TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2023

Daily Evening Newspaper

ENTERTAINMENT

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"Grateful. anchored. at peace...": Rashmika Mandanna on completing 7 years in industry



INTERNATIONAL

SPORTS 18

Bajrang Punia urges

Sports Ministry to restart wrestling activities in view of Paris Olympics



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e-paper: www.topnewsjk.in RNI No. JKENG/2010/39369 Regd. No. JK-435 Vol.-14 Issue-358 Pages-12 Rs.-2/-

BRIEFLY

Court issues proclamation notice against 51 accused in North **Kashmir**

SRINAGAR, Dec 31 (Agencies): Additional Sessions Court Handwara issued a "proclamation notice" against fifty-one individuals wanted in a case dating back to 2011.

SHO of Police Station Kralgund, sought the proclamation against the accused persons in FIR 73/2011, as they were allegedly involved in offenses under the 2/3 EMICO Act and 121-A RPC.

Despite a non-bailable warrant issued by the court of CJM Handwara to compel the attendance of the accused persons, the warrant could not be executed because the accused individuals could not be located.

Consequently, the Court has now issued a Proclamation against the fifty-one accused and has directed them to appear in court by or before February 2, 2024.

Severe cold in Kashmir, **Minimum** temperatures several notches below freezing point

SRINAGAR, Dec 31 b(Agencies): Kashmir reeled under cold wave conditions Sunday as minimum temperatures across the Valley stayed several degrees below the freezing point, officials said here.

The minimum temperature in the summer capital Srinagar dropped to minus 3.4 degrees Celsius from the previous night's minus 2.8 degrees Celsius, they said.

Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district which serves as a base camp for the annual Amarnath Yatra recorded a minimum temperature of minus 3.4 degrees Celsius, up from the previous night's minus 4.1 degrees Celsius, the officials said.

The officials said that Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort in Baramulla, recorded a low of minus 3.5 degrees Celsius, down from minus 2.5 degrees Celsius

the previous night. Qazigund recorded a low of minus 2.6 degrees Celsius, Kokernag town minus 1.4 degrees Celsius

Turn to page 9

Tehreek-E-Hurriyat, once headed by Syed Ali Shah Geelani, banned by Govt

NEW DELHI, Dec 31 (Agencies): The government on Sunday declared pro-Pakistan separatist amalgam Tehreek-e-Hurriyat (TeH) Jammu and Kashmir a banned organisation for fomenting terrorism and spreading anti-India propaganda in the Union territory.

Announcing the decision, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the group was found spreading anti-India propaganda and continuing terror activities to fuel



secessionism in Jammu and Kashmir.

He said that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's zero-tolerance policy against terrorism, any individual or organisation found involved in anti-India activities would be thwarted.

"The 'Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, J&K (TeH) has been declared an 'Unlawful Association' under

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. The outfit is involved in forbidden activities to separate J&K from India and establish Islamic rule," Shah wrote on 'X'.

Netanyahu says Israel must

control Gaza's border with Egypt,

war to last months

pro-Pakistan The group was earlier headed by deceased separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who was succeeded by Masarat Alam Bhat. Bhat is also known for his anti-India and pro-Pakistan propaganda.

Bhat is currently in jail and his party the Muslim ■Turn to page 9

Police

HAPPY NEW YEAR Happy New Year 2024 to All Our Readers Police attaches house, car under

UA(P) Act in Baramulla



SRINAGAR, Dec 31 (Agencies): Police attached a residential house and a vehicle under Unlawful Activities Prevention UA(P)Act in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district.

"Continuing its crackdown on harbouring militants and providing

logistic support to them, police have attached a residential house & vehicle under sections of 25 UA (P) Act in Baramulla", a Police statement said on Sunday.

During the investigation of the case vide FIR No. 104/2023 U/S 7/25 I.A Act, 120-B IPC,

13,16,18,23 UA (P) Act of Police Station Uri, one vehicle was seized which was allegedly used for transportation of illegal Arms/Ammunition from one place to another for militant activities.

"The said vehicle falling within the ambit of proceeds of militancy after obtaining approval from competent authority", reads the statement.

Similarly, during the investigation of case FIR No. 46/2023 U/S 307 IPC, 7/27 Arms Act, and the Section 16,18,19, 20 and 38 of UA (P) Act of Police Station, Kreeri,

Turn to page 9

Jammu train delayed as bomb hoax call by a frustrate jobless triggered alarm SRINAGAR, Dec 31 there was an unclaimed

(Agencies): Jammu bound Ahmedabad-Jammu Tawi Express got delayed last night as a passenger who missed the train made a bomb hoax call to the authorities, reports appearing in the media said. The man, who was later arrested, was found to be frustrated young man driven to the state of suicide by protracted joblessness.

Identified as Amit Singh, a resdent of Raj-

asthan, had boarded the train and then missed it. He rang up the Ahmedabad city police control room claiming there was a bomb on the train.

The train was stopped at Mehsana station, the third stop on the train's route, around 12.30 pm and checked thoroughly for around one and half hours with the help of bomb disposal and dog squads. Nothing suspicious was found on the

Police told reports that

bag, from which its owners phone number and address was detected. When the police acted on it, they located Amit Singh, the same man who had missed the train.

Singh was arrested and it got revealed that the Rajasthan resident was living in Gujarat but was facing serious unemployment issue and was driven to the point of suicide. He had

Turn to page 9

8000 fake social media handles identified in J&K: DGP Swain

JAMMU, Dec 31 (Agencies): J&K police wasn't fighting against the gun-wielding terrorists only but also the false narrative being spread by almost 8000 fake social media handlers sitting across with an aim to incite trouble and glorify terrorism. Director General of Police (DGP) RR Swain said Saturday.

"Our battle is not



against Militants only but against the narrative which is being spread by 8000 fake social media

twitter and instagram. Their handlers are sitting across and their aim is to incite trouble and glorify terrorism. They peddle wrong information. We are acting against them under the ambit of law after differentiating the genuine and not-genuine," he said. "We will act against them under IT Act 61. If need arises,

handles—facebook,

■Turn to page 9

announce cash reward upto Rs 12 Lakh to curb 'Anti-National Activities' in JK

SRINAGAR, Dec 31 (Agencies): Jammu and Kashmir Police have announced a cash reward of upto Rs 12.50 lakh for people who provide information & intelligence on trans border tunnels, drones, narcotics, militant activities, and militants in an attempt to curb 'anti national activities'.

In a post on X, J&K Police said that the people can share such information with district superintendents of the police concerned and the identity of the person will be kept secret.

Police announced a cash reward of Rs 5 lakh for those who provide information about transborder tunnels used by anti-national elements. It announced a Rs 3 lakh reward for those who sighted drones **Turn to page 9**

India records 841 New Covid-19 cases

NEW DELHI, Dec 31 (Agencies): India has logged 841 new cases of COVID-19, the highest in 227 days, while the number of active cases of the infection have been recorded at 4,309, the health ministry said on Sunday.

Three new fatalities due to COVID-19, one each from Kerala, Karnataka and Bihar, have been reported in a span of 24 hours, according

to the ministry's data updated at 8 a.m.

India had recorded 865 new cases on May 19. The number of daily

cases had dropped to double-digits till December 5, but cases 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 over 4.4 crore with a national recovery rate of 98.81%, according to the ministry's website. According to the web-

site, 220.67 crore Turn to page 9

Gold likely to touch Rs 70,000 in 2024, say experts

MUMBAI, Dec 31 (Agencies): Continuing to glitter in 2024 as well, gold price is likely to touch Rs 70,000 per 10 grams in the domestic market on the back of a stable rupee, geopolitical uncertainties and slowing global economic growth, according to experts.

Currently, the yellow metal price is hovering at Rs 63,060 per 10 grams on the commodity stock exchange MCX and around USD 2,058 an ounce in the international market at a time when the rupee is trading above 83 against the US dollar.

In early December, prices skyrocketed again on global tensions in the Middle East, and emerging market participants



anticipated that the rate hike cycle has more or less ended.

While the gold price remained volatile this year, it reached a new high of Rs 61,845 per 10 grams on May 4 in the domestic market and USD 2,083 an ounce in the global markets. Later, the yellow metal touched a record high of Rs 61,914 per 10 grams on November 16, Commtrendz Research Director Gnanasekar

Thiagarajan told agency. In a reflection of its safe-haven appeal, he said, gold touched an all-time high of Rs 64,063 per 10 grams and USD 2,140 an ounce on December 4.

"We expect an eventual rise to USD 2,400 in 2024, and if the rupee is to be stable, gold is likely to reach around

Rs 70,000 levels. As India faces elections, the rupee could weaken as Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) are expected to lighten up their portfolios, which could further bolster domestic prices for gold," he said.

Kotak Securities Vice President - Head Commodity Research Ravindra Rao said retail jewellery buying might face headwinds from higher domestic prices in India and China while central banks' demand might exceed last year's record if the current momentum continues.

Rao noted that robust central bank buying alongside solid bar and coin demand helped gold prices amid surging

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CADNICA ELECTRONIC SOLUTIONS

Contact Person Mr. Sanjeev Kumar

9419143503

OBITUARY

beloved mother Smt. Tulsi Devi W/o Lt. Govind Ram Raina of Verinag, Anantnag Kashmir on 26-12-2023 presently at Balai Enclave Sec-23/Pocket 11/B. Rohini, Delhi 85, R/o H.No. 69. Second Floor, Pocket 11/B Sec-23 Rohini Landmark Balalji Satsang Bhawan

Tenth Day will be performed at Rohini New Delhi on 04/01/2024.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Son & Daughter-in-law

Rattan Lal Raina & Tosha Raina Chaman Lal Raina and Bimla Raina

Daughter & Son-in-law Ashok Ji Bhat & Nancy Bhat

Bhart Bhushan Tickoo & Jiji Tickoo Vijav Asthana & Usha Asthana Contact No.: 9419206291, 09999823589, 9419332786, 9419292793



10TH DAY KRIYA/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise our beloved Sh Ram Lal S/o Lt Sh Mokoru Ram H No. 493-A Lane No. 1 Digiana, who left for his heavenly abode on 20-12-23. 10th Day Kriya will be performed on 29-12-23 at Hanuman Mandir Digiana Park at 11 AM. Uthala/Kriya/Karm on 01-01-2024 (Monday) 4 PM at our Residence H No. 493-A, Lane-1 near

Police Chowki Digiana. Sh Ram Lal

Grief Stricken: Pandey Parivar

Smt Sharda Devi (Wife)

Mob: 94191-55958, 90861-89066

OBITUARY/ TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved ER. KANAYA LAL MANTOO - Retd. Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) PDD, R/o House No F 145/833 JMC Ward No 18, Last Morh Sarwal, Jammu, J&K as he has left for his heavenly abode on 27 December, 2023.

The TENTH DAY KRIYA will be held on January 4th, 2024 (Thursday) at Muthi Ghat (near Directorate of School Education)

GRIEF STRICKEN Smt KRISHNA MANTOO (Wife)

[Daughter and Son-in-law]

Mrs. Renu Thaper (Yoga Instructor) & Mr. Y.C Thaper (Retd. J&K Bank Officer) 9419153072, 9419191928

Mrs. Asha Mantoo W/o Late Mr. Varinder Mantoo (Daughter-in-Law)

Mr. Satyam Thaper & Mr. Shivam Thapar (Owner's THE STRENGTH CULTURE) Mrs. Gunjan & Mr Kapil Mahajan (Granddaughter and Son-in- Law)

OBITUARY/ TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and sudden demise of our beloved Hirday Nath Raina S/o Late Sh Mashewar Nath Raina of Trichal Pulwama presently residing at Flat no 2, Block 134, Lane 22, Jagti colony, Nagrota.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed on 05-01-2024, 9 A.M. at Muthi Ghat, Near Director of School Education. **GRIEF STRICKEN**

Suman Raina (Wife)

Meenakshi & Arun Raina (Son & Daughter in law) Shonu & Ashish Raina (Son & Daughter in law) Shama & Bansi I al Raina (Brother) Kiran & Bushan Lal Raina (Brother & Sister in law) Sunita & Deepak Raina (Brother & Sister in law) Rajni & Shadi Lal Koul (Sister & Brother in Law)

Vrindha (Grandchild) & Samast Raina Parivar,

MOB NO: 7889974415, 7889349854

ER. KANAYA LAL MANTOO

Retd. Assistant Executive

Engineer (AEE) PDD

RAINA

SHRI RAM JI PANDIT

10TH DAY KRIYA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND REGRET, IT IS TO INFORM. THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED FATHER **SHRI RAM JI PANDIT** S/O LATE SH. AFTAB RAM ORIGINALLY R/O AKHRAN KULGAM AND AT PRESENT SATTANI DHAR ROAD UDHAMPUR. 10TH DAY KRIYA WILL BE PERFORMED ON 6Th JANUARY (SATURDAY) 2024 AT DEVIKA GHAT

UDHAMPUR AT 9:00 AM GRIEF STRICKEN SH. SOOM NATH PANDIT (BROTHER)

(DAUGHTER IN LAW & SON) LATE-SMT PHOOLA KUMARI & SH. SURINDER KRISHAN PANDIT

SMT. ANITA PANDIT & SH. KANWAL JI PANDIT (DAUGHTER IN LAW & SON SMT DAISY PANDIT & MAHARAJ KRISHAN PANDIT (DAUGHTER IN LAW AND SON) SMT. PUPLY KUMARI & SH. CHAND KRISHAN (DAUGHTER IN LAW & SON) SMT. REETA KUMARI & SH. ASHOK KUMAR RAINA (DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW SMT. GIRJA BHAT & SH. OMKAR NATH BHAT (DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW) SMT USHA KUMARI AND SH. BUSHAN LAL BHAT (DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW)

SMT LALITA BHAT & SH. PRAN NATH BHAT (DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW) SMT PUMMY BHAT & SH. SANJAY KUMAR BHAT (DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW) SMT. KAJAL PANDIT & SH. ROHIT (GRAND DAUGHTER IN LAW & GRAND SON) GRAND CHILDREN: MOHIT, SAHIL, NIKHIL, DIVYA, RUCHI, MEHAK &DANISH

GREAT GRAND SON- SHIVA Phone no-9797305248.8493058455

TENTH DAY KRIYA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW WE INFORM THE SAD & UNTIMELY DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED SH. BAL KRISHAN PANDITA ON 26-12 2023, ORIGINALLY FROM KHAWAJA BHAG BARAMULLA.

TENTH DAY KRIYA SHALL BE HELD AT MATA BHADRAKALI ASTHAPAN THALWAL JAMMU FROM 7:30AM ONWARDS ON 4TH JANUARY 2024 & SUBSEQUENT ASSEMBLY SHALL BE HELD AT OUR RESIDENCE 37 AJIT COLONY GOLE GUJRAL JAMMU FROM 11AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN SMT. PINKEE PANDITA **WIFE**

BHABHI & BROTHER

SMT. LALITA & SH. RAJ NATH PANDITA SMT. VEENA & DR. DURGA NATH PANDITA

SMT. JANSI & SH. MOHAN LAL PANDITA SISTER & BROTHER-IN-LAW

SMT. BIMLA & SH. AVTAR KRISHAN PANDITA

MS. SHRIYA PANDITA (DAUGHTER).

SMT.& SH.RAKESH KACHRU.

SMT.& SH. RAJESH KACHRU MOB.: 9891471253. 6005690285. 9541860478. 9086074869. 9725285474. 7889915073.

OBITUARY/TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved father **Sh Badri Nath Raina** S/o Lt Madav Lal Raina originally resident of Herman (Shopian) at present H No. 6 Sector-3 Sharika Vihar (near Social Welfare office) Roopnagar Jammu left for heavenly abode on 25-12-2023.

The Tenth Day Kriya will be held on 2nd January 2024 (Tuesday) 9:00 AM at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education.

Grief Stricken:

Sons & Daughter in-laws Sanjay Raina & Nirmala Raina- 9419791073 Manoj Raina & Renu Raina-7006154007

Sons-in-law & Daughters Ashok Bhat & Sudesha Bhat

Sanjay Raina & Rumila Raina

Grand Childrens

Rohin, Vishal, Rishab, Riya, Riyansh, Raunak, Mehak, Khushi, Supriya

Sh Badri Nath Raina

Smt Chander Kanta

Smt Shivo Devi

SMT LALITA

SHARMA

13TH DAY/UTHALA

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः

न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved Smt Chander Kanta W/o Late Er Anil Sharma Ward No-16, Mohalla Purani Poonch, Poonch on 20-12- 2023.

13TH Day/ UTHALA will be performed on Monday 1st of January ,2024 in their residence from 9:30 AM Onwards.

मध्याह्न भोजन - 12:30 PM Onwards



Sister in law & Brother in law Smt. Parveen Kumari and Lt Sh Yashpal Sharma (Former MLC Poonch)

Smt. Kaushal & Adv. Sunil Sharma (President Municipal Council, Poonch)

Smt. Veena and Late Dr. R.C.Sharma (Ex-Minister J&K) (Sister in Law & Brother in law) Smt. Santosh and Advocate Rajender Prasad (Sister In Law & Brother in law) Dr Sushil Sharma (HOD, Cardiology GMC & SSH Jammu) (Brother in Law)

Mr Vinayak Sharma (Son) Mr Lakshay Sharma (Son)

Smt. Lalita and Sh. Chuni Lal Sharma (Sister in law & Brother-in-law)

Smt. Santosh & Late Master Romesh Chander (Sister in law & Brother-in-law) Smt. Kanchan & Sh. G.L. Sharma (Retd. Principal, GDC) (Sister in law & Brother-in-law) Fondly remembered by:

Her well-wishers & people of Poonch. 9419602060 & 9419199088

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt Shivo Devi** W/o Late Sh Babu Ram Choudhary R/o Lower Muthi, Akalpur. The **Tenth Day** will be held on 2nd January, 2024 (Tuesday) 11.00 AM at Nakul Palace,



Sons and Daughters in law Capt Surinder Choudhary & Smt Darshana Devi Sh. Tarsem Choudhary & Smt Pawana Devi

Daughters and Sons-in-law Smt Shakuntla Devi & Lt Kartar Singh Smt Sudesh Kumari & Lt Sh Kuldeep Raj

Grand Son & Grand Daughter in Law Sh Naresh Choudhary & Dr Asha Choudhary Mob : 9070846368, 6005889166

KRIYA/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved Smt Lalita Sharma W/o Shri Vijay Kumar R/o H. No F-370 (Near Police Station) Bakshi Nagar Jammu. KRIYA will be performed on 31-12-2023 from 11.00 AM (Sunday) at our residence.

UTHALA will be performed on 01-01-2024 (Monday) at Arya Samaj Mandir Bakshi Nagar Jammu from 3 PM to 4 PM. **GRIEF STRICKEN**

Sh. Vijay Kumar (Husband) (Son & Daughter in Law) Mrs Rita Sharma and Mr Chetan Sharma

Miss Konika Sharma (Daughter)



Smt Kishni Pandita (Pyari) W/o Sh P L Pandita of Mantapora, Anantnag Kmr shall be per-

03-01-2024 formed on (Wednesday) at Akhnoor Ghat SMT. KISHNI PANDITA

and afterwards the Assembly

shall take place at 12.00 Noon at our residence H No 417, Behind Shiv Mandir (opposite Govt Quarters) Janipur Colony, Jammu.

Grief Stricken:

SAMAST PANDITAS, HANGLOOS, BHATS, AMBAR-DARS, TICKOOS, RAINAS AND SARAF PARIVARS

TENTH DAY

With profound grief, we inform that our beloved Mother Smt. Vaishno Devi Ji W/o Lt. Sh. Mulkh Raj Gupta R/o Durga Nagar, Jammu left for heavenly abode on 23/12/2023 The Tenth Day will be held at Aap Shambu Mandir Roop Nagar, Jammu on 1/1/2024 (Monday) at 11.00 am.

GRIEF STRICKEN Sons & Daughter-in-laws Manohar Gupta & Rupali Gupta Sumit Gupta & Prinkal Gupta M/s Mulkh Raj Gupta & Sons Nehru Market, Ware House Jammu Contact: 9149529885, 7006378791



Smt. Vaishno Devi Ji

TENTH DAY/KRIYA/RASAM PAGRI

Jec 2023.

10TH DAY will be performed on Thursday 28 Dec 2023 a.axmi Narayan Temple, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu at 11.00 am KRIYA will be performed on Sunday 31st Dec 2023 at ou residence H No 686-A, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu 12.00 noon. RASAM PAGRI on Monday 1st Jan 2024 at our relo 686-A, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu 2.00 pm

GRIEF STRICKEN Daughter-in-law & Son

Daughter-in-law & Son
Ramnee & Hemant Andotra
Daughter & Son-in-law
Shakun & Pawan Parihar (Inspector)
Bhabhi & Brother
Smt. Kuku & Sh. Karan Singh Andotra (Retd. Chief Engineer)
Smt. Radha & Sh. Balibir Singh Andotra (Retd. AEE)
Sister & Brother-in-law
Late Smt. Nimmi & Late Sh. Naseeb Singh Pathania
Smt. Shobha & Sh. Shalinder Singh Pamwar
Grand Children- Vivaan, Vihaan, Rudra & Geetanjali.
Mob: 7780982649, 9796482512, 7889847057

10TH DAY, KRIYA Mith profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the sa demise of Smt Jaikishori Dhar (Rani ji) Wo Late Sh Makha al Dhar, originally resident of Chattabal, Srinagar, at preser 2D Ayodha Enclave, Sector 13, Rohini, New Delhi left for heav

ZD Ayora Enclave, Sector 13, Korlini, New Deini iert for near-ienly abode on 24th December 2023

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed on 2nd January 2024
(ruseday) at 9.4M. on Hyderpura Canal, Sector 15-16, dividing road, Rohini, New Deihi Condolences Gathering will be at our residence at 2D,Ayodha Enclave Sector-13 Rohini at 11.30 AM

Enclave Sector-13 Kommi at Grief Stricken: Son and Daughter in law. Ranjan Dhar & Beena Dhar Daughters & Sons in law. Girja Koul & Bansi Lal Koul

rofound grief & sorrow we inform the sad demise of **Mr Anl** al S/o Lt Sh Bajinder Singh R/o Suchani, Teh Vijayp





DWARKA MORH, UTTAM NAGAR, NEW DELHI 110059 (original resident of 48-A, Azad Basti, Natipora, Srinagar, Kashmir), left for heavenly abode on 27th December 2023 5:30

10th Day Kriya on 4th January 2024 at Rohini Ghat (near telephone exchange), New Delhi and assembly at our residence.

GRIEF STRICKEN

CHOUBARSI

Char Barsi (4th Death anniversary) o our beloved Sorub Sharma (Kannu S/o Sh Shiv Kumar Sharma, shall be

Tikri, Udhampur, t's been four years that you left us but still we feel your presence everywhere.

alwavs be with us in our hearts May your soul rest in peace. DEEPLY REMEMBERED BY

MOB - 9906150866/ 9987680609 नैनं छिदन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावक: ।

ary **Shri Sham Lal Sharma Ji**, a governor state awardee aducationist, social reformer and religious leader whose life

TENTH DAY

Kunal Dogra S/o Late Sh. Ramesh Kumar of H.No -16/A, Lane No - 1, Basant Naga Mainstop on 24 December 2023 at 5.40 pm We very humbly pray to the God Almighty to bestow Moksha to the departed soul and give courage to the members of the bereaved family to bear this irrepara-

Mother - Sunita Dogra Brother - Rahul Dogra
Brother - Rohan Dogra Sister - Deepika Choudhary



FIFTH DAY

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW WE INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED SHRI HIRA NAND MISHRA H/O OUR SISTER SAVITRI SHARMA D/O LATE SHRI GANGA DUTT BALOTRA

MEPHEWS
SMT & SH ISHWAR CHANDER SHARMA
SMT & SH CHANDER KANT SHARMA
SMT & SH HARISH CHANDER SHARMA
SMT & SH PANKAI SHARMA

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TENTH DAY/KRIYA

at 1100 am GRIEF STRICKEN Soma Devi & Lt Sh Narain Singh (Grand Mother & Father) Anita Devi & Lt Sh Bajinder Singh (Mother & Father) Veha Jamwal (Wife) Samayara & Shivansh (Daughter & Son) Amit & Ekta Jamwal (Brother & Bhabhi) Chacha & Chachi Ji Pathbat Singh & Pull Devi



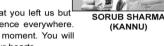
10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief & sorrow we inform that of "BADABOBA" Karmayogi - Shri OMKAR NATH MATTOO (S/o Late Madhav Lal Mattoo & Late Leelawati

Shri OMKAR NATH

Mattoo Parivar and Shah Parivar Mobile: +91-8368571967, +91-9319147207

performed on 2nd Jan '24 (Tuesday) a our residence Tikri, Near Post office

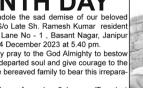


L NEARS & DEAR



SH. SHAM LAL SHARMA JI









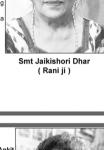




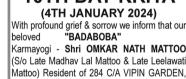
Shri Hira Nand

Mishra

DISCLAIMER







AM (before sunrise). The void left in our hearts and lives will remain unfilled. He lit and blessed our lives, and he will

"Days will pass and turn into years... but we will always remember you with

We missed you every moment. You will SANMOTRA FAMILY

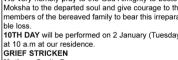


ar lettred educationist, social reformer and religious leader whose life left an indelible mark on his community and beyond. He passed away on 25th December at 3:35 am in the presence of his loved ones.

10th Day to be held on 2nd January, 11 am - 2:00 pm at Sharma Palace, Dablehar, R.S. Pura, Jammu.

GRIEF STRICKEN:
Smt Viro Devi (Wife)
(Brothers and Sisters-In-law)
Sant Shri Subhash Shastri ji and Smt Kamlesh Sharma
Shri Brahmdev Sharma and Smt Bimla Devi
Shri Rooplal Sharma and Smt Beimla Devi
Shri Royal Sharma and Smt Beimla Devi
Shri Eckhraj Sharma and Smt Beimla Devi
Brother-In-law and sister)
Shri Lekhraj Sharma and Smt Santosh Sharma
(Nephew & Daughter-in-law)
Shri Mahash Rajesh Bittu ji (Chairman, Radha Madhav Trust) and Smt Rajin Sharma
(Kons & Daughters-in-law)
Shri Kaliash Pati Sharma and Smt Renuka Sharma
(VP Global Schneider & Co Chairman ASSOCHAM Electronic Hardware)
Shri Mahash Sharma (AEE DICC) and Smt Aruna Sharma
(Son-in-law and Daughter)
Shri Ajay Sharma and Smt Archana Sharma
Nephews: Piyush Ji, Dr. Rahul, Adv Daksheesh, Rohit, Sachin
Surishta, Shakti - Niece
Grandchildren: Akarshan, Kritika, Arushi, Karishma, Atharv and Mani

Grandchildren: Akarshan, Kritika, Arushi, Karishma, Athary and Manik





SISTER SAVITRI SHARMA D/O LATE SHRI GANGA DUTT BALOTRA (ARNIA WALE). BE PERFORMED AT LAKSHMI NARAYAN MANDIR (BACKSIDE) GANDHI NAGAR JAMMU ON IST JANUARY 2024 (MONDAY) AT 11AM TO 11:30AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN
BROTHERS
SMT & SH LATE KRISHAN KUMAR SHARMA
SMT & SH PUSHAP RAJ SHARMA
SMT & SH TILAK RAJ SHARMA
NEPHEWS

SMT & SH PANKA) SHARMA 63-A SMALL PLOTS /687-A GANDHI NAGAR -JAMMU. MOBILE: 9086115948/9796699955



fied) carried in this newspaper. The paper does not endorse the same. Readers are requested to verify the contents on their own before acting there upon.'



PANDITA

DR. NEHA KACHROO & DR. ISHAN PANDITA - DAUGHTER -IN-LAW & SON DR.SHIKSHA & SH. PAMPOSH MOHAN KOUL - DAUGHTER & SON-IN-LAW











here. He described

the Mann Ki Baat pro-

gramme as one of the

many legacies of Prime

Minister Modi in the last

ten years. He said Mr

Modi has been shar-

ing his ideas on many

pressing issues and

highlighting other mat-

ters through his monthly

broadcast on Akashvani

to lead the nation in

Dr Jitendra Singh

urged everyone to play

their part in realising Mr

Modi's vision of a devel-

oped India by 2047. In

this regard, Dr Singh laid

emphasis on maintain-

ing personal fitness as

stressed by the Prime

Minister in today's Mann

Ki Baat. The Minister

stated that fit and bodily

addressing them.

Dr Jitendra visits River Devika Project site, inspects finishing touches

Top News Report

UDHAMPUR., Dec 31: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today carried out an on-site review of the River Devika Rejuvenation Project here and inspected the finishing touches in progress on the completion of Rs 190 cr centrally funded Project which is the first of its kind river project in North India and was launched by PM Narendra Modi in 2019.

Dr Jitendra Singh's visit to the project was to see the last minute finishing touches before it is dedicated to the nation, most likely by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in near future.

Built on the lines of 'Namami Ganga', the Project was launched by the Prime Minister in February 2019.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Jitendra Singh said there had been a long pending demand for renovation, rejuvenation and beautification, but none of the earlier governments paid any heed. He said, Ghat area it was only after 2014

of Namami Ganga. During the over onehour review, Chief Engineer, UEED, engineers from the PWD and Irrigation Department, officials from the district administration and public representatives were among those present at the site.

that this first of its kind

river rejuvenation proj-

ect was undertaken in

North India on the lines

The Minister directed officers of the PWD (R&B) and Municipal Council Udhampur for ensuring dedicated feeder for uninterrupted power supply, besides mainitaing cleanliness and beautification of the

Earlier, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the year 2023 has been historic for India on many fronts. It was in this year that India landed on the Moon and attained the Presidency of the G20, the Minister mentioned. The world is now ready to be led by India, he

asserted. Dr Jitendra Singh was speaking to reporters after listening to the latest edition of Prime Minister's monthly address to the nation through Mann Ki Baat at Saint Thomas' Church sound citizens can channelise their energies to make India a developed

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the basis for making "Viksit Bharat" has been laid in the outgoing year. Now, the youth have to work on solidifying that base during the upcoming 25-year journey in the run-up to the target year of 2047.

The Minister said India is all set to emerge as the fourth largest economy next year. Exuding confidence, Dr Singh said that during Prime Minister Modi's 3rd term in office, India would reach the milestone of becoming the 3rd largest economy of the world.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the role of Jammu and Kashmir would be of great significance as India achieves such a feat. Dr Singh said many innovations and the best practices adopted by J&K in areas like agriculture and horticulture are now being replicated in other northern States like Uttarakhand.

Couple charge-sheeted in Rs. 35 lakhs Kitty Party fraud: Crime Branch

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: The Economic Offences Wing - Crime Branch Jammu has chargesheeted Pinky Gupta and Shiv Partap Gupta in a fraud case related to a Kitty Party scheme. The charge-sheet, presented in the Hon'ble Court, consists of 396 pages and alleges criminal conspiracy, cheating, and defrauding complainants and others by luring them to deposit money in the guise of Kitty parties with promises of hefty

interest payments. The case originated from a written complaint filed by Smt. Neelam Malhotra and others, who claimed that the accused individuals, residents of Green Enclave, Jammu, had enticed them and other innocent people to deposit money with the assurance of substantial returns. Subsequently, the accused allegedly



fled after locking their residence and office, deceiving individuals of their hard-earned money, totaling Rs. 35.00 lakhs.

The preliminary inquiry substantiated the allegations, leading to the initiation of criminal proceedings against the accused with the approval of Crime Headquarters. The formal case FIR was registered in the Police Station, Economic Offences Wing, Crime Branch, Jammu. Throughout the investigation, material evidence, both oral and documentary, as well as scientific evidence, was gathered. The accused,

who were evading arrest outside the UT of J&K, were eventually apprehended by the Crime Branch team.

As a result of the investigation, the case is closed as Challan, indicating that the charges have been formally presented in court. However, criminal proceedings are being separately initiated against the accused for their alleged involvement in defrauding other innocent people. The legal process will determine the outcome of the case and the appropriate actions to be taken against the accused individuals.

Abhay Bakaya demands de-notification of **Gair Mumkin Khad in Jammu District** been regularized /de-notified by the Govt in

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: Apni Party Youth Wing General Secretary and Spokesperson, Abhay Bakaya today demanded de-notification of Gair Mumkin Khad in Jammu District.

As per a press release, Abhay Bakaya said that the people who have constructed their houses, commercial establishments and lives of thousands of people depend upon the decision of the Govt on Gair Mumkin

He said that the people live in distress because their property falls in Gair Mumkin Khad area of Jammu District that is yet to be de-notified by the Govt.

"Same type of land in other Districts has

other districts, whereas Jammu District has been ignored and the steps to de-notify the Gair Mumkin Khad have not been initiated,'

In these circumstances, he said that it becomes imperative to take a final call and accordingly, de-notify the Gair Mumkin Khad in Jammu District keeping in view the larger interest of the masses.

"Most of the land in Jammu is settled on Gair Mumkin Khad and the decision to avoid de-notification has pushed the commoners to the wall. Hence, a positive decision in favour of the people should be taken," he

BJP Library releases documentary on Article 370

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: Jammu and Kashmir BJP President Ravinder Raina, along with MP Jugal Kishore Sharma, General Secretary (organisation) Ashok Koul and other leaders released a documentary on Article 370 and history of Praja Parishad in the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir. This documentary was also shown on the newly fixed LED in Nanaji Deshmukh Library. The LED will run this documentary on working days for the convenience of the history loving people.

Er. Dil Bahadur Singh Jamwal, Convenor BJP Sawachh Bharat Abhiyan and Er. T.K. Sharma, Co-Convenor of the Abhiyan presented this LED to the library. Prof. Kulbushan Mohtra Incharge Nanaji Deshmukh Library and Documentation



Department, had organised the

Ravinder Raina, while speaking on the occasion, said that Nanaji Deshmuk Library is proving a great asset not only to the party but general public is also visiting here and taking benefit of books related to different subjects, particularly ones on historic moments and developments in Jammu and Kashmir.

Ashok Koul said that the documentary released today is indeed a big source of information on Article 370 and the Praja Parishad movement and the readers will surely appreciate its contents and study material based on facts.

Prof. Kulbushan Mohtra, on this occasion, shared details about the books and the documentaries available in the library

and informed that during the past five years, a number of research scholars have taken help in completing their thesis on various subjects from this library, which is a matter of pride for the party.

Former Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta, former ministers Sat Sharma and Sham Lal Sharma, general secretaries Vibodh Gupta and Dr. Devinder Manyal, Waqf Board Chairperson Dr. Drakshana Andrabi, N.E Member and former minister Priya Sethi, J&K BJP Vicepresident Anuradha Charak, secretaries Arvind Gupta and Veenu Khanna, Mahila Morcha president Sanjita Dogra, former MLA Ashwani Sharma, Jammu south district president Rekha Mahajan, Mahila Morcha Spokesperson Pooja Grover were prominent leaders present on the occasion.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, JAL SHAKTI PHE DIVISION SAMBA

SHORT NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

E-NIT No. PHES/115 of 2023-24 Dated: 29-12-2023 under endorsement no. PHES/18416-29, Dated. 29-12-2023.

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, tenders are invited from Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE Division, Samba by e-tendering mode from approved and reputed / registered firms/ workshop owner shaving GST registration /PAN no. having sufficient experience in execution of similar nature of works. The details of works are as follows:

S. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (In	Earnest Money	Tender Fee	Time of Completio n	Bid Validity	Class of Contractor
		lacs)	Deposit		"1		
1.	Providing, Installation, testing and commissioning of pumping machinery along with allied electro-mechanical equipment under Improvement and Augmentation of water supply scheme Purmandal under NABARD (Technical Specification mentioned as Annexure- A)	23.30	@ 2% of the Advertised cost (To be submitted at the time of bid submission)	500/-	45 days	90 days	Registered firms/Worksh op Owners
Mai	or Hood NADADD						

Major Head NABARD Position of AAA Accorded Position of Funds **Available**

Senior Advocate Ashok Bhan conferred with prominent citizen award



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: Senior Advocate Ashok Bhan, has been awarded a prominent Citizen Award by Mool Chand Sharma Minister Higher Education, at a well attended function organised by Kashmir Peace Keepers (KPL)in NCR region.

The award given to Bhan is in recognition of and honour him for his exceptional contribution to the society.

The award is in great appreciation of his commitment and leadership exemplified the values of the Kashmiri Pandit community inspiring generations and enrich-

ing the cultural heritage. Bhan is also a bar leader and has been elected as senior executive member of the Supreme Court Bar

Association for many He is a chamber door

tenant with a leading law Chambers in London. He has also represent-

ed the Republic of India as an International law expert along with a Parliamentary delegation, to UN General Assembly session. He was the first non- parliamentarian representative in UN General Assembly to urge the global community on the issue of cross-border terrorism in the South east Asia.

Along with being a leading senior advocate in India, Bhan is also well recognized as a Track- II diplomat and expert on geo-political conflict resolutions. As an expert, he has represented various parties including the Republic of India at the United Nation Human Rights Commission in Geneva for several years.

He is also a distinguished fellow with United Services of India (USI), a strategic think tank for Armed forces on Geo-political affairs in India.He is chairman of a think tank-Kashmir (policy and strategy) Group.

He is son of a veteran freedom fighter Sh SN Bhan who was close associate of late Pt Kashyap Bandu ji in the socio-political movement of Kashmiri Pandit Community.

He is also a regular columnist and a public speaker. He regularly speaks at various Universities and writes column in some daily publications including Indian Express, Sunday Guardian & JK leading dailies etc.

SMVDU cricket team wins winter cricket tournament

Top News Report

JAMMU. Dec 31: SMVD University staff team won the winter cricket tournament organized by SMVD Narayana Hospital held at SMVD University Sports ground. The final match was played between SMVD University staff team and Unbeatable Warriors team of SMVD Narayana Hospital. The Unbeatable Warriors team set a target of 103 runs while batting first and was bowled out in 19.4 overs. The batting team suffered quick losses in the initial overs and never recovered from them. Mr. Aman Thakur was the pick of bowlers who claimed 4 wickets while Mr. Vishal and Mr. Sarthak took 2 wickets each. In response the SMVD University Staff team convincingly won the match by 9 wickets and reached the target in 17 overs. The chase was led by the captain of the team Mr. Sumit Sharma

and Mr. Surya Pratap Singh who scored 38 and 46 runs, respectively.

The tournament was played in super six format and these teams were divided into two pools. In the prize distribution ceremony Dr. Parvez Singh Slathia, In charge Sports, SMVD University and Mr. M. Muthu Mathavan, Facility Director, SMVD Narayana Hospital congratulated the winners and handed over the prizes to winner and runner up teams. Mr. Mathavan expressed his gratitude towards the university for providing the sports ground and allied facilities for organizing the tournament. Dr. Slathia congratulated the SMVD Narayana Hospital for organizing the tournament and emphasized that such tournaments are necessary for fostering the sportsman spirit and assured that in future more sports events will be conducted on the same lines.



1. The NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (BOQ), terms and conditions of contract

	on, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (BOQ), terms and conditions of contr			
can be seen / downloaded from website www. Jktenders.gov.in as per the dates shown below:				
Publishing date of NIT	29 -12-2023 at 04:00 PM			
Period of downloading Tender Documents	From date: 29-12-2023 to 08-01-2024 up to 4:00 PM.			
	Place (s): http://jktenders.gov.in			
Period of Submission of Bids	From Date: 29-12-2023 to 08-01-2024 up to 4:00 PM			
Date and Time Of Opening of Bids	09-01-2024 at 03:00 PM			
Place of Opening of Bids	Office of the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE Division, Samba			

The bids shall be opened online on above mentioned date or any other date convenient to the opening authority in presence of the bidders who may wish to be present.

Bids must be accompanied by cost of tender document & bid security deposit as specified in column 3 & 4 of the table payable at Samba pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE Division, Samba. Bid security will have to be in the form of CDR/FDR & shall be valid for at least 90 days. The cost of downloaded tender document shall be in the form of e-Challan through Treasury favouring Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE Division Samba and mentioning the name of work by crediting to MH- 0215 WSS.

3. <u>Instruction to bidders regarding E-tending process:</u>

3.1 Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the download bid submission.

3.2 To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) as per information technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from approved option as well as from "Bidders Manual kit" on website (www.jktenders.gov.in) to acquaint vendors.

3.3 The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital signature. No financial bid will be accepted in physical form.

 $3.4\,$ Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all below mentioned necessary documents:

a) Scanned copy of e-Challan through treasury towards the cost of tender document mentioning the name of work

b) Scanned copy of EMD in shape of CDR/FDR @ 2% of advertised cost duly pledged to Executive Engineer Jal Shakti

c) The Performance Security @ 3% in the shape of CDR/FDR/ irrevocable Bank Guarantee shall have to be submitted before award of contract duly pledge to Executive Engineer Jal Shakti, PHE Division Samba.

e) Scanned copies of Experience certificate of having executed similar nature electro-mechanical works in last two years. The experience certificate (satisfactory performance certificate of works executed) shall have beenissued by an officer of the rank not below an Executive Engineer of any Government Department/Semi Government/PSU's.

f) Scan properly all documents & convert all scan images into PDF format on 100dpi with black & white option. 3.5 The bid shall be deposited in electronic format only on the web site of (www.jktenders.gov.in) till the end date

nentioned in bid submission. 3.6 The details of cost of documents, EMD specified in the tenders document should be the same, as submitted online

(scanned copies) otherwise bid shall be rejected. 3.7 The Department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reason whatsoever claimed by the

> **Executive Engineer** DIP/J-13248/23

Jal Shakti (PHE) Division Samba

EDITORIAL

ADOPT PRICING METHODS

here are many methods of pricing and each one of them is appropriate for achieving a particular pricing objective or combination of pricing objectives.

The three major categories of methods used to establish product prices are cost-oriented pricing, competition-oriented pricing, and demand-oriented pricing. A retailer may use one or a combination of the methods. The most common is cost-oriented pricing.

The cost based pricing methods are based on cost incurred in the production of the goods. Total costs include fixed and variable costs. The pricing may be based on total costs or only on variable costs. A reasonable profit is added to base cost to arrive at the pricing.

Most frequently used method is the cost-plus method. Under this mark-up pricing is done. Mark-up pricing refers the pricing method in which selling price is fixed by adding a margin to the cost price. Mark-ups vary depending on the nature of the product and the markets. Usually if the value of the product is higher the markup pricing will be larger or vice-versa.

Mark-up pricing assumes that demand cannot be known accurately but costs are known. A reasonable mark-up is added to the costs. Then the price as well as mark-up is adjusted by trial and error. The main objective is to maximize profits in the short run without giving up on sales due to excessive prices. This method is adopted usually by distributive trade and marketing firms who do not have any manufacturing of their own.

Another common method of pricing is to determine the price on the basis of variable cost or direct cost. Fixed cost is totally ignored and the firm is only concerned with marginal or incremental cost of producing the products. Variable costs depend on the volume of production. Thus variable cost sets the price after a certain level of output is achieved. This method essentially aims at maximizing the total contribution of the firm towards fixed costs and profit. It does not seek to absorb the total cost in each unit of sale. This method takes into account cost aspects as well as demand aspects.

Rate of return means gain or loss on an investment over a specified period, expressed as a percentage increase over the initial investment cost. This method uses standard costing techniques and identifies the variable and fixed costs of manufacturing, selling and administration involved in producing and selling the product.

All The costs of the three operations are added. And to this total cost the required margin is added towards profit and the total becomes the selling price of the product. For this type of pricing, the company needs to specify the rate of return on its capital invested. Similar to cost plus pricing, the difference is that the mark-up will be based on the target rate of return.

The target rate of return varies with market norm or what management considers a fair return. Useful method to use when a business has invested too much on the project or the products. However difficult to use where a company has too many product lines or competes in markets.

The Growth of Artificial intelligence has Rapidly intruded into every Sphere of Scientific Activities

By: Vijay GarG

¬ very year, the prestigious scientific journal Nature selects ten individuals who played significant roles in crucial scientific discoveries from that year. The scientific journal compiles an annual list of ten people they believe have had a major impact on science, called Nature's 10. No matter their stance on science, these nominees have made a lasting impression. Reporters and editors at Nature assess people whose positions have significantly influenced science or whose impact on the world is significant as part of the selection process. The list includes short biographies of the people responsible for some of the year's most important discoveries and events.

The compilation also features five people named "ones to watch" for the coming year. This year's list, which was published on December 13, made every Indian proud as it featured our Kalpana Kalahasti, who played a crucial part in ensuring Chandrayaan-3's triumphant

touchdown on the Moon, along with global stalwarts.

But this year's Nature's 10 will be written in the annals of human history, as for the first time, it featured a non-human entity. The AI-based ChatGPT has found a place in the list, along with human scientific counterparts. Why incorporate a computer program into a compilation of individuals who have influenced science in 2023? ChatGPT isn't a human being, but in numerous aspects, this software has significantly and extensively impacted the field of science throughout the past year.

ChatGPT, a chatbot created by OpenAI, was released on November 30, 2022. The AI-based bot ChatGPT has gained wide acceptance among the scientific community, as well as among the public, since 2022. In just five days of launch, ChatGPT crossed 1 million users. By January 2023 (two months after its launch), ChatGPT users grew by 9900% — meaning it gained 100 million active users. According to the latest available data, ChatGPT has around 180.5 million users.

Within a short time of its inception, ChatGPT has found profound acceptance among the research community. It acts as a valuable tool in scientific research across various domains. ChatGPT can assist researchers in performing literature reviews by succinctly summarising and extracting crucial details from an extensive array of scientific journals and articles. It offers succinct summaries of current research, aiding researchers in identifying deficiencies in the literature or locating pertinent studies.

ChatGPT can assist researchers with data analysis by providing insights, hypotheses, or explanations using given datasets. It can assist in the interpretation of intricate findings, providing supplementary viewpoints or indicating possible links within the data. ChatGPT is frequently used by researchers as a writing aid, often to draft sections of research papers, proposals, or reports. The generation of content that is coherent and well-structured can be facilitated by it.

The basic objective of ChatGPT is to maintain discussions reasonably

and compellingly that are consistent with its training data. Nevertheless, in the process of achieving this objective, it, along with other generative artificial intelligence (AI) programmes, is transforming the landscape of scientific endeavour. The advent of this transition has rekindled conversations about the limits of artificial intelligence (AI), the fundamental nature of human intellect, and the most effective ways to regulate the interaction between the two. One of the reasons that a non-human entity was chosen to be included in this year's edition of Nature's 10 is because of this issue.

Nature's list also recognises the creators of such AI-based technologies. Ilya Sutskever, the chief scientist and cofounder of OpenAI, the organization that created Chat GPT, has also found a place among Nature's 10.

(Vijay GarG Retired Principal Educational columnist malout)

Children with Disabilities in underserved Communities face a multitude of Societal and Economic Challenges

By: Vijay GarG

In India, children with disabilities face considerable challenges, often amplified by socio-economic factors. Recent data suggests that a significant number of these children do not receive the necessary medical and educational support. These children are also less likely to attend school compared to their non-disabled peers. Moreover, access to specialized healthcare and rehabilitation services can be limited, particularly in rural and underprivileged areas.

Parents often struggle to identify developmental issues in their children due to a lack of awareness and information. Recognizing signs of disabilities like autism, hearing impairments, or cognitive delays can be challenging without proper knowledge or access to healthcare professionals. Additionally, cultural stigma and misconceptions about disabilities can lead to denial or reluctance to seek help. This delay in identification hinders early intervention, which is crucial for better

outcomes. The limited availability of specialized healthcare services in many regions further exacerbates these challenges.

Children with disabilities in underserved communities face a multitude of societal and economic challenges. These include limited access to healthcare, educational opportunities, and rehabilitation services. Financial constraints often prevent families from seeking or continuing treatment, leading to inadequate care. Stigma and lack of awareness in these communities further contribute to social isolation and discrimination, impeding the children's development and integration into society. These challenges not only affect the immediate health and well-being of these children but also limit their prospects in terms of education, employment, and social inclusion, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and marginalization.

To meet these challenges head-on early identification and providing comprehensive support throughout life is essential. Initiatives like

the Cochlear Implant Program have helped over 1200 hearing-impaired children since 2013, while the Little Hearts Program of the Hans Foundation (THF) tackles children suffering from congenital heart defects. Collaborations of NGOs with government healthcare systems ensure broader access to essential medical treatments. The Centre for Early Childhood Development and Neuro-Rehabilitation, established in collaboration with AIIMS, aims to centralise services for children with disabilities, ensuring more accessible and effective care. Indeed, philanthropy can play a pivotal role in elevating pediatric care for children with disabilities and fostering enduring positive impacts. By investing in specialized pediatric care centres, supporting research and innovation, and promoting early intervention programs, philanthropic efforts can significantly enhance the quality of care provided to children facing disabilities. Financial assistance to families, training healthcare professionals, and constructing accessible facili-

ties are additional avenues through which philanthropy can actively contribute.

Advocacy and awareness campaigns serve to educate various stakeholders, while collaboration with government agencies and NGOs ensures a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to pediatric care. Supporting community-based initiatives and fostering long-term partnerships with healthcare institutions and advocacy groups further strengthens the impact of philanthropy. Through these initiatives, philanthropy not only addresses immediate healthcare needs but also works towards creating inclusive environments that empower children with disabilities and their families, ultimately shaping a more equitable and supportive future.

(Vijay GarG Retired Principal Educational columnist malout)

Explore the Top Multimodal Artificial intelligence tools shaping 2024's tech landscape

By: Vijay GarG

ultimodal AI tools, once confined to unimodal input tasks, have evolved significantly, extending their capabilities to encompass text, images, video, and audio. According to Markets and Markets research, the global multimodal AI market is projected to surge from \$1 billion in 2023 to a staggering \$4.5 billion by 2028, highlighting the growing significance of these tools. Navigating through the expanding array of options can be challenging, so let's explore the five best multimodal AI tools for 2024.

1. Google Gemini

Google Gemini, a natively multimodal Language Model (LLM), stands out as a versatile tool capable of identifying and generating text, images, video, code, and audio. Divided into three versions—Gemini Ultra, Gemini Pro, and Gemini Nano—each caters to specific user needs. Gemini Ultra, the largest LLM, excels in performance, surpassing GPT-4 on 30 out of 32 benchmarks, as shared by Demis Hassabis, CEO, and co-founder of Google Deep-Mind.

2. ChatGPT (GPT-4V)

ChatGPT, powered by GPT-4 with vision (GPT-4V), introduces multimodality by allowing users to input text and images. With an impressive 100 million weekly active users as of November 2023, ChatGPT supports a mix of text, voice, and images in prompts, and responds in up to five AI-generated voices. The GPT-4V variant ranks among the largest multimodal AI tools, offering a comprehensive user experience.

3. In world Al

In world AI, a character engine, empowers developers to create non-playable characters (NPCs) and virtual personalities for digital worlds. Leveraging multimodal AI, In world AI enables NPCs to communicate through natural language, voice, animations, and emotion. Developers can craft smart NPCs with autonomous actions, unique personalities, emotional expressions, and memories of past events, enhancing the immersive quality of digital experiences.

4. Meta Image Bind

Meta Image Bind, an opensource multimodal AI model, stands out by processing text, audio, visual, movement, thermal, and depth data. As the first AI model capable of combining information across six modalities, Image Bind creates art by merging disparate inputs, such as audio of a car engine and an image of a beach.

5. Runway Gen -2

Runway Gen -2 takes center stage as a versatile multimodal Al model specialising in video generation. It accepts text, image, or video input, allowing users to create original video content through text-to-video, image-to-video, and video-to-video functionalities. Users can replicate the style of existing images or prompts, edit video content, and achieve higher fidelity results, making Gen -2 an ideal choice for creative experimentation.

(Vijay GarG Retired Principal Educational columnist malout)

BJP leaders along with public listen 108th Episode of **Mann Ki Baat Program at Jammu West**

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: BJP leaders, including Braham Jyot Satti, and the public in Jammu West gathered to listen to the 108th episode of "Mann Ki Baat."

The event was organized by Parveen Badyal, Vice President of OBC (Other Backward Classes).

Other notable attendees included Tarun Sharma (culture cell bjym), Raja Ram (Social Activist), and prominent citizens.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted the significance of the digit "108" on the 108th episode.

He extended New Year greetings and discussed the achievements of the



country in 2023. Emphasized the importance of maintaining fitness and acknowledged the response to the Fit India initiative.

The PM appreciated the response to the upcoming Ram Temple inauguration in Ayod-

Urged citizens to contribute to a #RamBhajan social media drive by consolidating artwork related to the event. Acknowledged India's

achievements in sports, including 107 medals in the Asian Games and 111 medals in the Asian Para Games.

Mentioned the impressive performance of Indian players in the Cricket World Cup. Highlighted the conve-

nience brought about by innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) in various sectors. Braham Jyot Satti sum-

marized the episode, expressing admiration for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. Praised the growth and entrepreneurship fos-

tered by various employ-

ment schemes. Emphasized the BJP's commitment to the "Nation First" ideology and its focus on serving humanity at the ground level.

Overall, the information provided gives a snapshot of the key highlights and reactions to the 108th episode of "Mann Ki Baat" in Jammu West.

Shahadat Gurmat Samagam Grand Programme organizes in Jammu

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: A religious and commemorative event related to the Shahadat Gurmat Samagam Grand Programme organized by the Parbandak Committee Gurudwara Mata Gujar Kour Ji in Jammu. The event included the participation of various Sikh organizations and prominent individuals. The program involved recitation of Shabad Gurbani by Ragi Jathas, and the sacrifices of Sahibzadas of Guru Gobind Singh Ji and Mata Gujar Kour Ji were remembered.

The historical account of the sacrifices made by the Sahibzadas and other Sikh warriors in the battle of Chamkor was highlighted, along with the tragic incident of Sahibzada Jorawar Singh Ji and Sahibzada Fatey Singh Ji being bricked alive by Wazir Khan at Fatey Garh Sahib. The refusal of Wazir Khan to allow cremation until land was purchased, and the subsequent purchase of the land by Dewan Todar Mal using gold coins, was also narrated. The cost of the land was mentioned as 2 billion 50 crore rupees, making it one of the most expensive lands in history.

The Gurudwara Parbandak Committee Mata Gujjar Kour KC Colony expressed gratitude to the Sangat and Shriman Mahant Man-

jeet Singh of Dera Nangali Sahib Poonch. Various Sikh organizations and individuals, including S. Mohinder Singh, S. Rajinder Singh, S. Tejinder Singh, S. Surinder Singh Dutt, S. Gagandeep Singh, S. Surjeet Singh Kukoo, S. Kulwant Singh, and S. Jaswinder Singh Lucky, were acknowledged for their participation in the program.

It's a comprehensive account of the event, acknowledging the religious and historical significance of the sacrifices made by the Sikh community. If you have any specific questions or if there's anything else you'd like to know, feel free to ask.

Sheetal Devi names the "Best Para Women Archer of the Year

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: Duggar Gaurav Adventure Award and the recognition it brings to exceptional achievements in adventure sports. Sheetal Devi, being named the "Best Para Women Archer of the Year," is undoubtedly a remarkable accomplishment.

The involvement of prominent personalities and experts in the decision-making process, as well as the diverse representation in the club's core members, reflects a comprehensive and wellconsidered approach in selecting the awardee.

The decision to release a colorful souvenir during the grand function to celebrate the 41st anniversary of the club is an excellent way to highlight the achievements not only of Sheetal Devi but also of other notable individuals, including Shivani Charak, who made history as the first woman from J&K to participate in the Asian

It's commendable that the club has the flexibility to increase the number of awards in a particular year and extend recognition to exceptional individuals from various fields. This approach broadens the scope of the award and allows for the acknowledgment of outstanding contributions beyond adventure sports.

The background information about the institution of the Duggar Gaurav Adventure Award in 2021

and the recognition of all 11 Everest heroes belonging to Jammu in the inaugural year adds historical significance to the award and showcases the commitment of Tawi Trekkers J&K to honoring and celebrating local achievements in adventure sports.

The upcoming grand function in February 2024 promises to be a momentous occasion, and the release of the souvenir will undoubtedly serve as a fitting tribute to the accomplishments of Sheetal Devi, Shivani Charak, and other prominent members of the club in mountaineering, sport climbing, and trekking. It also provides a platform to inspire and motivate

SMVDU Student presents Paper at the International Congress on Renewable Energy

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: Milind Shukla, a final vear student of the School of Mechanical Engineering (SoME) presented a research paper at the International Congress on Renewable Energy held at KREEPA, Cochin, Kerala under aegis of Solar Energy Society of India (SESI) during 07-09 December 2023. The paper discusses the transformation of power grids to smart grids. The presented paper will be published in SESI National Journal. This achievement reflects his dedication and the quality of his research.

and serves as a testament to the rigorous academic standards and opportunities provided by the School of Mechanical Engineering at SMVDU. The School continues to inspire and motivate its students to achieve excellence in their chosen fields while fostering an environment of innovation and academic growth. Milind Shukla's successful participation in ICoRE 2023 is a notable milestone in his academic journey, setting an example for future students and highlighting the University's commitment to promoting research and scholarly endeavours.

Apni Party's acceptance increases among people, says Manjit Singh

others to excel in the field

of adventure sports.

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: Asserting that the acceptance of the Apni Party has been growing in Jammu and Kashmir, the Apni Party Provincial President, Jammu, and Former Minister. S. Manjit Singh today said that the Party has expanded its roots in Jammu plains with the support of people from various segments of society.

"The people from every nook and corner have joined Apni Party and the Party has gained strengthen because of the public faith in the leadership of the Party and its politics of telling truth to the people," said Manjit Singh, while addressing a public meeting cum program here at Apni Party office, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu.

The meeting was orga-

nized by District President (Minority Wing) Jammu District, Dalbir Singh and District General Secretary, Jammu (Minority Wing), Harjeet

During the meeting, dozens of people joined the Apni Party in presence of S. Manjit Singh. Welcoming the new entrants into the Party fold, Manjit Singh hoped that their joining would strengthen the Party at the grass root level.

In his address, he said that the people from across Jammu and Kashmir and from all the regions have shown their faith in the Apni Party because of its policy of ensuring equitable development, protecting resources, land and employment for the local population.

He said that the traditional political parties have failed to do what was expected by the people. However, they encouraged regional and religious divide in Jammu and Kashmir that has created a situation where the people are no longer trusting them.

"The people have pinned their hopes on the Apni Party. We have committed to provide employment, protest resources, and end any kind of discrimination whether regional, religious or any other type," he said.

He said that the commitment of bringing reforms and upgradation of social, economic and political status of Jammu and Kashmir's people will be fulfilled if Apni Party forms Govt in the erstwhile state.

He said that the present form of Govt has failed to do justice with the people and their style of working has generated anguish among the people because of their discriminatory approach.

"The developmental projects have come to stand still and the pending payments of the already done works are delaying year by year. From contractors to common man, everyone feels ignored and pushed to the wall without an elected Govt," he said.

He said that the people would have a sigh of relief only when assembly elections are held in J&K, and statehood is restored without further

"There would be no prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir unless an elected Govt replaces the present form of Govt to restore the confidence of the people," he added. Meanwhile, he took a detailed review of the Party's working in

Jammu District.

and others.

Prominent among those who were present on the occasion include Senior Vice Provincial President Jammu, Fagir Nath, Provincial Vice President, Jammu, Mohammed Shafi Sheikh, Additional General Secretary, Arun Kumar Chibber, District President, Rural-A, Pushap Dev Uppal, Provincial President, Jammu, Youth Wing, Vipul Bali, Provincial President, Jammu, Women Wing, Pavneet Kour, Provincial Vice President Women Wing, Jammu, Neelam Gupta, Provincial President Transport Union, Jammu. Tirath Singh, Provincial Vice President, Transport Union, Devinder Gill, General Secretary Transport Union, Yash Choudhary, Balbir Singh Bawa, Inderpal Singh

Declare Rajouri Day as **Holiday: Vibodh**

the local VDC's need to be

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: BJP leader calls on LG, submit 13 point demands, applaud Sinha for changing perception of J&K in the world Jammu Demanding declaring of Rajouri Day on April 13 as Holiday for Rajouri District, Former MLC and General Secretary of BJP, J&K Advocate Vibodh Gupta said that on 13 April 1948, Rajouri town was recaptured from the intruders by the heroic action of armed forces assisted by brave citizens of Rajouri we must consider the significance of this day by declaring April 13 as Holiday. Advocate Vibodh Gupta today called on to Hon'ble LG Manoj Sinha and presented 13 point memorandum raising various development demands including declaring April 13 as Holiday in Rajouri, strengthening of VDC, creation of tehsil at Budhal and Doongi, operationalization of KV in Doongi, managing the sanction of project under AMRUT 2.0 for Rajouri, construction of span PSC Girder-Motrable Panjpeer to Badalmang Bridge, J&K Bank Branch at Doongi, opening of Degree College at Dhangri, sanctioning bridge between Sangam Dugwell to New Bus Stand, Appointment of permanent Principal in GMC Rajouri, establishment of New Industrial Zone in Rajouri, sanction of Mother & Child Hospital in Old Hospital Building and timely completion of Akhnoor Poonch Highway and expediating work on Thanamandi Surankote Road. During the interaction with Hon'ble LG, Gupta said that in order to tackle the recent surge of

strengthened and new gun licences should be issued to the locals in these affected areas besides renewal of old licences on priority. He briefed Hon'ble LG that two new Tehsils in Budhal and Doongi areas of Rajouri were not made operational and it is the long pending demand of the people of these areas. He apprised that a Kendra Vidyalaya was sanctioned for Doongi, Rajouri, and a principal was also appointed. He urged Hon'ble LG to ensure that KV's are operationalised at the earliest. Vibodh said that a project under AMRUT 2.0 has been sent to Delhi for approval. He urged him to take up the issue with the Union Minister for Jal Shakti to prioritise the work and expedite the execution of this project for the welfare of the people Demanding intervention of Hon'ble LG into construction of of 160-metre span PSC Girder Motorable Panipeer to Badalamang Bridge, Vibodh said that it was sanctioned by the Ministry of Road. Transport and Highways, Government of India in 2016 to alleviate traffic congestion in Rajouri city from the heavy vehicular movements but the project could not be completed due to objections raised by the Army Station HQ Rajouri. He requested Hon'ble LG to intervene and ensure the successful completion of this critically important project for the benefit of the public. Demanding J&K Bank Branch at Doongi and Degree College for Dhangri, Vibodh said that Doongi area of Rajouri is situated adjoining to the Line of Control (L.O.C), and the residents of this area have endured significant hardships during the past and they deserve to be given J&K Bank branch. He added that people of Dhangri have been persistently requesting the establishment of a Government Degree College for their area from a long time and the demand is genuine to be fulfilled. Vibodh also requested to sanction a bridge between Sangam Dugwell to the New Bus Stand with approach road to Vedanta Bridge besides posting of Permanent Principal in Government Medical College Rajouri. He also demanded to establish a new industrial zone in Rajouri, equipped with modern facilities. "There is also need to sanction a Mother & Child hospital for Rajouri and this can function at the old building of the Rajouri Hospital", he demanded. He has also demanded timely completion of the Akhnoor-Poonch highway as per the DPR as this road besides being lifeline of the entire population of the area, has immense strategic importance. He further requested Hon'ble LG to issue direction to concerned agencies and officials to expedite the work on Thanamandi - Surankote road via Bufliaz. Expressing satisfaction over the visionary approach of Hon'ble LG towards changing the perception about J&K in the rest of world, Vibodh said that they are grateful to LG for tireless efforts in engaging with the people of J&K towards early solution of their various problems. He said that Hon'ble LG has inspired renewed confidence and brought positive changes on the ground through his initiatives. He thanked Hon'ble LG for his tireless efforts in championing their cause.

Congress party holds district workers convention at Shalimar Kishtwar

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Dec 31: A significant gathering organized by the Kishtwar Congress under the leadership of President District Congress Committee Kishtwar, Adv Mohd Asif Nageeb. The convention focused on various issues faced by the people of Kishtwar. Naqeeb highlighted the critical issue of free electricity, stating that it is a welldeserved demand of the people of Kishtwar.

The convention discussed the ongoing road connectivity issues in areas adjoining the District headquarters. Plans were discussed to raise the voice for road connectivity and safety in order to enhance accessibility and connectivity for development options.

President District Congress highlighted the ever-rising



creating job opportunities within the district.

Local Employment in Ongoing Projects: Nageeb stressed the right of locals to have employment opportunities in ongoing projects across District Kishtwar, aiming to prevent exploi-

Nageeb urged the people to vote for the Congress in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, expressing the hope that this would help put an end to what was perceived as anti-people policies of the BJP government.

The lack of proper healthcare facilities for rural areas was highlighted, with a commitment

to making healthcare accessibility and quality a top priority if the Congress is voted to power.

The meeting witnessed a substantial turnout of party workers and the presence of esteemed senior leaders. Notable personalities included leaders from INTUC, Sevadal, senior Congress leaders, and President Youth Congress Kishtwar, among others.

At the end of the meeting, hundreds of people reportedly showed their faith in the secular policies of Congress and joined the party. They were welcomed by Adv. Nageeb and other senior

Overall, the gathering and convention served as a platform for the Kishtwar Congress to address the concerns of the community and express its commitment to fostering comprehensive development within

Sikh United Front along with various Sikh organizations conduct emergency meeting

Top News Report

Pak sponsored militancy

related incidents in Rajouri,

JAMMU, Dec 31: An emergency meeting organized by the Sikh United Front along with various Sikh organizations in Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting was chaired by S. Sudershan Singh Wazir, Chairman of Sikh United Front Jammu

and Kashmir. Participants included leaders such as S. Mohinder Singh, Bhai Kanhiaya Nishkam Sewa Society J&K Chief Organizer, S. Darbinder Singh, President Shiromani Akali Dal J&K, and others from various Sikh organizations.

Manjit Singh G. K, Ex-President Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee, and S. Parmjeet Singh Sarna joined Shiromani Akalidal Badal Punjab. The move was welcomed during the meeting.

The need for unity among the Sikh community was emphasized, setting aside minor differences. Discrimination against the Sikh community in various aspects of society was mentioned, and a call to unite for the community's welfare was made.

The historical significance of Akalidal, founded in Amritsar on December 14, 1920, was highlighted. Akalidal was recognized as the only political wing that assisted the Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandak Committee (SGPC) as a task

Appeals were made to veteran leaders throughout the country to unite and form state bodies. Bibi Jaggir Kour and Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa were urged to join the party for the betterment of the community. Sukhbir Singh Badal was requested to approach veteran leadership for unity

The meeting expressed concerns about the discrimination faced by the Sikh community and the need to address it. Sukhbir Singh Badal's apology for mistakes was acknowledged, and efforts to fight for the release of Bandi Singhs

were emphasized. The meeting included representatives from various Sikh organizations, motor transport associations, panchayats, youth groups, and Gurdwara commit-

The information provided outlines the key points discussed during the emergency meeting, focusing on unity, political affiliations, and addressing concerns within the Sikh community.

Happy with response, don't make movies with box office in mind: Rajkumar Hirani on 'Dunki'

Commercial success does matter but filmmaker can't focus on it and let it colour their vision, says "Dunki" director Rajkumar Hirani, happy that people have praised his efforts to tell a human story at a time audiences are flocking to action movies.

"Dunki", fronted by Shah Rukh Khan, is based on the illegal migration of people who travel through the dangerous 'donkey route' in search of a better life.

The much-discussed film comes after Shah Rukh's blockbusters "Pathaan" and "Jawan", both high-octane action thrillers that crossed over Rs 1,000 crore each at the box office. "Dunki", which also stars Taapsee Pannu, Vicky Kaushal and Boman Irani, is a gentler film and has made Rs 300 crore a success though not at par with the other two films.

"Of course, commercial success matters to me but I try not focus on it at all because the moment you start focusing on it, then you start colouring the kind of film you want to make...," Hirani said.

His last film was "Sanju" in

"I take three or four years to make a film. This time I took five years to make a story. It should be like... let me make this film whatever the fate of the film is. Sometimes you will get a universal audience, sometimes you will get an audience which is in smaller pockets. India is a massive country and there will be all kinds of audiences liking all kinds of films," Hirani said.

The 61-year-old is known for his unique brand of cinema that focuses on human stories with a touch of comedy and commerciality. His earlier films include the super successful "Munnabhai" films and "3 Idiots" as well as



"PK" and "Sanju".

Hirani said he was not scared at all while making "Dunki".

"It's an Indian story which in Hindi cinema no one thought about. I'm happy with the response. Sometimes it will be massive, sometimes it will be different. It is a successful film and people are going for it and people are liking it. I don't think one should ever worry about box office numbers. If the attention is there, then it's a big trap."

What scares him, he said, is audience expectation.

"I get scared... people expect that 'jo pehle banaya tha wohi humko dekna hai' (We want to something similar to what we saw earlier). With every film, I'm always jumping genres and trying to make something different from 'Munnabhai' to '3 Idiots' to 'PK', 'Sanju' and this," he added.

As a storyteller, Hirani said his goal is to scout for unique subjects and it's the most difficult task.

"For 100 years, cinema has been made and now people are exposed to world cinema and they see all kinds of films, so to find a subject that has not been dealt with is always difficult." "Dunki" references village homes in Punjab which have concrete planes on their roof-

"I initially saw one plane on top of a house and I was like, 'why are they making these planes on top of the house?' Then I discovered that this is kind of a status symbol for people whose children are abroad. Then I dived into it," he said.

Home is an emotion for Nagpur-based Hirani, and he said he could understand the desire to move out of a place for better work opportunities.

"Dunki" to him is also a story of coming back home.

"Most of these people leave their homes eventually to come back, nobody leaves a home thinking that will permanently settle there. They will be like, 'We will go there, make money and come back and retire in my own country' but most don't. So, to me, home is a great emotion and that was more inspiring," the filmmaker said.

During his research for "Dunki", Hirani found there are many English-speaking classes in Punjab where students learn the language in order to fulfil their dream of getting a visa.

It's an interesting world, the director said, adding that he met many people, who followed the donkey route and even attended English-speaking classes in dis-

"During COVID-19, I went to Punjab and sat in all those English-speaking classes. I would put on a mask and go there and attend it and I would be like, 'I want to do a trial class'. I went to those villages and many of them have become empty as there are just older people staying there, and no young people. I met a lot of people there, families, children and saw those aircraft on top of the houses," he

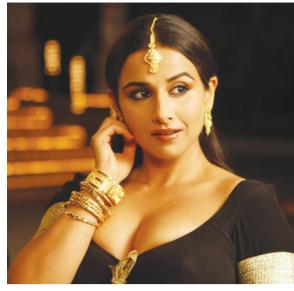
Working with Shah Rukh Khan, who was his first choice for his 2003 directorial debut "Munna Bhai M.B.B.S" and 2009 hit "3 Idiots", has been a long-cherished dream.

More than him, his mother was happy he was finally collaborating with the superstar.

"After my last film 'Sanju', we started meeting more often. During COVID-19 times when not much work was happening, he asked me, 'What are you working on?' I said, 'I've these two-three ideas.' I narrated all the ideas to him and he got fascinated with this one and he was like, if this one develops then let's do it.

"So, it happened organically. All I can say is I had complete joy working with him. As Abhiiat (Joshi, writer) describes Shah Rukh, he says, 'This man is pure love'. I had a very happy experience of not only working with him as an actor but also as a human being." According to Hirani, the role of Hardy, who is not fluent in English, was challenging for Shah Rukh.

When Vidya Balan refused to eat as a child without watching 'Sara Zamana'



Taking a trip down the memory lane, actress Vidya Balan revealed how during her childhood, she refused to eat her food if she didn't see the famous song 'Sara Zamana' featuring Amitabh Bachchan

on television. 'Sara Zamana', sung by Kishore Kumar, is from the 1981 movie 'Yaarana' starring Amitabh, Neetu Singh, and Tanuja. Vidya appeared for the finale episode of quiz-based reality show 'Kaun Banega Crorepati 15', along with Indian Paraarcher Sheetal Devi.

During the game hosted by Amitabh Bachchan, Vidya recounted her childhood story related to the megastar.

The 'Parineeta' actress said: "I was telling Sheetal backstage. During childhood...You and I go back a long way, sir.'

Big B interrupted and said: "You're mentioning this now."

Vidya then went on to narrate: "You don't know about this. If I didn't see 'Sara Zamana' on TV during childhood, I'd refuse to eat. I feel the same even today when you are before me. Everyone on KBC experiences it. Most people are left speechless."

The 'Maa' fame actress the shared: "Sir, I've witnessed...In this season, I noticed that a lot of people mentioned one person who leaves you speechless. I have a short video for you."

The 81-year-old actor was shocked and said: "Oh, God! Who is it? Play it quickly." The video mentioned Big B's wife Jaya Bachchan. Vidya asked the cine icon how it was.

actor said: "Thank you so much, Vidya. You reminded me of so many things."

The 'Brahmastra'

Vidya then said: "I'm a big fan of hers too, sir. I wanted to somehow... bring her..."

She said how everyone in her family is a big fan of Amitabh Bachchan. Vidya was accompanied by her parents, and mother-inlaw on the sets of 'KBC

"When KBC was

launched in 2000, my father wrote a letter to you. He posted the letter but maybe you didn't get it. He didn't get a reply and he was dejected. In our family...forget about my family and this country, the whole world is your fan. When I was working with you, he'd tell me every time, 'Can you give you the letter?' I said, 'Please don't!' I would hesitate back then. Today, my father brought that letter," she said.

Vidya's father then handed over the letter to the 'Don' actor. Amitabh said to her father: "Sir, thank you so much. Thank you very much. Thank you."

The 'Kahaani' actress said: "You can read it later, but it's a big deal for him that he could give the letter to you."

Big B said that he will read it as well as reply to it.'Kaun Banega Crorepati 15' airs on Sony.

Major hits and misses from Bollywood in 2023

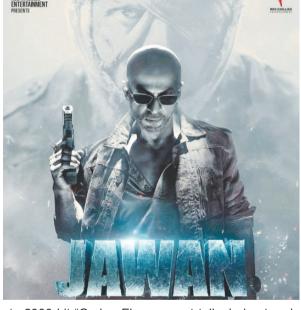
The year 2023 proved lucky for Bollywood and Shah Rukh Khan led the way with "Pathaan" and "Jawan". However, amidst high expectations, there were also some big titles that failed to capitalise on the great theatrical boom of Hindi movies post pandemic, ultimately falling the box office.

Here is the list of some of the major hits and misses of 2023. Hits

1. "Pathaan" and "Jawan": With the two action titles. Shah Rukh made a triumphant return to leading man roles after a gap of four years. "Pathaan", directed by Siddharth Anand, released in theatres in January and shattered many box office records in the opening weekend and ended its theatrical run with a towering gross box office collection of over Rs 1,050 crore. It also starred Deepika Padukone and John Abraham, "Jawan". a high-octane action entertainer from Tamil director Atlee. The pan-India film, which also featured Nayanthara and Vijay Sethupathi, turned out to be an even bigger hit, grossing Rs 1,150 crore globally to become the biggest hit of SRK's career.

2. "Animal": It was one of the most memorable years of Ranbir's career with the actor delivering the third biggest but also the most divisive film of 2023 in "Animal", directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga of "Kabir Singh" fame. The film drew criticism for its graphic content, extreme violence, and treatment of female characters but since its release on December 1, it has earned over Rs 880 crores in worldwide

3. "Gadar 2": A sequel



to 2000 hit "Gadar: Ek Prem Katha", the Anil Sharma-directed film reintroduced Sunny Deol to mass audiences. The movie, which released in August, turned out to be a surprise hit of the year with over Rs 680 crore in worldwide collection, according to trade web-

Sunny, 66, reprised his role of Tara Singh in "Gadar 2", set years after the events of the first movie.

4. "Tiger 3": Salman Khan returned as super spy Avinash Singh Rathore aka Tiger in the third part of his eponymous movie franchise. Directed by Maneesh Sharma, the film was released in November. Despite coming in theatres around the time of Cricket World Cup, the movie grossed over Rs 460 crore in worldwide collection. It also starred Katrina Kaif and Emraan Hashmi.

5. "Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani": Karan Johar's seventh full-fledged feature not only became one of the highest grossing films of the filmmaker's career, but is also his

most talked-about and progressive movie till date. Released in July, the movie grossed over Rs 355 crore.

"Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani" featured Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt with great supporting acts by the likes of cinema veterans Dharmendra, Jaya Bachchan and Shabana Azmi as well as actors Tota Roy Chowdhury, Churni Ganguly and Aamir Bashir.

Misses 1. "The Vaccine War": After the controversialyet-highly-successful "The Kashmir Files", Vivek Agnihotri released "The Vaccine War" in theatres in September. The movie revolved around Indian scientists and their quests to develop an affordable vaccine for India and the world. It earned Rs 14 crore at the box office, according to trade websites.

2. "Tejas": Kangana Ranaut had another forgettable year as "Tejas", which featured her as an Indian Air Force pilot, turned out to be a colossal disappointment at the box office. It was released in theatres in

October and managed to earn around Rs 8 crore, trade websites reported.

3. "Bholaa": Trade pundits were betting big on Ajay Devgn's "Bholaa", the Hindi remake of Tamil hit "Kaithi", but the audiences gave the film a cold shoulder. The film, which released in cinemas in March, earned over Rs 120 crore, just enough to cover its making cost. It was directed by Devgn and also starred Tabu.

4. "Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan": Before "Tiger 3", Salman had another big release in "Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan", which made its debut in theatres in April, coinciding with the festival of Eid. Despite being headlined by a Bollywood superstar, the film underperformed at the box office. earning around Rs 180 crore.

The movie, which was a remake of Tamil superstar Ajith's hit movie "Veeram", also starred Pooja Hegde and Venkatesh Daggu-

5. "Adipurush": The Om Raut-directorial, headlined by "Baahubali" star Prabhas, was one of the most anticipated titles but was plagued by many controversies. It was released amid much fanfare in June, registering a bombastic score of over Rs 300 crores in the opening weekend.

But poor reviews, coupled with a huge row over its poor dialogues and VFX, took a toll on the movie as it recorded a huge dip in numbers and footfalls in theatres. The film, also starring Saif Ali Khan and Kriti Sanon, eventually grossed around Rs 390 crores, according to trade websites.

"Grateful, anchored, at peace...": Rashmika Mandanna on completing 7 years in industry happen. When did it



Actor Rashmika Mandanna has completed seven years in the film industry.

Marking the special occasion, Rashmika

took to Instagram and penned a beautiful note filled with gratitude.

"Sometimes just pause and think. Damn! How did it all

all happen. Why did it all happen. And I am so freaking glad - that it all, happened! Grateful. Anchored. At peace. Happy! This is everything that I've always dreamed of..I'd have not realised it and would've kept running towards something I don't even know what, but being with the right people makes you realise that sometimes you should just pause and realise that - this is it! This is what the lil girl grew up dreaming about," she

Alongside the note, she dropped her happy picture.

Rashmika's post is flooded with heartfelt comments

"God bless you always," a social media user commented.

"Proud of you," another

Rashmika made her

acting debut with the Kannada film 'Kirik Party' (2016). The film was directed by Rishab Shetty. In her final release of 2022, Rashmika

appeared in the Amitabh Bachchan starrer 'Goodbye', marking her debut in Hindi cinema. She recently acted in Sandeep Reddy Vanga's 'Animal', which also starred Ranbir Kapoor, Anil Kapoor and Bobby Deol.

In the film, she essayed the role of Ranbir's wife. Prior to 'Animal', she was seen in Sidharth Malhotra-starrer 'Mission Majnu'.

In the coming months, Rashmika will be seen in the pan-India film 'Pushpa 2'. She also has 'Chaava' in her kitty.

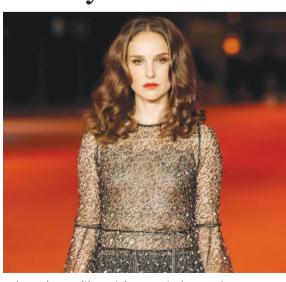
Mind game: For Natalie Portman, psychology and acting are very similar

Black Swan actress Natalie Portman believes that acting and psychology are 'very similar'. The actress took a

break from her career to pursue a degree in psychology from Harvard University.

She thinks it helped her work because doing both successfully involved being 'observant'. Asked if her degree

had been useful in her work, she said: "I think it's very similar — in acting you're trying to imagine why people do the things they do and what forms them. Psychology is very much the same practice. The first thing they teach is



observing - it's watching people, noticing patterns and behaviour."

Meanwhile, in May December, Natalie plays Elizabeth, an actress preparing to play a reallife figure and she admit-

ted essaying someone based on a real person can feel 'vampiric', even when she is trying to be empathetic. She said: "That's a classic trope of literature and theatre. You read Chekhov, and

he's questioning whether storytelling is stealing from people's lives. I think every artiste questions himself or herself." She added, "Am

I stealing from real people to feed my art - like a vampire? It can be 'vampiric', but I think you can approach it in a way that's more generous, more about empathy and trying to imagine someone's life, as opposed to trying to steal someone's life". The 42-year-old actress made her movie debut in Leon when she was 12 and had her first Broadway role was four years later in The Diary of Anne Frank. She enjoys working on stage and screen in different ways.

India brimming with self-confidence, imbued with spirit of self-reliance: PM Modi

Prime Minister also emphasises on physical and mental health

NEW DELHI, Dec 31 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the country is imbued with the spirit of 'Viksit Bharat' and self-reliance, and asserted that this spirit and momentum has to be maintained in 2024 as well.

In the 108th episode of 'Mann ki Baat' radio broadcast, Prime Minister Modi also emphasised on physical and mental health and highlighted several unique efforts for 'Fit India'.

During the broadcast, Isha Foundation founder Sadhguru, Indian Women's Cricket Team Captain Harmanpreet Kaur, chess legend Vishwanathan Anand and actor Akshay Kumar shared their fitness tips.

In his remarks, Modi said India is brimming with self-confidence and is imbued with the spirit of 'Viksit Bharat (developed India)'



and self-reliance. "We have to maintain the same spirit and momentum in 2024 as well," Modi said.

He also said that India becoming an 'innovation hub' symbolises the fact that "we are not going to stop". India, he said, accomplished many special achievements this year, including the passage of

the women's reservation Bill. The Prime Minister also said that the entire country is enthused about the Ram temple in Ayodhya and people are expressing feelings in different

"You must have seen that in the last few days new songs and bhajans have been composed on Shri Ram and Ayodhya. Many people are writing new poems as well.

"I have also shared some bhajans and songs on my social media. It seems that the world of art is becoming a participant in this historic moment in its unique style," he said.

"A thought comes to my mind that should we share all such creations with a common hashtag? I request you to share your creations on social media with #SHRIRAMBHAJAN," Modi said.

6 killed in massive fire at glove factory in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar



CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR (MAHARASHTRA), Dec 31 (Agencies): At least six people were killed in a massive fire that broke out at a hand glove manufacturing company in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar in the early hours of Sunday, officials said. According to Fire Department officials,

the blaze erupted around 02:15 am at

the factory in Waluj MIDC area.

"We received a call at 2:15 a.m. When we reached the site, the entire factory was on fire. Locals informed us that six people were trapped inside. Our officers entered and recovered six charred bodies," Mohan Mungse, a fire officer,

"Extinguishing work is currently in progress," he added.

Earlier, locals claimed at least five workers were trapped inside the building. Fire Department officials later confirmed the deaths of six people in the fire incident.

Workers said that the company was closed, and they were sleeping when the fire broke out.

"10-15 workers were sleeping inside the building when the fire broke out. Some managed to escape, but at least five were trapped inside," one of the workers had told ANI.

Meanwhile, fire dousing operations are ongoing, and the exact cause behind the fire is not ascertained yet.

On the run for 31 years, Maharashtra man finally held for murder

MUMBAI, Dec 31 (Agencies): A 62-yearold man wanted in a murder case and believed to be dead has been nabbed after 31 years by Mumbai Police from Nalasopara area in neighbouring Palghar district, an official said.

The accused, identified as Deepak Narayan Bhise, was tracked after the police got his wife's mobile phone number.

He changed multiple locations before settling in Nalasopara where he was living in a rented accommodation with his family for the last two years, and used to take tree cutting contracts, the official said.

Bhise was accused of killing one Raju Chikna in 1989 and for murder bid on another person -Dharmendra Saroj.

He was granted bail in the murder case in 1992



but he never turned up for the case hearing in court. In 2003, the court declared him absconding and asked the police to trace him, the official

"Whenever police visited Bhise's residential address at Tulaskarwadi in suburban Kandivali, local people would tell us he might have died but we kept looking for him," he said.

During the search, police managed to get the mobile phone number of Bhise's wife and tracked him down to Nalasopara from where he was nabbed on Friday night, he said. Bhise had settled in the locality with his wife, two sons and a daughter and used to take contracts for cutting trees,

the official said. Kandivali police station sub-inspector Nitin Satam said, "Accused Bhise have been arrested under Indian Penal Code Section 307 (attempt to murder) and lodged in a jail in Thane after being produced in a court. Further investigation is under way."

Punjab, Bengal Republic Day tableaux not aligned with theme: Defence Ministry

NEW DELHI, Dec 31 (Agencies): Facing criticism from Puniab, Delhi and West Bengal, the Ministry of Defence on Sunday clarified that their tableaux were not included in the Republic Day Parade as they were not aligned with the broader themes of this year's tableau.

Their criticism of tableau not being selected for the Republic Day Parade is not objective and unfounded, it said in a statement.

Reacting to media reports, citing separate reactions from Punjab and West Bengal Chief Ministers, the Ministry of Defence said that "there is a well-established system for selection of tableaux for participation in the Republic Day parade as per which the Ministry of Defence invites proposals for tableau from all states, Union Territories (UTs), Central ministries and



departments.

"The tableaux proposals received are evaluated in a series of meetings of the expert committee for selection of tableaux comprising eminent persons in the field of art, culture, painting, sculpture, music, architecture, choreography, etc.

"The expert committee examines the proposals on the basis of theme, concept, design and its visual impact before making its recommendations. Due to time

allotted for tableaux in the overall duration of the parade, shortlisting of tableaux is done by the expert committee which leads to participation of the best tableaux in the parade.

For the Republic Day parade, 30 states and UTs had shown their willingness to participate in it, including Punjab and West Bengal.

Out of these 30 states and UTs, like every year, only 15-16 of them will be finally selected to present their tableaux in the Republic Day Parade.

It said the tableau proposal of Punjab was considered in the first three rounds of the meeting of the expert committee. After the third round of meeting, the tableau could not be taken forward by the committee for further consideration for not aligning to the broader themes of this year's tableau.

However, the tableau proposal of West Bengal was considered in the first two rounds of the meeting of the expert committee, it said.

After the second round of meeting, the tableau could not be taken forward for further consideration for not aligning to the broader themes of this year's tableau.

In the past few years, the tableau of Punjab was shortlisted for the Republic Day Parade six times in eight years from 2017 to 2022, while the tableau of West Bengal was selected five times in eight years—in 2016, 2017, 2019, 2021 and in 2023.

As states have to be treated equally, it is essential that states should be given the opportunity to display their tableaus as per a formula, the Ministry of Defence clarified.

The Government of India is preparing a three-year programme covering all states and UTs which will be shared with all them. Hence, the criticism by these states is baseless, it said.

Moreover, the states and UTs not being selected for the Republic Day Parade are being invited to showcase their tableaux in Bharat Parv at Red Fort during January 23-31 in accordance with the MOU signed with the states and UTs, it added.

95 detained after cops raid rave party in Thane; drugs seized

THANE, Dec 31 (Agencies): At least 95 people were detained after the police raided a rave party near a creek in Maharashtra's Thane in the early hours of Sunday, an official said.

Officials of the Crime Branch Unit V Wagle Estate and Unit II Bhiwandi conducted the raid at an open space in a remote area near Vadavali Creek at around 3 am, the official said.

At least 95 persons, including five women, were found partying at the site and have been detained, Deputy Commis-



sioner of Police (crime) Shivraj

The police have arrested Tejas

(19), who organised the party,

Kubal (23) and Sujal Mahajan

The police recovered 70 gm of charas, 0.41 gm of LSD, 2.10 gm of ecstasy pills, 200 gm of ganja and alcohol from the scene, and also seized 21 motorcycles, the official said, adding that the total value of the seizure was Rs 8

An offence has been registered under relevant provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act against the accused and only two persons have been arrested so far, he said.

Rahul Gandhi's 'Bahubali' barb at PM Modi over Vinesh Phogat returning awards several female wrestlers



NEW DELHI, Dec 31 (Agencies): Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over two-time World Championship medallist Vinesh Phogat's decision to return her Khel Ratna and Arjuna awards. The move came amid a controversy surrounding the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) involving former chief and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Singh.

On Saturday, Vinesh Phogat left her Arjuna and Khel Ratna awards on the pavement of Kartavya Path in Delhi before being stopped by the police while she was on her way to PM Modi's residence. She had decided to return her awards as a mark of protest over the election of Sanjay Singh, an aide of Brij Bhushan Singh, as the WFI president.

In a tweet, Rahul

Gandhi said that selfrespect comes first "for every daughter of the country and any other medal or honour comes after that".

"Today, did the cost of 'political gains' received from a 'proclaimed Bahubali' become greater than the tears of these brave daughters? The Prime Minister is the guardian of the nation. It is hurt to see such insensitivity on his part," he wrote on X in Hindi.

Vinesh Phogat, in a letter, had said she would be returning her Arjuna and Khel Ratna awards, expressing disappointment over female wrestlers not getting justice. This came after top wrestlers, including Vinesh Phogat, Sakshee Malikkh and Bajrang Punia, led months-long protests against Brij Bhushan Singh after

accused the former WFI chief of sexual harass-

Phogat's decision came days after Olympic medallist Bajrang Punia and Deaflympics champion Virender Singh Yadav returned their Padma Shri awards. Rio Games bronze medallist Sakshi Malik quit wrestling after Saniav Singh's election as WFI president on December 21.

However, the Sports Ministry had suspended the newly-elected WFI and Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur has written to the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) to form an ad hoc committee to oversee WFI affairs till the time the suspension lasts.

Earlier on Wednesday, Rahul Gandhi made an "impromptu" visit to an 'akhara' in Haryana's Jhajjar district and met a group of wrestlers, including Bajrang Punia

amid the controversy.

A senior Haryana Congress leader from the district said Gandhi reached the 'Virender Akhara' in Chhara village early in the morning and interacted with the wrestlers.

Dalit Teen Pushed Into Hot Oil Cauldron For Protesting Sexual Harassment

NEW DELHI, Dec 31 (Agencies): In an incident shocking in its brutality, an 18-year-old Dalit woman working at an oil mill was pushed into a cauldron with hot oil when she protested sexual harassment. The incident, which took place at Baghpat in Uttar Pradesh, has left the teenager with serious burns. She has been moved to Delhi for treat-

The three accused, including the mill owner, have been arrested.

A complaint filed by the woman's brother yesterday says members of his family worked at an oil mill at Dhanaura Silvernagar village. His sister was working at the mill when the accused -- mill owner Pramod and associates Raju and Sandip -- started harassing her. When she protested, the accused allegedly hurled casteist abuses. They then pushed her into the cauldron full

of hot oil, her brother has said. In a statement recorded from her bed



at a Delhi hospital, the 18-year-old said the accused misbehaved with her and verbally abused her before pushing her into the cauldron.

The woman has suffered burns on more than half of her body, with her legs and arms seriously scalded.

Based on her brother's complaint, the police registered a case under sections relating to attempt to murder, assaulting a woman and under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. "We have arrested the three accused and further action is being taken," Circle Officer Vijay Chaudhary said.

Job scam offering money to 'impregnate' women busted in Bihar, 8 arrested

PATNA, Dec 31 (Agencies): Eight people were arrested in Bihar's Nawada for allegedly luring men into a fraudulent scheme that offered them money for 'impregnating' women who were not able to conceive a child with their partners.

The group, known as 'All India Pregnant Job (Baby Birth Service),' used to operate through social media platforms, assuring men an opportunity to earn money by 'impregnating' women. According to the police, the accused charged a registration fee of Rs 799 from those who showed an interest, followed by additional demands for security money ranging from Rs 5,000 to Rs 20,000. The arrests were made after the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Bihar Police conducted a raid on the premises associated with Munna Kumar, believed to be the mastermind behind this extensive cybercrime network. Although the police were successful in capturing eight members of the racket, several others managed to escape during the operation.

Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Kalyan Anand confirmed the arrests and stated that the men were part of a larger countrywide cyber syndicate.

During the arrests, authorities seized nine smartphones and a printer from their possession.

The senior police official said that interrogations into the case were ongoing and that more arrests were likely to be made.

Shelling kills 21 in Russian city of Belgorod following Moscow's aerial attacks across Ukraine

110 people are wounded in the strike, making it one of the deadliest attacks on Russia since the start of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine

MOSCOW, Dec 31 (Agencies): Shelling in the centre of the Russian border city of Belgorod on Saturday killed 21 people, including three children, local officials reported.

A further 110 people were wounded in the strike, said regional Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov, making it one of the deadliest attacks on Russia since the start of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Russian authorities accused Kyiv of carrying out the attack, which took place the day after an 18-hour aerial bombardment across Ukraine killed at least 41 civilians.

Images of Belgorod on social media showed burning cars and plumes of black smoke rising among damaged buildings as air raid sirens sounded. One strike hit close to a public ice rink in the heart of the city, which lies 25 miles (40 km) north of the Ukrainian border and 415 miles (670 km) south of Moscow. While previous attacks have hit the city, they have rarely taken place in daylight and have claimed fewer lives.

Russia's Defence Ministry said it identified the ammunition used in the strike as Czech-made Vampire rockets and Olkha missiles fitted with cluster-munition warheads. It provided no additional information.

"This crime will not go unpunished," the ministry said in a statement on social media.

The Kremlin said Russian President Vladimir Putin had been briefed on the situation,



Oryol, and Kursk regions.

They also reported that cross-

border shelling had killed two

other people in Russia. A man

died and four other people were

wounded when a missile struck

a private home in the Belgorod

region, on Friday evening, and

a 9-year-old was killed in a sep-

arate incident in the Bryansk

Cities across western Russia

have come under regular

attack from drones since May,

with Russian officials blaming

Kviv. Ukrainian officials never

acknowledge responsibility for

attacks on Russian territory or

the Crimean Peninsula. How-

ever, larger aerial strikes against

Russia have previously followed

heavy assaults on Ukrainian

Russian drone strikes against

Ukraine continued on Satur-

day, with the General Staff of

the Ukrainian Armed Forces

reporting that 10 Iranian-made

Shahed drones had been shot

down across the Kherson,

region.

cities.

and that the country's health minister, Mikhail Murashko, was ordered to join a delegation of medical personnel and rescue workers traveling to Belgorod from Moscow.

Russian diplomats also called for a meeting of the UN Security Council in connection with the strike. Speaking to Russia's state news agency, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said that Britain and the United States were guilty of encouraging Kyiv to carry out what she described as a "terrorist attack". She also placed blame on EU countries who had supplied Ukraine with weapons.

"Silence in response to the unbridled barbarity of Ukraine's Nazis and their puppeteers and accomplices from civilized democracies will be akin to complicity in their bloody deeds," the ministry said in a statement.

Earlier on Saturday, Moscow officials reported shooting down 32 Ukrainian drones over the country's Moscow, Bryansk,

Khmelnytskyi, and Mykolaiv regions.

Local officials reported that three people had been killed by Russian missiles: a 55-yearold man in Kherson, a 43-yearold man in Stepnohirsk, and a 32-year-old in Chernihiv.

On Friday, Moscow's forces launched 122 missiles and dozens of drones across Ukraine, an onslaught described by one air force official as the biggest aerial barrage of the war.

Apart from 39 deaths, at least 160 people were wounded and an unknown number were buried under rubble in the assault, which damaged a maternity hospital, apartment blocks, and schools.

Western officials and analysts recently warned that Russia limited its cruise missile strikes for months in an apparent effort to build up stockpiles for massive strikes during the winter, hoping to break the Ukrainians' spirit.

Fighting along the front line is largely bogged down by winter weather after Ukraine's summer counteroffensive failed to make a significant breakthrough along the roughly 1,000-km (620-mile) line of contact.

Russia's ongoing aerial attacks have also sparked concern for Ukraine's neighbours.

Poland's defence forces said on Friday that an unknown object had entered the country's airspace before vanishing off radars, and that all indications pointed to it being a Russian missile.

Netanyahu says Israel must control Gaza's border with Egypt, war to last months



CAIRO/GAZA/ JERUSALEM, Dec 31 (Agencies): Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to retake control of the Gaza Strip's border with Egypt, expanding Israel's mission to neutralize Hamas in a conflict it says it expects to last for months.

"The war is at its height," Netanyahu told reporters on Saturday of the fighting since Oct. 7 when the Palestinian militant group Hamas and its allies infiltrated Israel, killing 1,200 people and capturing 240 hostages.

He said the Philadelphi Corridor buffer zone that runs along Gaza's border with Egypt must be in Israeli hands.

"It must be shut," Netanyahu said. "It is clear that any other arrangement would not ensure the demilitarisation that we seek."

He did not elaborate, but such a move by Israel would be a de facto reversal of its 2005 withdrawal from Gaza, placing the enclave under exclusive Israeli control after years being run by Hamas.

Netanyahu's comments about the buffer

zone came as Israeli military forces pressed ahead with an offensive that the prime minister reiterated will last "for many more months." Following Hamas' surprise October incursion, Israel launched a fullscale attack in Gaza. displacing nearly all its 2.3 million residents and killing at least 21,672 Palestinians, according to health authorities in Gaza, with more than 56,000 injured and thousands more feared dead under the rubble.

Residents and medics said Saturday's fighting was focused in al-Bureij, Nuseirat, Maghazi and Khan Younis in central and southern Gaza.

Hamas media reported on Saturday that Abdel-Fattah Maali, a senior member of the group's armed wing, was killed in an Israeli strike in Gaza. It said Maali, originally from the West Bank, was freed during a 2011 prisoner swap and expelled to Gaza. The reports did not specify when he was killed.

Israel says 172 of its military personnel have been killed in the Gaza fighting.

The conflict has sparked concerns it

6.5 magnitude earthquake shakes Indonesia's

could spread across the region, potentially involving Iran-backed groups in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Yemen that have exchanged fire with Israel and its US ally, or targeted merchant shipping.

Israel cited progress in destroying Hamas infrastructure, including a tunnel complex in the basement of one of the houses of the Hamas leader for Gaza, Yahya Sinwar, in Gaza City. Troops also raided the Hamas military intelligence headquarters and an Islamic Jihad command centre in Khan Younis, and destroyed targets including a weapons foundry, a military statement said.

Hamas and Islamic Jihad -- both sworn to Israel's destruction -- issued statements saying their fighters destroyed and damaged several Israeli tanks and troop carriers in attacks across Gaza on Saturday. They also said they fired mortars against Israeli forces in Khan Younis and Al-Bureij as well as in northern Gaza.

Washington has pressed Israel, so far unsuccessfully, to scale down the war by moving to targeted operations against Hamas leaders, and end what President Joe Biden has described as "indiscriminate shelling." Israel has vowed to destroy Hamas, and says the militant group puts civilians in danger by using them as human shields. Hamas denies

North Korea to launch new spy satellites, build drones as it warns war inevitable

Pyongyang says US, its allies increasing tensions

SEOUL, Dec 31 (Agencies): North Korea vowed to launch three new spy satellites, build military drones, and boost its nuclear arsenal in 2024 as leader Kim Jong Un said US policy is making war inevitable, state media reported on Sunday.

Kim lashed out at Washington in lengthy remarks wrapping up five days of ruling party meetings that set economic, military and foreign policy goals for the coming year.

"Because of reckless moves by the enemies to invade us, it is a fait accompli that a war can break out at any time on the Korean peninsula," he said, according to state news agency KCNA.

He ordered the military to prepare to "pacify the entire territory of South Korea," including with nuclear bombs if necessary, in response to any attack.

Kim's speech comes ahead of a year that will see pivotal elections in both South Korea and the United States.

Experts predict North Korea will maintain a campaign of military pressure for leverage around the U.S. presidential elections in November, which could see the return of former President Donald Trump, who traded in both threats and historic diplomacy with Kim.

"Pyongyang might be waiting out the U.S. presidential election to see what its provocations can buy it with the next administration," said Leif-Eric Easley, professor of international studies at Ewha Womans University in Seoul.

The administration of U.S. President Joe Biden says it is open to talks, but it imposed new sanctions as North Korea pushed ahead with more missile tests banned under United Nations' sanctions.

The U.S. also increased drills and deployed more military assets, including nuclear-armed submarines and large aircraft carriers, near the Korean peninsula.

PRESSING FOR-WARD

Kim said the return of such weapons had completely transformed South Korea into a "forward military base and nuclear arsenal" of the United States.

"If we look closely at the confrontational military actions by the enemy forces... the word 'war' has become a realistic reality and not an abstract concept," Kim said.

Kim said he has no choice but to press forward with his nuclear ambitions and forge deeper relations with other countries that oppose the United States. North Korea has deep ties with both China and Russia.

"North Korea is preparing for further escalation of tension with Washington and Seoul, for at least a year or more, and its hard line policies are likely to be accompanied by efforts for dialogue as well ahead of the U.S. election," Yang Uk, an analyst at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies said.

"Kim is building on his success of the spy satellite to do three more because he knows satellite capabilities are powerful targeting tool



for better nuclear command and control." South Korea holds a parliamentary election in April that could impact the domestic and foreign agenda for conservative President Yoon Suk Yeol, who has maintained a hawkish stance toward Pyongyang.

South Korea's National Intelligence Service (NIS) warned on Thursday that "there is a high possibility that North Korea could unexpectedly conduct military provocations or stage a cyberattack in 2024, when fluid political situations are expected with the elections."

Pyongyang has now ruled out the possibility of unifying with South Korea, and the country must fundamentally change its principle and direction toward South Korea, Kim said.

"North-South relations are no longer a kinship or homogeneous relationship but have completely become a relationship between two hostile countries, two belligerents at war," he said, calling the South a colonised state completely dependent on the United States for national defense and security.

Kim also promised to develop the economy, including the metals, chemicals, power, machinery and railway sectors, while modernising wheat facilities to boost production.

One key policy goal is to invest in science and technological research at schools, he said. MILITARY TECHNOL-OGY

In the past year, North Korea says it successfully launched its first military spy satellite and test fired new solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), seen as having the range to deliver a nuclear warhead to anywhere in the United States.

A new reactor at North Korea's Yongbyon nuclear complex appears to be operating for the first time, the U.N. nuclear watchdog and independent experts said this month, which would mean an additional potential source of plutonium for nuclear weapons.

North Korea has not tested a nuclear weapon since 2017 but in recent years has taken steps to resume operations at its testing site.

Kim said 2024 would

see further military development, including strengthening the nuclear and missile forces, building unmanned drones, expanding the submarine fleet and developing electronic warfare capabilities.

The fleet of spy satellites would represent the first such capability for the North.

That successful launch in November was preceded by two failed attempts last year when its new Chollima-1 rocket crashed into the sea.

The move raised regional tensions and sparked fresh sanctions from the U.S., Australia, Japan and South Korea.

Pyongyang has yet to release any imagery from the new satellite, leaving analysts and foreign governments to debate its capabilities.

The apparent success also came after Russian President Vladimir Putin promised to help North Korea build satellites.

South Korean officials

said Russian aid likely made a difference in the success of the mission, though experts said it was unclear how much help Moscow could have provided.

Papua region, no casualties reported JAKARTA, Dec 31 but warned of possible eruptions because of its (Agencies): A power-aftershocks as the location on the "Ring of

(Agencies): A powerful earthquake shook Indonesia's easternmost region of Papua early on Sunday, but there were no immediate reports of serious damage or casualties. The US Geological Survey said the magnitude 6.5 earthquake was centred 162 kilometres northeast of Abepura, a subdistrict in Jayapura, the capital of Papua province. It happened at a depth of 10 kilometres.

Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysical Agency said there was no danger of a tsunami

earthquake was centred on land. According to the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii, there was no tsunami threat from the earthquake. With a population of just 62,250, Abepura is one of Indonesia's least populated towns. In February, another shallow earthquake shook the province, killing four people who were unable to escape when a floating restaurant collapsed into the sea.

teorol- Indonesia, a vast y and archipelago of more gency than 270 million people, s no is frequently hit by earthquakes and volcanic location on the "Ring of Fire", an arc of volcanoes and fault lines in the Pacific Basin. A magnitude 5.6 earthquake on November 21

A magnitude 5.6 earthquake on November 21 killed at least 331 people and injured nearly 600 in West Java's Cianjur city. It was the deadliest in Indonesia since a 2018 quake and tsunami in Sulawesi killed about 4,340 people.

In 2004, an extremely powerful Indian Ocean quake set off a tsunami that killed more than 230,000 people in a dozen countries, most of them in Indonesia's Aceh province.

US destroyer shoots down anti-ship missiles fired from Yemen

WASHINGTON, Dec 31 (Agencies): An American destroyer shot down two anti-ship ballistic missiles fired from Yemen Saturday as it responded to a call for help from a container ship that was hit in a separate strike, the US military said.

The missiles were launched from territory controlled by the Iran-backed Huthi rebels, the US Central Command (CENTCOM) said in a social media post, describing it as the "23rd illegal attack by the Huthis on international shipping" since November 19.

The Huthis have repeatedly targeted vessels in the vital Red Sea shipping lane with strikes they say are in support of Palestinians in Gaza, where Israel is battling militant group Hamas.

CENTCOM said the USS Gravely and USS Laboon -- both destroyers -- responded to a request for assistance from the Maersk Hangzhou, a Singapore-flagged, Denmark-owned and operated container ship that reported being struck by a missile while transiting the Red Sea.

While responding, the Gravely shot down the missiles, which were fired "toward the ships," it said.

toward the ships," it said. The attacks by the Yemeni rebels -- who have said they are targeting Israel and Israeli-linked vessels -- are endangering a transit route that carries up to 12 percent of global trade, prompting the United States to set up a multinational naval task force earlier this month to protect Red Sea shipping.

The latest round of the Israel-Hamas

The latest round of the Israel-Hamas conflict began when the Palestinian militant group carried out a shock cross-border attack from Gaza on October 7 that killed about 1,140 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally based on Israeli figures.

Following the attack, the United States rushed military aid to Israel, which has carried out a relentless campaign in Gaza that has killed at least 21,672 people, also mostly civilians, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry.

Those deaths have sparked widespread anger in the Middle East and provided an impetus for attacks by armed groups across the region that are opposed to Israel.

US forces in Iraq and Syria have also repeatedly come under fire from drone and rocket attacks that Washington says are being carried out by Iranbacked armed groups.

MP Ghulam Ali Khatana attends VBSY in Poonch

Highlights crucial role of self-employment in fostering economic independence

Top News Report

POONCH, Dec 31: Member of Parliament, Ghulam Ali Khatana, today participated in the ongoing Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, a nationwide campaign dedicated to raising awareness and ensuring widespread implementation of flagship government schemes.

Secretary, Mining, Dr. Rashmi Singh, DDC Chairperson Poonch, Deputy Commissioner Poonch and DDC Vice Chairperson Poonch were also present on the occasion.

The event, held at Degree College Poonch, witnessed enthusiastic participation from diverse segments of society.

The campaign, highlighted through an Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) van, showcased remarkable success stories of beneficiaries who have thrived under multiple schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), UMEED, Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), Kisan Credit Card (KCC), Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM Kissan), Poshan Abhiyan, Old Age Pension and more. Notably, a pivotal moment included a message from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, personally delivered through the IEC van, underscoring the government's commitment towards nation's development

Various government departments contributed to the vibrancy of the event by setting up stalls



at the venue, presenting a visual narrative of the myriad schemes and programs actively being implemented in the district.

On the occasion, PRIs, locals, and students came together during the event to take a collective pledge for a Viksit Bharat, symbolizing dedicated commitment towards advancement and progress of our nation.

The 'Meri Kahani Meri Zubaani' segment featured impactful firsthand accounts from beneficiaries, showcasing the tangible benefits and positive changes brought about by the government's welfare programs.

Addressing the event, Er Ghulam Ali Khatana emphasized the significance of the Viksit Bharat Yatra, elucidating its role as a transformative nationwide journey aimed at promoting government schemes. He underscored the significance of various welfare schemes during his address. He, while emphasizing that awareness is pivotal for successful implementation of government initiatives, highlighted how informed citizens plays a crucial role in overall success of these pro-

grams. Member Parliament

also highlighted the pivotal role of self-employment in fostering economic independence and underscored the transformative potential embedded within these initiatives. He added that the main motive to conduct such programmes is to educate public and analyse if the benefits of the government schemes is reaching at

ground level or not Secretary expressed gratitude for the participant's active involvement and commended the district administration for successfully organizing the program. She urged the people to visit stalls set up by different departments to get familiar with the procedures of different schemes run by the government

She underscored the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra's role in creating awareness, bridging gaps for inclusive development, and fostering engagement with government schemes.

On the occasion, Member Parliament handed over keys of houses to beneficiaries under PMAY (U) besides presenting permission letter for PMAY houses, cheques of mobilization advance to BLC beneficiaries, sanction letter for high tech polyhouse under HADP, Golden

Cards to beneficiaries, loan sanction letter of J&K bank under different self employment generation schemes and keys of passengers vehicles under MUMKIN

scheme. Besides, school bags were also handed over to school girls in addition to a signature campaign organised by the Social Welfare Department under the Beti Padho Beti Bachao initiative.

Meanwhile, Chairman DDC Council Poonch, shared his experience of how he took the benefit of Centrally Sponsored Scheme like IDDS in setting up a Dairy Business. He added that there are many selfemployment schemes run by the government and everyone should take benefits of the same for employment generation

The event concluded with the vote of thanks delivered by the District Development Council Chairperson Poonch, Tazeem Akhter.

Among others, Joint Director Mining and DC State Taxes Enforcement, Chief Planning Officer, Assistant Commissioner Development, ACP, Chief Medical Officer, and other District officers, officials, PRIs and public attended the

Kavinder welcomes banning of Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, says noose against anti-India brigade to be further tightened

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: Kavinder Gupta, senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and former Deputy Chief Minister has welcomed the Govt's decision banning the separatist organization Tehreek-e-Hurriyat of Syed Ali Shah Geelani under UAPA and intensifying efforts in the direction of totally demolishing the terror infrastructure by punishing those involved in the disintegration tirade against the nation. He said that it is the result of zero-tolerance policy of Modi Govt towards separatists and terrorists that the noose against such anti-India brigade has been tightened the most never ever witnessed before. He expressed this in his address during functions held under 'Booth Jan Samvad Abhiyan' at Ward No: 22 and 51 here today.

The senior BJP leader said that as of today the figures on record speak of the Govt's strong determination to wipe out terrorism from the roots. The very fact that there has been a decline of 63 per cent in terror-related incidents as compared to the last year and recruitment of terrorists also having gone down with besides strike calls and stone-pelting totally declined today is ample indication of the success achieved by Govt's zerotolerance policy against the enemies of the nation within and outside. He said that the crackdown on the terrorists and separatists will be further intensified by the Govt in the coming time. He said that organizations like Tehreek-e-Hurriyat and its ilk were responsible for separatism and terrorism in J&K and post Article 370 abrogation the Govt's zero tolerance policy delivered unprecedented results. He said that there are still some more anti-India elements on the move and very soon they will be handed over strictest punishment by the nation's security forces. He assured that each and every person involved either actively or remotely in this bloody campaign against the nation and its people will definitely face the tune of

law in the coming time. Meanwhile, Kavinder Gupta while highlighting the aim of 'Booth Jan

Samvad Abhiyan' said that BJP's commitment to inclusive governance as per Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas' has fostered a sense of belonging with renewed spirit and confidence among the people today. He urged the party functionaries to reach out to each booth and engage in Samvad explaining to the people the schemes and historic initiatives taken by the Prime Minister Modi led BJP Government with the aim to benefit and uplift the poor and downtrodden in the society

Rajkumar Tarkhan, former Chairman JMC and Corporator also addressed the gathering at Ward No: 51 Channi Himmat. He urged the foot soldiers of the party to be proactive and remain present among the people at the grass roots level leaving no stone unturned in ensuring unprecedented success to the party in the 2024 Parliamentary elec-

Prominent among others present on the occasion were Jagdish Raj Proch (Ward President), Aru Dutta (Addl Sect. District Jammu), Surinder Singh Charak, Vinod Gupta, Mahavir Gupta, Mirza Baghat, Dinesh Kumar, Manohar lal, Dinesh Kumar, Deepak Kumar, Anand Lal Sharma, Parshotam Gupta, Tarsem Lal, Vimal Sharma, Krishan Lal, Bittu Choudhary, Thoru Ram, Chander Shekhar, Manoher Lal, Devinder Kumar Sharma, Rishi, Pintu Pandita, Deep Raj, Devinder Singh Charak, Noor Hussain, Nazir Ali, Gul Mohd, Lal Din, Peer Mohd, Alif Din, Khush Mohd, Majid Ali, Abdul Sheen, Abdul Meen, Jhon Hussain, Khan Mohd, Farman Hussain, Mohd Rafiq, Nazir Choudhary, Lal Mohd, Shean, Sarab Din, Mohd Saleem, Vinod Sharma, Mahesh Sharma, Chaman Lal Sharma, Omkar Sharma, Rajinder Gupta, Ramesh Sharma, Naresh Sharma, Rattan Lal, Pankaj Sharma, Rakesh Kumar, Balwinder Kumar, Satish Gupta, Deepak Kumar, Susheel Gupta, Sunil Sharma, Jagdish Kumar, Rashpal Kumar, Sanieev Kumar, Shah Mohd, Fareed and Sadiq Ahmed. [31/12, 18:00] kavinnoose against anti-India brigade to be further tightened

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DC Samba inspects renovation work on **Mohargarh Heritage Site**

Top News Report

SAMBA, Dec 31: Deputy Commissioner Samba, Abhishek Sharma visited the Mohargarh Heritage Site today to review the ongoing works under the "Revival of Heritage" project.

The Mohargarh Heritage Site is a historical fort located in the Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, It is one of the places in Jammu that has a rich cultural and architectural legacy. The "Revival of Heritage" project aims to restore and preserve the heritage structures and promote them as tourist attractions

During his visit, Sharma inspected the progress and reviewed the quality and pace of the work. He directed the executing agency to expedite the work and ensure quality standards . He also interacted with the locals and highlighted the importance of the heritage sites as the historical milestones of a nation and source of inspiration for the future generations. He further underscored the importance of the community ownership of the heritage sites. He also announced plans for creating better facilities and amenities to make Mohargarh an attractive tourist destination. He said that the project would boost

zens as informers.'

the local economy and generate employment opportunities for the

"I hope that the Mohargarh Heritage Site will soon become a popular attraction for tourists and visitors from across the country and the world" he added. He said that the site would showcase the glorious history and culture of Samba District.

He also reviewed the augmentation of WSS for Samba town.

He was accompanied by Tehsildar Samba, PWD Department Engineers, Revenue and field officials, and Sarpanch Mohargarh.

FROM PAGE 1

about cybercrime and the fact is that this crime is going under-reported and affecting more people than what police actually knows. "We are upgrading the system and lot more needs to be done to prevent cybercrimes," he said, adding that large amount was traced and given back to the people who were cheated through internet fraud and digital world frauds.

Police attaches house. car under UA(P) Act in Baramulla

one residential house of Farooq Ahmad Bhat a resident of Wanigam Payeen on land situated at Wanigam Payeen was attached for allegedly harbouring militants,

India records 841 New Covid-19 cases

doses of Covid vaccines have so far been administered in the country.

Gold likely to touch Rs 70,000 in 2024, say experts

bond yields and a strong US dollar throughout the year, as the US Federal Reserve raised the interest rates to a 22-year high.

"The central banks' buying has turned out to be a major demand driver for physical gold since the last few quarters. Record high domestic prices and uneven monsoon weighed on Indian jewellery consumption

while the Chinese economic downturn led to an increase in the jewellery demand from the top consumer nation," he said. On the price front, Rao said Comex gold

der gupta: Kavinder

welcomes banning of

Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, says

has once again taken resistance near USD Even though rates might stay higher for

some time, the current geopolitical environment, slowing global growth, and economic uncertainties further increase the appeal of the yellow metal, he added. All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic

Council (GJC) Chairman Saiyam Mehra said the volatility in gold prices impacted sales, and in spite of 30-35 lakh weddings, the business will be the same as in 2022.

"With the US Fed reducing rates, and continuing geopolitical tensions, the weak rupee will further boost gold prices, which is likely to touch USD 2,250-2,300 and Rs 68,000-70,000 in 2024. The high prices will impact sales further in 2024, and the business is likely to remain at the same level as 2023," he said.

World Gold Council Regional CEO Somasundaram PR said gold prices touched historic highs globally during the year due to various factors that accentuated its role as a safe haven and hedge against inflation. In the September quarter, gold price was

12 per cent below last year. However, demand for 2023 will be marginally below the last year at 700-750 tonnes, though the value of investments in gold will be higher, he said.

According to him, the redemption of the first tranche of sovereign gold bonds in November at a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) in excess of 12 per cent has also added to the attraction of gold among the investor community and strengthened conversations around gold as a portfolio diversifier in these uncertain times

"In 2024, apart from the economic developments, the trajectory of gold prices will be largely dependent on the dollar index and geopolitical situation," he said.

Gem Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) Chairman Vipul Shah said 2023 was a tough year for the exporters, mainly due to a decline in demand in the key markets following a rise in interest cost, geopolitical issues and China continuing to remain closed even after Covid.

"However, the situation has started to improve, and we expect things to improve in 2024, as interest rates are expected to come down, and we hope geopolitical issues will be resolved, boosting the global economy. We also expect the China market to open after remaining closed for a long period," he added.

Severe cold in Kashmir. Minimum temperatures several notches below freezing point

and Kupwara minus 3.8 degrees Celsius. There was some snowfall and rains in Kashmir during December which resulted in the prolonged cold wave conditions,

Kashmir is under the grip of the 40-day harsh winter period 'Chilla-i-Kalan'. The chances of snowfall are the highest during this period and most areas, especially the higher reaches, receive heavy snow.

'Chilla-i-Kalan' will end on January 31. However, the cold conditions will continue even after that with a 20-day 'Chillai-Khurd' and a 10-day 'Chilla-i-Bachha'.

a banned organisation on December 27. Jammu train delayed as bomb hoax call by a frustrate jobless

Tehreek-E-Hurriyat, once

headed by Syed Ali Shah

Geelani, banned by Govt

League of Jammu Kashmir was declared

planned to travel on the train to Jodhpur and commit suicide there. The unclaimed bag, among other things, carried a bottle of pesticide intended for Singh's desperate act of self-harm.

triggered alarm

After missing the train and triggered the bomb hoax, Singh had hopped on to another train and was detained at Unjha railway station.

Police have detained him, lodged an FIR, sent him for medical check-up. He is likely facing two charges - one making a hoax call and another making an attempt to kill

Police announce cash reward upto Rs 12 Lakh to **curb 'Anti-National Activities' in JK**

from across the border and provided information about the person receiving such drones

As per the document, "Rs 2 lakh reward

people to join terrorist ranks and pick up guns. "Rs 2 lakh to Rs 12.50 lakh reward has been announced for those giving specific information about the presence of terrorists, resulting in successful operation leading to arrest or combat, and cash rewards will be provided as per category of A, B and

each has been announced for people pro-

viding information about inter-state narcot-

ics modules, people talking to Pakistan-

based terrorists and separatists in jails and

persons talking to or communicating with

terrorist handlers across the border or with

Police also announced Rs 1 lakh cash

reward for persons providing informa-

tion about those inciting and encouraging

their agents within J&K and branding citi-

8000 fake social media handles identified in J&K: **DGP Swain**

will catch-hold of them through Interpol." Narco-Terror links found in Turkey, Canda, Paris: The year 2024 will witness a decisive battle against narco-terror. "The links between narco-terror, separatism and terrorism was already nailed in 2022," he said.

"Links of narco-terrorism have been found in Kashmir to Jammu to Puniab and Delhi. Other links including the handlers were traced in Paris, Canada and Turkey. In the recent case of the Ramban narcoterror module, the mastermind was traced

Cyber Crime, a lot more needs to be done: DGP Swain said that police are mindful

IPO boom to Dalal Street's dream run: Events that shaped India's economy in 2023

Numerous events shaped the country's economic landscape this year, and a few stood out. Here is a recap of all the events that shaped India's economic landscape in 2023.

NEW DELHI, Dec 31 (Agencies): As the sun sets on 2023, we reflect on a year that has been nothing short of extraordinary for India's economic landscape, with a fair mix of triumphs and chal-

Numerous events shaped the country's economic landscape this year, and a few stood out-from Dalal Street's record run to the return of the IPO boom, and India making its presence felt on the global stage by becoming the fifth-largest economy in the world.

This year saw an Indian bank join the global elite, but it was also the year citizens maxed out their credit cards. While tomatoes may not have been the reason behind the high credit card spending, the prices of this kitchen essential did reach an all-time high, causing distress across millions of

As digital payments adoption continued to grow rapidly, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) decided to pull the plug on the elusive Rs 2,000 notes, announcing their withdrawal earlier this

And who can forget the dramatic saga involving one of India's biggest conglomerates, the Adani Group and US short-seller Hindenburg Research, leading to a turbulent run in the Indian stock markets? Let's delve into the key events that stood out in the world of business and economy in 2023

Dalal Street's record run The Indian stock market

witnessed a remarkable bull run in 2023, with the Nifty 50 index soaring to new heights, achieving year-todate returns of +18 per cent.

Mid and small-cap stocks outperformed even more impressively, with gains of +40 per cent and +50 per cent, respectively.

The Sensex and Nifty hit multiple milestones, with the 30-share index crossing 70,000 mark and the 50-share index going past 21,000, buoyed by sectors such as defence, realty, autos, public sector enterprises, and pharma.

Jaspreet Singh Arora, CIO, Research & Ranking, said, "Looking at the sectoral performances this year, sectors like defence, realty, autos, PSEs, and pharma have been major outperformers while new-age businesses have been a dark horse."

The rally was further bolstered by the launch of 58 mainboard IPOs, signaling strong investor confidence,

Arora added.

of the world's fifth-largest economy in 2023, marking remarkable growth despite

growth, including higher government spending on infrastructure, robust macroeconomic factors, increased foreign investments, strong corporate growth and calculated policy measures by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). said, "We are exiting 2023 on a positive note with RBI upping FY24 GDP guidance by 50bps to 7 per cent and US Fed suggesting at least

Indian general elections in May and the US Presidential elections in November "could make the markets jittery in the runup to those events". However, he added that a cool-off in oil prices combined with the strong earnings potential of the Indian companies paints a positive outlook for the market in

"Sectors like financials and IT and themes such as manufacturing, PSEs, and healthcare could be rewarding during 2024," Arora said.

India's IPO boom returns 2023 was a banner year for initial public offerings (IPOs) in India, with numerous companies making their debut on the stock exchange.

range of businesses tapping into the capital markets, from traditional industries to newage tech-driven firms.

There were 58 mainboard IPOs in 2023, of which over 50 have delivered gains after listing and raised nearly Rs 49,500 crore. In addition, 172 SME IPOs also hit the markets this year, raising nearly Rs 4,500 crore.

Investors have shown a keen interest in India's growth story, and the successful listings have only added to the allure, promising more opportunities for both companies seeking capital and investors looking for lucrative ventures.

Withdrawal of Rs 2,000 currency notes

5th-largest economy milestone India achieved the status

global economic concerns. Several factors contributed

to the country's economic Jaspreet Singh Arora,

three rate cuts in 2024." Arora highlighted that the

The year saw a diverse

Market analysts are optimistic about the future of India's IPO market, predicting continued vibrancy in 2024 as the economy maintains its growth trajectory.

In a move aimed at curbing hoarding and black money, the RBI announced the gradual withdrawal of Rs







2,000 currency notes from circulation in May 2023. While the notes remain legal tender and can still be used for transactions, they are no longer being issued by banks.

The central bank has not issued any new Rs 2,000 notes in the past few years, leading to a natural reduction in circulation. This step is part of a broader strategy to encourage digital transactions and reduce the reliance on cash in the economy.

While the deadline to exchange these notes at banks has ended, individuals can still get them exchanged at 19 regional RBI offices across the country. In its latest update on December 1, RBI said 97.26 per cent of the Rs 2,000 banknotes in circulation as of May 19, 2023, have been returned or exchanged.

India welcomed Apple physical stores

The year marked a significant milestone for India's manufacturing sector as Apple opened its first physical stores in the country, one in Delhi and another one in Mumbai.

Following the inauguration of the stores, Apple CEO Tim Cook expressed how the stores were "off to a great start" and exceeding their expectations. He called the new retail stores "one step" in their Indian journey, hinting

at further expansion plans. With Foxconn's increased investment and focus on India, the nation is rapidly becoming a key hub for iPhone production, catering to both domestic and international markets.

This development underscores India's growing prominence as a global manufacturing powerhouse, attracting major tech players seeking alternatives to China amidst shifting geopolitical land-

Year of 'sour' tomatoes

Tomato prices soared to unprecedented levels in 2023, driven by supply shortages and erratic weather patterns. Prices skyrocketed to an unprecedented Rs 250 per kilo in 2023, following which elaborate steps had to be taken by the government to tackle inflation.

This price surge had a ripple effect on household budgets and the broader food market. highlighting the vulnerability of agricultural supply chains to environmental factors.

Not just tomatoes, but several other staple items such as rice and pulses witnessed a steep price in 2023, forcing India to take difficult steps that included export bans.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das recently highlighted the issue of unstable food prices, stressing on the need for better monitoring of inflation.

Credit card spending at record high Indians embraced credit cards like never before in 2023, with spending reaching all-time highs. Credit card

spending hit a record high of Rs 1.78 lakh crore in October, with the RBI expressing concern about the high growth in certain components of personal loans. What sparked the concern

was the fact that banks' outstanding receipts from credit cards rose above Rs 2 lakh crore as of August 25. During the RBI's October

policy review, Governor Shaktikanta Das said the central bank is closely monitoring certain components of personal loans that are witnessing "very high growth".

He advised both banks and non-bank lenders to enhance their internal monitoring systems, address potential risks, and implement appropriate safeguards.

Going forward, the RBI has taken several measures to tighten unsecured lending by banks, hoping to reverse the alarming trend.

Adani vs Hindenburg saga Although not directly linked to the Indian economy, the Adani-Hindenburg saga

stands out as one of the most dramatic episodes of 2023 due to its substantial impact of the Indian stock markets.

It was January 24 that marked the beginning of a tumultuous chapter in Indian corporate history - the Adani-Hindenburg saga.

A scathing report by shortseller Hindenburg Research accusing the Adani Group of "brazen stock manipulation and accounting fraud over the course of decades" sent shockwaves through the Indian markets.

What unfolded in the months that followed was a roller coaster of allegations. market crashes, regulatory scrutiny, and public debates, making it one of the most defining economic events of the year.

At one point, the combined market capitalisation of Adani Group companies tumbled by over \$150 billion, even as the Gautam Adaniled group rejected the allegations levelled by the US short seller.

The Adani Group has vehemently denied the accusations, calling the report "malicious." "baseless," and a "calculated attack on India."

The drama took a new turn when the Indian regulators the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and the National Stock Exchange (NSE) - initiated investigations into the matter.

The Supreme Court also intervened, setting up an expert committee to probe the allegations. The saga didn't remain confined to the financial realm. Opposition parties in India seized the opportunity to attack the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), alleging its close ties to the Adani Group.

In the following months, Adani Group stocks showed signs of recovery, regaining some of the lost ground. However, the losses were significant, and the Group underwent a major restructuring exercise, diversifying its holdings and seeking partnerships.

As we approach the end of the year, the saga remains unresolved. While several investigations are ongoing, no conclusive findings have been announced. The Hindenburg accusations continue to hang over the Adani Group, and concerns about transparency and corporate governance persist.

Indian rupee's rollercoaster

The Indian rupee experienced a tumultuous journey in 2023, hitting a lifetime low against the US dollar. The rupee hit a record low of 83.305 against the US dollar in October.

This unprecedented plunge sent ripples through the Indian economy, sparking concern and igniting discussions about the currency's future.

Several factors converged to orchestrate the rupee's depreciation. Globally, the US Federal Reserve's aggressive monetary policy tightening to combat inflation led to a broad-based dollar strengthening, making other currencies, including the rupee, relatively cheaper.

Rising geopolitical tensions and a global economic slowdown further intensified the flight to safety, pushing investors towards the dollar.

Domestically, India's ballooning trade deficit played a significant role. The surge in global commodity prices, particularly oil, led to a spike in India's import bill, exceeding the value of exports.

This imbalance, coupled with foreign investors cautiously withdrawing funds from emerging markets, exerted additional pressure on the rupee.

Despite the record low, the rupee's depreciation was more contained compared to other emerging market currencies. This can be attributed to several factors, including India's relatively robust foreign exchange reserves, an increased inflow of foreign direct investments, and timely government interventions to curb non-essential

Another airline bites the

Once a budget airline riding the wave of India's aviation boom, Go First (formerly GoAir) took a nosedive in 2023, culminating in a May bankruptcy filing.

This dramatic fall, fuelled by financial turbulence and engine woes, sent shockwaves through the industry and left passengers scrambling for options.

Go First's woes stemmed from a confluence of factors. The pandemic dealt a crippling blow, crushing passenger demand and draining resources

Additionally, mounting debts and the grounding of half its fleet due to faulty Pratt & Whitney engines severely hampered operations. With revenue nosediving and losses piling up, bankruptcy became the only viable option.

The bankruptcy had immediate consequences. Thousands of employees faced job uncertainty, flights were grounded, and stranded passengers struggled with refunds and rebooking woes.

The airline's future hangs in the balance, with creditors vying for control and a resolution process dragging on. The fate of Go First remains shrouded in uncertainty. Potential buyers have expressed interest, but negotiations are slow and com-

HDFC Bank joins global elite list

The year also witnessed a historic rise for HDFC Bank, culminating with the private lender achieving the title of the world's sixth-largest bank by market capitalisation.

The achievement, fuelled by the successful merger with its parent company -HDFC, solidified the bank's position as a global financial powerhouse and showcased the Indian banking sector's burgeoning potential.

The July 2023 merger was hailed as a landmark consolidation in the Indian financial landscape and combined the strengths of HDFC Bank, a retail banking leader, with HDFC's mortgage expertise.

As of today, HDFC Bank boasts a market capitalisation of nearly Rs 13 lakh crore, higher than the likes of Morgan Stanley, Bank of China and HSBC.

This milestone isn't just a victory for HDFC Bank; it signifies the rise of the Indian banking sector on the global stage. It attracts foreign investment, boosts confidence in the Indian financial system, and fuels aspirations for further progress.

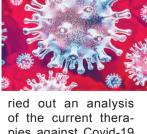
As we bid adieu to 2023, these events stand as milestones in India's economic journey as each played a role in shaping the country's future trajectory. With a blend of challenges and triumphs, the year has laid a foundation for continued growth and prosperity in the years

Bioactive compounds derived from mushrooms have potential to combat Covid, says study

CHANDIGARH, Dec 31 (Agencies): Amidst reports of a resurgence of Covid, a new study has revealed that natural anti-viral and antiinflammatory products derived from a wide range of easily available mushrooms and their bioactive molecules have the potential to combat the virus.

The study says mushrooms contain bioactive polysaccharides and compounds with immuno-modulation, antiviral, antibacterial, antifungal and other medicinal properties and mushroom-based drugs are being evaluated in human trials, with promising results against SARS-CoV-2, according the Ministry of Science and Technol-

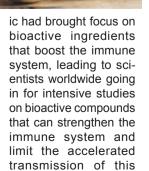
A research group from the Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology had car-



pies against Covid-19 versus the potential of natural antiviral products derived from mushrooms and their bioactive molecules. They assessed the

roles and mechanisms of 13 different mushroom-derived bioactive compounds in preventing SARS-CoV-2 infection and the pathophysiology associated with its infection, such as lung infection, inflammation, cytokine storm, and thrombotic and cardiovascular effects, the

ministry said. The Covid-19 pandem-



virus. Consequently, bioactive compounds from herbal sources and edible mushrooms gained commercial interest due to their easy availability, high antioxidant activity, nutritional value and low sideeffects.

The main advantages

of using edible mushroom against viral infections are: they can be used as a nutraceutical supplement with no side-effects and can act as an immunity booster, the researchers said.

Mushrooms have become a popular source of food are now widely cultivated commercially. Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh are among the top 10 mushroomproducing states in the country The study, published

in the Journal of Fungi, also suggests that there are huge opportunities for better understanding the role of mushroom-derived bioactive compounds by in-depth pre-clinical and clinical studies, which calls for coordination between researchers, health professionals and policymakers.

Going bananas for weight loss

The diet's appeal lies in its simplicity. Advocating for rice as a lunch or dinner option, it underscores reduced overall calorie intake, contributing to weight loss.

NEW DELHI, Dec 31 (Agencies): In the pursuit of shedding those extra kilos, people often explore a multitude of methodsfrom herbal concoctions to fad diets that transform meals into uninspiring grub. Amid this weightloss chaos emerges a unique and buzz-worthy approach—the 'Morning Banana Diet'. Originating in Japan, its simplicity and principles have captured global attention. Conceived by Osaka pharmacist Sumiko Watanabe in 2008, the diet gained widespread popularity after her husband Hitoshi Watanabe shared his weight loss of 37 pounds (17 kg) on Japan's social networking site, Mixi.

It encourages participants to commence their day with bananas, consuming up to four until they feel satiated. The number of bananas can vary based on individual capacity. Rich in fibre and nutrients, the fruit offers a healthy morning boost, contributing to prolonged feelings of fullness, and potentially curbing excessive food consumption. Alongside bananas, followers are advised to drink room-temperature water. The diet promotes balanced lunches and

dinners, allowing flexibility for favourite foods in moderation and stopping when feeling 80 percent full. It advocates an early dinner, prohibits snacking after 8 pm, and discourages dairy, alcohol and caffeine consumption while stressing adequate sleep and regular water intake. The diet's appeal lies in its sim-

plicity. Advocating for rice as a lunch or dinner option, it underscores reduced overall calorie intake, contributing to weight loss. It also highlights portion control, mindful eating and the prohibition of late-night snacking. Mumbai-based dietitian Kushboo Gupta says, "The reason this diet gained popularity is the fact that it is easy to follow." She, however, underscores the need for comprehensive research on its impact on weight loss, and cautions that while the diet encourages healthy eating, its effectiveness may vary. "Relying solely on bananas might lack the necessary protein and dietary diversity for a balanced regimen," she says. She advocates incorporating a range of fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains for sustainable weight loss.

While the diet discourages sugary foods, sweets, ice cream, and soda, it also advises against ultra-processed foods like fried items, crackers, pizza, and fast food. It encourages walking for improved health, but raises concerns about the potential stress induced by exercise.

Delhi-based dietitian and nutritionist Gunjan Mehta Sood emphasises, "Diet plans are not magic and our body's metabolic systems are complex; hence, results might vary. Its success, however, depends on individual lifestyle, metabolism and physical activity levels. While it may serve as a beneficial starting point, sustained success necessitates a holistic approach, including regular exercise and a diverse, well-balanced diet." One can treat it as a transitional step toward healthier eating and lifestyle practices.

While the Morning Banana Diet provides a healthy start to the day, it is crucial to complement it with a varied and nutritious overall diet. Consulting a healthcare professional is advised to ensure a safe weight loss journey.

kept three lengths for

First, two horizontal

blue strips on 10 metre

length (short), then two

red chip type on 6-8

metre length (back of

length) and two paral-

lel yellow strips on good

length (around 4 metre).

Prasidh was asked to

hit each of those lengths

on a regular basis. He

wasn't always success-

ful and it was evident

that he is not ready for

Jadeja looked fully fit

looked completely fit as

he bowled and batted

comfortably for a consid-

erable amount of time,

allaying fears about

whether he can take part

in the must-win second

Jadeja bowled for

close to 45 minutes

alongside Ashwin. He

seemed to be bowling

quick as he made Rohit

defend a few deliveries

Ravindra Jadeja

the big test yet.

the pacer.

Cape Town Test: India skipper Rohit Sharma focuses on Mukesh during net session, Ravindra Jadeja goes full tilt

Rohit specifically wanted Mukesh to pitch in between 4-6 metre length and the seamer seemed to have impressed the skipper

CENTURION, Dec 31 (Agencies): It was an optional session at the Supersport Park but for India skipper Rohit Sharma, skipping the nets wasn't an option.

Outfoxed by South African pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada in both innings of the opening Test, Rohit was present as skipper and batter in equal measure during a two-hour session.

The Indian captain was focussed on facing Mukesh Kumar, who bowled only to Rohit for at least 45 minutes.

While the fit-again Ravindra Jadeja and Ravichandran Ashwin also bowled in the same nets, the Indian skipper's complete attention was on the one Test old Bengal seamer.

Occasionally, Dayanand Garani, the throwdown specialist kept his deliveries fast and full on off stump channel. He actually wanted Mukesh to bowl one that comes in with the angle from length.

"Hawa mein andaar aa raha hai. Par koshish kar angle se andar laane ka," the skipper told his younger colleague. Rohit specifically

wanted Mukesh to pitch in between 4-6 metre length and the seamer seemed to have impressed the skipper. There were times when he beat Rohit's bat and earned appreciation

from the senior pro.

When batting coach Vikram Rathour asked him, "Tu is net pe aayega" (would you like to use this one), pointing at the nets exclusively kept for throwdowns, the skipper replied: "Nahi vehin pe aur 10 minute bat karoonga" (No I will bat here for another 10

minutes) The skipper devoted extra time for Mukesh and it seemed he was giving tips on wrist position and the length that he needs to hit on a regular basis.

Mukesh has been consistently playing domestic cricket and is one of the biggest reasons for Bengal featuring in two Ranji Trophv finals in three years.

On the day, he did ask a few probing questions of the Indian captain and certainly made a case for himself for the Newlands game.

Mhambrey works on Prasidh's length

It will be a huge surprise if Prasidh Krishna, after his forgettable debut, gets a chance to play in the next Test.

Far from being Test match ready, it was time for him to get back to the drawing board.

Prasidh didn't bowl to any batters at the nets as the lanky man from Bengaluru sought to figure out what's the right length to hit in South African condi-

Bowling coach Paras Mhambrey paid singular attention to Prasidh during the 75 odd minutes that he bowled at the nets. Mhambrey

While batting, he looked nice and upright while playing some

hurriedly.

punchy drives. Shardul injury scare,

Jaiswal scratchy Shardul Thakur while batting got a nasty hit on the left shoulder while

facing throwdowns from

fielding coach T Dilip. While he completed the session, he was seen wearing an ice pack sling to lessen the bruise.

He might not need scans as it was learnt that it's not very serious but it will be interesting to see how long the pain takes to subside.

Meanwhile. Yashasvi Jaiswal looked a bit scratchy and at times seemed annoved, loudly admonishing himself after being beaten once.

At another time, he couldn't deal with Raghu's searing pace while facing throwdowns as the bat came down late and the stumps went for a toss.

His closest competitor Abhimanyu Easwaran looked better in the nets but he is unlikely to pip Jaiswal to the opening

Bajrang Punia urges Sports Ministry to restart wrestling activities in view of Paris Olympics



NEW DELHI, Dec 31 (Agencies): Olympic medallist Bajrang Punia urged the Sports Ministry to restart the wrestling activities in the country with just seven months remaining for next year's Paris Games, and said no one seemed to have taken the preparations for the quadrennial showpiece seriously.

Wrestling action has come to a standstill for the last several months owing to the turmoil within the fraternity following the grapplers' protests against former president Brij Bhushan

India vs Aus, 2nd ODI: Richa Ghosh's 96, Deepti Sharma's

Sharan Singh.

Even the election of a new Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) committee could not restore normalcy as the Sports Ministry suspended the Sanjay Singh-led panel citing the violation of its own constitution in announcing the national U-15 and U-20 Championships.

"Wrestling activities have come to a standstill for the last several months. Neither has any nationals been held nor have any camps been organised to prepare the players (for Paris Olympics)," Punia wrote on his 'X' account.

Punia, who had decided to return his Padma Shri in protest over the election of Sanjay Singh, a Brij Bhushan loyalist, further said the preparation for the Olympics needed urgent attention.

"There is an Olympic Games after seven months but no one seems serious about it. Wrestling has given four consecutive medals in the last four Olympics,' he said.

Punia, a 65kg freestyle bronze winner in Tokyo Olympics, said the officials should keep in mind the players' future.

"So, I request the Sports Ministry to start all wrestling activities as soon as possible so that the future of the players can be saved." he added.

In the recent days, a slew of protest measures from the grapplers took the centre stage as Sakshi Malik decided to retire from wrestling while Vinesh Phogat decided to return her Khel Ratna and Arjuna Award in a letter addressed to PM Narendra Modi.

IPL is like Olympics, every game is a spectacle: Justin Langer thrilled to join LSG as head coach

SYDNEY, Dec 31 (Agencies): Former Australia head coach Justin Langer has showered praise on the Indian Premier League. The newly appointed head coach of the Lucknow Super Giants said that the IPL is like the Olympic Games and every single game is a spectacle

The former cricketer was named the head coach of the Lucknowbased side ahead of the 2024 season. LSG moved away from the management team that included Andy Flower and Gautam Gambhir. Langer, who has won the T20 World Cup with Australia and the Big Bash as well revealed that he has had a lot of chat about the tournament with Ricky Ponting and Tom Moody.

"Having sat with Ricky for so long and he talked about his time with the Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals. How much he loves the



tournament. And Tom Moody, one of my best friends, he's been so involved in the IPL and just to hear them talking about it," Justin Langer said on a video uploaded by the LSG.

Olympic Games. It is so big. Every game is a spectacle, it is so well received, it is so well supported, not just at the stadiums, all through India and around the world. To have the opportunity to be a part of that is something I am very, very excited about," he

further added. Langer took over the

Australian side after the infamous Sandpa per Gate in 2018 and earned the trust back of the Australian public. Known as a no-nonsense man. Langer was at the helm of the Aus-"The IPL is like the tralian side till their 2021 T20 World Cup victory. The players fell apart with the coach's style and Langer was forced to move on despite a riveting 4-0 win against England in the Ashes

> Since Langer's departure, Australia have won the WTC 2023 and the ODI World Cup under the leadership of Andrew McDonald.

Down Under.

5/38 go in vain as Australia take unassailable 2-0 lead MUMBAI, Dec 31 (Agencies):

Richa Ghosh's career-best 96 and Deepti Sharma's 5/38 went in vain as Australia Women clinched a thrilling three-run win to take an unassailable 2-0 lead against India in their threematch ODI series.

Chasing 259, Ghosh led India's reply with a fine 117ball 96 featuring 13 fours but the hosts stuttered in the death overs to suffer their ninth consecutive defeat to Australia at home.

India managed 255/8 in their 50 overs with Deepti (24 not out off 36 balls, 1x4s) and Shreyanka Patil (5 not out) at the crease when the match came to an end.

Apart from Ghosh's heroics with the bat, India also had their vice-captain Smriti Mandhana providing early fireworks with a 38-ball 34 (3x4s, 1x6s).

Jemimah Rodrigues (44 off 55 balls) and Ghosh laid the foundation with an 88-run third wicket stand but could not deny Australia from maintaining their record in India of never losing a series.

In a contest wherein both teams dropped more than 10 catches combined, Litchfield eventually made the difference with two sharp catches after



dropping one early on, which followed a fine knock of 63 in the first innings to top-score for her side.

Positioned at cover, Litchfield helped break the third-wicket stand to dismiss Rodrigues off Georgia Wareham (2/39) at a crucial juncture in the 34th over.

Later on, when Ghosh was one stroke away from her maiden ton, Litchfield pulled off another superb grab at cover off Annabel Sutherland (3/47) to deny her the feat and in effect, India a win.

Having kept wickets for all 50 overs of Australia's first innings, the 20-year-old Ghosh batted with gusto and tremendous application, with her stupendous knock featuring strokes in all parts of the ground.

Ghosh also capitalised on two lifelines — one of which she got on the first delivery itself when Litchfield put down a tough chance at first slip soon after Yastika Bhatia (19) was dis-

Ghosh kept India in hunt with her partnership with Rodrigues, but Australia capitalised after finding a breakthrough. India's hopes suffered a serious dent when Ghosh, who was cramping up in the later stages of her innings, fell in the 44th over and Amanjot Kaur (4) in the 46th.

With Deepti failing to get a move-on — she had contributed only eight runs in her 47-run stand with Ghosh — the task became even more challenging for the likes of Pooja Vastrakar (8) and concussion substitute Harleen Deol (1), who had replaced Sneh Rana for the remainder of the game in the second half.

Earlier, off-spinner Deepti Sharma stymied Australia's surge with a stellar five-wicket haul but seven dropped catches by India allowed them to post a challenging 258 for eight.

Deepti exploited a dry and turning surface to a fine degree to return with figures of five for 38, but her hard work was undone by the hosts' horren-

dous fielding. She accounted for Ellyse Perry (50), Beth Mooney (10), Tahlia McGrath (24), Georgia Wareham (22) and Annabel Sutherland (23) for her career's second five-for.

Alana King, who was dropped once each by Deepti and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, hammered three sixes to make an unbeaten 28 (17 balls) in a late surge to take Australia past the 250-run mark, which at one stage looked beyond the visi-

Australia looked in complete command until the 22nd over, powering to 117 for one through a 77-run stand for the second wicket between Perry and Litchfield (63, 98 balls, 6x4s).

Mohammed Shami "Took Injections" During World Cup: Report Reveals India Star Pacer's 'Chronic Issue'

Mohammed Shami, Cricket World Cup 2023's highest wicket-taker, could have been handy for India vs South Africa

MUMBAI, Dec 31 (Agencies): Mohammed Shami's absence was heavily felt during India vs South Africa first Test.

The Indian cricket team pacers leaked runs as South Africa batter piled on runs. Jasprit Bumrah did not have proper support as the likes of Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna and Shardul Thakur failed to live up to the expec-

Mohammed Shami, Cricket World Cup 2023's highest wicket-taker, could have been handy in such a situ-

However, he is nursing an injury and missed the series.

In a report titled, "Prasidh's performance hints at bare bench strength" news agency revealed that Shami played the World Cup with

"Shami has a chronic left heel issue. A lot of people don't know that he took injections regularly during World Cup and played the entire tournament through pain. But you must understand that as you grow older, recovery from each niggle or big injury takes that more time," a former Bengal teammate of Shami, aware of his situation told agency on the

condition of anonymity. Mohammed Shami opened

up on the Men in Blue's sixwicket loss against Australia in the ODI World Cup 2023 final match and said that the nation was disappointed after the defeat. While speaking to the press, Shami said that the hosts gave their best to continue the momentum throughout the tournament and win the final match.

The 33-year-old added that they cannot explain where they went wrong during the final match of the ODI World Cup 2023 against Australia.

"The whole nation was disappointed (when India lost the World Cup). We tried hundred per cent to continue



the momentum till the end that we had created and win the final. But...it cannot be explained, where we went wrong at the end...," Shami

After India's loss, PM Narendra Modi met the players in the dressing room and comforted them.

The video of that meeting was widely shared. In that meeting, PM Modi hugged Shami and congratulated him for his performance. That video went viral on social media and grabbed mixed reactions from the viewers.

In an interview, Shami revealed that the Indian cricket team players were not ready for the PM's visit as it came as a surprise for

"We were heartbroken after the loss and were sitting dejectedly. It was like our hard work of two months got negated due to just one match. It was our bad day and we were dejected but when the PM enters, you have to keep your head high. We were not even told that Modiji was coming there and suddenly he entered. Earlier, we were not even in the mood to eat and talk to each other but when he came, it was such a big surprise for us," said Shami.

Lok Jan Kalyan" is the essence of Bharatiya **Janata Party: Vinay Gupta**

Top News Report

JAMMU, 31 Dec: Lok Jan Kalyan is the essence of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and it has been in service of the people since its inception. This was stated by BJP senior leader and Seh Prabhari Jammu North Vinay Gupta, while addressing the general public of Jammu South to mark the BJP party's ongoing Booth Jan Samvad abhiyaan public outreach program in Booth no.111,112 & 113, ward no.58, Dashmesh Nagar in Gandhi Nagar Mandal of Bahu Constituency in District Jammu South. Vinay was accompanied by District Vice President and Mandal Prabhari Narinder Koki, Mandal President and Cantonment Board Vice Chairman Bharat Bhushan, program main speaker Payush Sahni, Sat Choudhry, Subash



Choudhry, Vijay Dogra, Vicky Dogra, Mitu Sharma, Rajni Gupta, Shilpa and others who were present on the occasion.

In direct camaraderie with the general public, Vinay Gupta elaborates that PM Modi is a "kindhearted noble soul" and always committed, and devoted to the national interest of the public. He claimed that the policies of Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Prime Minister Narendra Modi had secured

a political resolution to the "protests and sporadic incidents of insurgency and infiltrations" in Jammu and Kashmir. Vinay added that he would like to credit the "Modi Sarkaar", primarily the Prime Minister and the Home Minister, for always exhibiting and keeping confidence in the general public of

Vinay lauds that the BJP government has made such arrangements that no matter where you go in the

country, you will continue to get free ration and the Modi-led government has given you the facility of a 'One Nation One Ration Card'. He said that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's unwavering commitment to social justice is widely acknowledged. Emerging from humble beginnings and belonging to the lower strata of society, he comprehends the challenges people face and their aspirations for opportunities. The Modi

government has intro-

that have significantly improved the lives of weaker sections, ensuring their social and economic empowerment," Gupta stated while engaging with residents during the outreach program. He indicated that Modi's leading government successfully a long decade has not only transformed lives but also helped the poor in overcoming poverty", Vinay educates and informs that more than 13 crore people have come out of poverty in the last 5 years alone. He said that 13 crore people have successfully broken the barrier of poverty and become part of the neo-middle class in the country under the umbrella of PM Modi's swift moves. He is fully confident that "People should re-elect the Modi government in 2024, Gupta added.

duced various schemes

BJP cheats the people of Jammu and entire UT: Rajesh Gupta

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: Launching a scathing attack on the BJP, Bahujan SamajParty (BSP) General Secretary Rajesh Gupta, said in the last nine years BJP has done nothing for the public except give suffering.

"The entire State administration is on the brink of collapse as BJP cheated the people of Jammu and the entire UT", Rajesh Gupta said while addressing media persons

He said, Jammu is ruined under the BJP administration. Everywhere there is a hue and cry. Not a single citizen of Jammu is satisfied with the dictatorial attitude of the BJPled government. They have multiple miseries through their anti-people decisions and measures despite brewing resentment among the people.

Gupta said in a statement on Sunday that people are waiting eagerly to teach a lesson to the BJP for allegedly failing to fulfil the promises made



before coming to power at the Centre and in J&K.Gupta said that people should elect those who will ensure that their voice is heard. "People of J&K want a credible voice to represent their aspirations and must give a chance to new and honest persons he added.

"The people of J&K remember BJP for unleashing countless miseries on the State and its people. People still recount the numerous instances of BJP and its leaders committed from time to time. The treacherous role played by the BJP and its leadership is an open secret," he said, adding, that now the responsibility rests on people to choose between forces inimical to the State's

integrity and those who have lent immense sacrifices for the protection of the State's communal harmony and brotherhood.

"Now, it is up to people to discern between the ones who stand for their rights and who trampled them. However, people have made it a point to show such forces as are inimical to the State they have the right to place. In the end, it is the people whose resolve will prevail," he said. The BSP leader said that the public would teach a lesson to the BJP in the J&K Assembly elections. It will lick the dust in the coming J&K assembly polls,"

Gupta said. He said that now the time has come to save Jammu from the cruel clutches of the BJP and he would revive and make stronger Bahujan Samaj Party. Rajesh Gupta also extended new year 2024 greetings to people of J&K. He said new year may bring peace and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir UT.

Balwant Thakur' Hindi play 'Jaal' staged by Natrang Jammu



the village like poverty,

domestic violence, and

other ailments are attrib-

uted to the constant

growth of consumption

of alcohol in the village.

In a sequence the daily

routine of a villager is

shown who consumes

the whole of his daily

earnings in alcohol.

Being drunk completely

he has looses his way

home. By the time a

local escorts him to

his place where in the

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: Balwant Thakur's hard hitting Hindi play 'JAAL' staged here today at Rani Park, Jammu under the direction of Neeraj Kant. At the very outset while addressing the gathering, Natrang Director Balwant Thakur said that while bidding farewell to 2023 and welcoming 2024 Natrang chose to present a play which addresses the biggest challenge of the contemporary times. The menace of drugs amongst youth is all set to take its toll. Before it becomes 'Udta Jammu', it becomes the responsibility of every one to come forward and fight out this growing menace before it grips every home. Natrang being a responsible cultural institution has volunteered by taking this message to every nook and corner of the region through the effective use of theatre. In a very effective manner this powerful play 'Jaal' innovatively showcases as how the Drug-menace is ruining the generations like a rapid fire, crippling the developing nations like India. The youth of the country, the largest energetic and most productive human resource of the country, sometimes unknowingly slip into this dangerous trap of drug menace.

The play 'Jaal' was not

based on any one storymiddle of the night this line but as an experiment drunken man starts Balwant Thakur has beating his sleeping woven multiple stories in wife and kids for not one theme focusing the receiving him on his spread of drug menace arrival. When the escort intervenes to save the like a mesh, this taking poor lady and children. the toll of the strongest he is blamed for having workforce of the country. malicious intentions Jammu is no exception. We are a witness to lots towards his wife. This fight further messes up of youth losing lives. In when a drunken man a sequence a young after losing senses boy is shown struggling damages his household for a good company belongings as well. The after his passing of the play unfolds a series of school and entry in the incidents where people college. He is isolated influenced by drugs, for not being the conalcohol and other intoxsumer of intoxications. ications create hell for All around him treat themselves as well as him like a child which for others. Many prereally frustrates him cious lives are being and to prove that he has charred in this fire grown-up as a young of the growing drug man now, he finds the menace which is to be easiest way and demfought unitedly to bring onstrates his coming them out of the mesh of of age by consuming a drugs menace. Through variety of intoxications. this play Balwant Thakur In another sequence a has tried to make an rural inhabitation parappeal to save mankind ticularly the men-folk from this dragon who is are shown drowned in extending its constituthe menace of alcoency day by day. hol. All the miseries of

Actors who outshined in their respective performances and left an impact of their acting included Neeraj Kant, Aadesh Dhar, Kananpreet Kour, Vishal Sharma, Abhimanyu Choudhary, Sanket Bhagat, Kushal Bhat and Chaitanaya Shekhar. The show was ably conducted by senior actor of Jammu stage Rajinder Narang and coordinated by Mohd.

LG directives to attend grievances/ complaint of citizens not being heeded: TMF



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: There is frustration and dissatisfaction expressed by Team Mask Force chairman Vijay Sharma regarding the lack of response to public grievances and complaints by the authorities, specifically the LG (Lieutenant Governor) and the JMC (Jammu Municipal Corporation) grievances cell. The press release states that despite directives from the LG to address public grievances and complaints promptly, there has been a significant delay in attending to them.

An example is cited, specifically the grievances lodged by Vijay Sharma himself regarding the encroachment of a road in front of his house at 45B/D Gandhinagar Jammu.

Despite the passage of months, there has been no resolution or response from either the LG grievances cell or the JMC grievances

The statement men-

tions that no reply has been received from either the LG or the JMC grievances cell regarding the lodged complaints.

Vijay Sharma draws a parallel between the unaddressed grievances and what he refers to as political "jumla" (empty rhetoric) and "jumalebazi" (political theatrics).

Specific comparisons are made to promises made by political figures, such as the Prime Minister's promise of creating 2 crore jobs annually and the declaration of bringing back black money from Swiss banks, which are described as unfulfilled.

The press release concludes with a strong expression of frustration, suggesting that the directives from the LG to promptly address grievances seem to be mere rhetoric, similar to other unfulfilled political promises.

It's important to note that this information is based on the provided text, and without additional context or official responses, it represents one perspective on the matter. In situations like these, it is common for various factors and perspectives to be at play, and a comprehensive understanding often requires insights from multiple sources.

Groundbreaking success in delivering govt schemes directly to citizens: Raman Suri

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: In a historic turn of events, Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visionary initiative, Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, has emerged as a beacon of success, breaking the shackles of past inefficiencies in delivering central government schemes. Revealing this triumph, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) J&K Executive Member Raman Suri highlighted that it is for the first time that the Prime Minister is receiving direct feedback from both the administration and the common people.

Raman Suri emphasized that the success of Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra serves as concrete evidence that citizens are now reaping realtime benefits of Union Government-sponsored key schemes, including Ayushman Bharat, Har Ghar Jal, digitization of land records, and the mission to create Open Defecation Free (ODF) villages, alongside various self-employment initiatives.

Underlining the metic-

ulous feedback mechanism established by Prime Minister Modi, Suri emphasized its role in transparently showcasing the impact of schemes, such as the declaration of ODF Plus villages, increased access to tap water, and illuminated village homes. He particularly commended the digitization of land records, which has empowered the citizens to safeguard their interests and avoid becoming victim to the ills like corruption.

Viksit Bharat Yatra, initiated by Prime Minister Modi in November 2023, is heralded as a transformative movement, enabling the government to gather vital information about the implementation status of flagship schemes across the nation. With ambitious plans to cover 2.60 lakh Gram Panchavats, 4000 urban local bodies, and engage with approximately 2.50 crore citizens within the next month, the Yatra signifies a groundbreaking shift in governance.

For the first time in independent India's history, Prime Minister

Modi is directly engaging with beneficiaries, transcending geographical barriers to understand the on-ground realities of the deserving citizens residing in remote areas. Success stories from Jammu and Kashmir as well as other states illustrate the tangible impact of Ayushman Bharat, with beneficiaries expressing gratitude for timely interventions and coverage of medical expenses through the Ayushman

Beyond mere statistics, the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra encapsulates transformation in the laughter of children with access to clean water, the pride of a farmer securing his land deed, and the hope in the eves of a mother ensuring healthcare for her family. Raman Suri applauded the PM's unwavering commitment to inclusive development, ensuring that no citizen is left behind. Viksit Bharat is not just a promise; it is a journey marked by tangible improvements and countless lives being transformed.

Kashmiri displaced people wing (J&K) of DPAP party extends heartfelt new year greetings to the people in 2024

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 31: The leaders of the KDP wing of DPAP, including Sh. Sanjay Dhar (President), Piaray Lal Pandita (Chairman), Roop Krishen Koul (Vice President), Gowhar Wani (Spokesperson), Raj Kumar Ticku (General Secretary), Daizy Dhar (Mahila Wing President), Vijay Karihaloo (Vice President

Kashmir), Deepak Fotadar (General Secretary Non Camps), Amrita Bhat (Mahila Vice President), Renu Razdan (Mahila Vice President), Geeta Koul (Vice President Non Camps), Shikha Koul (Women's Youth President), Neha Mian (Mahila Unit Vice President Jagti), Naveen Gosani (Youth President), Rahul Raina

(Youth Vice President), Anjali Pandita (Mahila Unit President Jagti), Avtar Krishen Ladhoo (Unit President Jagti), Ravinder Singh (Secretary), Charanjeet Singh (Publicity Secretary), Vikas Koul (Secretary), and many others, extend warm congratulations to the people of India, both within the country and abroad, and especially

to the people of J&K, on the advent of the new year 2024.

The leaders express their heartfelt wishes that the new year brings peace and prosperity to J&K and pray for happiness and smiles to grace the faces of citizens. They extend their wishes for good health to all, hoping that the government of India and the government of

Jammu & Kashmir will prioritize the resettlement and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Displaced Hindus. They highlight the community's three decades of exile and express hope for a positive change in the coming year.

The leaders conclude by invoking the Almighty's blessings for happiness among the people of the country.

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