

# TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2023

Daily Evening Newspaper



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**Kirti Sualy talks about networking**



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**Rahul Gandhi to begin 'Bharat Nyay Yatra' from Manipur to Mumbai on January 14**

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**PTI's Shah Mehmood Qureshi arrested after being released from Adiala jail**



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## BRIEFLY

### Residential house gutted in Shalakadal fire mishap

SRINAGAR, Dec 27 (Agencies): A 4-storey residential house got damaged in a fire in Shalakadal locality of downtown in central Kashmir's district Srinagar, officials said on Wednesday.

An official said that fire broke out in the residential today morning and soon engulfed the entire house.

He said that the fire completely damaged the house, however, cause of fire was yet to be known.

### Dense fog blankets Kashmir, Pahalgam coldest at minus 4.6 degree Celsius

SRINAGAR, Dec 27 (Agencies): Dense fog continued to engulf most parts of the Kashmir Valley on Wednesday while the mercury settled below freezing point at all the stations across the Valley.

Amid forecast of dry weather conditions till December 31st, Director Meteorological department, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that the foggy mornings would continue to be witnessed during the next few days.

However, the night temperature continues to settle below freezing point across the Valley today while Pahalgam was the coldest place at minus 4.6 degree Celsius.

According to the data prepared by the MeT department here, Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu & Kashmir shivered at minus 2.6 degree Celsius while the night temperature of minus 3.2 degree Celsius was also recorded in South Kashmir's Qazigund station.

Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, has recorded a low of minus 2.8 degree Celsius.

Kupwara in north Kashmir has recorded a low of minus 4.2 degree Celsius while Kokernag recorded a minimum temperature of minus 2.2 degree Celsius.

### India sees single-day rise Of 529 Covid-19 Cases

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (Agencies): India recorded 529 fresh COVID-19 cases in a single day, while the country's active infection count stood at 4,093, the health ministry said on December 27.

Three new fatalities, two from Karnataka and

## Can't tolerate anyone looking down on our soldiers, says Rajnath Singh in Rajouri

RAJOURI (J&K), Dec 27 (Agencies): Nearly a week after the terror attack on army vehicles at Poonch, in which four Jawans were killed, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh arrived at Rajouri on Wednesday to review security and said that every soldier is very important to us and every soldier is like a member of the family and we cannot tolerate anyone looking down on our soldiers and countrymen.

"I wish for the speedy recovery of our soldiers who have been injured. I want to assure you that, considering the seriousness of all the soldiers

who have been injured, every effort is being made to take all necessary steps and no stone is being left unturned to take all necessary steps for their well-being. Every soldier is very important to us. I believe that each of our soldiers is like a member of the family; this feeling resides within all of us. This feeling resides within every countryman; we cannot tolerate anyone looking down on our soldiers and countrymen," said Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at Rajouri.

"Both security and intelligence agencies play an important role



and this effort is being made continuously by them as well. This role will be more important in the future. Whatever cooperation is required

from the government and whatever cooperation will be required from the government in the future, our treasury is fully open," added the

Defence Minister. Speaking on the Rajouri encounter earlier this week, Rajnath Singh said, "I believe that such incidents should not be

taken for granted. We need to be more alert. I know you all remain alert."

Rajnath Singh also encouraged security personnel and said that their duties and efforts cannot be compared with compensation.

"You all have a sense of sacrifice for the nation. Because of the bravery and valour that you show, we all also feel a sense of pride. Whatever your sacrifice is in the service of the motherland, your duties and efforts cannot be compared with anything under any circumstances. Even if some compensation is given, it will

not compensate for the sacrifice of soldiers," said Rajnath Singh.

"I want to assure you that, as far as the government is concerned, the government stands by you and we give equal priority to your welfare and your convenience. We try to take steps based on whatever information is given to us," said the Minister.

Rajnath Singh said that the Indian Army has become quite well equipped as compared to earlier.

Speaking about the Indian Army, Rajnath Singh said, "The Indian Army has now become much more powerful

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## Huge quantity of seized drugs, psychotropic substances destroyed in Anantnag

SRINAGAR, Dec 27 (Agencies): Authorities in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district destroyed a huge quantity of seized drugs and psychotropic substances, officials said on Wednesday.

They said that in compliance with the order of the Session Court, the Anantnag committee comprising Police officers from District Anantnag and Crime Branch (ANTF Kashmir) revenue officers and a Judi-



cial officer destroyed a huge quantity of seized drugs and psychotropic substances under sec-

tion 52A of NDPS Act on December 26, 2023. "The seized contraband substances

of 65 cases of Police Stations of District Anantnag, ANTF Kashmir, Qazigund and Qaimoh Kulgam were destroyed", the officials said.

The seized substances, as per the officials, included 1,605 kgs of Charas, 925.660 kgs of Poppy Straw, 1659 bottles of Codeine, 40 grams of Heroin, 770 grams of Ghanja, Fukki 29.610 kgs, Capsules + Tablets 248, Bhung

Turn to page 9

## MHA declares Muslim League Jammu Kashmir (Masarat Alam Faction) an unlawful association

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (Agencies): The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has declared 'Muslim League Jammu Kashmir (Masarat Alam faction)' / MLJK-MA as an 'Unlawful Association' under the UAPA.

In a post on X, Home Minister Amit Shah stated, "This organisation and its members are involved in anti-national and secessionist activities in J&K supporting terrorist activities and inciting people to establish Islamic rule in J&K. The PM @narendramodi government's message is loud and clear that anyone acting against the unity, sovereignty, and integrity of our nation will not be spared and face the full wrath of the law."

Alam was among the main organisers of

Turn to page 9

## No expectations from Defence Minister's J&K visit: Farooq Abdullah

SRINAGAR, Dec 27 (Agencies): National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Wednesday said he had no expectations from Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's Jammu and Kashmir visit but hoped that incidents like the civilian deaths in Poonch will not be repeated.

"I have no expectations from his visit. Can he bring back the dead? Does he have that power? But he can



do this much that such injustice is not repeated," Abdullah told reporters in Kulgam, 80 kilometres from Srinagar. Abdullah said Singh

was visiting "because our people were killed" and that the minister will "apply balm on the wounds of the affected families." Three civilians

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## Govt directs digital platforms not to carry Ads of fraudulent loan apps



NEW DELHI, Dec 27: The government has directed social media and online platforms to

ensure that they do not host advertisements of fraudulent loan apps, Union Minister Rajeev

Chandrasekhar said on Wednesday.

Mr. Chandrasekhar said the IT ministry has made it clear to the platforms that they cannot carry advertisements of fraudulent loan apps as those are misleading and exploit people using the internet.

"One of the areas we are now cracking down on is advertising of

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## IED detected, destroyed in Srinagar outskirts

SRINAGAR, Dec 27 (Agencies): The security forces on Wednesday detected and destroyed an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) fitted in a gas cylinder at Lawapora, Srinagar, officials said.

An official said, that a joint team of security personnel comprising 2 Rashtriya Rifles (RR), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Jammu and Kashmir Police police found a gas cylinder with the concealed IED at Lawapora area of Srinagar outskirts.

He added that the prompt action of security forces averted a potential disaster by destroying the IED.

Jai sai ji 🙏 Jai baba lal ji

Nails classes start

Prop.: Shivani Mahajan Mob.: 6005746425

Nail Art BY SHIVANI MAHAJAN

- Rainbow waves nailart
- Cat eye nailart
- Animal print nailart
- Matte nailart
- Bubble nailart
- Marble Nailart

Come on girls ❤️

Any one join me

Nail kit free

me time

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Contact Person Mr. Sanjeev Kumar 9419143503

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform you that our beloved mother **Smt. Susheela Pandit (Saba Ji)** wife of Sh. Soom Nath Pandit originally resident of Rahmoo Pulwama Kashmir at present Kathyala, New Jail Road Udampur breathed her last on Wednesday, 20/12/2023.



**TENTH DAY KRIYA** will be performed **Smt. Susheela Pandit at DEVIKA GHAT Shiv Nagar (Saba Ji)** Udampur on Friday, 29/12/2023 at 9 am.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
Sh. Soom Nath Pandit (Husband)  
Smt. Nirmala & Sh. Srinath Suman (Daughter and Son in Law)  
Smt. Pushpa & Sh. M K Pandita (Daughter and Son in Law)  
Sh. Siddharth & Smt. Rohini Pandit (Son & Daughter in Law)  
**MOB: 9419606551/ 9419166580/9419703731**

10TH DAY KRIYA

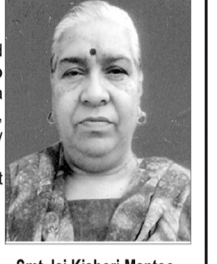
With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt. Man Mohani Raina W/o Late Hony. Lt. Som Nath Raina R/o 187, Shastri Nagar, Jammu on 22-12-2023.**  
**10th Day Kriya** will be performed at Muthi Ghat, near Directorate of School Education, Jammu on 31-12-2023 at 9:15 am.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN:**  
Chand Krishen Sapru - Brother  
Younge Jee Dassi (Son-in-law)  
Annapurna & Surinder Raina (Daughter-in-law & Son)  
Muni & Sushil Raina (Daughter-in-law & Son)  
Sunita & Kanwal Krishan Razdan (Daughter-in-law & Son)  
Retu & Ravi Raina (Daughter-in-law & Son)  
Renu & Kuldeep Bhat (Daughter and Son-in-law)  
Anita & Vikas Sadhu (Daughter and Son-in-law)  
Kouls, Pajnoos, Dhars, Bhats, Sadhus, Hakims  
**Grand & Great Grand children**  
**Tel No: 0191-2456547, Mobile: 9810743072**



Smt. Man Mohani Raina

10TH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt. Jai Kishori Mantoo (Teja) W/o Sh. Omkar Nath Mantoo R/o Sangrampora Sopore Kashmir** presently at Trikuta Nagar Enclave, Lower Muthi, Akalpora, Jammu, who left for heavenly abode on 20th Dec. 2023.  
**10th Day Kriya** will be performed at Muthi Ghat Jammu on 29th Dec. 2023.  
**Assembly** will be held at Muthi Ghat at 10 A.M.  
**Grief Stricken:**  
Omkar Nath Mantoo - Husband  
Ramesh Mantoo and Bharti Mantoo (Son & D-in-law)  
Chand Ji Mantoo and Kamlesh Mantoo (40-)  
Sanjay Mantoo and Vijay Mantoo (40-)  
Sanjay Jalali and Meera Mantoo (Jalali) (Son-in-law and Daughter)  
**SAMAST PARIVAR**  
**MANTOO'S, MATTOO'S AND JALALI'S**  
**Mob : 9622129039, 9419702111, 8716035010, 9419105497**



Smt. Jai Kishori Mantoo (Teja)

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform that our beloved father **Karamyogi Sh Prithvi Nath Pandita** originally resident of Magam, Handwara Kashmir presently at H.No. 113, Sector 6, Behind Sai Baba Mandir Lower Roop Nagar Muthi left for heavenly abode on 21.12.2023.  
**TENTH DAY KRIYA** shall be performed at Muthi Ghat near Directorate School Education, Muthi on Saturday 30.12.2023 at 9:30 am.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
**Daughter-in-laws & Son**  
Mrs. Renu Kaul & Prof. Sundeep Pandita  
Mrs. Skula Bhat & Sh. Sanjay Pandita  
**Daughters & Son-in-laws**  
Mrs. Rajni Pandita & Sh. Ashok Pandita  
Mrs. Veena Kar & Sh. Vijay Kar  
Mrs. Pitta Jigri W/o Lt. Sh. Makhan Lal Kar (Sister)  
Mrs. Dhanwati W/o Lt. Omkar Nath Bhat (Bhabhi)  
Mrs. Reeta Bhat W/o Lt. Swaroop Nath Bhat (Bhabhi)  
**Grand children:** Ajay, Ashwani, Sudanshu, Shreya, Divij, Tanish, Vedica  
**Great Grand children:** Samanyu, Yayati, Kavyansh  
**Ph.: 9419137162, 9419299551, 9469231701, 9419652715, 9419166960, 9419159018**



Sh. Prithvi Nath Pandita

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW, WE INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF **SH TEJ KRISHAN PANDITA S/O LATE SH ROUGH NATH PANDITA R/O NAHAMA, KUPWARA/ P BUTTA NAGAR, MIGRANT QUARTERS, BLOCK - G. FLAT NO-15, ON 21-12-2023.**  
**10TH DAY WILL BE PERFORMED ON 30-12-2023 (SATURDAY) AT MUTHI GHAT AT 10.00AM.**  
**GRIEF STRICKEN:-**  
**NANCY PANDITA (WIFE)**  
**(SON & DAUGHTER-IN-LAW)**  
VIPAN PANDITA & KOMAL PANDITA - 700679696  
SAHL PANDITA (SON) - 7006244099  
**BROTHER & BHABHI**  
SMT. RADHA DEVI W/O LATE SH. RADHA KRISHNA PANDITA  
SH. J. L. PANDITA & SMT. CHUNU PANDITA  
SH. MANOCHAR LAL PANDITA & SMT. SANTOSH PANDITA  
**SISTER & BROTHER-IN-LAW**  
SMT. RATNI RAJAWATI W/O LATE SH. JAGAR NATH RAJAWATI  
SMT. PUSHPA BHATT W/O LATE SH. M. L. BHATT  
SMT. DURGA KULI W/O VILAY KULI  
KUCHROO'S (BARAMULLA) & SMASAT PANDITA PARIVAR OF NAHAMA



SH TEJ KRISHAN PANDITA (BABLU JI)

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved **Smt. Raj Kumari W/o Sh. Goverdhan Singh R/o H.No. 67/1, New Plot, Near State Motor Garage Jammu, who left for heavenly abode on Sunday on 17 Dec. 2023.**  
**TENTH DAY** will be performed on 26-12-2023 Tuesday at 11:30 AM at our residence.  
**KRIYA** will be performed on 29. Dec. 2023 (Friday) at our residence.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
Sh. Goverdhan Singh (Husband)  
Sh. Nater Singh & Smt. Gan Kumari - Jeth & Jethani  
Son & Daughter-in-law  
Hukam Singh & Jyoti  
Ashok Singh & Ritu Devi  
Darshan Singh & Asha  
**Grand Children - Naman, Ayush, Pragati, Kunal, Amrita**  
**94193 27832, 9419148427, 959668248**



Smt. Raj Kumari

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sub. Sher Singh Katoch S/o Late Kanshi Ram Katoch R/o village Hambal, Tehsil and District Doda.**  
**The TENTH DAY KRIYA** will be performed on 28-12-2023, Thursday at 10:30 AM and **KRIYA** will be performed on 30-12-2023, Saturday at our residence, village Hambal, Tehsil and District Doda (J&K).  
**GRIEF STRICKEN:-**  
Mrs. Vidya Devi and Dr. M.S. Katoch (Bhabhi & Brother)  
**Daughters-in-law and Sons:-**  
Mrs. Chhallo Devi and Mr. B.B. Katoch  
Mrs. Kanta Katoch and Adv. P.B. Katoch  
Mrs. Vijaya Katoch W/o Late Adv. I.B. Katoch  
Mrs. Shobha Katoch and Mr. Satya Bhushan Katoch  
**Daughters and Sons-in-law:-**  
Mrs. Usha Thakur W/o Late Y.R. Thakur  
Mrs. Shashi Kala and Mr. Satish Chander Manhas  
Mrs. Sandhya Thakur W/o Late Adv. I.L. Thakur  
Mrs. Sudha Thakur and Mr. G.L. Thakur (Master)  
**GRAND CHILDREN AND GREAT GRANDCHILDREN.**



SUB. SHER SINGH KATOCH

In Loving Memory Of Our revered mother

**Smt. Indrawati Handoo (Bhabhi) W/o Lt. Shri Kashi Nath Handoo (24-07-1924-18-12-2023).**  
**10th Day Kriya** Wednesday, 27th December, 2023 | 09.00 am at Chota Haridwar Upper Ganga Muradnagar UP.  
**Prayer Meeting/Shanti Paath** Friday, 29th December, 2023 | 04.00 - 5.30 pm at Sharika Bhawan, Institutional area (Adjacent Police Station), Sector-17, Faridabad.  
**Fondly Remembered By:**  
**Samrat Handoo/ Bhat/ Bali/ Raina/ Tickoo/ Dhar/ Thussu/ Zutshi Parivar**  
**Dr. S K Handoo**  
**H.No.1892, Sector-9, Faridabad**  
**9958998069, 9910687799, 9560809812**



Smt. Indrawati Handoo (Bhabhi)

TENTH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

Its now a week you have left us in deep mourn. We are missing your presence among us. May God bestows sadgati to your Noble Soul.  
**Tenth Day** shall be held on 28th Dec (Thursday) 11:00-12:00 Noon at Pacci Mandi Hall, Chauhatta. **Kriya** shall be held on 31st Dec at our residence 11:00am onwards. **Uthala** shall be held on 1st Jan (Monday) 2024, 12:00-1:00 Noon at Pacci Mandi Hall, Samba  
**GRIEF STRICKEN:**  
Smt. Neelam Sethi - Wife  
**Daughters and Son-in-Law**  
Smt. Himza Lakhani & Sh. Nitesh Lakhani  
Smt. Rimza Sambyal & Sh. Amit Sambyal  
Miss Aakriti Sethi  
**Brothers & Sister-in-law**  
Sh. Shambu Nath Sethi & Smt. Sujata Sethi  
Sh. Shanker Sethi & Smt. Sunita Sethi  
Sh. Parshotam Sethi & Smt. Leena Sethi  
Miss Aakriti Sethi - **Daughter**  
Rajat, Prateek, Sharun - **Sons**  
**Grand Children:** Asvi, Yashvi, Aarish, Maira



SH. SHIV DATI SETHI

10TH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief & sorrow, we inform sad & untimely demise of our beloved **Sh. Bhupesh Sharma S/o Sh. Om Parkash Sharma R/o House No. 522 F, Lane No.29 (Mandir Gall), Rajpura Mangotriar, Jammu.**  
**The 10TH DAY** will be performed at Hari Mandir, Rehari Colony, Jammu on 27-12-2023 (Wednesday) at 11.00 AM.  
**Kriya** will be performed on 28.12.2023 (Thursday) at our Residence from 10.00 AM onwards.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
Smt. Rattanabha Sharma & Sh. Om Parkash Sharma - Mother & Father  
**All members of Sadotra & Sharma Parivar**  
**MOBILE NO: 9419264681**



Sh. Bhupesh Sharma

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW, WE REGRET TO INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED FATHER **SH. BABU RAM BHAGAT (BABU SHAH JI) R/O SIMBAL MORH, R.S. PURA, WHO LEFT FOR HIS HEAVENLY ABODE ON 19TH DEC. 2023. MAY GOD GRANT PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL.**  
**10TH DAY SHALL BE PERFORMED ON 28TH DEC. 2023 (THURSDAY) AT SHARIKA PALACE MARALA MORH MIRAN SAHIB AS PER PROGRAMME.**  
**SATSANG 12 TO 1 PM FOLLOWED BY GURU KA LANGAR**  
**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
**SONS AND DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW**  
SH. RAJEEV KUMAR BHAGAT AND SMT. RAJ KUMARI  
SH. VED PAUL BHAGAT AND SMT. SUJESH KUMAR BHAGAT  
SH. JANAK RAJ BHAGAT AND SMT. ANJU BHAGAT  
SH. GANDEEP KUMAR BHAGAT AND SMT. SUMAN BHAGAT  
**DAUGHTERS AND SONS-IN-LAW**  
SMT. ASHA BHAGAT AND SH. HANS RAJ BHAGAT  
SMT. SHUB LATA W/O LATE SH. ASHOK KUMAR BHAGAT  
SMT. CHAMBA BHAGAT  
SMT. VEENU BHAGAT AND SH. SANJAY KUMAR BHAGAT  
**GRAND DAUGHTERS AND GRAND SONS-IN-LAW**  
PICHANA AND MUKESH  
HMANI AND VIKAS  
SHITAL AND RAKESH  
HIMANSHI AND FARISH  
**GRAND SONS AND GRAND DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW**  
PANKAJ AND ANKUL  
HITANSHU AND ARCHNA  
**GRAND CHILDREN**  
SHWETA, ANKASH,  
DR. SHIVANGI, HEENAM, GOURAV,  
SOHINI, ARYAN  
ANVI, ANANYA, MIKHA AND ASVI  
**9419199682, 9419666151**



SH. BABU RAM BHAGAT (BABU SHAH JI)

TENTH DAY / KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Devinder Kumar Khajuria S/o Late Sh. Mehanga Ram Khajuria R/o H. No. 405, Sector No. 2, Vinayak Nagar, Upper Muthi, Jammu (near Sham Palace) who left for heavenly abode on 19th Dec. 2023.**  
**10th Day** will be performed on 28th Dec 2023 (Thursday) at 11.00 am at our residence.  
**Kriya** will be performed on 29th Dec 2023 (Friday) time 12.00 Noon at our residence.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
Smt. Sangeeta Khajuria (Wife)  
Mrs. Sandeepa and Sh. Aditya Sharma - DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW  
Mrs. Suyasha and Sh. Vishal Sharma - DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW  
**BHABHI AND BROTHER**  
Smt. Suman and Sh. Surinder Khajuria  
Sh. Ravinder Khajuria  
Smt. Vanita and Sh. Mohinder Khajuria  
**SISTER AND BROTHER IN LAW**  
Smt. Suraj Kala and Sh. Prem Sharma  
Smt. Anita Sharma  
**GRAND DAUGHTER:** Baby Adiva  
**M. No. 8825073058, 9906088661, 7006002040**



Sh. Devinder Kumar Khajuria

TENTH DAY/KRIYA/RASAM PAGRI

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform you about the sad demise of our beloved father **Sh. Ranjit Singh Andotra S/o Late Col. Deraik Ram Andotra R/o 66A, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu who left for heavenly abode on 19th Dec. 2023.**  
**10TH DAY** will be performed on Thursday 28 Dec 2023 at Laxmi Narayan Temple, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu at 11:00 am  
**KRIYA** will be performed on Sunday 31st Dec 2023 at our residence H No 66B-A, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu 12:00 noon.  
**RASAM PAGRI** on Monday 1st Jan 2024 at our residence H No 66B-A, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu 2:00 pm  
**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
Smt. Rama Andotra (Wife)  
**Daughter-in-law & Son**  
Ranjnee & Hemant Andotra  
**Daughter & Son-in-law**  
Shabun & Pawan Parthar (Inspector)  
**Bhabhi & Brother**  
Smt. Kuku & Sh. Karan Singh Andotra (Retd. Chief Engineer)  
Smt. Radha & Sh. Balbir Singh Andotra (Retd. AEE)  
**Sister & Brother-in-law**  
Late Smt. Nimmi & Late Sh. Naseeb Singh Pathania  
Smt. Shobha & Sh. Shalinder Singh Panwar  
**Grand Children- Vivan, Vihvan, Rudra & Geetanjali.**  
**Mob: 778982548, 9786482512, 789947057**



Sh. Ranjit Singh Andotra

ANTIM ARDAAS

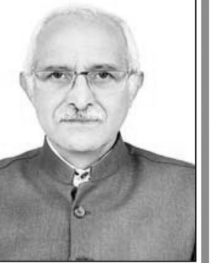
We seek your presence for the Antim Ardaas / 10th Day of our beloved Father **S. BALWANT SINGH NAGRA S/o S. Prem Singh of Jerda** at present Gangyal on Thursday, 28.12.2023 at Gurudwara Sahib, Ashok Nagar, Satwari.  
**Guru Ka Kirtan from 10:00 AM Ardaas & Bhog on 12:30 PM**  
**Guru ka Langar** also Served as per Guru Maryada  
**GRIEVED:**  
Kuldeep Singh & Lakhbir Singh (Sons) & Family  
**# 9419205065, 9419111258**



S. BALWANT SINGH NAGRA (1952-2023)

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform that our beloved **Shri Ravinder Nath Bhat (Raviji) s/o Late Shri Dwarika Nath Bhat** originally resident of Logripora, Aishmuqam, Kashmir, presently at H. No. Z-127, Lane No 11, Kashmiri Colony, Najafgarh, New Delhi, left for heavenly abode on 21-12-2023.  
**TENTH DAY KRIYA** shall be performed at Gauri Shankar Mandir Palam Vihar Gurugram on 30-12-2023 at 09:00 am. **THE ASSEMBLY OF MOURNERS** will be held at his residence on 30-12-2023 at 11:00 AM.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN:**  
Mrs. Asha Bhat (Wife)  
Veena & Behari Lal Bhat (Bhabhi and Brother)  
Subhash Chander Bhat (Brother)  
Hem Lata & Pran Nath Bhat (Bhabhi and Brother)  
Sonia & Rajinder Nath Bhat (Bhabhi and Brother)  
Swati & Vimal Bhat (Daughter-in-law and Son)  
Neelam & Gaurav Dixit (Daughter and Son-in-law)



Shri Ravinder Nath Bhat (Ravi ji)

OBITUARY

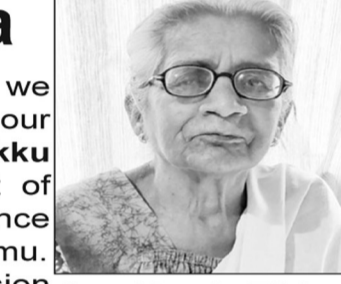
We all deeply mourn the loss of our beloved father **Mr. Rattan Lal Kaul S/o Late Mr. Sat Lal Kaul**, originally resident of Sekidaffar Safa Kadal, Srinagar, who left for heavenly abode on 20th December 2023.  
**CREMATION** was performed on 21st December in Hyderabad.  
**TENTH DAY KRIYA** will be performed on 29-12-2023 (Friday) at Hyderabad.  
**IN DEEP GRIEF AND AGONY:**  
Rakesh Kaul & Nirija Kaul (Son and Daughter-in-law)  
Kiran Tiku & King Tiku (Daughter and Son-in-law)  
Sanjay Kaul & Nancy Kaul (Son and Daughter-in-law)  
**Grandchildren:** Sourabh, Kavya & Priyanka  
**MOBILE NUMBER: 9618874251, 9985801842, 9963679343**



Mr. Rattan Lal Kaul

Tenth Day Kriya

With profound grief & sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt. Kamla Tikku W/o Lt. Sh. O. N. Tikku** on 21st of December 2023 at her residence 28A, Ext. IInd Gandhi Nagar Jammu.  
**Tenth Day Kriya** a solemn occasion to honour her memory is scheduled to take place on 29th of December 2023 at 9.00 AM at Muthi Ghat.  
**Grief Stricken**  
Sh. Ravinder Tikku & Rainu - Son & Daughter-in-law  
Sh. Ashwani Tikku & Sushma - Son & Daughter-in-law  
Sh. Rakesh Tikku & Veena - Son & Daughter-in-law  
Smt. Rajni & Sh. Jatinder Koul - Daughter & Son-in-law  
Smt. Suman & Lt. Sh. Surinder Gigoo - Daughter & Son-in-law  
Smt. Anjana & Sh. Kumar Ji Koul - Daughter & Son-in-law



Smt. Kamla Tikku

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

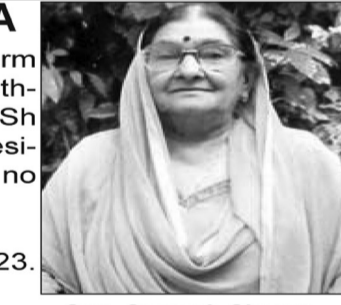
WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW WE REGRET TO INFORM THE UNTIMELY DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED **VARUN SHARMA S/O LATE SH. C. D SHARMA R/O H.NO.1283 SECTOR 6 LANE NO. 7 NANAK NAGAR JAMMU WHO LEFT FOR HEAVENLY ABODE ON 18/12/23 (MONDAY).**  
**TENTH DAY** WILL BE PERFORMED ON 27TH DEC. 2023 WEDNESDAY AT 11AM AT OUR RESIDENCE  
**KRIYA** WILL BE PERFORMED ON 28TH DEC. 2023 THURSDAY AT 12.30 NOON AT OUR RESIDENCE.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN:-**  
SMT. KAMLA SHARMA (MOTHER)  
MASTER KEVIN SHARMA (SON)  
MRS. NEHA SHARMA (WIFE)  
(SISTER & BROTHER IN LAW)  
MRS. NEERAJ & MR. VINEY SHARMA (9419183530)  
MRS. SHIVANI & MR. RAJESH SHARMA (9906039624)



VARUN SHARMA

10TH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

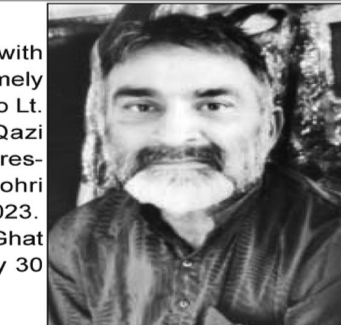
With profound grief we regret to inform the untimely death of our beloved mother **Smt. Santosh Sharma W/O Sh. Kewal Krishan Sharma (Shakir)** residence of Rajpura Mangotriar house no 653 on 19/12/23:  
**Rituals shall be performed as per prog:**  
**10th Day** at our residence on 28/12/23 - 10:30 am to 11:30 am  
**Kriya** on 29/12/23  
**Uthala** on 29/12/23 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm at Afsar Guest House near A G Office.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN:**  
Rajesh Sharma & Reeta Sharma (Son and Daughter in law)  
Ajay Sharma & Sweety Sharma (Son and Daughter in law)  
Anil Sharma & Kiran Sharma (Son in law and Daughter)  
Rajesh Sharma & Anju Sharma (Son in law and Daughter)  
**Grand Children:** Ivu, Rishav, Shivam, Manini, Akhshat  
**Mobile nos : 9419100331, 9419191504, 9419651745, 9419680668**



Smt. Santosh Sharma

TENTH DAY KRIYA

In loving memory, we regret to inform with profound grief and sorrow, the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **Sh. Subhash Saraf S/o Lt. Sh. C.L. Saraf** originally resident of Qazi Mohalla/Goja Mohalla Anantnag Kashmir at present H.No. 45/5 Manorma Vihar Patta Bohri Jammu left for heavenly abode on 21 Dec. 2023.  
**Tenth Day Kriya** will be performed at Muthi Ghat near Directorate Education office on Saturday 30 Dec 2023 at 9.30 am.  
**In Deep Grief, Agony and sorrow:**  
Mrs. Rajni Saraf - Wife - 8825007858  
Mr. Mohit Saraf - Son  
Dr. Rohit Saraf - Son  
Mr. Raghu Mana - Son  
**Brothers & Bhabhis**  
Shmt. Vineeta & Sh. Sanjay Saraf  
Shmt. Shivani & Sh. Jagdish Bhat  
Shmt. Sunita & Sh. Satish Saraf  
**Sisters & Brothers-in-law**  
Shmt. Shakuntla & Sh. S.L. Koul  
Shmt. Girja Dhar  
Shmt. Basanti & Sh. I.K. Kandroo  
**Children & Grand Children**  
Shmt. Preeti & Sh. Sandeep Bhat  
Shmt. Shivani & Sh. Jagdish Bhat  
Shmt. Neenu Dhar  
Shmt. Smita & Sh. Mohit Raina  
Shmt. Arki & Sh. Rishi Raj  
Anmol & Ankur, Eshaan & Aryan, Millie & Sheena  
Yukta, Aahaana, Nrip, Aaliya, Aayaan, Vahin & Ari



Sh. Subhash Saraf

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**State Taxes Department Jammu collects record Rs 4.93 Cr. penalty till December 2023**

**Scrap, Electrical Goods, Motor Parts, Building Material dealers turn Prime GST Defaulters**

**Top News Report**

JAMMU, Dec 27: Jammu and Kashmir State Taxes Department's Jammu Division has recovered a penalty of rupees 4.93 Crores from April 2023 to December 2023 from Goods and Services Tax (GST) defaulters for various violations under the GST Act.

As per a handout issued on Wednesday, Rs 3.78 Crores has been recovered through various enforcement activities during the tax period of April to December 27, 2023, in Jammu division on various violations including e-invoicing, stock mismatch, other non-compliance while additional Rs 1.15 crores have been realized during special inspections and enforcement drives by Special



Task Force. Moreover, cases with potential of more than Rs 3.50 crores tax liability on defaulters are under scrutiny.

"The major sectors on which penalties have been imposed are Metal Scrap, Electric, Electronics Goods, Motor Parts dealers, building/construction materials, etc", the statement reads.

Additional Commis-

sioner State Taxes, Administration & Enforcement, Jammu, Namrita Dogra appreciated the efforts of the team led by Deputy Commissioners and State Tax Officers.

She also urged upon the Officers/Officials to redouble their efforts of enforcement action to create strong deterrence with special emphasis on transporters who are carrying goods without

proper invoices and e-way bills. She also called for setting up surprise check posts on the various transition points.

In a message to taxpayers, Additional Commissioner said GST is very simple taxation law and every stakeholder must follow its guidelines. She said traders found not comply with laid down guidelines of GST act liable to pay penalties.

Namrita Dogra added that noncompliance also leads to suspension or cancellation of registration, legal proceedings or even seizure and confiscation of goods. So, it's very important for businesses to adhere to GST rules, file returns on time, and fulfill their tax obligations to avoid these penalties and consequences.

Additional Commissioner urged taxpayers to avail the service of GST Suvidha Kendras, which is functional in all 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir, to clear their doubts regarding GST. She further informed that the department have a dedicated X handle @JK\_GST\_JK, which provides all necessity information from tax notifications to changes/upgradation in GST law.

**Saurabh Bhagat chairs executive committee meet of Skill Dev Mission**



**Top News Report**

JAMMU, Dec 27: Aiming further sharpening of skills of youth of the UT, the government has submitted an ambitious proposal to the Union government for advanced and aspirational skill development trainings to be conducted in the region.

Commissioner Secretary, Skill Development Department (SDD), Saurabh Bhagat, informed this here on Wednesday while chairing the third Executive Committee meeting of J&K Skill Development Mission.

The meeting was attended by representatives of line departments as members besides DG Finance, Finance Department, Mohamad Sultan Malik, Mission Director, JKSDM Leena Padma, Director Skill Development Sundershan Kumar, Additional Secretary Industries and Commerce, Mamta Devi, Additional Secretary, Youth Sports Services and Labour and Employ-

ment, Neelam Khajuria, Joint Director Planning, Parshotam Lal along with other officials of SDD, officials from NSDC and MSDE in person and virtually.

The Commissioner Secretary emphasized on convergence between various departments on skilling initiatives to avoid redundancy and have holistic overview of skill ecosystem of the UT.

The Commissioner Secretary directed for Adhaar seeded placement data of the placements made by the department so that a realistic picture is put forward.

The Commissioner Secretary emphasised the need for initiation of short term skill courses and life skills in schools, industry and tourism departments so that the youth are gainfully skilled for self and wage employment.

It was informed that J&K UT is participating in India Skills Competition 2023. The registration for the same is being done currently and more than 1600 candidates from

have already registered for competitions in more than 60 skill sets identified by Gol.

The Commissioner Secretary emphasized upon the skilled youth of J&K to use this opportunity to showcase their skills and talent and represent J&K in National Competitions and win medals and laurels for the UT and carry forward to represent India in World Skill Competitions scheduled to be held in France in 2024.

Earlier, MD JKSDM briefed about the agenda and the activities being carried out by the Mission Directorate while displaying a presentation on working of the Mission which is presently implementing Centrally Sponsored Schemes like Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana and SANKALP in the UT of J&K. He informed that the Mission has initiated implementation of Nal Jal Mitra and PM Vishwakarma schemes in collaboration with Jal Jeevan Mission, J&K and the Department of Industries and Commerce.

MD JKSDM informed that the mission is in process of developing a robust Management Information System (MIS) to keep record and track the trained and placed skilled candidates. The MIS will have access by all the stakeholders and various departments that undertake different skilling initiatives in the UT, he added.

**AC gives amnesty to settle tax arrears of pre GST regime**

**Top News Report**

JAMMU, Dec 27: The Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha approved a proposal of the Finance Department for granting amnesty for settlement of Tax arrears pertaining to pre GST regime.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor; Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor attended the meeting.

This step is going to provide relief to the tax payers in the form of waiver of interest and penalty besides recovery of the blocked revenue to the Government. Earlier all dealers could not take benefit of erstwhile amnesty scheme issued vide Govt. order no. 39-FD of 2018 dated 05/02/2018 due to various reasons including Covid-19 pandemic.

As such, large no. of representations were received from the trade/industry sector for granting a onetime opportunity to the dealers for settlement of the outstanding arrears under the pre GST tax legislations.

The amnesty Scheme provides relief to dealers on following terms:-

i) 100% waiver of penalty and interest under J&K General Sales Tax

Act, 1962, and Central Sales Tax Act, 1956, for assessment/ re-assessment up to 2017-18 (07/07/2017 for all and 31/08/2017 for liquor dealers).

ii) 100% waiver of penalty and interest under J&K Value Added Tax Act, 2005, and Central Sales Tax Act, 1956, for assessments up to 2017-18 (07/07/2017).

iii) Waiver of interest and penalty in (i) and (ii) subject to 100% payment of principal Tax in the manner and within the prescribed time as per the scheme to be notified by the Government.

iv) Settlement of demands for Industrial Units under repealed J&K Value Added Tax Act, 2005 (up to 2017-18) (upto 07/07/2017), J&K General Sales Tax Act, 1962 (up to 07/07/2017 and 31/08/2017 for liquor-dealing units), and Central Sales Tax Act, 1956, in respect of assessed/ re-assessed demands including yet to be assessed cases with certain conditions to be notified in the scheme.

This decision on the part of government will result into minimising of tax dispute cases and winding up of pre-GST cases etc. The time limit for receiving the applications for this amnesty will not be more than six months from the date an order is issued in this regard.

**Legacy of Sahibzades & Guru Gobind Singh Ji a timeless beacon of humanism, sacrifice: Kavinder**

**Top News Report**

JAMMU, Dec 27: Exemplary courage and sacrifice of Sahibzades and Guru Gobind Singh ji's life and teachings would continue to guide the path of humanity for all times to come. People must rise above the narrow outlook of life and tread the path of humanism.

This was stated by Kavinder Gupta, senior BJP leader and former deputy Chief Minister while participating in the Bhandara organized by Tankers Union of Jammu at Railway Yard here today. Ranjit Singh, President Tanker Union and Ranjod Singh Nalwa, President Minority Morcha, BJP, J&K, were also present.

Addressing the gathering, the senior BJP leader said that Prime Minister has taken the right step towards recognizing the sacrifice of the brave and righteous sons of Guru Gobind Singh. He said that the observance of Veer Baal



Diwas on December 26 is a fitting tribute to the valour of the sons of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikh Community.

Kavinder said that observance of December 26 day as Veer Baal Diwas will give an opportunity to the people of the nation to go through the difficulties which the countrymen faced under the rule of invaders and how the nation was freed from the clutches of unprincipled and barbaric rulers by the most courageous of those times.

Kavinder said that this move should have been taken soon after the country attained the independence but the then governments never bothered to high-

light the heroism and valour of the aboriginals and were interested in placating the foreign rulers for their vested interests. He said that the pragmatic move by the PM is a real tribute to the quest of Guru Gobind Singh and his entire family for justice and uprightiness of the people of the country irrespective of their colour, caste and creed.

The former Deputy Chief Minister also highlighted the significant contribution of Sikh Community in nation building and establishing a just and equal society. He said that people across the sections of society must be told about our Guru's influence in transforming society and enriching social values.

**TNWS projects demands for development of Trikuta Nagar Colony**



**Top News Report**

JAMMU, Dec 29: President, Trikuta Nagar Welfare Society (TNWS) Jammu, Rajinder Parshad Kakkar on Friday highlighted the ongoing challenges for the development of Trikuta Nagar Colony in Jammu.

"TNWS was established in 1993 with the aim of addressing the developmental needs of Trikuta Nagar Colony, which was developed in 1971 without provisions for essential facilities such as playgrounds, PDD receiving stations, and hospitals. Since its inception, TNWS has been actively working towards the betterment of the colony," Rajinder Parshad Kakkar said in a press conference here on Wednesday.

Kakkar provided an overview of the various activities carried out by the society since its establishment.

He urged the Board of Directors of Urban & Housing Development Department of J&K UT

to reconsider and slash the fees for freehold rights as the current fees pose a financial burden on senior citizens and retired pensioners residing in Trikuta Nagar Colony.

He also called for the upgradation and renovation of the Urban Health Training Center to a Community Health Centre. "This includes the provision of specialized doctors, adequate staff, machines, a helpdesk, and a Jan Aushadhi Centre." He said and request to provide an ambulance for emergency situations involving senior citizens.

He also requested the creation of a mini playground for the youth and kids of Trikuta Nagar Colony, equipped with a basketball court, badminton court, and skating rink.

He also highlighted the need for a parking complex to address the issue of illegally parked cars in the colony, causing inconvenience to residents.

The proposed complex

should be located near the TNWS complex in the main market, he said.

Kakkar emphasized the acute shortage of drinking water in sectors 5 to 9 of Trikuta Nagar Colony during the summer season and requested for a new bore well to address this issue.

He also advocated for the establishment of an Ayurvedic hospital with proper infrastructure and staff to cater to the residents of Trikuta Nagar who prefer Ayurvedic treatments.

He urged the government to widen the roads on the bridge between sectors 4-5 in Ward 53-54, Trikuta Nagar Colony, to prevent accidents and damage to vehicles due to congestion.

In conclusion, Rajinder Kakkar appealed for consideration and requests time-bound directions to the concerned government authorities of J&K UT.

TNWS believes that these issues, affecting the daily lives of Trikuta Nagar residents, can be effectively addressed with administration intervention.

Er. Ashok Kumar Arora, Som Nath Kaul, Dr. T. R. Gupta, Anil Sharma and R. K. Kakroo were also present in the press conference.

**NGO pays homage to martyrs sons of Guru Govind Singh Ji**



**Top News Report**

JAMMU, Dec 27: Responding to nation wide call from Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi to pay respectful homage to the martyrs sons of Shri Guru Govind Singh Ji Maharaj, Stand With Humanity Foundation, an NGO, organised a function under the chairmanship of Manik Uppal and office members of NGO Patron Ramesh Chander, President Akhil Kapoor, Director Angad Singh at Talab Tillo.

To grace the occasion Former MLC Charan-

jeet Singh Khalsa, Prominent Sikh Scholar Satinder Singh, BJP Secretary Sh. Ayodhya Gupta, Chairman Talab Tillo Traders Association Sh. Rajesh Uppal, Social Activist Rajkumar Sharma and members of Talab Tillo Traders Association made their presence and paid tribute to the great sons of soil who sacrificed their lives for the sake of their people against the atrocities of the rulers of that time.

At the conclusion of the function Prashad was distributed among the gathering.

**Office of the Divisional Forest Officer,**  
**Research Forest Division, JKFRJ Complex, Janipur, Jammu- 180007**  
E-mail:- [dfosfrjmu@gmail.com](mailto:dfosfrjmu@gmail.com), ☎ 0191-2953938

**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS**  
**e-NIT NO: -21 OF 2023-24 DATED: 23-12-2023**

For and on behalf of the Hon'ble President of India, e-tenders (Two cover system) are invited from registered, reputed and resourceful Contractors/Firms registered with Jammu & Kashmir Govt./Central Govt. Organizations for the following work:-

S NO	NAME OF WORK	ADV. COST (Rs. In lacs)	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)(Rs)	CLASS OF CONTRACTOR	Cost of Tender Document. (Rs)	TIME OF COMPLETION
1	Project on:-QR based digital Geotagging of Peepal & Banyan trees in Jammu region.	6.55	Rs. 13,100/=	"D" Class Civil Contractor/ Forest Contractor /JKFDC Contractor	Rs. 600/=	90 Calendar days.

The e-NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bills of quantities, (B.O.Q) set of Terms & Conditions of contract (Tender Document) which form the part of the Contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Website: -[www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in).

**Position of Funds: Allotted**  
**Position of AA/TS: Accorded**  
**Scheme: CAMPA**  
**Receiving/ Opening Committee: Tender Opening Committee**

<b>Publishing Date: -</b>	23-12-2023
<b>Download Start Date:</b>	23-12-2023 from 04:00 PM
<b>Bid submission Start Date:</b>	23-12-2023 from 06:00 PM
<b>Bid submission End Date:</b>	<b>06-01-2024 Upto 03:00 PM</b>
<b>Date of Opening of Technical Bid Online.</b>	08-01-2024 at 01:00 PM in the office of the Divisional Forest Officer Research Forest Division Jammu.
<b>Date of Opening of Financial Bid Online:</b>	To be opened (Online) at any convenient date & time after complete Evaluation of Technical Bids Received.

- The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website: - <https://jktenders.gov.in>
- The date for opening of Technical & Financial bids online shall be opened as per time schedule mentioned above.
- Bids uploaded must accompany Govt. Treasury Receipt (cost of tender document) in shape of Treasury Challan for the amount shown against the work above to be deposited in Govt. Treasury under Account Head 0406- Forest and Bid Security Deposit in shape CDR/FDR of for requisite amount and pledged to **Divisional Forest Officer, Research Forest Division, Jammu**. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of bids.
- Additional Performance Security shall have to be deposited by successful bidder in accordance to the GFR-2017 rules of the value of contract and if there are compelling circumstances, performance security in excess of three percent may also be demanded.
- Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website [jktenders.gov.in](http://jktenders.gov.in)
- To participate in bidding process bidders have to get Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) as per Information Technology Act Bidders can get Digital Certificate form approved vendor.
- The bidders have to submit their Technical & financial bids online in electronic format with digital signature. No Technical or financial bid will be accepted in physical/hard form.
- Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned above.
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents i.e Valid Registration Card issued by PWD/CPWD duly renewed for the current financial year 2023-24, PAN, Valid GST Registration, other Govt recognized organization, Govt. Treasury receipt/Challan (cost of Tender Document), bid security undertaking and Bid Security Deposit in shape CDR/FDR of for requisite amount and pledged to Divisional Forest Officer, Research Forest Division, Jammu.
- The successful bidder has to produce Valid Labour Registration Certificate issued by Labour Department after issuance of award of contract.
- The Department will not be responsible for any delay in online submission of the bid due to any reason (technical or otherwise).
- The Department shall not be held responsible for selection criteria/policy matter being adopted by the Directorate of Information regarding publishing the NIT, in any of the newspaper under circulation.
- The tender accepting Authority however reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
- All other terms and conditions shall remain same as per PWD form 25 (double leaf) and as per the detailed document.
- The description of the work is enclosed with the NIT document. The bidder shall be bound to adhere to any of the process related instructions of the project implementing agency if any of those are not specifically mentioned in the NIT document.
- The detailed terms and conditions shall be similar to those as advertised in other NITs of this division.
- The full and final payment shall be disbursed only after satisfactory execution of work to the full satisfaction of implementing agency.
- The successful bidder shall be bound to rectify the defects in the work upto six months after the conclusion of work for which 20 percent of the bid amount shall be retained as security.

**No:- JKFRJ/S/F148 /2023-24/1722-27**      **Dated:- 23-12-2023**

**DIP/J-13075/23**

Sd/-  
**Divisional Forest Officer,**  
**Research Forest Division,**  
**Jammu.**

## EDITORIAL

SOLDIERS-  
BIGGEST ASSET  
OF COUNTRY

Soldiers are the biggest asset of the country. Soldiers are the real heroes of the country who serve the country with body, mind and wealth. Indian soldiers are the pride of our country. The entire country is their family and they protect the citizens of their country at all costs. They are very selfless, who put the interest of the country above their personal interest.

The morale, courage, patience, intelligence and mental strength of soldiers are more than that of common citizens. Soldiers are honest, brave and strong. Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri had rightly honored the contribution of soldiers by giving the slogan "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan" during the 1965 war with Pakistan.

A soldier works as a sentinel for the country. He stays awake day and night, only then we are able to sleep peacefully. Despite being a soldier, the enemy does not even dare to look at our country. It is only because of soldiers that peace and security is maintained in the country and the country is able to move forward on the path of development.

It is because of the bravery and courage of the soldiers that we live in peace in our homes. He fights till the last moment of his life to protect his motherland. He sacrifices everything for the country. They remain alert at all times and also provide assistance in emergency situations in the country. There is no place for any caste, religion, state or language in their life. For them the country comes first. A soldier's life is truly a bed of thorns. Their life is based on selflessness and sacrifice. A soldier has to strictly follow discipline in his life. He has to face tough challenges and difficulties in his life. Be it hot desert or snowy mountains, they never step back to protect the country.

Before becoming soldiers they have to undergo very difficult training. They are taught to survive in the toughest conditions. To perform his duty the soldier has to sacrifice food, sleep and rest. The sole purpose of a soldier's life is to protect the country from internal and external enemies and fight for the country.

There are many challenges in the life of a soldier. To protect the country and families, he himself stays away from meeting his family and loved ones. Sometimes they do not even get leave during festivals or any family occasion. They have to undergo rigorous training to fight battles.

They mostly live in forests, mountains and such remote places where they lack proper supplies and basic facilities. Adversity of weather is a big challenge for them. They have to live and fight even in heavy rain, extreme cold and scorching sun.

From a soldier we get qualities like discipline, patriotism, sacrifice and selfless service. We should give due respect to every soldier of the country because he is the person who writes the destiny of the country with his blood. A country sleeps peacefully when its soldiers perform their duties. The role of a soldier is paramount and unique. He lives for the nation and dies for its dignity. He makes history and history immortalizes him.

## The lesson from Ayodhya: How power eclipses piety

By: Parsa  
Venkateshwar Rao Jr

From 1853 to 1931, when the local groups rioted for space in the then Babri Masjid, it was the religious motive that dominated, however flawed it was. And there is little doubt that it was flawed in historical terms, though it was a sentimental issue. The Supreme Court judgment in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid case had decided the issue in terms of a property dispute. Neither religion nor myth was given any credence. But for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), ever since it adopted in its Palampur session the Ayodhya dispute as its core agenda, along with Article 370 and the Uniform Civil Code, it has been purely a political matter. But there was enough ambiguity in its stance. It did not fight any election from 1989 to 2019 on the issue of the temple. Mr Narendra Modi was silent on an issue in 2014 and 2019, and Mr Amit Shah had said that it could either be decided in a court of law or it has to be based on a compromise between the Hindu and Muslim communities. It never became the party's poll plank.

The ambiguity persists and looms larger than before when Prime Minister Modi wants to give it the pride of place on his political agenda. He wants to make it a grand affair, showcase it as an issue of revival of national glory, and there is a thin, blurring dividing line between the political agenda and the party's, and the Modi government's, rhetoric of cultural nationalism. The BJP governments at the Centre and in Uttar Pradesh are trying to

maintain that the construction of the temple is that of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, which the Central government had set up in February 2020 through an announcement by the Prime Minister in the Lok Sabha, and 12 of its 15 members were nominated by the government. This is an autonomous body which does not come under government purview. It is in more ways than one a legal fig leaf. Ayodhya has been declared Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra "place of historical importance" and "place of public worship of renown", which do not really survive critical scrutiny. But a government can take arbitrary decisions, especially after the Supreme Court judgment in the mosque-temple matter. Despite everything, the Modi government has to maintain the legal façade that the construction of the temple, the functioning of the temple, is not by the government. The state-church separation is sought to be maintained. There is no doubt that the undeclared intention of the BJP is to claim it as its political victory and flaunt it as an achievement in the 2024 Lok Sabha election.

Right from 1949, when the idol of Lord Ram was stealthily placed under the central dome of the then mosque, it had turned into a battle between the two communities, and both Hindus and Muslims have been guilty of taking the matter out of Ayodhya and turning it into a national issue. The Muslim community, especially the Uttar Pradesh Sunni Waqf Board, had accepted the judicial verdict and it is busy building a mosque at the five-acre plot away from the Ayodhya town

allotted by the state government following the directive of the Supreme Court. The BJP governments have been managing the Ayodhya temple construction and the sprucing up of the little town with grand plans to make it a spot of international tourist attraction.

The interesting cultural and religious aspect of North Indian culture is the widespread popularity of 17th century Hindi (Avadhi) poet Tulsidas and his devotional epic Ramcharit Manas, which dominates the consciousness and sentiments of the people, both the sophisticates and the ordinary folk. The Ramcharit Manas is saturated with piety for Lord Ram as the great god incarnating as a human being, and displaying divine uprightness and compassion. The temple that is set to be symbol of the BJP's cultural nationalism is literally trying to overwhelm the unparalleled popularity of the Tuls Ramayan. The temple would want to appropriate the text of Tuls. It will then be a contest between the modern building and the old text. The Tuls text has survived the test of time. It is to be seen whether the newly-constructed temple at Ayodhya will become a sacred place for the Hindus. The Tuls Dhyam Mandir in Varanasi has not been able to outshine the religious and cultural status of the Tuls Ramayan.

What is emerging in the construction of the temple and its inauguration in January is the power play of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and not so much of Hindu piety, which is the hallmark of the people in this country, where the story of Ram exists in its various literary retell-

ings in many languages of India, and there is no Ram temple in brick and mortar to counter this cultural and religious legacy of the Hindus. In contrast, the Krishna cult has its temple centres in Dwarka, in Puri, in Guruvayoor, in Udipi and in Nathdwara, and the Krishna worshippers feel fulfilled visiting these temples. The BJP, it seems, is caught at the wrong end of the religious and cultural consciousness of the Hindus. The BJP and the Hindu-tva folks are babes in the wood, and that too in the shameful sense of ignorances and in the sense of innocence, while they grapple with the history and legacy of the Hindus.

Like Tuls in the Varanasi of 17th century, which was not part of the Ramayan lore, in the early 19th century, Tyagaraja was content with the idols of Ram, Sita and Lakshman in his home, to pour his devotion through the immortal songs that he composed. The subtleties of Hindu culture are beyond the grasp of the vulgar politics of power of the BJP. After the pyrotechnics of the temple inauguration in Ayodhya recede and the 2024 parliamentary election gets over, Ayodhya will remain the small place it has been, and the people will find Ram in Tuls and Tyagaraja for centuries to come. There will be an initial gold rush of tourists and then the dust will settle. The new temple in Ayodhya will not inspire Hindu piety the way the Golden Temple in Amritsar inspires Sikh piety. The show of power symbolised by the construction of the temple in Ayodhya will remain an expression of worldly pomp.

## How To Score Good Marks In Board Exam In Short Time

By: Vijay GarG

These are some basic and helpful tips and tricks to prepare for your board exams a month before the commencement of your board exams.

What are the simplest ways to get good marks in board exams? This is a very simple and the most common question which occurs mostly in every student's mind and students who are magnetized to the books are likely to get worried about good marks in each subjects.

How To Score Good Marks In Board Exam In Short Time : 99% Useful Tips

These tips and tricks are really useful and after doing research on more than 200 students, we find that if an average student will follow these tips, s/he will definitely score more than 90% in any board exam. Students who are preparing for board exam, and other examination they should know all these tips and keep these on your mind.

So keep working hard for your ambitions and follow all the steps given below to score good marks in your Board examinations.

1 - Time Management - Daily Routine  
Time is killer, A though came in my mind that, "if you didn't care for time, time will never give you a chance to care for the thing you needed". That's simple time is one of the most dangerous thing, you should take care of. Make a chart for your daily routine and give maximum time to your study. Suppose you spend 6 hours in your bed and rest 18 hours must be used for your exam preparation.

Best Timetable for Board Class Students  
A student is never pressurized for earning and other family matters. You are a student so give maximum time to your study.

Your daily routine must be like, wake up at 4 o'clock, take 15 min to be fresh and have a cup of tea/coffee. Then open your book, and study till 7 O'clock.

Then go for morning walk which is important, then take your breakfast till 8 O'clock. If you are at home then again collect your notes of other subjects and start practicing. Don't study more than 2 hours continuously take some break in between.

Around 1 O'clock take your lunch and then take a nap for 45 min. Then again get ready for your exam preparation.

In the evening you must go with your friends for some entertainment or physical activities.

Then around 7 O'clock start your study and then have your dinner before 9 O'clock. After your dinner you must revise all the things you read whole day.

Go to bed before 10 O'clock and revise the chart for next day.

2 - Having Good Food and Drinking More Water Will Help

Healthy Food, water, and juice are high of energy and protein which helps your brain to work fast and also helps in remembering what you studied.

70% of your brain is filled with water, so that you must know the importance of water. Regularly drink water and drink more than 2 liter per day.

Well food will help you to focus on your study and this will also make you physically strong. Which is really important according to the exams. Once you are suffering from fever it will less your 20 to 30 marks in each subjects and you have to face a big loss. 20 or 30 marks are really hard to get and these marks will decrease your percentages by 4 to 6.

3 - Doing Meditation For 30 Min Per Will Increase Memory Power by 20%

Make a hobby of doing meditation. First 2 weeks you will feel it useless but once you will realize the benefits of meditation. You will become habitual of it.

We got some query from our students, one of them was - Sir, I can't focus on study, when I sit in the desk then after few minutes i realise my mind diverts to another things. Every time I try to focus on study I get disturbed with useless thoughts, So please help us.

For those students, we have only one solution and that is do meditation and you will be focused on your study. Regularly do meditation for 30 minutes at a peaceful place and see the result.

Meditation for 30 min everyday

4 - Take A Nap & Sleep Well  
Relaxation ! Doing rest give us pleasure and one of the most enjoyable thing is sleeping while you are tired. Students study full day and worry about their exam. They should not worry about exam. Students should take a nap or break between long time study.

Don't study continuously for more than 2 hours Take 5 to 10 minutes break between your study, it will help you to remind what you learnt.

Sleeping is the best experience for anyone, but our parents think that this is exam time so you should not sleep for more than 4 hours.

I have heard people scolding their children for not sleeping before 11 pm and waking up at 3 am. This is not good for health and you have to pay for it if you are doing so. Take full 6 hours of sleep and this relaxation will help you to score good marks.

Sleep minimum 6 hours in a day

5 - Challenge Yourself  
Challenge your self means, set target for doing things before time and doing better with the time. Suppose you got 30% in first term, then improve yourself and get 50% in second term. Then work hard and you will get 95% in final board exam.

You will not succeed until you have not make an ambition to chase. Increase your performance day by day and this will only happen when you will regularly study and follow these steps.

challenge day by day

6 - Find Your Weakness

This is important from the perspective of exams, that you should make a note of your weakness either it's a subject or a

chapter or a topic.

let's suppose, you are weak in maths, obviously it will scare you and you will ignore as much as you can. But stop ignoring such a subjects because out of five there will be a subject or a chapter which is out of your mind or you are getting boring of it. 7 - Plan Your Study - Make Important Notes And Select Topics

Make your study plan and include every subjects don't leave anyone. For a day give some hours to particular subjects, subjects which you finds are hard schedule on top in the early morning.

Then scoring and one interesting subject keep side for day time while you get bored of study pick your interesting subject and your time will not waste just looking at book. Don't forget to take a nap in between.

Revision is important thing, learn today and revise tomorrow. This key will make you succeed and help you to score good in board exam. Don't forget scoring subjects and easy subjects. Sometime students over confident about some subjects and at the end they find with sad faces for worst paper of that same subject.

8 - Clear Your Concept Instead Of Rote Memorization (Mugging)

Sometime you must use tips and tricks to memorize, don't ever rote memorize for few subjects like physics and maths. For physics and maths you must clear your concepts. But you can't clear your concept of english, Hindi, commerce, history and like these subjects.

9 - Solving Sample Papers And Previous Years Papers Are Bonus Point

Sample paper for board exam are provided officially but only solving then will not give you such an experience of topper of the class. Collect some sample papers, guess papers and previous year papers and then download them and solve them.

10% - 20% are comes from sample paper each year so that you have to solve sample paper and, only if you solve previous 10 years paper and sample paper you will get more than 60% marks. And rest 30% you have to prepare from important notes and books.

10 - Scoring Subjects Are The Key - Mind It

Never forget, english, and Hindi which are most common and scoring subjects according to the study. if you score more than 95 marks in both subject and 80 marks in your weak subjects then it will help you to make an average of 90%.

When you are preparing for board exam and other exams, you should give some time for those subjects too, don't spend your all the time to practicing for tough subjects.

Your scoring subjects or those subjects which are easy according to you will help you to score good - keep in your mind always.

11 - Your Hand Writing and Keen Answer Sheet Will Always Help

Good hand writing give us bonus point, whether we are in class 1 or class 12. Examiner always be impressed with those

answer sheets which are keen and clean.

Because they don't need to put extra efforts to understand our hand writing. They checks thousands of copies and each of them is different. So, make your hand writing different and your answer sheet well maintained. So, that examiner will not think about cut your marks for silly reasons.

It's all about impress examiner so, one of the best way is to impress him/her is clear answer sheet and neat and clean diagrams.

12 - Take Full Of The time - During Exam

You are not complete if you have leave your answer sheet before 3 hours, take full 3 hours to complete your paper, A paper can't be too easy to complete within 2 and half hours.

If you are done before the time, then check your each question correctly and tie your second copy with first. Don't forget to mention second copy as + A or B in first page or answer sheet.

Your 1 marks will make a gap or 0.2% your one mistake will fell you down from 100% to 99.8%. So remember all little things during the examination.

13 - Group Study Will Help

It will obviously help you if you are studying in a group. No one is perfect and no one knows everything, so describe your answer with your friends and listen their answer too.

Then you will come to know what was wrong and what is right. Catch your mistakes and keep them in your mind. make improvement in your answer if you find you missed any thing while answering.

Watch video for that topic which are not clear to you. Audio, video and infographics will help you a lot.

14 - Stay Away of Social Media & Cell Phones

One of the disturbing element is mobile phone and second one is that facebook or WhatsApp you are using on it. Its time to say good bye to Facebook, Instagram, whatsApp and another Messenger apps.

Weather these are important too, if you are sharing notes and all these thing. So there is a better option that ask for the phone to your mom or dad or brother and do your work with.

Because once your phone will come to your hand, time will kill you and you will see at the wall after two hours. So avoid these things.

Avoid social media

15 - Teaching Others Is Always The Best way

Separate a day from your daily routine and go with your friends, teach them what you learnt. And believe this one is the best method to revise and memorize too.

(Vijay GarG Retired  
Principal Educational  
columnist malout Punjab)

# Sat asks people to take advantage of Viksit Bharat Sankalp yatra

## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 27: Former Minister Sat Sharma CA, District President Jammu Parmod Kapahi, Mandal President Talab Tillo Keshav Chopra, JKUT BJP Secretary Ayodhya Gupta, JKUT BJP Media Incharge Dr Pardeep Mahotra, BJP Senior Leader and Prabhari Nowshera Sanjay Kumar Baru, Ex Councillors Jeet Angral, Neelam Nargotra, Sr. Sucha Singh, District General Secretary Adv Rajesh Gupta along with Locals of Talab Tillo today attended Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra at Poonch House Talab Tillo Jammu West Constituency. They also listened to



the live address of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in which the PM interacted with the beneficiaries of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra. Speaking on the Occasion Sat Sharma said that Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra was being organised to ensure that the benefits of all the welfare schemes reach up to the people of the last mile, and no

poor in the country was left out in the journey of development. Taking Part in the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra Parmod Kapahi & Keshav Chopra said that the Modi government is organizing this yatra in every part of Jammu & Kashmir to increase awareness about the central government schemes and ensure that every eli-

gible person gets the benefit. Dr Pardeep Mahotra and Sanjay Kumar Baru while discussing the calendar prepared with the details of central schemes said that one could scan the QR code placed on the calendar with a cell phone and know about all the welfare schemes being implemented by the Centre.

# GDC Akhnoor donates winter clothes to underprivileged

## Top News Report

AKHNOOR, Dec 27: In a compassionate effort to bring warmth to the lives of those in need, the NSS Unit of Government Degree College Akhnoor, under the banner of Viksit Bharat, has initiated a Winter Clothes Donation Drive. The drive, organized by Dr. Sanjay Kapoor, NSS Programme Officer, and executed under the able guidance of Dr. Romilla Malla Bhat, Principal of GDC Akhnoor, aims to provide winter essentials to the less fortunate members of the community.

The winter clothes donation drive is a testament to the college's commitment to social responsibility and community welfare. Recognizing the harsh realities

faced by the underprivileged during the winter season, the NSS Unit encourages students and the local community to contribute generously to make a meaningful impact.

Dr. Sanjay Kapoor, NSS Programme Officer, expressed his enthusiasm about the initiative, stating, "This Winter Clothes Donation Drive is an opportunity for us to extend our hands of warmth to those who need it the most. It aligns with the NSS motto of 'Not Me, But You,' emphasizing the spirit of selfless service."

The event is a collaborative effort that embodies the spirit of Viksit Bharat, a platform

that focuses on holistic development and social upliftment. Dr. Romilla Malla Bhat, Principal of GDC Akhnoor, highlighted the importance of such initiatives, stating, "As an educational institution, we believe in nurturing not only academic excellence but also fostering a sense of social responsibility. This winter drive is a step towards creating a more compassionate and caring society."

The Winter Clothes Donation Drive invites contributions of warm clothing items such as sweaters, jackets, blankets, and more. Donors are encouraged to drop off their contributions at designated collection points on the college campus.

# Private schools showing contempt to Director, CEO of Education Department: Amit Kapoor



## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 27: President of Parents Association Jammu, Amit Kapoor has said that some private schools are flouting the orders of the School Education Department and are opening schools despite the winter holidays. He said that in this way these private schools are openly defying the Director and CEO of the Education Department while the children are

forced to go to schools despite the holidays in this winter season. Amit Kapoor said this while addressing a press conference in Jammu. He said that the mafia of private schools has become so unbridled that it is openly flouting the holiday orders issued by the Director of the Education Department, while the Director and CEO of the Education Department are

watching all this as mute spectators and their Not ready to take any action against.

He said that the Education Department has declared closure in all government and private schools in view of the winter season and also said that strict action will be taken against anyone who violates this order. But despite this, some private schools are open and children are forced to go to schools. Amit Kapoor has demanded Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to intervene in this matter and issue orders to the Director and CEO of the Education Department that strict action should be taken against those schools which are violating the order.

# AAP volunteers start door to door campaign in Marh Assembly Constituency

## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 27: Intensifying its door to door public awareness / awakening program, on Wednesday, the AAP leaders of Jammu District Rural Romesh Lal Bhagat, Vice President Jammu District Rural, Adv. Dalvinder Kumar Bhagat, Block President Marh Constituency, Omparkash Sharma Vice President Block Akhnoor & Bansil Lal, interacted with all sections of society, including Senior citizens, housewives, Educated youths, shopkeepers & college going students in Marh Constituency, about the Delhi Model of governance which has become talk of the town across the country.

The Sr. AAP leaders said that the AAP has taken its birth to the service of common man, the work-



ers, laborers, farmers and exploited class of the society.

They congratulated Delhi and Punjab people for their wisdom and foresightedness who voted Kejriwal to serve the people, who has, because his visionary pro-people politics and programs, revolutionized and galvanized the Delhi UT & given a new concept of governance in politics-i.e; "governance to serve & not to rule".

They added that Delhi type of governance is a death blow to communalism & hate policy of certain

Political Parties and they claimed and said that same facilities can be introduced in J&K too if voted to power, they assured.

The AAP leaders further said & expressed wonder as to how Delhi Government led by Kejriwal, having no source to generate a single unit of electricity, is providing free uninterrupted power to the public up to 200 units. But the present dispensation here in J&K, instead of meeting the requirement of local population is providing around 80% of power to the Northern grid for dis-

tribution among northern states out of around 2250 Mega watts of electricity through Salal, Baghliar & Dul-Hasti Mega power projects of Jammu region showing utter bankruptcy of sensitiveness, sincerity and judicial wisdom.

The AAP leaders cautioned the public of J&K to read between the lines and be prepared to throw away the anti farmer, anti-women, anti-poor, anti youth and anti-labour government at the helm of affairs.

The AAP leaders further expressed great surprise and concern over continuous and organized attack on small traders, farmers, laborers', un-employed youths, workers etc by the ruling dispensation encouraging by Corporate Houses by way of selling them the property of the Nation earned by

our National Heroes be it Railways, Air Ports, Highways, LIC, BSNL, Banks, HAL, Hospitals, Refineries, privatizing so many profit earning public units. They further said that people were smartly befooled in 2014 and 2019 Parliamentary elections also in state elections in this duration, promising 2 crore jobs every year, removing corruption, decriminalization of politics, lowering prices of Diesel, Petrol, domestic gas, sand, Bajri, stones, making 100 smart cities, running of Bullet trains, constructing 1 model village in each constituency every year etc, they said and added that enough is enough now and that all the people can't be befooled for all the time as the people have seen through the game of polarization, of all traditional Political Parties so called the savior of Hindus & Muslims.

# Farewell accorded to Dr. Mohd Yaqoob Mir, CMO Kishtwar

## Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Dec 27: In a heartfelt tribute, the Medical block Kishtwar organized a retirement party to honor the exemplary 33-year career of Dr. Mohd Yaqoob Mir, Chief Medical Officer of Kishtwar.

The event, held at TRC Kishtwar, saw a gathering of approximately 100 attendees, including esteemed colleagues, family, and friends.

Throughout the past month, numerous farewell parties were hosted in different blocks, including Chatroo and Padder, to commemorate Dr. Yaqoob Mir's

unwavering commitment to healthcare.

The Medical block Kishtwar took the initiative to express gratitude for his remarkable service. Several distinguished speakers shared their thoughts on the occasion, acknowledging Dr. Yaqoob Mir's dedication.

Among them were Dr. Balbir Kumar, Dy CMO, Dr. Sajjad Hussain District Immunization Officer Kishtwar, Dr. Sat Lal Manhas BMO Kishtwar, Dr. Nazir Hussain MO, Dr. Noor ul Hassan, MO, Dr. Vibav Vinod, and Dr. Murtaza Ali (DS), Ajeet, Hukam Chand Advocate



Sheikh Nasir also participated as a guest and speaker.

The event commenced with the enchanting notes of classical music and songs, creating a warm atmosphere that resonated with the attendees.

Dr. Yaqoob Mir's family

was present, adding a personal touch to the occasion. As a gesture of appreciation, gifts were presented to Dr. Yaqoob Mir at the conclusion of the program, symbolizing the community's gratitude for his significant contributions to healthcare in

Kishtwar.

The farewell party stands as a testament to the respect and admiration garnered by Dr. Yaqoob Mir over his distinguished career. Dr. Yaqoob Mir, in his own address, expressed gratitude for the memorable farewell and shared reflections on his decades-long journey in serving the community.

The event not only celebrated the professional accomplishments of Dr. Yaqoob Mir but also highlighted the camaraderie and mutual respect within the healthcare community in Kishtwar.

# DHEW organises Veer Bal Diwas

## Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Dec 27: Under the supervision of DSWO Kishtwar Zubair Ahmed, Sakhi One stop centre for women Kishtwar in collaboration with DHEW organised Veer Bal Diwas at Al-Hilal Institute Of Education Kishtwar.

The event commemorates the martyrdom of Baba Fateh Singh and Zorawar Singh, sons of the 10th Guru, Govind Singh.

Children were motivated and made aware about the inner strengths, courage and special abilities etc. Children participated



in many competitions like Drawing, Painting, Essay writing, poetry etc.

After that awards were distributed by the central administrator of OSC for women (Department of Social Welfare Kishtwar) Indu Balla and other officials of Parishad, DHEW

and Palash.

The staff of Pareeha, Palash and many other dignitaries also witnessed the program.

Speakers emphasised the importance of upholding righteousness and standing firm against injustice, values exemplified by the young martyrs.

# JKBS members felicitate ASI Rakesh Lakhotra on winning gold & silver medals



## Top News Report

R S PURA, Dec 27: The Jammu and Kashmir Batwal Sabha (JKBS) members in a brief function at Chohala on Wednesday, felicitated ASI Rakesh Lakhotra on winning a gold medal in 800 mtrs & silver medals in 100 mtrs and javelin throw in 50+ age category in J&K UT Master Open Athletic Championship held recently in M A Stadium.

Among others who were present on the occasion included Messrs R.L. Kaith, Rameek Singh, Ramesh Choudhary, Janak Raj Lakhotra, Rakesh Kumar Lakhotra, Dhian Chand Lakhotra, Rattan Lal Motan, Bishan Dass Kaith, Ramesh Chand Chanjotra, Jagdish Chander Chanjotra, Sat Pal Targotra, Baldev Raj, Birbal Mandi, Hakikat Anmol, Raj Kumar, Gesu Kumar and Aryan Lakhotra.

# Only NC can give a tough fight to BJP in ensuing polls in J&K: Rattan Lal

## Top News Report

KATHUA, Dec 27: Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President, JKNC, Jammu, on Thursday emphasized that only the National Conference has the mettle to give a formidable challenge to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the upcoming polls in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a public meeting at village Buthi in Jasrota Assembly Constituency here today, the senior NC leader highlighted the deep-rooted presence and the grassroots strength of the National Conference. "Our party is fundamentally cadre-based, with a strong foothold at the grassroots level across Jammu and Kashmir," he stated.

Gupta highlighted the sacrifices made by hun-



dreds of party cadres for the welfare of the people, mentioning the significant historical contributions of the party's founder, Sheikh Abdullah, who endured several years of imprisonment for his beliefs and actions.

Earlier, Sham Narayan Mehta, District President of Kathua Rural, who organized today's meeting, briefed the senior party functionaries about the acute hardships faced by the residents, especially regarding the lack of basic amenities in the Kandi belt. In the

meeting Sardar Randhir Singh Naib Sarpanch Lachipora joined National Conference.

The Provincial President expressed serious concerns over the challenges faced by the people residing in Kandi belt of district Kathua.

He pointed out the stark lack of development in the area, with people desperately in need of basic amenities. He emphasized the poor condition of electricity, acute shortage drinking water, roads, streets, inadequate healthcare facilities, and the lack

of doctors in health centers, illustrating the incumbent government's seriousness in addressing the needs of the people.

Raising the burning issues of common masses, Rattan Lal said that people residing in Kandi belts are facing numerous problems including unemployment but the BJP dispensation at the Centre and its proxy administration in J&K are doing nothing except rhetoric and showing dreams to the people with more and more promises made

every day as if those sitting at helm will provide moon and stars to the people.

He asserted that the people of J&K have now understood well that BJP leadership has expertise in befooling public and telling lies, therefore it is the time for one and all in the UT to extend wholehearted support to NC leadership in the upcoming polls to bail out people from the morass created by BJP Government at the Centre.

Sheikh Bashir Ahmed, Provincial Secretary, JKNC, Jammu, stressed the urgent need to fortify the party in light of the current political landscape.

He urged for a consolidated effort to strengthen the party's base and prepare for the forthcoming electoral battles. In the meeting Vijay

Lochan Chairman SC Cell and Pardeep Bali Provincial Secretary Jammu also stressed the people of the area to strengthen hands of Dr Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah to once again install a government which is people-centric and considerate towards the problems of the common man and not like BJP Government which is doing anything and everything for selected few in the country.

Among those who were present in the meeting include Rakesh Singh Raka Vice President Central Zone, Sham Kumar Mehra, Dharampaul Kundal, Karan Din Chopra, Arjeet Singh, Pardeep Singh, Janak Raj, Ashu Rajput, Manohar Lal, Prem Kumar, Amar Singh, Dr. Y.P Singh and Hari Singh Pathania.

# Here's a look at celebs who chose a negative role for a change

As the calendar turns to 2024, it would be fair to say that 2023 has been a year of success and transformation for the film industry. From movies breaking box-office records to heroes like Shah Rukh Khan and Sunny Deol making a triumphant comeback, it has been a remarkable year. As we look back, we can't miss out on those dashing villains who gave a powerful fight to the protagonists. What's more, many among them were actors who have played the hero in movies before, but essayed the role of an antagonist with élan!

**Nailing it**  
Vijay Sethupathi in *Jawan*

This year for Makkal Selvan (people's treasure) of Tamil cinema, as Vijay Sethupathi is fondly known, has been a fulfilling one. From successful cross-over to Hindi films and OTT series debut, he made a place for himself in Bollywood. His fans

lauded him for being a fitting antagonist, Kalee Gaikwad, to Shah Rukh Khan's double-role avatar in *Jawan*. Audiences believed the animosity between Kaalie and Vikram Rathore (Shah Rukh Khan) worked because of Vijay Sethupathi. And the climax fight scene showcased how Vijay nailed a character with a grey shade.

**Change of role**  
John Abraham in *Pathaan*

John Abraham's villainous role of Jim in *Pathaan* was a winner from the word go. He plays a patriot who turns into a killer after his family dies, as Indian government refuses to negotiate with terrorists. While SRK fans celebrated his performance, fans and critics both lauded John Abraham for his craft as well as physical prowess. The intensity with which he played Jim made people fall in love with an anti-hero and empathise with him. The actor too



admitted that post the response to *Pathaan*, he would get prominence as a villain or anti-hero in the future.

**Formidable antagonist**  
Arjun Rampal in *Bhagavanth Kesari*

Bollywood's heartthrob Arjun Rampal transitioned into the Telugu film industry with *Bhagavanth Kesari*. While it's his South Indian film debut, what made this even more special was that he portrayed a formidable antagonist in the film. Arjun Rampal won praise for his intense screen presence, baritone voice and sinister demeanour as Rahul Sanghvi, who added a new dimension

to the narrative.

**Sweet hacker**  
Alia Bhatt in *Heart of Stone*

Alia Bhatt made her Hollywood debut alongside Gal Gadot and Jamie Dornan in spy thriller *Heart of Stone*. She played the antagonist, Keya Dhawan, in the film. Her wicked performance as a hacker who was after 'The Heart', an AI device that could enable someone to destroy the world, was loved by the audience.

**Ruthless mercenary**  
Emraan Hashmi in *Tiger 3*

Emraan Hashmi locked horns with Salman Khan in the blockbuster *Tiger 3*. Playing a ruthless

mercenary, Aatish, it is his enigmatic and calculating portrayal that added an unpredictable element to the spy thriller. Emraan Hashmi, who has been known for playing romantic roles, broke out of his shell and delivered a stellar performance as a villain. In *Tiger 3*, Hashmi was appreciated for striking a balance between charm and malevolence.

**Memorable performance**  
Manish Wadhwa in *'Gadar 2'*

While the audience dearly missed Amrith Puri, the iconic villain of Bollywood, in the grand sequel of *Gadar*, Manish Wadhwa was the actor

who replaced him and did manage to deliver a memorable performance as Pakistan's Major General Hamid Iqbal in *Gadar 2*. Comparisons with Amrith Puri were inevitable, but his portrayal made people believe the industry had a dedicated villain once again!

**Mute gangster**  
Bobby Deol in *Animal*

Bobby Deol made headlines with his performance in *Sandeep Reddy Vanga's Animal*, a film headlined by Ranbir Kapoor. The actor was celebrated for his menacing avatar as Abrar Haque, a mute gangster who killed men and assaulted women.

Be it his entry scene or the song *Jamal Kudu*, Bobby Deol trended massively on social media, thanks to his violent character in the film. The film showcases his ability to bring gravitas to a dark role.

**The flip side**  
Lead actors who will essay negative roles in 2024

Bollywood audiences have always had a strange love-hate relationship with the antagonists. Some of the iconic Bollywood characters have been villains like 'Mogambo' or 'Gabbar Singh'. Since we love the 'bad guy' characters so much, here's a list of mainstream actors who are set to play the role of the antagonist in 2024.

**Prithviraj Sukumaran**: Bade Miyan Chote Miyan

Pan-India star Prithviraj Sukumaran will be seen in a new light in the upcoming movie *Bade Miyan Chote Miyan*. The superstar will play the antagonist oppo-

site Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff, which will be a treat for the audience. Directed by Ali Abbas Zafar, the movie is slated to release on April 10, 2024.

**Saif Ali Khan**: *Devara*

The audience was thrilled to see Saif Ali Khan play the villainous Langda Tyagi in the movie *Omkara*. Now, the actor is set to play the role of Bhaira in the upcoming movie *Devara*, alongside NTR Jr and the gorgeous Janhvi Kapoor. Directed and written by Koratala Siva, the movie is all set to release on April 5, 2024.

**Arjun Kapoor**: *Singham Again*

The *Singham* franchise is known for its iconic villains, who have given brilliant performances with killer swag. Now, it will be very interesting to see Arjun Kapoor as the antagonist in the movie, which will be directed by Rohit Shetty and is set to release in August 2024.

## Amitabh Bachchan voices dislike for momos, ditches rice from diet



Megastar and host of the quiz-based reality show 'Kaun Banega Crorepati 15', Amitabh Bachchan said that he doesn't like momos. The actor also revealed that he has stopped eating rice.

In episode 97, Big B welcomed Pooja Pareek from Sonitpur in Assam to the hot seat.

The contestant was excited to see the cine icon, and said, "Sir! Oh my, God! Sir, you're real."

Big B replied looking at the audience, and said, "She's asking me if I'm real."

Pooja went on to praise the 81-year-old star and said, "Sir, you're so good-looking. I can't express it."

Amitabh said, "Since you've praised me so much. Let's go somewhere and have some tea. There's nothing in the game. Come on, let's go."

The audience laughed and cheered for the actor.

For the Rs 5,000 question, Amitabh asked, "Traditionally, which of these is a stuffed food item?"

The options for the right answer given were roti, sev, momo, and shrikhand. The correct answer is momo.

Amitabh then asked Pooja whether she has eaten momos?

She replied, "I am very fond of it."

The actor said, "I have been told many times at

home that they've made momos, but I don't get it. It's very doughy, right?"

"It has some sort of filling inside. They tell me to eat it with a chutney or sauce. But, I'm sorry, I don't like it. Since you like it, I'll treat you to momos when I take you out for tea."

The actor also asked her whether she does cooking.

Pooja said, "I don't like cooking. More so, because I live alone. So, I don't like making the effort. But if someone comes over, I make them something nice."

Big B asked, "What would you make for me if I came over to your house?"

Pooja said, "In Marwari, we call it 'sheera'. I will make that. I also make decent aloo parathas. Sometimes, the kheer turns out delicious. I will try to make tasty kheer for you."

The actor said, "For your convenience, let me tell you I've stopped eating rice. So, prepare the kheer using another ingredient. How will you make it without rice?"

She said she can make it using vermicelli.

Amitabh said, "You can use vermicelli, right. I can also have sooji halwa."

'Kaun Banega Crorepati 15' airs on Sony.

## Kirti Sualy talks about networking



Kirti Sualy, who is currently seen in *Kumkum Bhagya*, says that getting to know the right people is the way to go ahead in the entertainment industry. She adds that recommendations come naturally when you are excellent at your job.

"An actor's duty or job execution has been classified under the Service Provider category and, like all other professions that are known as service providers, creating a network is extremely important. References are the result of the quality of your job execution. If your work speaks for you, recommendations are bound to be given. Both networking and references are a result of persistent hard work and good performances," she says.

She adds, "There is nothing like the right opportunity. In the entertainment sector, it's all about connecting with the audience. Frustration is a manifestation of one's attitude towards life."

## Ankita Lokhande couldn't handle Sushant Singh Rajput's intimate scenes in *Shuddh Desi Romance* and *PK*

Ankita Lokhande in the latest episode of *Big Boss 17* was seen talking about how she could not handle her former boyfriend and late star Sushant Singh Rajput's intimate scenes in films such as *Shuddh Desi Romance* and *PK*.

Ankita said that she was dating Sushant when he featured in Bollywood films like *Shuddh Desi Romance* and *PK*, where the late actor got intimate with Parineeti Chopra and Vaani Kapoor and also had a kissing scene with Anushka Sharma in the latter.

While talking to co-contestants Abhishek Kumar and Ayesha Khan in the house, Ankita spoke about the kissing scene with Anushka in the film, "(When I watched *PK*), mujhe chakkar aa gaye the."

She also shared that she was upset and broke down when she saw him having multiple intimate scenes in *Shuddh Desi Romance*.

"We went to watch the film. He booked the entire theatre in Yash Raj Studios. There was nobody except me and



Sushant. Because he couldn't watch it with anyone because he knew I would lose it."

She mentioned that she scratched his hand and added, "He ran away and didn't come. I watched the full film and after watching all the scenes I cried so much after reaching home. Even Sushant cried. He

said, 'I am sorry bubu. Abb nahi karunga.'

When Abhishek asked Ankita till which film they were together as a couple, she said *MS Dhoni- The Untold Story*.

Ankita is now married to Vicky Jain. She shared that her husband cannot watch intimate scenes on the screen.

## Kangana Ranaut's *Tejas* to premiere on Jan 5 on ZEE5

Kangana Ranaut-starrer *Tejas* is set for its digital premiere on January 5 on Zee5.

The action-packed thriller features Ranaut in the role of an Indian Air Force pilot.

It is written and directed by Sarvesh Mewara and produced by Ronnie Screwvala.

Released in theatres on October 27, the film was a box office failure and earned poor reviews.

Ranaut said, "With *Tejas*, our aim was not only to entertain but also to shed light on the passion and sacrifices of the armed forces.



Through this film, we hope to address the challenges faced by those in uniform and inspire a collective responsibility to honour and respect them.

"I hope audiences resonate with the powerful narrative and find inspiration in the incredible stories of our real-life heroes.

Gear up for an exhilarating journey as *Tejas* takes flight on the digital stage," the actor said in a statement. Ashish Vidyarthi, Harsvardhan Rane, Divya Dutta, Anshul Chauhan, and Varun Mitra round out the cast of *Tejas*.

## Tanisha Mehta dons bridal lehenga for 'Ikk Kudi Punjab Di'

Actress Tanisha Mehta has stunned viewers with a jaw-dropping bridal ensemble in the wedding sequence of 'Ikk Kudi Punjab Di'. The diva had her own style inputs for the eccentric look in the show.

Talking about the attires for the wedding sequence in *Gurudwara*, Tanisha was unconventional.

The creative team and Tanisha chose a breath-taking light blue and golden lehenga, that exuded grace and poise.

Tanisha said, "Every girl dreams of dressing up as a beautiful bride, and as a professional in this industry, I have been lucky enough to experience this magical moment several times. But this one is truly distinctive and one of my favourites."

"I never thought that the combination of light blue and golden would look this good as a bridal



outfit, but as soon as it was finalised, my creative team and I were thrilled with the outcome. I was so excited that I went around with the team to find the jewellery to match

the attire, as I wanted it to be perfect," she shared.

The actress was happy and satisfied with the outcome of the selection she did for the neckpiece to the nose ring.

The actress added, "I honestly feel that dressing up as a bride is wonderful, whether it's for reel or real life, it brings out a lot of emotions and makes you happy. In the upcoming episodes, there are countless surprises and shocks for all the fans. I cannot wait to see their reactions to it."

While *Tanisha* is all engrossed in her wedding attire, there is a lot of drama incoming in Heer's life after her marriage with Kuldeep.

'Ikk Kudi Punjab Di' is based in Punjab, and revolves around the friendship between Heer (Tanisha) and Ranjha (played by Avinesh Rekhi).

It airs on Zee TV.

## Government working to make cooperative strong part of rural life: Prime Minister Modi

The Prime Minister said one crore people have been given 'Ayushman' card, a health insurance scheme run by the government for the poor.

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said his government is working to make cooperatives a strong part of rural life, asserting that they are being scaled up massively in sectors like agriculture and fisheries after making a mark in fields such as dairy and sugar production.

In an interaction with beneficiaries of the ongoing 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra', he said the change in the lives of crores of beneficiaries of his government's welfare schemes in the last 10 years has been a story of courage, satisfaction, and dreams.

Modi said it has been a great source of satisfaction for him



to see the self-confidence of people when he interacts with them.

During the yatra, he said one crore people have been given 'Ayushman' card, a health insurance scheme run by the government for the poor. 1.25 crore

people have undergone health check-ups while more than 70 lakh inspected for tuberculosis.

Taking a swipe at previous dispensations, he said if the situation during their tenure had prevailed now, then prospective beneficiaries of these schemes

would have lost their hopes in doing rounds of government offices.

There is no nepotism and bribery now to get these benefits, he said, adding "Modi is like family to you.

You don't need any connection.

"In the 10 years of his government, 10 crore women have joined self-help groups across the country and have been given Rs 7.5 lakh crore through banks, he said, adding that it is his dream to make 2 crore women 'lakhpati'.

The prime minister said his government is working to build lakhs of storage facilities to help farmers.

## Four killed, several injured in collisions due to fog across Uttar Pradesh

UNNAO/ BAGHPAT/ ETAWAHA, Dec 27 (Agencies): At Least four people were killed and several others injured in separate road collisions in various parts of the state due to a heavy fog the previous night and Wednesday morning.

In Unnao district, adjoining the state capital, a man was killed and at least 15 others injured in a pile-up of three buses, one container truck, and two cars on the Agra-Lucknow expressway last night.

Bangar Mau Police Station SHO Gyanendra Singh said, "A bus collided with a container truck from behind due to low visibility caused by heavy fog. Two other

buses later collided with the bus followed by two cars leading to a pileup."

The accident occurred on the intervening night of Dec 26 and 27.

"According to police, the victim of the collision was 50-year-old Vijay Kumar, and the 15 injured were all from the buses.

They have been admitted to a hospital.

In the Baghpat district of Western UP, two women were killed and 11 others injured when the van they were travelling in hit a truck in an area under the Khehra Police Station.

"A passenger van collided with a truck on the Eastern Peripheral Expressway during the wee hours of Wednesday," SHO Rajiv Singh

said. Seema, 44, and Mandeep, 38, were killed in the accident.

The injured were rushed to a hospital.

"It appears that the accident occurred because the van driver failed to notice the truck due to fog," the SHO said.

In Etawah, three people were injured after being hit by a truck on the Agra-Kanpur National Highway under the Jaswantnagar area of the district Wednesday morning.

According to police, the three were standing on a roadside when they were hit by a truck.

The three were admitted to a hospital, where one of them is said to be in a critical state.

## Several injured in pile-up on Yamuna Expressway in Greater Noida amid fog

NOIDA, Dec 27 (Agencies): Several commuters were injured in a pile-up on the Yamuna Expressway in Greater Noida on Wednesday morning amid reduced visibility due to fog, police officials said.

According to the officials, the incident took place around 8 am on the Agra to Noida lane of the expressway in the Dayanapur area under the Jewar police station limits.

"No person suffered fatal injury in the incident while the number of those injured was yet to be ascertained," Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (Greater Noida) Ashok Kumar said.

The officer said most of the damaged vehicles have been removed from the expressway and normal traffic move-



ment resumed on the stretch.

A video of the pile-up that surfaced on social media showed multiple damaged vehicles, including private and commercial ones, on the expressway.

One lane of the carriageway also appeared to have barricades where some construction work was underway, the purported video showed.

There was no comment yet from the officials concerned about whether the barricades caused the road crash.

Earlier this month, the upper-speed limit on the Yamuna Expressway was capped at 80 km per hour as a preventive measure against accidents due to fog. The speed limitation was started on December 15 and will be in force till February 15.

## Rahul Gandhi to begin 'Bharat Nyay Yatra' from Manipur to Mumbai on January 14

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (Agencies): Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is set to undertake the second edition of the 'Bharat Jodo yatra' on January 14 from Manipur and Mumbai covering 6200 km. It is set to conclude on March 20.

The yatra will be called 'Bharat Nyay Yatra'. It will be undertaken mostly by bus with short walks across 14 States. The states to be covered in the yatra include Manipur, Nagaland, Assam, Meghalaya, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

Announcing the yatra, AICC general secretary in charge of organization KC Venugopal and general secretary in



charge of communications Jairam Ramesh said that the yatra would be flagged off by the Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge from Imphal on January 14.

The main aim of the 'Nyay Yatra' will be to secure economic, social, and political justice for the country's people.

Venugopal said, "Following the unanimous resolution of the Congress Working Committee on December 21 that Mr Gandhi should

do the second phase of the Yatra from East to West, it was decided that he (Gandhi) should do the second phase of the yatra from Imphal to Mumbai."

Replying to a question about choosing Manipur as the starting point, he said, the state was an important part of the country and also the party wanted to begin the process of healing the wounds of the people of Manipur.

He said that while in

the first phase, Gandhi covered about 4,500 km from Kanyakumari to Kashmir covering 12 states, this time he will cover 6,200 km covering 14 states. This time the mode of the 'yatra' will be a bus with off-and-on walking stretches.

Ramesh said that while during the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', Gandhi raised the issues of economic disparities, polarization, and dictatorship, the 'Nyay Yatra' will focus on social, economic, and political justice for the country's people.

He said that after spreading the message of unity, love, and harmony, Gandhi will seek justice for the people of the country.

Replying to a question about whether the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) parties will also participate in the

yatra, Venugopal said, the final details were being worked out.

Ramesh pointed out that during the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', leaders of various political parties had also participated in that yatra.

On September 7 last year, the Congress launched the Kanyakumari-to-Kashmir 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' that covered over 4500 km. During the yatra, Gandhi traversed across 12 States and two Union Territories with a clarion call for unity and a mantra of 'open a shop of love in the market of hatred'.

It also saw the participation of celebrities like Pooja Bhatt, Swara Bhasker, Opposition leaders Shiv Sena's Aaditya Thackeray and NCP's Supriya Sule, former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan, among many others.

## Ammonia gas leaks from subsea pipeline of TN fertiliser plant, several people hospitalised

CHENNAI, Dec 27 (Agencies): An ammonia gas leak from a subsea pipeline linked to a private fertiliser manufacturing unit in north Chennai has caused illness among local residents, with about 25 people hospitalised. Officials on Wednesday reported symptoms such as shortness of breath and nausea among the affected people, who are currently undergoing treatment.

Following the leak, at about 11.45 pm on December 26, an odour that caused severe discomfort to people spread through air in north Chennai areas.

A number of persons fainted after experiencing 'burning sensation' in their throat and chest. Many people who were asleep woke up in panic and scurried out of their homes and alerted neighbours and all of them soon reached the main roads unsure of what to do.

For the people of north Chennai, it was double whammy, as they were affected by the recent oil spill and now the ammonia gas leak. About 25 people including children, who were residents of areas close to the fertiliser manufacturing facility were hospitalised. Most of them experienced unease,

shortness of breath, nausea, and faintness.

According to representatives of fishermen villages, Chinna Kuppam, Periya Kuppam, Netaji Nagar, Burma Nagar in north Chennai were among the affected neighbourhoods.

People had a tough time finding vehicles midnight and used whatever vehicles were available like autorickshaws and motorcycles to reach hospitals.

An elderly woman fainted after bouts of vomiting and she was rushed to a hospital in an autorickshaw. Buses and ambulances were also deployed by authorities to immediately bring

affected people to hospitals many kilometers away from the location of the fertiliser unit.

Some fishermen and local people who happened to be on the beachfront at midnight noticed unusual sound and water gushing out from select spots above the subsea pipeline.

Health Minister Ma Subramanian visited the Government Stanley Medical College Hospital here and spoke to people admitted from gas-hit areas and interacted with hospital authorities.

Coromandel International Limited, a Murugappa group company

said in a statement: "As part of routine operation, we noticed abnormality on December 26 at 23.30 hrs in the ammonia unloading subsea pipeline near shore side, outside the plant premises. Our Standard Operating Procedure activated immediately, and we have isolated ammonia system facility and brought the situation to normalcy in the shortest time."

After the company officials 'addressed' the issue, police personnel pacified people who gathered on roads and requested them to go back to their homes as 'there is no problem'.

## Tamil Nadu: 2 wanted in murder case killed in police encounter



KANCHIPURAM, Dec 27 (Agencies): Two men, accused of killing a history-sheeter, were shot dead during an encounter with police in Tamil Nadu's Kanchipuram district on Wednesday morning.

According to sources, police had to open fire in retaliation after the duo, identified as Raghuvaran and Karuppu Asain, allegedly attacked police personnel, who had

gone to arrest them in connection with the murder case.

The history-sheeter, Prabhakaran, was murdered on Tuesday by a group of men on the Puthupalayam street in the district. According to the police, Raghuvaran and Asain were allegedly involved in the murder. Following the murder, the duo hid in a dilapidated building near the new railway station bridge, from where the

police arrested them. The duo then tried to escape and allegedly attacked the cops with a sickle.

Police said to prevent further assault on his team members, Sub-Inspector Sudhakar had to open fire on both of them, after which both the accused were taken to a hospital, where the doctors declared them dead. Meanwhile, the injured police officials, Special Sub-Inspector of Police Ramalingam and Constable Sasikumar, were also admitted to the hospital.

Both Raghuvaran and Asain had several criminal cases registered against them in various police stations.

## 2 youths caught on CCTV walking on road close to Israel Embassy shortly before explosion; security tightened in Delhi

Police have increased security in the national capital after Tuesday's blast near the embassy

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (Agencies): Delhi Police have intensified its probe into a low-intensity blast that occurred near the Israel Embassy here and sources said two youths were caught on camera walking on the road close to the spot shortly before the explosion.

The National Security Guard (NSG) along with forensic experts visited the spot on Wednesday morning and collected samples of leaves and grass that they suspected might contain chemicals used in the explosion, police sources said, adding a team of dog

squad by the NSG also inspected the spot with two canines.

The team of forensic experts has marked the places with the signage of 'A', 'B' and 'C' from the spot where the blast took place on Tuesday.

The experts have used magnetic gadgets to detect the intensity of the blast, said sources.

The officials of Delhi Police Special Cell and local police inspected the spot and a group of paramilitary personnel were deployed there.

An official said as of now the police are contemplating to regis-



ter an FIR.

The police have also beefed up security in the national capital after the blast near the embassy in Chanakyapuri diplomatic enclave, an official said.

Areas around the Israel Embassy and Jewish establishments in Delhi have been put under the watch of the security personnel. The local police have been asked to increase the vigil in the national capital, the official said on Wednesday.

According to police sources, CCTV footage have been recov-

ered from near the spot in which two youths were found walking on the road, shortly before the blast. "It is yet to be ascertained whether they are suspects," the official added.

Security agencies have collected multiple CCTV footage from the lanes of Abdul Kalam Road and Prithviraj Road.

Security officials who visited the spot said since no remnants of the explosive were found at the spot, the possibility of a "chemical explosion" could not be ruled out.

## War With Hamas Will Last "Many More Months", Warns Israel Army Chief

**Israel's leaders have repeatedly vowed to keep up their offensive until Hamas is destroyed, and army chief Herzi Halevi signalled there would be no quick end to the war.**

JERUSALEM, Dec 27 (Agencies): Israel's army chief warned its war with Hamas will last "many more months" as the military stepped up strikes inside the Gaza Strip, where more than 20,000 people have already been reported killed.

Concerns over a spiralling humanitarian crisis inside the besieged territory have amplified calls for an end to the hostilities, while incidents linked to Iran-backed groups acting in solidarity with Hamas have fanned fears of a wider regional conflict.

On Tuesday, the United States reported shooting down a barrage of drones and missiles over the Red Sea fired by Yemen's Huthi rebels.

But Israel's leaders have repeatedly vowed to keep up their offensive until Hamas is destroyed, and army chief Herzi Halevi signalled there would be no quick end to the war.

"This war's objectives are essential and not simple to achieve," Halevi said on Tuesday night.

"Therefore, the war will continue for many more months."

The war erupted when Hamas gunmen attacked Israel on October 7 and killed about 1,140 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally based on Israeli figures.

During the attack -- the deadliest in Israel's history -- Hamas also took around 250 hostages, of whom 129 remain inside Gaza, Israel says.

Israel retaliated with a relentless bombardment and a siege followed by a ground invasion. The campaign has killed at least 20,915 people, mostly women and children, according to the latest toll issued by Gaza's Hamas-run health ministry.

- 'I've borrowed everything' - Since the siege went into effect, Gaza's 2.4 million people have been suffering severe



shortages of water, food, fuel and medicine, with only limited aid entering the territory. An estimated 1.9 million Gazans have been displaced, according to the UN.

In the southern city of Rafah, where many displaced people have sought refuge, hundreds turned up at the Abdul Salam Yassin water company on Tuesday carrying baskets, pulling handcarts and even pushing a wheelchair stacked with bottles to queue for clean water.

"This was my father's cart," said Rafah resident Amir al-Zahhar. "He was martyred during the war. He used it to transport and sell fish, and now we are using it to transport fresh water."

Elsewhere in the city, people split logs and stacked kindling as the lack of fuel forced them to burn wood for cooking and to keep warm.

One woman took advantage of the sunshine on Tuesday to wash her family's clothes by hand, telling AFP: "I've pleaded with people for water. I have absolutely nothing. I've borrowed everything, even the blankets, from others."

The UN Security Council, in a resolution last week, called for the "safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance at scale".

It requested the appointment of a UN humanitarian coordinator to oversee and verify third-country aid to Gaza, and on

Tuesday Sigrid Kaag, the outgoing Dutch finance minister, was named to the post.

The resolution, which did not call for an immediate end to the fighting, effectively leaves Israel with operational oversight of aid deliveries.

- 'Gravely concerned' - Israeli army spokesman Daniel Hagari said Tuesday that troops were "fighting in the southern Gaza Strip in the area of Khan Yunis, and we have expanded the combat to the area known as the central camps".

Three more Israeli soldiers were killed in Gaza on Tuesday, bringing the total to 161 since its ground invasion began on October 27, the military said.

The UN Human Rights Office said it was "gravely concerned about the continued bombardment of Middle Gaza by Israeli forces", particularly after the military ordered residents to move to the central and southern regions.

France, a staunch Israeli ally, also said it was concerned by Israel's vow to intensify and prolong the fighting.

Violence has also flared across the occupied West Bank since the war began.

An Israeli operation in a refugee camp in the north of the West Bank left six people dead early Wednesday, according to the Palestinian ministry of health.

More than 300 Palestinians in

the West Bank have been killed by Israeli forces and settlers since the war erupted, according to the ministry.

- Regional sparks - The impacts of the war have also reverberated throughout the region, with armed groups backed by Israel's arch-foe Iran escalating activity.

US military forces shot down more than a dozen attack drones and several missiles fired by Yemen's Iran-backed Huthi rebels at shipping in the Red Sea, the Pentagon said, reporting no damage or injuries.

The Huthis had claimed a missile strike on a vessel in the Red Sea and a drone attack towards Israel, their latest such actions in solidarity with Gaza.

Israel's military said one of its fighter jets had intercepted "in the Red Sea area a hostile aerial target that was on its way to Israeli territory".

Egyptian broadcaster Al-Qahera News reported that a flying object was struck about two kilometres (1.2 miles) from the seaside town of Dahab. The town lies around 125 kilometres south of Eilat on the southern tip of Israel, the closest target for Yemen's rebels.

In Iraq, the US military launched strikes on pro-Iran groups it has blamed for numerous attacks on US and allied forces during the Israel-Hamas war.

The strike claimed at least one life, Iraqi authorities said.

An anti-tank missile fired by Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah movement wounded nine soldiers, Israel's military said, while Hezbollah announced the death of two of its fighters.

The incidents come after an Israeli strike in Syria on Monday killed Razi Moussavi, a senior commander in the Quds Force -- the foreign arm of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

## Actor Lee Sun-Kyun of Oscar-winning film 'Parasite' found dead inside car



SEOUL, Dec 27 (Agencies): South Korean actor Lee Sun-Kyun, best known for his role in the Oscar-winning film "Parasite", was found dead Wednesday in an apparent suicide, Yonhap news agency reported.

The actor was discovered inside a vehicle at a park in central Seoul, Yonhap reported, citing police.

Lee, 48, had been under police investigation over his alleged use of marijuana and other psychoactive drugs. Once celebrated for his wholesome image, local news outlets reported that the actor was being dropped from television and commercial projects following the

scandal.

A graduate of South Korea's prestigious Korea National University of Arts, Lee made his acting debut in 2001 in a television sitcom titled "Lovers". He later won acclaim for his performances in a variety of roles, including a charismatic chef and a diligent architectural engineer who learns his wife cheats on him.

Globally, he is best known for his portrayal of the wealthy and shallow patriarch in director Bong Joon-ho's 2019 Oscar-winning film "Parasite".

His last film, this year's horror flick "Sleep" -- in which he played a husband whose sleepwalking eventually leads to horrifying circumstances

-- was well-received critically and featured in the Critics' Week section at the Cannes festival.

He briefly spoke to reporters in late October before entering an Incheon police station to meet with investigators.

"I sincerely apologise for causing great disappointment to many people by being involved in such an unpleasant incident," he said at the time. "I feel sorry for my family, which is enduring such difficult pain at this moment. "Once again, I sincerely apologise to everyone."

South Korea has extremely tough laws on illegal drugs, with even Koreans who take drugs like marijuana legally abroad risking prosecution upon returning to their home country.

This year, President Yoon Suk Yeol called for more stringent measures to eliminate drug traffickers, saying the country was no longer "drug-free".

He is survived by his wife and actress Jeon Hye-jin and two sons.

## Over 120 Kg 'Cocaine Bricks' Wash Up On Australia Beaches Over Christmas

SYDNEY, Dec 27 (Agencies): Australian police said Wednesday they were scouring beaches after mysterious packages believed to contain more than 120 kilograms of cocaine washed up over the Christmas period.

A first batch of 39 barnacle-encrusted, one-kilogram bricks of suspected cocaine was discovered on Friday near Magenta Beach, north of Sydney, police said.

Since then, another 85 packages of the same size had been spotted along about 80 kilometres (50 miles) of the

New South Wales coastline, state police said.

Police urged people to report any suspicious packages, Detective Chief Superintendent Jason Weinstein said in a statement.

"Detectives and specialist police are currently combing beaches and coastlines for any outstanding packages and working behind the scenes to make sure we find and hold accountable those responsible," said Weinstein, who is director of the state's crime command.

## Six dead, tens of thousands hit by southern Thailand flooding

BANGKOK, Dec 27 (Agencies): Floods in southern Thailand have killed at least six people and affected tens of thousands of households, authorities said on Wednesday.

The floods, which began on December 22, have hit more than 70,000 homes across the provinces of Satun, Songkhla, Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat, regional officials said.

Six people including an 89-year-old woman and a toddler were killed in Narathiwat, deputy provincial governor Preecha Nualnoi told agency.

Another person was still missing following days of intense rain, which sparked floodwaters that reached around



three meters in height in some places, he said.

Local media footage showed streets submerged by the muddy deluge and residents taking refuge on rooftops.

Relief teams worked by night to hand out bottled water and snacks and check buildings for damage or casualties. Thailand's Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation said the water level had reduced on Wednesday morning.

Some rail services in Narathiwat province, which borders Malaysia, had resumed following days of closure due to track subsidence, deputy governor Preecha said.

The kingdom's rainy season typically brings months of daily deluges but scientists say man-made climate change can make rainfall more intense.

In 2011, widespread flooding killed hundreds and damaged millions of homes around the country.

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## PTI's Shah Mehmood Qureshi arrested after being released from Adiala jail

LAHORE, Dec 27 (Agencies): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party's Vice Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi, who was last week granted bail in the cipher case by the Supreme Court, was re-arrested outside the Adiala jail on Wednesday.

Footage aired on television and shared by PTI on social media showed the 67-year-old former foreign minister, who was loudly protesting the "illegality" of the police's actions, being shoved into an armoured police vehicle by an official wearing the Punjab police uniform, Dawn News reported.

In a post on X, the party said Qureshi was



again arrested from outside the Adiala jail after being released on bail in the cipher case.

The party said that the order issued on Tuesday by the Rawalpindi Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar Cheema for Qureshi's 15-day detention had been withdrawn.

Police have not yet

commented on the issue.

While being forcibly whisked away by police personnel, the PTI leader kept saying he was being arrested illegally.

Qureshi added that the police were making a mockery of the Supreme Court's orders and cruelty and injustice were at its peak.

"They are arresting me again in a false case," he said. "I represent the nation, I am innocent and I am being targeted for political revenge without any reason," he said.

On Friday, the top court granted bail to former Prime Minister Imran Khan and his close aide Qureshi in the cipher case and told him to submit surety bonds worth Rs1 million each.

Qureshi's daughter had said she expected her father would be released as his arrest was not required in any other case.

Qureshi's family on Tuesday arrived at Adiala jail to pay his surety bond but before they could obtain the

robkar (release order), Rawalpindi Deputy Commissioner (DC) Hassan Waqar Cheema issued an order for the former foreign minister's 15-day detention under Section 3 of the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO).

Section 3 of MPO empowers the government to arrest and detain suspected persons to prevent them from "acting in any manner prejudicial to public safety or the maintenance of public order".

If necessary the government may "extend from time to time the period of such detention, for a period not exceeding six months at a time".

## Russia says redirected most oil exports from Europe to China, India

**After President Vladimir Putin sent troops to Ukraine in February 2022, Western countries hit Russia with a slew of sanctions including a European Union embargo on its seaborne oil deliveries.**

MOSCOW, Dec 27 (Agencies): Russia has redirected its oil exports from Europe to China and India, Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said Wednesday, almost two years after Moscow was hit by Western sanctions over the Ukraine conflict.

After President Vladimir Putin sent troops to Ukraine in February 2022, Western countries hit Russia with a slew of sanctions including a European Union embargo on its seaborne oil deliveries.

"We previously supplied a

total of 40 to 45 percent of oil and oil products to Europe," said Novak, who is in charge of energy policy.

"This year, we expect the figure not to exceed four to five percent of total exports," Novak said in a televised interview.

As it was losing much of its market share in Europe, Moscow pivoted to other buyers including China.

"China -- whose share (of oil exports) has grown to 45-50 percent -- and India have become our main partners in the current situation," Novak said.



India, which previously received almost no shipment, has become a major buyer.

"In two years the total share of supplies to India has increased to about 40 percent," Novak said.

India has been able to snap up discounted crude from Russia before refining it and selling it to European

customers, reports say.

While these sales are legal, critics say they amount to a backdoor route for Russian oil and undermine the impact of the sanctions.

Russia has also had to find new markets for its natural gas exports as Moscow cut its exports to EU nations, which have also looked for new suppliers.

Novak said the Russian energy industry had successfully developed despite multiplying sanctions in 2023.

Novak said he expected Russian oil and gas rev-

enues will amount to almost nine trillion rubles (\$98 billion) this year -- a level similar to before the offensive in 2021.

The oil and gas industry accounts for 27 percent of Russia's gross domestic product, according to Novak, bringing in 57 percent of Russia's export revenues.

Novak said Russia was open to other buyers. "There are a lot of people who want to buy Russian oil. These are Latin American countries, African countries, and other countries of the Asia-Pacific region."



## FPSB India, IIBF join forces to advance financial planning education and certification

### Top News Report

JAMMU / MUMBAI, Dec 27: FPSB India, the Indian subsidiary of Financial Planning Standards Board Ltd., the global standards-setting body for the financial planning profession and owner of the international Certified Financial Planner® certification program, has entered into a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Banking and Finance (IIBF) to enhance the educational and professional opportunities for aspiring financial planners in India and give impetus to professional financial planning advisory in India.

Under this significant partnership, candidates who have successfully acquired the CAIIB qualification from IIBF will be exempted from passing the first three modules of CFP Certification and become eligible to enrol in FPSB India's Integrated Financial Planning module through the Challenge Pathway.

To qualify for this pathway, candidates must also have a



valid three-year experience in banking and financial services.

FPSB India offers the globally recognized CFP® certification, which represents excellence in financial planning through rigorous competency and ethical standards. It is home to over 2,500 CFP professionals in India and part of a global network of organizations representing more than 213,000 CFP professionals worldwide.

Krishan Mishra, CEO, FPSB India, expressed his enthusiasm about the collaboration, saying, "This MoU is a pivotal moment

in the financial services sector of India. It brings together two esteemed institutions, FPSB India and IIBF, with the common goal of promoting professionalism and excellence in financial planning. The exemption for CAIIB candidates is a testament to our commitment to recognizing and facilitating the career growth of skilled individuals."

In addition to the exemption provision, FPSB India will extend special discount on the total course fees, examination fees, and other applicable fees to eligible CAIIB candidates

who apply for the Certified Financial Planner (CFP) certification under the Challenge pathway.

Biswa Ketan Das, CEO, IIBF, shared his perspective on the partnership, saying, "IIBF is proud to collaborate with FPSB India to offer a seamless pathway for CAIIB qualified professionals to embark on a rewarding journey in financial planning. This strategic partnership reflects our commitment to fostering excellence in banking and finance education."

Furthermore, FPSB India and IIBF are set to enhance their collaboration by organizing joint seminars, webinars, and conferences on various subjects related to Financial Planning and other relevant topics. The FPSB India-IIBF MoU is poised to bring significant benefits to the financial services industry and aspiring financial professionals in India. It aligns with the mission of both organizations to promote education, professionalism, and ethical standards in the financial planning domain.

## Block Diwas: Grievance redressal camps held at Kund Block



### Top News Report

KULGAM, Dec 27: To listen to issues, grievances and demands of people for their timely redressal, the District Administration Kulgam on Wednesday organized grievance redressal camps at Kund block of district Kulgam.

The Additional Commissioner (ADC) Kulgam, Vikar Ahmad Giri presided over the grievance redressal camp at Kund.

The programme was attended by a number of delegations, civil society members, PRI representatives and scores

of individuals besides government officers.

At the outset of the programme, Naib Tehsildar Kund Hyder Husain Bhat gave a brief of action taken on the issue and grievances raised by the previous Block Diwas programme.

Delegations from, Waltangoo, Kanchloo, Orien, Kraloo, Pachgam Nard, Nageenpora, Razloo, Batangoo, Nowbugh, Waripora, and Hakraden and various other areas flagged-off their issue and grievances for timely redressal on the occasion.

The participating del-

egations, civil society members, PRI representatives and individuals highlighted a number of issues and grievances including, PDD, augmentation of water supply scenario in various areas, development of community centre at Waltangoo and various other demands of public importance.

Officers on spot responded to the queries and issues pertaining to their departments.

Several issues and grievances of immediate nature were redressed by the ADC on the spot.

The Naib Tehsildar, BDO Kund, ZEO Devsar, and other officers from civil and police administration also attended the programme.

The ADC exhorted upon the officers to ensure that people are served with utmost dedication and sincerity.

## Dr Tomar distributes Tabs among Law College students

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 27: Dr. Rajendra Singh Tomar, President and founder of IMRC College of Law, highlighted the advancements in higher education in India and the potential of today's students to shape a bright future for the nation.

Dr. Tomar emphasized that the Indian government is now providing facilities for higher education that were once only available abroad.

This shift has allowed students to access modern legal education within the country, eliminating the need to go to places like London for such opportunities, he said.

Dr. Tomar commended the exceptional talent of today's students, noting their achievements in various examinations.

He proudly mentioned that graduates from the College of Law have risen to occupy high positions, including



judgeships in different states. This, he stated, is a source of great pride for the college.

As recognition of the students' talent, Dr. Tomar distributed tablet phones as awards during the event. The ceremony also featured a performance by renowned singer Harish Kashyap, adding an entertaining element to the occasion.

The presence of notable figures, including Hindu nationalist BJP leader Raju Chandel, Dinesh Tomar, Mandal President BJP of Bahadurgarh Hapur, and Naresh Tomar,

General Secretary of Hapur, added significance to the tablet distribution ceremony. Raju Chandel, in his address, expressed confidence in the young generation of students, stating that they will lead the nation to new heights and contribute to the creation of a united India.

He acknowledged the abundance of talent and skills among students in the country, attributing the visible brightening of future prospects to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Make in India' initiative.

## Sahitya Akademi organizes program "Through My Window"

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 27: Sahitya Akademi New Delhi, organized a program "Through My Window" at Jammu.

The program was based on Prof. Ram Nath Shastri's life and work.

Prof. Ram Nath Shastri was known as father figure of Dogri and worked hard to promote Dogri language and literature.



Sahitya Akademi honored him with its highest Award "Fellowship". He was the recipient of

Sahitya Akademi Award and Sahitya Akademi Award for translation. Government of India

honed him with its fourth highest civilian Award "Padma Shri".

He along with his young comrades created a group in 1944 popularly known as Dogri Sanstha. His contribution to Dogri language and literature is remarkable.

Narsingh Dev Jamwal spoke at length on Prof. Ram Nath Shastri under the title through my window.

Narsingh is a renowned Dogri writer contributed

more than fifty books to Dogri literature. He is a recipient of Sahitya Akademi Award, Sahitya Akademi Award for translation and Sahitya Akademi Award for children literature.

Government of India honored him its fourth highest civilian Award Padma Shri.

The program was appreciated by one and all presented in the hall. Mohan Singh Convener Dogri Advisory Board chaired the program.

## Satsang held at Chohala in memory of Kartaro Devi

### Top News Report

R S Pura, Dec 27: A Satsang in memory of Late Shrimati Taro Devi was held at Village Chohala here today in which a large number of people hailing from different corners participated.

The religious teacher said, "When someone expires, we say, 'This person is no more.' That

is not true. The person is no more the way you know him, but he still very much exists.

The physical body will fall apart, but the mental and pranic body go on, depending upon the strength of karma. To find another womb, the intensity of this karmic structure should come down, it should become passive. If the karmic structure has become

weak because it has run its course, then it finds another body very easily.

When one completes his allotted karma for this life, he will expire just like that - without disease, accident or injury. That person may find another body within hours."

Among others who listened to the satsang were Messrs R.L.

Kaith, Ramneek Singh, Ramesh Choudhary, Janak Raj Lakhotra, Rakesh Kumar Lakhotra, Dhian Chand Lakhotra, Rattan Lal Motan, Bishan Dass Kaith, Ramesh Chand Chanjotra, Jagdish Chander Chanjotra, Sat Pal Targotra, Baldev Raj, Birbal Mandi, Hakkat Anmol, Raj Kumar, Gesu Kumar and Aryan Lakhotra.

## FROM PAGE 1

### Can't tolerate anyone looking down on our soldiers, says Rajnath Singh in Rajouri

than it was before. The Indian Army has become quite well equipped as compared to earlier. You all are the protectors of this country. Along with protecting the country, I want to make a special request to you. The responsibility of protecting the country rests on you, but along with protecting the country, winning the hearts of your countrymen is also a big responsibility on your shoulders. Stay closely connected with the people of the country you are serving."

"I believe that we aim to win the war. While we aim to eliminate the terrorists, our aim should be bigger; we have to win the hearts of our countrymen. We will win the war, we will win any kind of war, and we will eliminate the terrorists but at the same time, we have to win the hearts of the countrymen and a huge responsibility rests on the shoulders of all of you and I know very well that you will fulfil it completely. We try our best to fulfil it with dedication. May you continue to serve with courage, honour, and unwavering adherence to your values," added Rajnath Singh.

Earlier, four Army personnel were killed and three others were injured after heavily armed terrorists ambushed two Army vehicles near Thanamandi in the Rajouri sector on Thursday last week.

Amid the recent increase in attacks on its troops, the Indian Army is planning to increase the number of troops in the Poonch-Rajouri sector to curb the activities of the Pakistani terrorists there, sources said on Monday.

"An additional brigade-size formation had been moved into the area a few months ago. It is planned that another brigade will come there along with a few other units to support counter-terrorist operations," sources in the Army informed ANI.

The move is expected to strengthen the counter-terrorist grid in the area and increase the confidence of the local population.

The local police have also strengthened their intelligence network and are expected to beef it up further.

The Army is also conducting a Staff Court of Inquiry against the 13-Sector Rashtriya Rifles Commander, who is a Brigadier, for the recurring lapses in operations in which the Army has lost many troops.

The Staff Court of Inquiry is being headed by a Major General-rank officer who would also be taking responsibility for the deaths of three civilians who were taken into custody by 48 RR troops right after the Dera ki Gali terror attack, in which four troops were killed and their bodies were also mutilated. Indian Army chief Gen. Manoj Pande also visited the Poonch-Rajouri sector today and is expected to visit again along with senior defence ministry functionaries this week.

During the visit, he was briefed by the top commanders about the current operations and the steps to be taken to target terrorists effectively in the coming days.

Sources said the Pakistan Army and its intelligence agencies want to revive terrorism in the Poonch-Rajouri sector to pressurise the Indian Army to cut down troops on the northern border with China.

The security forces have also managed to cut down on terrorist activities in the Kashmir valley.

### Huge quantity of seized

### drugs, psychotropic substances destroyed in Anantnag

Bhosa 164.810 kgs + 03 Parcels, Charas Power 21.499 kgs were destroyed at Kashmir Health Care System, IGC Lassipora in presence of constituted committee headed by Chief Judicial Magistrate Anantnag, SP (OPS) Anantnag, Dy SP ANTF Kashmir, Executive Magistrate Anantnag and other Police officers of the District.

### No expectations from Defence Minister's J&K visit: Farooq Abdullah

were found dead after they were picked up by the Army for questioning following a terrorist ambush on two Army vehicles in Poonch last Thursday that killed four soldiers.

The defence minister has flown to Rajouri to visit ground zero on Wednesday along with Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Army chief Manoj Pande to review the security situation following the terror attack on the Army vehicles.

On Congress' Bharat Nyay Yatra that was announced earlier on Wednesday, the NC president said Rahul Gandhi "is trying to unite the country".

"He is trying to remove the mistrust and hatred between communities. We were part of this effort earlier and we will be part of it again," he added.

Asked about his remarks on Kashmir turning into Gaza, a defiant Abdullah hit back and said, "What will happen if the two countries do not find a way for friendly relations? We have terrorism. China is also

sitting over our heads. If there is a war here, where will the bombs fall? Will the bombs explode in the air or fall on us?" On Tuesday, Abdullah said he favoured talks with Pakistan, saying that otherwise "we will face the same situation as is happening with Palestinians in Gaza".

The former J&K chief minister said he has been advocating talks between India and Pakistan to ensure friendly relations between the two countries.

"That's why I often repeat Vajpayee's words that we can change friends but we cannot change neighbours. The incumbent PM has also said that this is an era when war cannot resolve issues but talks can."

"We will pray that such time comes and talks happen here also so that the clouds of problems hovering over us disappear," he added.

On the Israel-Palestine war, Abdullah said "If America wishes, this war (in Gaza) will stop tomorrow but they also want Muslims to be killed." He said the conflict in the Middle East was not new and dates back to times when "kings from foreign lands would come to kill Muslims."

### Govt directs digital platforms not to carry Ads of fraudulent loan apps

fraudulent loan apps that many platforms are carrying and we have, through yesterday's advisory, made it clear that no intermediary can carry advertisements of fraudulent loan apps because it will be misleading and exploits people who are using the internet," the Minister of State for Electronics and IT said on the sidelines of an event.

Jurisprudence and government approach on safe and trusted internet is evolving, he said adding that IT rules clearly specify 11 areas of prohibited content.

### MHA declares Muslim League Jammu Kashmir (Masarat Alam Faction) an unlawful association

pro-Azadi protests in the Valley in 2010. He was arrested along with several other leaders after those protests and was released in 2015.

### India sees single-day rise Of 529 Covid-19 Cases

one from Gujarat, were reported in a span of 24 hours, according to the ministry's data updated at 8 a.m.

The number of daily cases had dropped to double-digits till December 5, but infections have again gone up after emergence of a new variant and cold weather conditions. The daily numbers were in lakhs at the peak of the pandemic, which began in early 2020 and has seen more than 4.5 crore people getting infected and over 5.3 lakh deaths in about four years since then across the country. The number of people who have recuperated from the disease stands at more than 4.4 crore with a national recovery rate of 98.81%, according to the ministry's website. The case fatality rate stands at 1.19%.

According to the website, 220.67 crore doses of Covid vaccines have so far been administered in the country.

## NOTICE

I, Sahil Sharma, S/o Chuni Lal Sharma, R/o Nagrota Gujru, Tehsil Billawar, District Kathua have lost my Driving License bearing no JK 0820100016538. Now I am applying for duplicate for the same. Objection if any may be conveyed to concerned authority within 7 days of publication of this notice.

## Markets continue to rally for 4th day running

**The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 289.93 points to 71,626.73 in early trade. The Nifty climbed 90.45 points to 21,531.80.**

MUMBAI, Dec 27 (Agencies): Equity benchmark indices maintained their winning run for the fourth day running on Wednesday, helped by optimism over the country's macroeconomic fundamentals and firm global market trends.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 289.93 points to 71,626.73 in early trade. The Nifty climbed 90.45 points to 21,531.80.

Among the Sensex firms, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, Tata Motors, Larsen & Toubro and Power Grid were the major gainers. Asian Paints, NTPC, Maruti and Hindustan Unilever were among the laggards.

In Asian markets,



Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong quoted with gains while Seoul traded lower.

The US markets ended in the green on Tuesday. "The resilience of the market even in the holiday season, which is normally devoid of much action, is an indication of its underlying bullishness."

The global support to the market from the mother market US where the S&P 500 is close to all-time high is significant," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief

Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.07 per cent to USD 81.01 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 95.20 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

The BSE benchmark climbed 229.84 points or 0.32 per cent to settle at 71,336.80 on Tuesday. The Nifty advanced 91.95 points or 0.43 per cent to 21,441.35.

## Real estate space sizzles with surging demand, soaring sales; rush for properties to continue in 2024

**The real estate industry saw record sales of residential properties in terms of both volumes and value.**

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (Agencies): India's housing market defied logic this year to register all-time high sales as home buyers snapped up deals despite a jump in asking prices and the highest interest rates in six years.

Market experts strongly believe the demand will not only sustain in 2024 but rise further, albeit at a slower pace, on high economic growth and expectations of a fall in home loan interest rates.

The real estate industry saw record sales of residential properties in terms of both volumes and value, real estate market data showed that consumers are increasingly buying into the idea of home ownership post-Covid pandemic.

The ouster of dubious developers from the real estate market thanks to greater regulatory oversight via RERA helped boost confidence among home buyers.

The insolvency law too has played a role in the elimination of defaulting builders.

According to real estate consultant Anarock, housing sales are estimated to rise by 30 per cent this year to a record 4.74 lakh units in primary (fresh sales) markets of top seven cities -- Delhi-NCR (National Capital Region), Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Pune.

In value terms, the sales of residential properties are seen at a whopping Rs 4.5 lakh crore, supported by higher ticket prices.

Housing prices, which started moving up last year after remaining stagnant for almost a decade, continued an upward trend and appreciated by an average of 14 per cent this year, encouraging investors to return to the primary residential market.

"The changing sentiments of homebuyers -- wherein not only are home-renters convert-



ing into buyers but also buying bigger homes -- has played a huge contributing hand to sectoral and economic growth.

The consumer has realised the importance of owning a home and we expect this sentiment to continue in the foreseeable future," realtors' apex body CREDAI President Boman Irani told agency.

Property developers and consultants think that the industry is witnessing the "best time" and it is possibly in the first or second year of a long-term upcycle.

Sales were strong across price brackets, be it affordable, mid-income, premium and ultra-luxury homes, but what surprised everyone was the huge demand for properties starting from Rs 3-4 crore range to as high as Rs 100 crore.

"The Indian residential real estate sector experienced remarkable growth in 2023, reaching a pinnacle not seen in the past 15 years. On the back of a strong Indian economy, real estate sector is seeing this robust end user-led growth in the residential demand and supply," Anarock's Chairman Anuj Puri said.

He expressed confidence that the real estate market will grow further next year.

"Given the ongoing developments and sustained momentum in the Indian economy and residential real estate sector, the upcoming year is poised for continued growth, although the rate of increase may be more moderate due to high base effect," Puri said.

Sales are expected to surpass supply or maintain equilibrium, he said, adding that prices might rise 8-10 per cent in 2024 across major markets.

Big branded developers having a good track record of executing projects reported sales of entire inventories in their project within a few days, as potential homebuyers and investors queued up to book their flats in large numbers, outstripping the supply.

DLF, the country's largest real estate firm, announced in March sales of 1,137 luxury apartments, priced Rs 7 crore and above in its housing project in Gurugram for over Rs 8,000 crore within 3 days.

DLF, Prestige Estates, Macrotech Developers and Godrej Properties all reported sales bookings between Rs 12,000 crore and Rs 15,000 crore during the last fiscal year and they expect to better their performance in the 2023-24 fiscal.

The consolidation in the housing market, in terms of both supply and demand, gained further momentum towards branded and trusted developers, prompting them to aggressively expand their land bank for future development.

Among other segments of real estate, the demand for office space is estimated to remain flat this year at 37-39 million square feet across seven major cities.

There were apprehensions that the leasing or absorption of office space would decline this year because of geopolitical concerns and the global economic slowdown.

The flexible space segment expanded its portfolio in a big way to meet demand from corporates who have started adopting managed workspace instead of conventional office to save cost and also get rid of facility management.

Leasing of retail space in shopping malls and major high-street locations also increased as retail consumption surged.

The year also saw India's first retail assets-backed REIT -- Nexus Select Trust -- sponsored by global investment firm Blackstone, which also made a complete exit from the country's first REIT -- Embassy Office Parks -- by selling 23.5 per cent stake for Rs 7,100 crore this month in open market transactions.

REITs are Real Estate Investment Trusts. Builders also diversified their portfolio to develop warehousing projects and data centres projects. Co-living, which was badly hit during the pandemic, recovered a lot.

In a nutshell, builders are upbeat that the housing market sustained strong demand and was able to post a healthy growth.

Since 2022, the sector has been on an upswing and seems to have overcome disruptions caused by demonetisation, implementation of RERA and GST laws, NBFC crisis and the Covid pandemic.

"The prospect of being the world's fastest-growing nation, coupled with current affordability levels, is expected to sustain the real estate momentum in 2024. Hopefully with inflation and interest rates getting moderated, we may see 2024 as a record year ahead of 2023 on both supply and demand for residential from end users," Puri said.

If the growth trend continues, the size of the Indian real estate market will expand in a big way and may reach USD 5.8 trillion by 2047 from USD 477 billion last year, according to a recent NAREDCO-Knight Frank report.

## SBI hikes interest rates on FDs



NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (Agencies): The State Bank of India (SBI) has raised interest rates on certain fixed deposits (FDs) by up to 0.5 per cent with immediate effect.

The bank has hiked the interest rate on deposits maturing between 7 days to 45 days to 3.50

per cent from 3 per cent.

SBI raised the interest rate on tenure of 46 days to 179 days to 4.75 per cent from 4.50 per cent.

The bank has also hiked the interest rate on tenure of 180 days to 210 days from 5.25 per cent to 5.75 per cent. For FDs maturing 211

days to less than one year, the interest rate has been raised to 6 per cent from 5.75 per cent.

On deposits maturing between three years to less than five years, the interest rate has been increased to 6.75 from 6.50 per cent. Other tenure rates have been left unchanged.

In the case of the Amrit Kalash specific tenor scheme of '400 days' at rate of interest of 7.10 per cent w.e.f. April 12, 2023, senior citizens are eligible for a rate of interest of 7.60 per cent. The scheme will be valid till March 31, 2024.

## Treating tumours in under a day with radiosurgery treatment

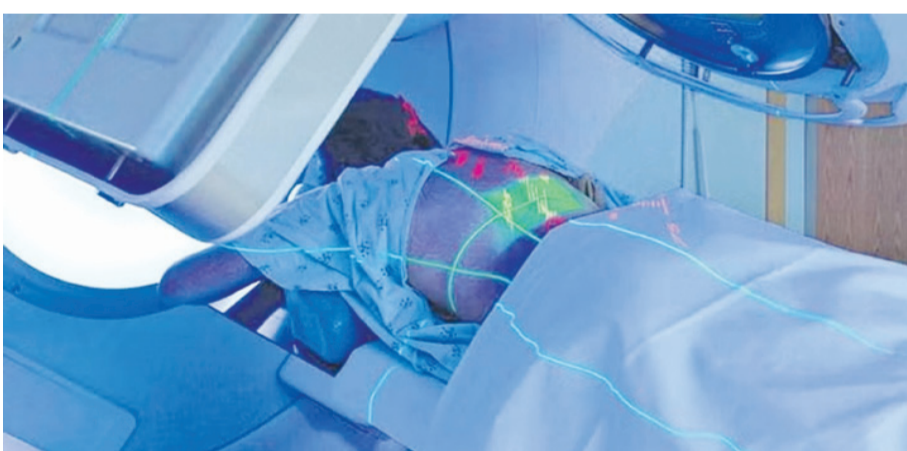
**The primary criterion, to apply the method, is the tumour has to be small/ tiny and the treatment is restricted to the tiny tumour.**

KOCHI, Dec 27 (Agencies): Radiation therapy, also known as radiotherapy, is a common treatment for cancer, but it takes around 25 to 30 days or sittings. However, patients can opt for radiosurgery treatment which can last from a few minutes to a few hours, depending on the location and type of area being treated.

However, for several reasons - the lack of expertise and awareness, the less time-consuming treatment method is not popular in India. "Lars Leksell, a Swedish neurosurgeon who also specialised in radiation, invented the method in the 1960s. The surgery takes only a day. So, he combined radiation with surgery - to treat tiny tumours in a day.

The primary criterion, to apply the method, is the tumour has to be small/ tiny and the treatment is restricted to the tiny tumour. If a larger area has to be treated - we cannot opt for radiosurgery," said Dr Arunlal, consultant radiation oncologist at Lisie Hospital, Kochi.

"In the last 10 to 12 years, there has been a shift in terms of indications, data generation and refinement of



the treatment. We have 10-year follow-up data that shows how safe and effective radiosurgery is. It has helped to improve the acceptance of radiosurgery," said Dr Debnarayan Dutta, assistant professor with the Department of Radiotherapy at Amrita Hospital, adding that robotic radiosurgery came to India in 2010.

Earlier, the procedure, called stereotactic radiosurgery, was only used to treat brain conditions. The technology can be now used to treat small tumours in the lungs and liver. The procedure is called stereotypic body radiotherapy. "We never used radiosurgery for prostate, liver or lung diseases earlier. Now it has become standard care.

If someone has a small bone metastasis, it is treated with radiosur-

gery and the outcome is better than the conventional surgery. It is similar for the lungs and liver too," added Debnarayan. The procedure is similar to radiation therapy. "For a patient undergoing radiosurgery, it is pretty similar to standard radiation treatment. An initial planning scan will be performed with an immobilisation device, on which the doctors mark the area to be treated and the normal tissues to be spared.

The planning takes place where angles are decided which will optimally treat the tumour and spare unaffected tissues. On the day of treatment, the patient will once again lie on the couch, scans will be taken to verify the position and treatment will be delivered. It will be painless and complete-

ly non-invasive. Unlike earlier, there is no need for fixed frames or fiducials to track in modern radiation oncology. Most of the difficult work is behind the scenes and patients can enjoy the benefits," said Arunlal.

Advantages "The difference between radiation therapy and radiosurgery is the time required for treatment. Conventional radiation will require 25 to 30 sittings. In radiosurgery, it is given in a single shot. The radiation dose to surrounding parts is reduced and thus the side effect profile of the method is less," added Arunlal. "Radiosurgery is a short treatment, usually lasting one to five days.

So the recovery time for patients, bystanders, day losses etc is lesser. It does not have many side effects. The quality of life is better maintained in radiosurgery as there aren't many reactions," said Debnarayan. "In case of brain metastasis, we don't have to treat the whole brain. When we treat the brain completely, they may experience memory decline and it can be avoided when radiosurgery is used. Also, in certain cases, it can be an acceptable alternative to surgery," added Arunlal.

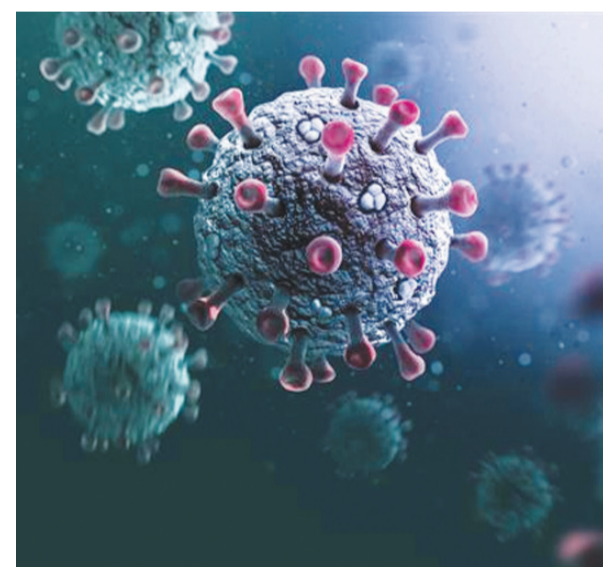
Options available

The treatment is available in almost all major cities in India. "High-end Linear accelerator (LINAC) machines that can give both conventional radiation treatment and radiosurgery are available in all major super-specialty hospitals.

Facilities for gamma knife radiosurgery are available in AIIMS Delhi, NIMHANS Bangalore, Apollo Hospitals etc," said Arunlal. "We need the expertise, machine and team to perform the procedure to deliver the high dose. We cannot make any errors. Expertise is critical. It is the only thing that stops the expansion of radiosurgery in India," added Debnarayan.

## Cases of Covid sub-variant JN.1 rises to 109 in India

**Three new fatalities two from Karnataka and one from Gujarat were reported in the last 24 hours**



NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (Agencies): Forty more cases of the COVID-19 sub-variant JN.1 were recorded, with the tally of cases of the new variant across the country till December 26 rising to 109, official sources said on Wednesday.

Thirty-six cases were detected from Gujarat, 34 from Karnataka, 14 from Goa, nine from Maharashtra, six from Kerala, four each from Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu, and two from Telangana, they said. Most of the patients are currently in home isolation, they added.

NITI Aayog member (Health) Dr V K Paul had said last week that the new variant was being closely investigated but he stressed on the need

for states to ramp up testing and strengthen their surveillance systems.

Even though the number of cases is rising and the JN.1 sub-variant has been detected in the country, there is no cause of immediate concern as 92 per cent of those infected are opting for home-based treatment, indicating a mild illness, officials have said.

There is also no increase in hospitalisation rates and COVID-19 is an incidental finding in those hospitalised due to other medical conditions, they said.

Union Health Secretary Sudhanshu Pant last week had written to states and Union territories calling for requisite

public health measures to be put in place and underlined the critical COVID-19 control and management strategies considering the ongoing festive season.

States have been urged to ensure effective compliance of operational guidelines for revised surveillance strategy for COVID-19 shared by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

They have asked to monitor and report district-wise cases of Influenza-like Illness (ILI) and Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) in all health facilities regularly for early detection of rising trend of cases.

India saw a single-day rise of 529 cases of COVID-19, while the number of active cases of the infection was recorded at 4,093, the health ministry said on Wednesday.

Three new fatalities two from Karnataka and one from Gujarat were reported in the last 24 hours, according to the ministry's data updated at 8 am.

The JN.1 (BA.2.86.1.1), emerged in August 2023 in Luxembourg and is descendant of the BA.2.86 lineage (Pirola) of SARS COV2.

## KL Rahul sends a timely reminder, rescues India on Day 1

*In his new role as a middle-order batter, the 31-year-old scored a fifty to help the team recover in Centurion.*

CENTURION, Dec 27 (Agence): Kagiso Rabada had just cleaned up Shreyas Iyer on an overcast Tuesday afternoon at Centurion — a sharp inswinger that went between the bat and pad, and hit the middle stump on the last ball of the first over after lunch. It was his 497th international wicket, 282nd in the format and second on the day. Having won the toss and put in India, in conditions that assisted the pacers, South Africa had reduced India to 92/4 with Rabada, Gerald Coetzee, Nandre Burger and Marco Jansen yet to put a foot wrong.

Rabada, in particular, had been breathing fire. It is a format where he holds ground like no other, where his legend is less spoken of despite having the all-time best strike rate (39.3) for a pacer with a minimum of 200 wickets. Facing him in his next over was KL Rahul, the new batter, in his new role for the Indian Test team.

For the first time in nine years, Rahul is batting in the middle-order, and Rabada was not going to let him off easy. Two length deliveries, followed by two short balls, one of which



Rahul tried to hook and missed and then back-of-length deliveries that lifted off length. Rahul survived, breathed and took guard again. That in itself was a job well done.

When Rabada ran for the next over, Rahul was ready. Another delivery that bounced extra, but this time, Rahul had his hands on line and above, pulling the ball into the ground. It bounced near the legs of Tony de Zorzi and went through to the ropes. Rahul was officially off the mark with a shot that was a sign of what was to come.

On a surface where the ball was moving not just sideways, but also rising and keeping low, Rahul did what he does best —

take guard, watch, leave if you can, defend if you have to, rinse, repeat. Get something too full, lean forward a bit and gently caress it through covers for four. If it's on the body, fend it off if you can and take a single, pull it into the ground when possible and take the blow if you have to. When there is width on offer, guide it behind gully or free your arms and pull it in front of the square. Rahul did it all to perfection, with not much fuss.

Once Rabada sent back Virat Kohli and R Ashwin to close in on the 500th wicket, Rahul freed his arms, channelled his white-ball personality to play his shots — lofting Burger over cover for a six to get to his half-century. First

with Shardul Thakur, then with Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj, he took India to 208/8 and remained unbeaten on 70 along the way before rain drew curtains on the day's play.

Nine years ago, coming back from his debut tour of Australia where he scored a hundred, Rahul piled on runs in the 2014-15 Ranji Trophy. He smashed 838 runs in nine innings, including a triple hundred, and helped Karnataka lift the title, living up to the reputation he had built as a batting prodigy. However, his international career since then has not always been a smooth ride despite the backing he had (he averages 33.44 after 47 Tests). The last three years, though, have been different. The 31-year-old has shown he is ready to do what's needed and do it to the best of his capabilities.

And on Tuesday — where Rabada showed why he is one of the best in the business, taking a fiver and reaching the milestone (500) — Rahul has reminded everyone that he is capable of guiding the Test team through the transition over the next few years.

## Vinesh to return Khel Ratna and Arjuna Award

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (Agence): After Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik, another prominent face of the protests in the sexual harassment case against Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, Vinesh Phogat, has announced that she would be returning her awards.

Vinesh, who has won two World Championships medals, announced that she would be returning her Major Dhyana Chand Khel Ratna as well as Arjuna Award to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In a letter to PM Modi, which she released on micro-blogging site X, Vinesh said she was hurt how Olympics medallists Bajrang and Sakshi were forced into taking extreme measures.

"No mother in India would have the same fate as her daughter. Now I want to get rid of that image of receiving the award because that was a dream and what is happening with us right now is a reality," Vinesh wrote in her social media post.

"I was awarded the Khel Ratna and Arjuna Award but now they don't seem important to me. Every woman wants to live her life with respect so that's why Prime Minister sir, I want to return my Major Dhyana Chand Khel Ratna and Arjuna Award to you so that these awards do not become a roadblock in my life," she added.

Sakshi had announced her retirement on the day that Sanjay Singh, who was backed by Brij Bhushan, won the election to become the new Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president last Thursday.

Bajrang, meanwhile, left his Padma Shri medallion on a pavement near Kar-

tavya Path after he was stopped by the Delhi Police from heading towards the Prime Minister's Office.

In the letter, Vinesh also pointed to the fact that Sakshi was made the brand ambassador of the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign and that ever since registering their complaints against Brij Bhushan, women wrestlers have been targeted by him and his supporters. "Our lives are not like those fancy advertisements. Women wrestlers have suffered a lot over the years and one can realise how we have lived our lives under pressure. Those fancy flex advertisement boards are now old and now Sakshi Malik has retired," she wrote.

"The abusers have announced how powerful they still remain and in fact he was involved in the humiliating sloganeering. If you take five minutes to watch what all he said in the media, you will know exactly what all he has done. He has called women wrestlers Manthara, he has owned up to the fact that he made us uncomfortable and he has never shied away from humiliating us all. Importantly, he has forced women wrestlers to withdraw their complaints," she added.

"I have tried to forget all this but it is not that easy. Sir, I raised this issue when we met. We spent last year on the roads for justice but no one came to our aid. Sir, our medals were pegged at Rs 15 but they are worth more than our lives. We were honoured by our country when we won these medals but when we demanded justice we were painted as anti-nationals. Prime Minister ji, I want to ask you this, are we anti-nationals?" she added.

## Hardik Pandya to miss T20I series vs Afghanistan, likely to be fit ahead of IPL

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (Agence): Indian all-rounder Hardik Pandya is set to miss the upcoming T20I series against Afghanistan due to an ankle injury he sustained during the 2023 World Cup. However, India Today has learnt that Hardik is likely to be fit before the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024.

Pandya was a member of India's World Cup squad and played four matches, taking five wickets with the best bowling figures of 2/34 and scoring 11\* against Australia in his only innings before suffering an ankle injury during a league stage game against Bangladesh on October 19.

Pandya hasn't played any international cricket since, missing the five-match T20I series against Australia as well as the three-match T20I and ODI series during the South African tour. In the absence of Pandya and regular skipper Rohit Sharma, who requested a break from white-ball cricket after the World Cup



final against Australia, Suryakumar Yadav led India in all T20Is, while KL Rahul led the team in ODIs.

The selectors may consider other leadership options for the national side against Afghanistan, with names like Ravindra Jadeja being floated around, given his vice-captaincy experience during the South Africa T20I series. However, with Jadeja's involvement in the five Tests against England, workload management will be a key consideration.

As it stands, Hardik Pandya's focus will likely be on regaining fitness ahead of the IPL 2024, where he is

expected to lead the Mumbai Indians, provided he recovers in time. Fans and officials alike will be eagerly awaiting updates on his condition and potential return to the field.

Pandya was traded from the Gujarat Titans (GT) to his former franchise, the Mumbai Indians (MI), in November of this year. The all-rounder captained GT for two years, spearheading their campaign with aplomb. Hardik ensured GT's fairytale start in 2022, lifting the coveted trophy, while they finished runners-up in their second season after a last-ball defeat in a thrilling final earlier this year.

## Cricket Australia eyes 3-match women's Test series vs India after majestic display in Mumbai: CEO Nick Hockley

SYDNEY, Dec 27 (Agence): Cricket Australia's Chief Executive, Nick Hockley, is aiming to expand the women's Test series against India and England from a single match to a more prominent three-match series, emphasising the desire to elevate these encounters to marquee events at home.

The head of Cricket Australia expressed a commitment to increase the number of Test matches in women's cricket. Nick Hockley's remarks followed captain Alyssa Healy's sentiment of unresolved ambition following Australia's recent loss to India in Mumbai. Australia suffered an eight-wicket defeat at the hands of India in the one-off Test in Mumbai, prompting a desire for more Test cricket opportunities.

"We'll keep advocating for more Test cricket as part of a multi-format series. Maybe that's something in the future that we can think about key marquee series going to three Tests," Hockley

told SEN.

Australia's marquee women's Test series are primarily with England and India, as New Zealand appears hesitant to include women's Tests in their schedule. The recent defeat in Mumbai marked Australia's first loss to India in 11 Tests.

Alyssa Healy expressed a strong desire to participate in more red-ball cricket following this match.

"It would create a real contest over three games. That would be an unbelievable experience for our group, and probably a true test of both sides' abilities.

The one-off Test, India playing in their home conditions, you'd expect them to be heavy favourites. We would love to have another crack at it, show what we learned and put it into practice." The last women's Test series of more than one match was played way back in 2006, while India had not hosted any red-ball cricket for nine years before 2023.

## Finish Line: Good year with final twists for Indian cricket

*While India might not have an ICC trophy to show in 2023, both the men and women's team had a year to remember.*

NEW DELHI, Dec 27 (Agence): On the evening of October 7, less than 24 hours before India's first match of the 2023 Men's ODI World Cup against Australia, Rohit Sharma was at the ground floor press conference room of the MA Chidambaram Stadium, Chennai. As with every media interaction that involves Rohit, that one, too, was candid and interesting.

However, it had its share of intense moments. When asked about his quest to win an ODI WC, the one white-ball trophy Rohit has not won as a cricketer, things got real. The Indian captain's desire to win was unmistakable as he spoke about the "desperation" to get his hands on the trophy, while trying to be pragmatic as he kept talking. And as he often does, Rohit ended the answer with "but yeah, it will be nice to win a World Cup," making most people in the room smile. It was the kind of 'but' phrase that one uses at the end of a vulnerable conversation with a friend just to ease out the mood.

Over the next 42 days, Rohit and his teammates seemed invincible to an extent where comparisons were made to the Chicago Bulls' last dance in the 1997-98 NBA season. The planning, the change of guard — Rohit as captain and Rahul Dravid as head coach — that was made in the BCCI's pursuit to end the trophy drought, the ensemble they put together despite the multiple injuries to key players, all fell in place as India were on their way to write a fairytale script of winning a home WC. However, sport seldom works that way. Australia turned up at the final, and spoiled the party, silencing a billion fans. Another ICC event ended in a heartbreak for India. In a country where careers are made or broken from WC to WC, this particular one would sting for the longest time.

However, as 2023 comes to an end, looking back, the year was not all that bad for Indian cricket. Test series win against Australia, reaching the final of World Test Championship, dominating run to the ODI WC final, and smooth transition in the shortest and the longest format, the Men in Blue had a kind of year



most teams would take it with eyes closed.

The trophies might not be there, but the consistency they showed on the field is a result of the process that is in place. Former India cricketer Hemang Badani feels so as well. "We played a brand of cricket which I like and I'm quite excited about what's the future for us. If this is the way India are going to play going forward, I think it's all in the right direction. Even the younger boys are playing like that, which is great to see. Unfortunately, the finals didn't go our way, but it was fabulous to see Mohammed Shami and others bowled, the way we batted, Virat Kohli and Rohit at the top, taking the game on. A lot of things are going ahead and for the future," Badani told this daily.

The consistency and the brand of cricket apart, the one thing that stood out the most is the way the younger players who came into the national team looked at home. The likes of Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rinku Singh, Ruturaj Gaikwad, and B Sai Sudharsan had to fill in the shoes of some big names and they have made the transition look seamless. Jaiswal scored a century on Test debut, Rinku held his own, finishing tense T20I matches, Gaikwad and Sai Sudharsan seemed solid at the top.

Badani believes that the Indian Premier League has had a significant role in making this happen. "The transition is a lot easier because of the IPL. When you are sitting with all the big boys, you're chatting with them, they become your friends, you're picking their brains, you're learning new things all the time. IPL also has

its own pressures and expectations. So when you're playing for the national side after that, it's a lot easier. It wasn't the case for us when we played. I mean, you are playing Ranji Trophy to straight up, you are playing for India. It was a massive gap to bridge. Now, it's seamless," says the former Tamil Nadu captain.

Smooth transition without a senior ICC trophy to show pretty much sums up the year for India women as well. They had the biggest of the years at the global stage — winning the inaugural U19 T20 WC, the advent of Women's Premier League and the market it has generated, reaching yet another T20WC semifinal, historic Test wins against England and Australia at home, the list just goes on.

Newly-appointed head coach Amol Muzumdar, along with captain Harmanpreet Kaur, has kicked off his tenure in such a fashion that the road ahead looks well-lit. What also helps is that talents are being scouted by WPL franchises, the likes of Saika Ishaque, Shreyanka Patil and Shubha Sathesh made it to the national team and Jemimah Rodrigues and Pooja Vasttrakar are coming of age.

In a video shared by the BCCI, all Kaur had to say when asked about back-to-back Test wins was "Oh my god" with a wide smile on her face. "I think this has been the best environment that I have seen (in the Indian team). I have been playing for so many years, I know we have won many matches and tournaments, but what we are enjoying now, the brand of cricket we are playing, I have never experienced all these years," she would add, crediting the support staff. With two big years ahead

of them — a T20 WC in September 2024 and a home ODI WC in 2025 — Kaur and Muzumdar would want to maintain the consistency and the dressing room environment the captain spoke about, ensuring that the players are in a space to give their best.

As 2024 dawns upon us, the focus has shifted to the T20 format for both the teams, even as the men are trying to win a Test series in South Africa. On the eve of the Boxing Test in Centurion, Rohit, in his first media interaction since November 18, was, once again, asked about the "desperation" to prove a point; to win the T20 WC that is to be played in West Indies and United States next year amidst reports that the 36-year-old, who hasn't played a T20I since the 2022 WC, might return and lead the team again. "Everyone has the desperation to play cricket, do well in every chance they get, I know what you are trying to ask, you will get the answers," said Rohit like his typical self.

India men only have three T20Is against Afghanistan and the IPL before T20 WC, and Badani feels that now is the time for the selectors and team management to make it clear to the players about the role and availability for the global event. "I'm sure the Indian selectors and the management have a few players in mind already. It's a case of the support staff, be the coach or even the selectors start having conversations and defining roles. What is expected of a certain player? Player A, B and C, what is it that I want? You give them time to prepare and come ready for the World Cup. That preparation has to happen now. If you don't (and) just let them play the IPL and then you regroup after that and then you say 'let's go win the World Cup', No. It will have to happen now," he says.

With two T20 WCs to play for, whether India will go on and win it, only time will tell. What one can say now for sure is that the next generation looks ready. They are giving hope and the promise of a better 2024 for Indian cricket.

# MP Khatana castigates former Govt's for looting public money

## Top News Report

REASI, Dec 27: In a scathing critique, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Rajya Sabha, Er. Gulam Ali Khatana, lambasted the National Conference, Congress, and Peoples Democratic Party for their misuse of state funds during their respective tenures.

Addressing a gathering of party workers in the hilly and remote district of Reasi at Mahore, MP Gulam Ali Khatana expressed deep concern over the sorry state of affairs in the area.

Prominent among those present were Pardeep Singh Bali, Seh Prabhari, BJP Reasi, Ch. Mohd. Akram, Smt. Shaida Bano, BDC Gulabgarh, Bansi Lal,



Haji Abdul Rashid, Ch. Gulzar Ahmed, VP ST MOrcha, J&K. More than 100 workers of PDP, NC, Cong joined BJP in the presence of MP Khatana and pledged to work for expanding the party activities.

MP Khatana asserted that the previous gov-

ernments exploited the state exchequer, diverting public funds for personal gains and leaving the common people bereft of the benefits of development and growth. He highlighted instances where public money was allegedly misappropriated for

personal comfort and asset building of those in power. He asked the district administration to fix the responsibility for the delay in the works and if contractors are responsible, they be blacklisted and if the officers are then they should be penalised for

the delay.

During the party workers meeting, MP Gulam Ali Khatana expressed concern over the pathetic infrastructure in roads, health services, and overall development during past 70 years of dynastic rulers.

He noted that numerous developmental projects initiated two decades ago are yet to reach completion, leaving the local populace in a state of anticipation in Mahore, Chassana, Thuru blocks.

He urged the LG administration and district administration to speed up the ongoing developmental works so that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of serving the last man in the row is realised.

# JKAS officer awarded Delhi Star Award 2023



## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 27: Aijaz Kaiser a 2008 batch JKAS officer presently posted as Addl. Secretary Information Technology Department has been honoured with the prestigious Delhi Star Award 2023 in the category of distinguished public service.

The award, presented by Adhikar Manch & Punjab Kesari media group, recognises outstanding individuals across diverse fields for their exceptional contributions to society. This annual award giving accolade, now in its 23rd year, celebrates innovators & contributors who have made a significant

impact in their respective domains.

The impressive ceremony of Delhi Star Awards 2023 was held at NDMC Convention Center Connaught Place New Delhi. The awards were given away by the versatile Bollywood actor Raza Murad and politician, singer and actor serving as a Member of Parliament from North East Delhi Manoj Tiwari.

In recognition of the selfless services earlier in the J&K police on anti militancy front and later in the state bureaucracy, the officer was honoured with the Delhi star award 2023 in an impressive function at

New Delhi.

Among others who received the awards are BJP MP from Azamgarh of Uttar Pradesh and Bhojpur Star Dinesh Lal, Yadav Nirhua for being the best parliamentarian. Jaspal Singh, presently serving as Director General of police Goa for his distinguished police services. Special CP law & order in Delhi Depender Pathak, Virender Sachdeva BJP president New Delhi, Anand Ranganathan scientist & an award winning writer, Professor Dr Milind Houe a noted cardiologist in AIIMS New Delhi and Dr Suryasnata Mohanty, a distinguished Odia artist.

# One platform need of hour for KPs: Pandita

## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 27: The recent move by All Displaced Kashmiri United Forum (ADKUF) to bring Displaced Kashmiri Pandits on a single platform is a welcome step & need of the hour for displaced community living in exile for last more than thirty one years.

In a joint statement issued today by Vinod Pandita and Vishal Jotshi prominent KP leaders said that for pursuing the genuine problems of the Displaced community and other pertinent issues like time bound rehabilitation policy for Kashmiri Pandits in valley with honour and dignity, temples and shrines bill, implementation of immovable migrant property act 1997 in letter and spirit, etc being faced by the community in exile, a strong united front comprising of honest, dedicated and real ground workers is the paramount need of the hour and one such effort by ADKUF is a first welcome step towards it.

Pandita appealed all the social organizations of the community to come forward under

platform for the true cause of the community as 'United we stand, divided we fall.'

He also appealed to architects of this forum to also include all those left out people in the forum from North, South and Central Kashmir who have been working for the community on ground dedicatedly for last thirty-one years in a true and dedicated way which not only will strengthen this group but will also pave a way for a broader consensus and unanimity in the community to serve the purpose of the newly formed forum.

Jotshi appealed to all community organizational heads to sink personal differences and rise above the party politics and affiliations & come under one umbrella for the interest of the community and future generations.

Both the leaders further appealed the makers of the forum to carry out hectic exercise, ground work and identify the left out dedicated social people and bring them under one umbrella of the forum to serve the aim of this group for the overall interest of the community.

# Rashtra Katha Shivar Yatra concludes



## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 27: Rashtra Katha Shivar Yatra Closing Ceremony was organized at 76 Bn CRPF. This 24' Rashtra Katha Shivar Yatra has been organized and conducted successfully under Civic Action programme by CRPF under able guidance and supervision of Sandeep Khirwar, IG, Jammu Sector and Ashok Shamyal, DIG Jammu Sector.

T. H. Khan, Commandant 76 Bn was present as the Chief Guest. 38, 72, 76 and 160 Battalions of CRPF Jammu Sector sent 100 children from their area of responsibility in Jammu for this Yatra.

Shri Vedic Mission Trust organized the 24' Rashtra Katha Camp at Rajkot Gujarat from December 17 to 24, 2023 in which 25 students & one teacher each from Government High School Greater Kailash Lower Chowadi

Jammu, Government High School Kandoli Nagrota, Government Higher Secondary School Uttar Behani Samba, and Government High School Kali Deh Sunderbani (Rajouri) participated in the programme.

The programme started with the welcome speech by Praveen Kumar, Asst. Comdt. 76 Bn who described the glorious history, various social & welfare activities undertaken by the CRPF.

Chief Guest T. H. Khan, Commandant 76 Bn addressed the children and briefed them regarding the importance of the camp for awakening national spirit, apprise the rich history and culture of India, sense of national integration, social harmony, overall personal development and the programs/activities held in the camp.

He told that during the Katha Shivar, national integration, cultural and

personal development, patriotism, national security issues, Spirituality, disaster management, Cultural heritage of India was taught to students.

During the camp Indian Coast Guard, CRPF, RAF presented/showcased their weapons & equipments through exhibition, march-past and educated the students about various types of innovations and modern equipments & arms for national security. Debu Dhakarwal, AC, 76 Bn presented the vote of thanks.

Chief Guest declared the 24 Rashtra Katha Camp formally closed with best wishes to the children who returned from a successful visit.

Hariom Khare, Commandant 160 Bn, Ajay Kumar & Hazari Lal, Second-In-Command, Karnail Singh, Dy. Comdt. and other Officer's and Jawans of 76 Bn contributed to make the event successful.

# Shiv Sena demands to roll back toll hike



## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 27: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu and Kashmir unit has expressed strong anger over the decision to double the toll collection at Chinani-Nashri toll plaza and has warned to roll it back or take to the streets.

In a press conference held at the party state office today, state chief Manish Sahni accused the government of taking decisions exactly contrary to the demands of the people. He said that the public is demanding freedom from toll and the government doubling the collection

rates. He said that decisions are being taken every day to hit the pockets of the people struggling with inflation and unemployment. After increase in electricity and water rates to the public, increase in license rates of shopkeepers and street vendors, and property tax, now the toll collection at Nashri toll plaza has suddenly been doubled.

Sahni also raised questions on the rates and numbers of toll in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Sahni said that three toll plazas have been built on the 140 kilometer road from Jammu

to Katra religious city (where the world famous Shri Mata Vaishno Devi's court is located). This road route has the highest number of devotees coming to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi. Sahni said that there is a provision to increase the toll rates at the beginning of the financial year, but in Jammu and Kashmir, the toll has been doubled without considering all the rules.

Sahni warned in a warning tone to roll back this increase or else take to the streets.

President female wing Meenakshi Chibber, General Secretary Vikas Bakshi were present.

# JKBS members hail 'Pragatisheel Kisan Puruskar' given to Sat Pal Mandi by SKAUST



## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 27: The Jammu and Kashmir Batwal Sabha at a meeting held here today, hailed the 'Pragatisheel Kisan Puruskar, given to Sat Pal Mandi of Village Siyaan Chack by the Director Extension, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Jammu (SKAUST) on the occasion of Kisan

Diwas 2023.

While congratulating Sat Pal Mandi, the JKBS' General Secretary R.L. Kaith and other executive members said, "We saw him working so hard every day to achieve this accomplishment, and we can't think of anyone who deserves it more."

Sat Pal Mandi thanked all for their good wishes and appreciated their love and support.

# NHM Employees of Block Gandoh frame new body

## Dr Farhat Abass elected as new Block President

## Top News Report

DODA, Dec 27: In its mission to bring all categories of employees working under the ambit of National Health Mission one platform and in order to revitalize the internal hierarchy and infuse new blood into the forum activities, a meeting of NHM employees of Block Gandoh District Doda was held at CHC Gandoh (Block Hqr) on Wednesday.

The NHM employees during the meeting raised various issues related to the tribulations suffered by them which include framing of the regularisation policy,



enhancement of salary, timely release of salary, implementation of equal pay equal work etc.

Meanwhile, the body level body of NHM employees of Gandoh was also framed in

which Dr Farhat Abass was elected as Block President of Gandoh whereas Dr Mohd Irfan Mir as Sr Vice President, Nazia Parveen as Vice President, Tahir Mehmood as Convenor, Mr

Rohit Singh as General Secretary, Mohd Ishaq as Secretary, Mr Vinay Kumar & Mr Jatinder Singh as Treasurers, Mr Altaf Hussain as Co Treasurer, Mr Mushtaq Ahmed Khan as Chief

Spokesperson, Ms Manu Bala as Spokesperson, Ms Nadish Ashraf as Chief Coordinator, Rubina Begum, Madhiya Kousar, Mubeena Begum & Mohd Yaqoob as Coordinators, Ms Huma Mehboob as Publicity Secretary, Dr Parvez Mir as Chief Advisor, Dr Feroz Ahmed, Dr Mohd Anzer, Dr Qurrat Ain, Nirmala Devi, Shafia Kousar & Akhtar Rasool as Advisors, similarly in organizing committee Dr Sheema Sehar, Ved Parkash, Khursheeda Begum, Mohd Arif Batt and Ashwani Kumar were elected as members.

While speaking on the occasion, Dr Farhat Abass thanked all the participants for honoring and entrusting him the responsibility of the Block President, promising to work sincerely and dedicatedly for the welfare of National Health Mission Employees of the block.

The President cited several challenges and issues faced by the employees and pledged that he with the support of his team at block, district and province level will overcome these challenges and leave no stone unturned in resolving all the issues of NHM employees.