on technology that research shows may not work as intended.

Tesla, the leading manufacturer of EVs, reluctantly agreed to the recall last week after a two-year investigation by the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that Tesla's system to monitor drivers was defective and required a fix. The system sends alerts to drivers if it fails to detect torque from hands on the steering wheel, a system that experts describe as ineffective. Government documents filed by Tesla say the online software change will increase warnings and alerts to drivers to keep their hands on the steering wheel. It also may limit the areas where the most commonly used versions of Autopilot can be used, though that isn't entirely clear in Tesla's documents.

NHTSA began its investigation in 2021, after receiving 11 reports that Teslas that were using the partially automated system crashed into parked emergency vehicles. Since 2016, the agency has sent investigators to at least 35 crashes in which Teslas that were suspected of operating on a partially automated driving system hit parked emergency vehicles, motorcyclists or tractor trailers that crossed in the vehicles' paths, causing a total of 17 deaths.

But research conducted by NHTSA, the National Transportation Safety Board and other investigators show that merely measuring torque on the steering wheel doesn't ensure that drivers are paying sufficient attention. Experts say night-vision cameras are needed to watch drivers' eyes to ensure they're looking at the road.

"I do have concerns about the solution," said Jennifer Homendy, the chairwoman of the NTSB, which investigated two fatal Florida crashes involving Teslas on Autopilot in which neither the driver nor the system detected crossing tractor trailers. "The technology, the way it worked, including with steering torque, was not sufficient to keep drivers' attention, and drivers disengaged."

In addition, NHTSA's investigation found that out of 43 crashes it examined with detailed data available, 37 drivers had their hands on the wheel in the final second before their vehicles crashed, indicating that they weren't paying sufficient attention.

"Humans are poor at monitoring automated systems and intervening when something goes awry," said Donald Slavik, a lawyer for plaintiffs in three lawsuits against Tesla over Autopilot. "That's why the human factors studies have shown a significant delayed response under those conditions."

Missy Cummings, a professor of engineering and computing at George Mason University who studies automated vehicles, said it's widely accepted by researchers that monitoring hands on the steering wheel is insufficient to ensure a driver's attention to the road.

"It's a proxy measure for attention and it's a poor measure of attention," she said.

A better solution, experts say, would be to require Tesla to use cameras to monitor drivers' eyes to make sure they're watching the road. Some Teslas do have interior-facing cameras. But they don't see well at night, unlike those in General Motors or Ford driver monitoring systems, said Philip Koopman, a professor at Carnegie Mellon University

who studies vehicle automation safety.

Koopman noted that older Teslas lack such cameras. Tesla's recall documents say nothing about increased use of cameras. But the company's software release notes posted on X, formerly Twitter, say that a camera above the rearview mirror can now determine whether a driver is paying attention and trigger alerts if they aren't. Tesla, which has no media relations department, didn't answer emailed questions about the release notes or other recall-related issues.

Tesla's website says that Autopilot and more sophisticated "Full Self Driving" software cannot drive themselves and that drivers must be ready to intervene.

Experts say that although limiting where Autopilot can operate to controlled access highways would help, it's unclear whether Tesla will do so with its recall.

In the recall documents it filed with NHTSA, Tesla says its basic Autopilot includes systems called Autosteer and Traffic Aware Cruise Control. The documents say that Autosteer is intended for use on controlled access highways and won't work when a driver activates it under the wrong conditions. The software update, the documents say, will have "additional checks upon engaging Autosteer and while using the feature outside controlled access highways and when approaching traffic controls."

Cummings noted that doesn't specifically say Tesla will limit areas where Autopilot can work to limited-access freeways — a concept known as "geofencing."

"When they say conditions, nowhere does that say geofenced," she said.

Kelly Funkhouser, associate director of vehicle technology for Consumer Reports, said she was able to use Autopilot on roads that weren't controlled access highways while testing a Tesla Model S that received the software update. But it's difficult, she said, to test everything else in the recall because Tesla has been vague on exactly what it's changing.

Homendy, the chairwoman of the transportation safety board, said she hopes NHTSA has reviewed Tesla's solution to determine whether it does what the agency intended it to do.

The NTSB, which can make only recommendations, will investigate if it sees a problem with Teslas that received the recall repairs, Homendy said.

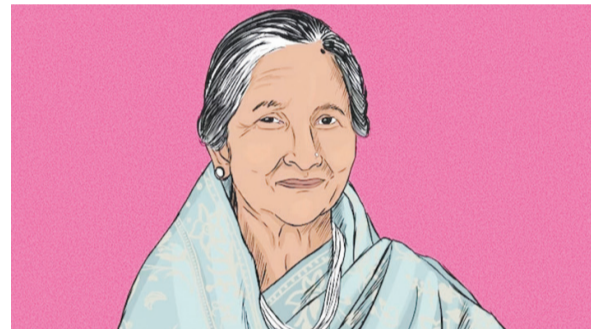
Veronica Morales, NHTSA's communications director, said the agency doesn't pre-approve recall fixes because federal law puts the burden on the automaker to develop and implement repairs. But she said the agency is keeping its investigation open and will monitor Tesla's software or hardware fixes to make sure they work by testing them at NHTSA's research and testing center in Ohio, where it has several Teslas available. The agency received the software update on its vehicles only a few days ago and has yet to evaluate them, Morales said. The remedy must also address crashes on all roads, including highways, the agency said.

Cummings, a former NHTSA special adviser who is set to be an expert witness for the plaintiff in an upcoming Florida lawsuit against Tesla, said she expects Tesla's warnings to deter a small number of drivers from abusing Autopilot. But the problems for Tesla, Cummings said, won't end until it limits where the system can be used and fixes its computer vision system so it better detects obstacles.

## Savitri Jindal's wealth grew \$9.6 billion in 2023, most among India's richest

NEW DELHI, Dec 20 (Agencies): India's richest woman, Savitri Jindal, witnessed an unparalleled surge in her wealth in 2023, outpacing the country's richest individuals such as Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani, according to data from the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

The 73-year-old has seen her net worth skyrocket by a staggering \$9.6 billion in the calendar year 2023. In contrast, Mukesh Ambani, the chairman of Reliance Industries (RIL) and India's richest individual, experienced a comparatively modest increase of around \$5 billion in the same



period.

Despite Ambani maintaining his top position among India's wealthiest with a total fortune of \$92.3 billion, Savitri Jindal's meteoric rise has drawn significant attention as she became the fifth-wealthiest Indian with a net worth of \$25.3 billion.

Her conglomerate, the OP Jindal Group, oversees prominent listed

companies such as JSW Steel, Jindal Steel & Power, JSW Energy, Jindal Saw, Jindal Stainless, and investment firm JSW Holdings.

The OP Jindal Group, which controls 83 per cent of the port operator JSW Infrastructure, successfully listed the company in October 2023. The Jindal family is now eyeing the potential listing of JSW Cement in

the upcoming year.

Following Savitri Jindal in the list of top wealth gainers in 2023 is Shiv Nadar, founder of HCL Tech, whose net worth surged by approximately \$8 billion to reach around \$32.6 billion.

The strong performance of HCL Tech shares, witnessing a 45 per cent rally in 2023, contributed significantly to Nadar's wealth growth.

Meanwhile, real estate tycoon KP Singh of DLF added another \$7 billion to his total wealth, reaching \$15.4 billion during the year, fueled by an 83 per cent rally in DLF stock amid a real estate boom in India.

Industry stalwarts

Kumar Mangalam Birla and Shapoor Mistry both experienced a substantial wealth increase of \$6.3 billion each during 2023.

Meanwhile, Mukesh Ambani's wealth recorded an additional \$5.2 billion, and Dilip Shanghvi, Managing Director of Sun Pharma, saw his net worth rise by another \$4.7 billion.

Notably, Gautam Adani remains the only prominent figure on the list whose fortunes went the opposite way in 2023. Despite a partial recovery in share prices, Adani faced a net drop of \$35.4 billion in his wealth, ending the year with an estimated net worth of \$85.1 billion.

## 20 cases of Covid sub-variant JN.1 found in three states

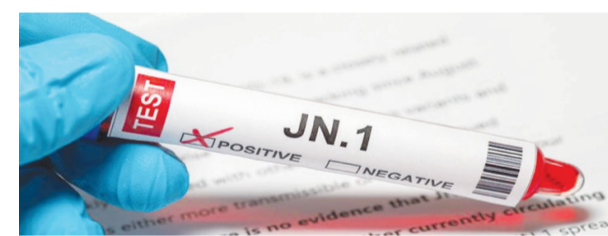
NEW DELHI, Dec 20 (Agencies): As many as 20 cases of COVID-19 sub-variant JN.1 have been found across the country with 18 traced in Goa and one each in Kerala and Maharashtra, INSACOG data showed.

The Centre has asked states and union territories to maintain constant vigil amid an uptick in COVID-19 cases and

the detection of the new JN.1 variant in the country.

Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya reviewed the preparedness of health facilities across the country and stressed on being alert against emerging strains of coronavirus.

India recorded 614 new coronavirus infections in a day, the high-



est since May 21, while the active cases have increased to 2,311, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Wednesday. The World Health

Organisation has classified JN.1 as a separate "variant of interest" given its rapidly increasing spread but said that it poses a "low" global public health risk.

The JN.1 variant was previously classified as a variant of interest (VOI) as part of the BA.2.86 sublineages, the parent lineage that is classified as a VOI, the world body said on Tuesday.

However, in recent weeks, JN.1 cases continued to be reported in multiple countries and its prevalence has rapidly increased globally.

## Exposure to household chemicals may reduce odds of getting pregnant, reveals study

WASHINGTON DC (US), Dec 20 (Agencies): According to research by a University of Massachusetts Amherst environmental and reproductive epidemiologist, exposure to phthalates, a collection of plasticising and solvent chemicals found in many home items, was associated with a lower likelihood of getting pregnant but not to pregnancy loss.

The study, published this week in the journal Environmental Health Perspectives, also noted an association between preconception exposure to phthalates and changes in women's reproductive hormones, as well as increased inflammation and oxidative stress.

"Phthalates are ubiquitous endocrine disruptors and we're exposed to them every day," says lead author Carrie Nobles, assistant professor of environmental

health sciences in the School of Public Health and Health Sciences.

Phthalates are found in such common products as shampoo, makeup, vinyl flooring, toys and medical devices. People are exposed primarily by ingesting food and liquid that has come in contact with products containing the chemicals, according to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention fact sheet.

Nobles and team analysed data from a "unique cohort" of women in the preconception time-to-pregnancy study known as EAGEr (Effects of Aspirin in Gestation and Reproduction), which evaluated the effect of low-dose aspirin on live-birth rates. The study includes detailed information on 1,228 participants during six menstrual cycles when they are attempting to get pregnant. The women who became pregnant were followed through

pregnancy.

"We were able to look at some environmental exposures like phthalates and how that relates to how long it takes to get pregnant. There was detailed data for each menstrual cycle, so we had a good handle on the date of ovulation and the timing of pregnancy when that happened," Nobles says.

The body breaks down phthalates into metabolites that are excreted in urine and can be analysed. The researchers measured 20 phthalate metabolites in urine samples taken when the participants enrolled in the study. "We found there were three parent compounds that seem to be most strongly associated with taking longer to get pregnant, although we saw a general trend toward it taking longer to get pregnant across the phthalates we looked at," Nobles says. "As exposure got higher, we saw

more and more of an effect." The researchers also looked at a global marker of inflammation, C-reactive protein, and found the women who had higher levels of phthalates exposure also had higher levels of inflammation and oxidative stress, which can lead to organ and tissue damage and ultimately to disease.

In addition, women who showed higher levels of phthalates had lower estradiol and higher follicle-stimulating hormone across the menstrual cycle, which play an important role in ovulation and the early establishment of pregnancy.

"This profile -- estradiol staying low and follicle-stimulating hormone staying high -- is actually something that we see in women who have ovarian insufficiency, which can happen with age as well as due to some other factors,"

Nobles says. "Ovulation just isn't happening as well as it used to." While women can check consumer product labels and look for phthalate-free options, the ubiquitous nature of the chemicals makes it difficult for an individual to control their exposure.

In Europe, certain phthalates are banned or severely restricted in their use, but the U.S. has no formal prohibitions. Nobles says the research findings add to the evidence that phthalates exposures have a negative impact on women's reproductive health and can be used to help inform policy making. "Maybe we want to think differently about our regulatory system and how we identify important exposures that are having adverse effects on whether people can get pregnant and have a healthy pregnancy," Nobles says.

## INW vs AUSW: After thrashing England, India aim to conquer invincible Australia at Wankhede

India are yet to beat Australia in Women's Tests, but before the match at the Wankhede Stadium, Harmanpreet Kaur and Co. will be high on confidence after beating England.

MUMBAI, Dec 20 (Agencies): It was only on December 16 that India set the record of the biggest Test victory by a margin of runs after they beat England by 326 runs at the Dr DY Patil Sports Academy in Navi Mumbai.

Deepthi Sharma stole the show and won the Player of the Match award for picking up nine wickets and scoring 87 runs. However, debutants Jemimah Rodrigues and Shubha Satheesh also impressed with knocks of 68 and 69 respectively. Yastika Bhatia also batted beautifully for his 67 in the first innings.

England had no clue about how to counter the Navi spinners as the pitch in Navi Mumbai kept becoming challenging to bat on.

After trouncing England, India are all set to lock horns with Australia in the Only Test, starting December 21 at the iconic Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.

Big challenge for India However, India have to make history if they are to win back-to-back Tests. Out of 10 Women's Tests since their first meeting back in 1977, India have never beaten Australia.

In their most recent meeting,



back in September 2021, India drew their Test against Australia at the Carrara Oval in Canberra.

Going into the game, India have an injury concern as there are doubts over Satheesh's participation in the game. The left-handed batter sustained a finger injury and did not bat in the second innings against England.

If Satheesh doesn't play, India can either play Richa Ghosh as a specialist batter or bring in all-rounder Harleen Deol. India have the option of Saika Ishaque, but they may not change their tried-and-tested spin trio of Deepthi, Rajeshwari Gayakwad and Sneha Rana.

New era for Australia Australia, in the meantime, is looking to go into a new era

without Meg Lanning, who has retired from all forms of international cricket. Earlier, Alyssa Healy took over as the full-time skipper of the team with Tahlia McGrath as her deputy.

For Australia, Ashleigh Gardner, Beth Mooney, Jess Jonassen and Ellyse Perry are expected to play an important part. Amongst the current set of players, Perry has played the most Tests (11). In fact, she is only 124 runs short of becoming the second Australian woman after Karen Rolton to score 1000 runs in Test cricket. Apart from that, she also has 38 Test wickets to her name.

Beth Mooney has been a stalwart of their batting and her role at the top of the order is going to hold a lot of importance. Anna-

bel Sutherland is one of the most exciting young all-rounders and the focus will be on her as well.

Australia's threatening spinners

Australia has a power-packed spin attack, including Alan King, Jonassen, Gardner and Georgia Wareham, who are all world-class prospects. Skipper Healy sounded confident of her spinners doing well in Indian conditions.

"I'm actually really intrigued to see what sort of wickets they prepare. I think we've got a really, really good spin attack, so do that at your own peril," Healy said earlier this month.

"Don't get me wrong, the Indians have got a strong spin attack as well, but we've got some of the best leg-spinners in the world. We've got Ash Gardner, who took nine wickets on English soil with the ball in hand, so prepare spinning wickets at your own demise," she added.

The upcoming Test is expected to be all about how the batters tackle the spin attacks of their oppositions. India's batters are in form, but Australian spinners come in with a lot of experience on their shoulders.

Without a doubt, an exciting Test match is on the cards.

## SA vs IND, 2nd ODI: Sunil Gavaskar impressed with Sai Sudharsan, wants batter to convert 60s into hundreds



GQEBERHA, Dec 20 (Agencie): Legendary India cricketer Sunil Gavaskar has been impressed with youngster Sai Sudharsan. Sudharsan who plays for Tamil Nadu in the domestic circuit made his India debut in the ongoing South Africa series. Sudharsan scored a half-century on debut and then followed it up with yet another fifty in the second match of the series.

Gavaskar said that he was impressed with the

young left hander and wanted him to convert his half centuries into hundreds.

"Yes, he looks very, very good. A very compact player plays close to his body, has got a good very still head. So balance is very good when he's playing. And, of course, when he play drives like that. Left-handers can be so elegant when they play, they can play the pull shot as well. But basically his temperament and talent are very, very

nice," Gavaskar said on Star Sports after the game.

Sudharsan became a household name in India after his stunning knock in the Indian Premier League 2023 Final. Sudharsan had slammed 96 off just 47 balls and had helped Gujarat Titans reach a massive 214-run total.

"Now it's a matter of them sort of carrying on from here and not being satisfied and I'm sure he's not being satisfied. You don't want to be getting out in 50s and 60s. When you bat up the order, you have the opportunity to score a 100 every time. So I think that is what he's got to grab so that somebody will be talking only about who will partner sai Sudharsan at the top," Gavaskar concluded on the youngster.

Despite Sudharsan's half-century in the 2nd ODI, India lost the match by 8 wickets. The KL Rahul side will play their final ODI on Thursday, 21 December.

## Cummins wants to use IPL as preparation for T20 World Cup 2024

MELBOURNE, Dec 20 (Agencie): Australia captain Pat Cummins hoped to set IPL 2024 as a base to launch himself into the T20 mode ahead of next year's World Cup to be jointly hosted by USA and the West Indies in June.

Cummins, who pulled out of IPL 2023 due to heavy international workload, attracted the second highest paycheck in the auction in Dubai on Tuesday -- Rs 20.50 crore by Sunrisers Hyderabad.

His teammate Mitchell Starc was lapped up by Kolkata Knight Riders for a whopping Rs 24.75 crore, the highest ever contract money in the IPL. "I feel like I haven't played a heap of T20 cricket and in some ways, I feel like I haven't played my best T20 cricket for a little while," Cummins was quoted as saying by



cricket.com.au.

"I'm really excited ... for next year to try to get some games before that World Cup and push a case to not only make the side but to get back to how I feel like I can bowl in T20 cricket."

Cummins last foray in the IPL was for KKR in 2022, where he smashed the fastest men's T20 half-century by an Australian from just 14 balls. "Pumped to be joining SRH for the upcoming IPL season," Cummins said in a video on the Sunrisers' Insta-

gram page. "I've heard a lot about the Orange Army. I've played in Hyderabad a few times and always loved it, so can't wait to get started."

Cummins was joined by teammate and World Cup final hero Travis Head in SRH after the left-handed opener was picked up for Rs 6.8 crore. "Great to see another Aussie in Travis Head over there as well. I think we are going to have a lot of fun this season and hopefully plenty of success," Cummins said.

## NZ vs BAN: Soumya Sarkar's record-shattering knock in vain as New Zealand claim ODI series against Bangladesh

New Zealand beat Bangladesh by seven wickets in the second ODI at the Saxton Oval in Nelson to take a 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

NELSON, Dec 20 (Agencie): New Zealand claimed the three-match ODI series against Bangladesh after winning the second match by seven wickets on Wednesday at the Saxton Oval in Nelson.

Soumya Sarkar played an incredible knock of 169 runs off 151 balls with 22 fours and two sixes for the Tigers. However, his efforts went in vain as the Black Caps chased down the target of 292 with 22 balls to spare.

Sarkar broke Sachin Tendulkar's record of the highest individual score in ODIs by a subcontinent batter in New Zealand. He also racked up the highest score by a Bangladeshi batter away from home in ODIs.

After being sent in to bat first, Bangladesh were bowled out for 291 in 49.5 overs. The visitors were struggling at one point in time after being reduced to 80 for four in 16.5 overs. From



there on, Sarkar and Mushfiqur Rahim put on 91 runs for the fifth wicket to bring their team back into the contest.

Mushfiqur scored 45 off 57 before Jacob Duffy dismissed him. Apart from Rahim and Sarkar, none of the Bangladesh batters made an impact. Anamul Haque Bijoy, skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto and Litton Das couldn't surpass double digits.

Jacob Duffy and William O'Rourke were the pick of the bowlers after they picked up three wickets apiece. Adithya Ashok, who made his ODI debut, picked up the crucial wicket of Mehidy Hasan Miraz.

Young, Nicholls star for Kiwis New Zealand got off to a flying start after Will Young and Rachin Ravindra put on 76 runs for the opening wicket off 11 overs.

Young, who made a match-winning hundred in the first game at the University Oval in Dunedin, carried on from where he left off.

He scored 89 runs off 94 balls with eight fours and two sixes before giving a caught and bowled to Hasan Mahmud. Ravindra bagged a duck in the first game before Mahmud dismissed him.

Henry Nicholls failed to open his account in Dunedin, but made amends in Nelson by scoring 95 runs off 99 balls with eight fours and a six. Young and Nicholls put on 128 runs for the second wicket.

Tom Latham, who got out in the 90s in Dunedin, and Tom Blundell stayed not out on 34 and 24 respectively to take the Kiwis past the finish line.

The third and final ODI is scheduled to take place on Saturday, December 23 at McLean Park in Napier.

## IPL 2024: Rohit Sharma 'very important' to Mumbai Indians to guide next generation, says Mahela Jayawardene

MUMBAI, Dec 20 (Agencies): Mumbai Indians are confident that Rohit Sharma will continue to play an integral role for the team and ensure a smooth transition after Hardik Pandya replaced him as captain ahead of IPL 2024 Auction. Head of Cricket and former coach, Mahela Jayawardene said on Tuesday that Rohit will be 'very important' to the 5-time champions in terms of guiding the next generation of players at the franchise.

Mumbai Indians made a "tough" and "emotional" call to replace their most successful captain Rohit Sharma with Hardik Pandya, who rejoined the team after a historic trade deal earlier in the year. While Hardik's elevation to captaincy after his success at Gujarat Titans was on the cards, MI helped raise a few eyebrows

by opting for a change in captaincy as early as the 2024 season.

Rohit Sharma, 37, is still one of the finest openers going around in white-ball cricket and the Mumbai Indians star was impressive as a leader in India's run to the ODI World Cup final earlier this year.

Not many IPL teams in the past have initiated such transition phases after replacing one of their finest captains, but Jayawardene said Mumbai Indians were prepared to hit the 'reset' button.

"(long-term plan) This is something we have spoken about as a franchise. It is a tough decision, we had to make them. It is emotional, it is tough, to be honest. But everyone who has been part of Mumbai know we cherish every moment a player has contributed and will contribute going forward," Jayawardene



told JioCinema on the sidelines of IPL mini-auction in Dubai.

"The legacy is something we want to build on and make sure we keep fighting for those wins, those trophies. As a good unit, we have the skill set to do it. That's the focus going ahead. Probably everyone in their eyes will think it is too soon, but it is a decision we had to make at some point," he added.

COLLECTIVE DECISION Jayawardene also highlighted that the decision to replace Rohit

with Hardik as captain for IPL 2024 was a collective one and everybody in the side has bought into their vision.

The former Sri Lanka captain also gave the example of Sachin Tendulkar and how the legendary batter was willing to play under other captains in the early years of Mumbai Indians.

"Having Ro (Rohit Sharma) in the team, on and off the field to guide the next generation is very important for us. He has been absolutely brilliant. I have worked very closely with Ro. He

is a fabulous individual and I am sure he will be part of the legacy who will guide that through.

"Mumbai have had that in the past too with Sachin (Tendulkar), who played with the youngsters. He gave the leadership to someone else and made sure Mumbai Indians was going in the right direction. It's the same thing.

"We had this conversation and everyone is buying into that, so, it's for us to look forward to the next season," Jayawardene said.

Mumbai Indians bought 8 players at the IPL 2024 auction on Tuesday, perfectly plugging the holes in their squad. South Africa all-rounder Gerland Coetzee was their costliest pick at Rs 5 crore while MI also bought two exciting Sri Lankan fast-bowling talents in Dilshan Madushanka and Nuwan Thushara.

## Tough to replace Pandya, but Gill is right person for GT captaincy: Nehra



NEW DELHI, Dec 20 (Agencie): Gujarat Titans head coach Ashish Nehra admitted that it will be tough to replace a multi-faceted player like Hardik Pandya but banked on Shubman Gill to shoulder the responsibility of leading the side in next year's IPL.

Pandya recently returned to Mumbai Indians and has been appointed as the skipper of the five-time champions. "To replace a player like Hardik Pandya is

difficult considering his talent and experience. We have seen how he (Gill) has shaped up in the past three-four years. He is 24-25 years of age but he has a good head on his shoulders," Nehra said in a virtual post-auction press meet on Tuesday night.

The former India pacer said the franchise will back Gill irrespective of the results in the next edition of the IPL.

"We believe in him. That is why we made him captain. I am not someone who will

always go by results. Yes, results are important but when you come to captaincy you have to look at other things also. We are confident that Gill is the right person (for captaincy)," Nehra added.

The Titans battled intensely in the auction room in Dubai to buy Mitchell Starc before Kolkata Knight Riders purchased the Australian pacer for a record Rs 24.75 crore.

Nehra wasn't surprised at the big paycheck which Starc attracted.

"There is nothing like being over priced in the IPL. Everybody knows what Starc can do. He is a proven player. We needed a fast bowler and every team had different strategies. We have to be satisfied with what we have. For a bowler like Starc, I don't think that is a surprise," he said.

## Govt Polytechnic Jammu organises road race



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 20: The Sports wing of Government Polytechnic Jammu conducted a "Road Race" for boys and girls of various engineering and non-engineering branches of the institute at MA Stadium Jammu, in which 40 students participated exhibiting their strength and endurance in 5Km run for Boys and 2 km run for girls. In the first phase of the event, all the Departments conducted trials to select the

athletes 3 Boys, 2 Girls from each branch. Principal Er. Arun Bangotra applauded all the participants during the Prize distribution function for taking part in the competition.

He said that Sports and games is a medium to channelize the energy of the youth and transform it to play a positive role to develop India into a Vibrant and energetic nation.

He congratulated the students who made it to podium and also

encouraged others to work hard next time to win the event.

He also apprised the students, faculty and staff about the Viksit Bharat @2047, which is the vision of Government of India to make India a developed nation by 2047, the 100th years of its Independence

In the Boys 5km run, Japneet Pal Singh of 5th Semester of Information Technology Department stood First place, Second position won by Rakesh Kumar

of 1st Semester of Travel and Tourism Department and third position won by Akashdeep of 5th semester of Civil engineering department.

In the Girls 2km category the race was won by Preeti Kumari of 5th semester of Civil engineering department, Second place won by Nancy of 3rd semester of Architecture department and third place won by Komal Bharti of 1st Semester of Travel and Tourism Department.

The Sports Secretary, Amit Sharma thanked the Chief Guest Er Arun Bangotra and Guest of Honour Inderjeet Singh for encouraging the students. Others present on the occasion were Sukhdeep Singh HoD Civil Engineering Manjeet Singh HoD Electrical Engineering, Dheeraj Kumar Lecturer Travel and Tourism, Mohd Arshad Ranjha Lecturer, Manu Rajput Demonstrator, Sajjad Hussain demonstrator, Rakesh Kumar, Chamel Singh, Toshi Devi and Talib Husain Pharmacist.

## Sports Dept JU organizes Marathon under Viksit Bharat@2047



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 20: The Directorate of Sports and Physical Education, University of Jammu on Wednesday organized Marathon under the event Viksit Bharat@2047 in which around 160 students participated.

The Viksit Bharat@2047 which was launched by Hon'ble Prime Min-

ister Narinder Modi through virtual mode the initiative 'Viksit Bharat@2047; Voice of Youth' that seeks to involve the Universities and students in attaining the goal of a developed India by 2047.

Dr. Daud Iqbal Baba, Director, Directorate of Sports and Physical Education, University of Jammu congratulated the students and also appreciated the efforts

of the teaching staff and their entire team to make the aforesaid event successful.

Men Section: Rajnesh Singh (B.P.Ed-3rd), first, Parvez Ahmed (B.P.Ed-3rd), second and Rohit Kumar (B.P.Ed-3rd), third.

Women Section: Sapna Devi M.P.Ed-3rd & Preeti (B.P.Ed-3rd), joint first, Neha (B.P.Ed-3rd), second and Priya (B.P.Ed-3rd), third.

## Event and Management Club of PG Department of Commerce organises Poster Making Competition

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 20: In continuation to the essay writing competition to commemorate the 'Viksit Bharat@2047' celebration where the participants penned down their creative thoughts to make India a develop nation by 2047, the 100th year of its Independence, Event and Management Club of PG Department of Commerce organized poster making competition among the scholars

temporary issues and envisioning the future.

She further added that through such events, the department encourages holistic development and civic engagement. Participants depicted their vision and aspirations for a thriving and developed nations through the medium of art accompanied by relevant captions and slogans.

Participants showcased their vision on various aspects of development like eco-



and students of M.Com. The competition is organised to sensitize participants towards transformation, development and sustainable growth of India as it approaches its centenary year of Independence.

Dr Jeevan Jyoti, HoD Commerce greeted and congratulated the participants for their whole hearted participation and stated that poster making competition on the theme Viksit Bharat@ 2047 is a platform where they can express their creativity while addressing con-

omic growth, social progress, environmental sustainability and good governance. Students participated with immense zeal and enthusiasm. All faculty members of the Department judged the competition.

Dr Harleen Kaur, Coordinator of Event & Management Club and Dr. Deepthi Abrol, Deputy Coordinator of Event & Management Club coordinated the whole event. Dr. Jeevan Jyoti, HoD applauded the efforts of the students and distributed the certificates.

## Edu-trip to Krimchi-Panchari Circuit organized by Department of Environmental Sciences, JU



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 20: A two-day 'Edu-trip to 'Krimchi-Panchari Circuit' was organised by the Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Jammu (JU).

The visit was part of the Viksit Bharat@2047 Campaign, and the purpose of the trip was to expose the students to the rich natural and cultural heritage of the first tourist village in the Jammu division and foster an understanding of village life and sustainable practices.

Prof. Piyush Malaviya, Head of the Department, while flagging off the trip, said that activity-based learning is important to bridge the gap between education and hands-on experience, so moving beyond classroom learning is important.

"Field visits and outreach activities in such remote but sustainably developed areas facilitate connections between students and the inhabitants and help students understand the issues of the local rural community and their best practices, which is a first and foremost step to move this important section of society towards the path of

Viksit Bharat by 2047," he added.

During the trip, the students trekked through the lush green Deodar forests at Panchari, which house different varieties of birds, butterflies, and other animals.

The students also learned about the wide variety of flora and fauna in the area. After Panchari, the students visited the famous Sankari temple, which is one of the oldest historical temples in the area. The temple is situated on a hillock in the village of Meer and is surrounded by meadows, lofty mountains, and lush green forest.

The students were also shown traditional springs and varied vegetation types in the area. The trip ended with a visit to the ancient structures of archaeological importance at the Krimchi Archaeological Site in Udhampur.

Krimchi Temple is a complex of seven ancient temples located on the bank of the stream Birunala in the village of Krimachi, locally known as the Pandava Temples. Students admired the stone carvings and the archaeological beauty.

Dr. Deepika Slathia, the teacher in charge of the trip, emphasised the

importance of showcasing rural life to the students and talked about the importance of the traditional water bodies in the area and the need for their conservation. "Such field trips provide the students with enriching hands-on experiential learning as they observe and experience the beauty and activities of rural life, which makes them feel connected," she said while interacting with the students about their experiences of the trip. Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Dr. Meenakshi Khajuria, and around fifty PG students from the department participated in the edu-trip.

At the end of the field trip, there was a thorough analysis and discussion of the findings of the students to draw a conclusion on what they had experienced on the field.

The educational trip helped students recognize the importance of traditional sustainable practices adopted by the villagers, like the use of Gharats (traditional water flour mills), conserving natural water bodies like springs, and protecting their biodiversity, thus providing an enriching and knowledgeable experience for the students.

## History Deptt JU hosts lecture on Viksit Bharat @2047

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 20: Department of History at the University of Jammu hosted a captivating lecture on Viksit Bharat @2047.

The speaker of the event was Dr. Amitash Ojha, a renowned IITian and professor of cognitive science, who imparted his wisdom on the behavioural updates that citizens can adopt to contribute to the development of Viksit Bharat.

The lecture was inaugurated by Prof. Suman Jamwal, the Head of the Department, who eloquently presented the conceptual framework of the Viksit Bharat and delineated the department's engagement in propagating the idea at various levels and the programme that the department has envisaged for the same.

She also mentioned the department's initiatives, such as organising a poster-making contest, displaying a short documentary by students, conducting

lectures, and facilitating popular discussions among students.

Dr. Ojha commenced his enlightening lecture by narrating a remarkable incident in Italy, which revealed a societal practice where tanned skin denoted affluence, while pale skin indicated a lower economic status. Drawing parallels to India, he stimulated the students to reflect on their own cultural norms.

Addressing the curious students, Dr. Ojha posed the intriguing question of how they can partake in the vision of a developed India. He recalled a powerful response from a 5th-grade student in Mumbai, who vowed not to use ballpoint pens to curtail plastic waste and proposed serving guests half a glass of water to preserve this invaluable resource.

Deliberating on the significance of ownership, Dr. Ojha accentuated the need for active participation and a change in language. He exhorted for a transition

from cultural passivity to a proactive stance, cultivating empathy over sympathy as a vital ingredient for national development.

Touching upon individualism, Dr. Ojha underscored the necessity of differentiating between competence and competition. He advocated for a concentration on skill development along with education, making education a preference rather than a compulsion.

The lecture was graced by the presence of faculty members, research scholars, and students.

The formal vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. Jasleen Kaur.

The students expressed their appreciation for this approach and opined that the university should organise more lectures like this in the future. The lecture left an indelible impression on the audience, igniting reflection on actionable steps towards building a more empowered and empathetic nation.

## MIER Jammu lifts I/c Badminton (women) title



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 20: MIER Jammu outplayed PG. Dept JU by 2-0 and lifted the Inter-Collegiate Badminton (Women) Trophy in the ongoing Inter Collegiate Badminton (Women) Tournament 2023-24 organized by the Directorate of Sports & Physical Education, University of Jammu at

University Gymnasium Hall.

For third place, MIET Jammu defeated GDC Vijaypur by 2-1.

Dr. Daud Iqbal Baba Director, Directorate of Sports & Physical Education University Jammu awarded Trophies & Medals to the winner & runner up teams in the presence of Raj Kumar Bakshi, Vikas Karloia,

Gagan Kumar, Sukomal Ganguly, Imran Ahmed and Deepak Singh.

The Tournament 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 Ravish Vaid and Jeevan Lal.

## NCC Cadet, students of GCD Parade participate in debate competition

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 20: 69 NCC Cadets of 2 J&K Girls BN from GCW Parade Ground Jammu in collaboration with Sports department of college participated in debate competition under the theme "Viksit Bharat@2047".

The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra is a government initiative being undertaken across the country, to raise awareness and track the implementation of flagship central schemes,



such as Ayushman Bharat, Ujjwala Yojana,

PM Surkasha Bima, PM SVANidhi, etc.

Ananaya verma stood 1st, Tejasvi Rajput stood

2nd and Kritika scored 3rd position in debate competition.

The faculty member Prof. Vipul Saraf, Dr. Avinash, Prof. Shrautika Rajput, Dr. Mamta Sharma and Prof. Anuradha Kalsi (sports committee members) made the event possible.

The event was supervised by Principal GCW Parade Dr. S.P. Saraswat and organised by ANO Lt Suman Lata (Physical Director).

Principal appreciated the students for their outstanding performance.