

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, THURSDAY, JANUARY 04, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



ENTERTAINMENT | 6

Janhvi Kapoor calls dating actors 'chaotic'



NATIONAL | 7

Mallikarjun Kharge asks Congress Workers to ensure Victory in 2024

SPORTS | 11

Coco Gauff Marches On With Dominant Win In Auckland



e-paper: www.topnewsjk.in

RNI No. JKENG/2010/39369

Regd. No. JK-435

Vol.-15 Issue-04 Pages-12 Rs.-2/-

BRIEFLY

Search Operations to track down terrorists underway in Kulgam

SRINAGAR, Jan 4 (Agencies): The anti-terror operation in Kulgam district of Jammu and Kashmir entered the second day on Thursday as security forces continued search operations to track down terrorists who had briefly engaged in a firefight last night.

There has been no fresh firefight but search operations are still in progress, a police official said. He said an encounter broke out between security forces and terrorists at Hadigam village on Wednesday night after the law enforcing agencies launched a cordon and search operation in the area.

Slight respite from severe cold conditions in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, Jan 4 (Agencies): Kashmir got some respite from intense cold wave conditions as the minimum temperature rose slightly across the valley, officials said here on Thursday.

As the minimum stayed several degrees below freezing point several waterbodies, including Dal Lake, froze overnight. A thin layer of ice had formed over the surface of Dal Lake as Srinagar city recorded a minimum temperature of minus 3.8 degrees Celsius last night, officials said. The residents of the Lake, who live in the houseboats, had a tough time breaking the ice layer while roving their boats towards the banks. Water supply pipes have frozen in many areas of Kashmir due to extreme cold wave conditions.

Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district, which serves as one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath Yatra, recorded a minimum temperature of minus 5.1 degrees Celsius, up from the previous night's minus 6.6 degrees Celsius, they said.

Gulmarg skiing resort in north Kashmir recorded a low of minus 4.2 degrees Celsius, the officials said. ■ Turn to page 9

LG addresses 8th Convocation Ceremony of SKUAST Jammu

With their talent, intellect, young women are gaining prominence in Agricultural Science & Technology: Sinha

590 students including 347 female students were awarded degrees; female students bagged 10 gold medals out of 11

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha addressed the 8th Convocation Ceremony of SKUAST Jammu at Baba Jitto Auditorium, on Wednesday.

A total of 590 students including 347 female students were awarded degrees in various subjects.

On the occasion, the Lt

Governor congratulated the graduating students, teachers and staff of the SKUAST Jammu and all those researchers, innovators, who are contributing in building the University into a centre of excellence for Agricultural Science and Technology.

He conferred medals to the meritorious students and extended his felicitations to the



women students for their excellent academic performance across the subjects and securing 10 Gold Medals out of total 11.

With their talent, intellect and skill, young women are gaining prominence in Agricultural Science and Technology. The number of degrees and awards to our proud daughters is heartening. They are the

role models for young generation and have set an example by hard work in pursuit of excellence, he said.

"Our daughters constitute the core and strength of innovation ecosystem. It is a matter of pride and there is a need for scaling up the presence of woman scientists and tech entrepreneurs at all levels to

■ Turn to page 9

South Kashmir's Kulgam gets automatic Weather Station

SRINAGAR, Jan 4 (Agencies): Authorities have put in place a sophisticated weather station in south Kashmir's Kulgam district with an aim to keep agriculturalists updated with real time weather check and soil analysis.

Quoting officials, a report in India Today said the installation of

the weather station is part of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADPP), operational at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) in the Pombai area of Kulgam.

"The weather station has primarily been installed to benefit the farming community," KVK Pombai Kulgam

Senior Scientist and Head Manzoor Ahmad Ganai said.

He said the multifunctional weather station offers comprehensive real-time updates on various factors, including wind direction, temperature, humidity, wind speed, soil temperature, soil moisture, solar radiation, solar intensity and

insights into pest activity.

Underlining the vitality of the station, Ganai emphasized that its main objective is pest detection and providing farmers with early warnings about potential threats to their environment.

He also mentioned that those who have registered with the Krishi

■ Turn to page 9

Govt says only processing charges to be levied for procuring blood at hospitals, blood banks

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Vice President Jagdeep Thakkar will skip the convocation of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology on Thursday as the aircraft ferrying him could not land in Jammu due to adverse weather conditions, officials said.

The vice president is heading to Kathua to inaugurate the Biotech Startup Expo at Biotech Park in the district along the International

Border, they said.

"Due to adverse weather conditions and poor visibility, the landing was not possible in Jammu. Therefore, the vice president won't be able to attend the convocation of Sher-e-Kashmir University in Jammu," an official said.

"He is heading directly to the other event in Jammu and Kashmir to inaugurate the Biotech Startup Expo at Biotech Park in Kathua," he added.

Winter vacations in Jammu schools extended up to Jan 6

JAMMU, Jan 4 (Agencies): The winter vacations in government and private recognized schools functioning in summer zones of Jammu division have been further extended till January 6, 2024 due to prevailing inclement weather conditions. As per an order issued by the Director School Education, Jammu, ■ Turn to page 9

High Speed Train test conducted on Udhampur Baramulla Railway Line



SRINAGAR, Jan 4 (Agencies): The Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), Dinesh Chand Deshwal, conducted an inspection of the 14.869 km Banihal-Khatri rail track, a segment of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link (USBRL) project, along with senior officials from Northern Railways, IRCON, and construction companies.

Following an examination of the track, tunnels, and bridges, the officials proceeded with a high-speed electric train.

The 14.869 km rail track is poised to be opened for regular train traffic between the two stations, as per officials. The CRS, accompanied

by a team from various authorities, inspected the infrastructure, including a cut-and-cover tunnel, two major bridges, and three major tunnels in the Banihal-Khatri sector. This marks the second statutory inspection by Deshwal before deciding on the opening of the Banihal-Khatri section of the 272 km USBRL project.

A senior official, as per a report in Hindustan Times said, "The CRS inspected the tracks, tunnels, bridges, and the infrastructure at the two railway stations of Khatri and Banihal before returning in a high-speed electric train from Banihal." Once the CRS grants permission, trains

are expected to operate between Khatri and Banihal railway stations. Work is also progressing on the Katra-Banihal stretch, with plans to make it operational by March this year.

On December 22, Northern Railways achieved a significant milestone in the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project with the breakthrough of the 3,209-meter-long Tunnel T-1 between Katra and Reasi railway stations. This breakthrough brings the Indian Railways closer to connecting the Kashmir Valley with the national railway network.

Tunnel T-1, located at the foothills of Trikuta Hills near Katra in Reasi district, presented formidable geological challenges due to its passage through the Himalayan Main Boundary Thrust (MBT), including rugged terrain and substantial water inflow.

The tunnel alignment

■ Turn to page 9

SIA attaches property of proclaimed offender in Sopore

SOPORE, Jan 4 (Agencies): State Investigation Agency (SIA) on Thursday said it attached a property of a proclaimed offender in Amarghar area of Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

An official said that the SIA attached the property of Abdul Rashid Mir son of Mohammad Sultan Mir of Amarghar.

He said that the property comprising of 5 kanals of immovable land was seized in case FIR No 19/2022 U/S 13,17,18,39,40 UAPA 120-B, 121,121-A IPC 8/21, 8/27-B, 29 NDPS Act of Ps SIA Kashmir.

3.9 magnitude earthquake hits Kishtwar

JAMMU, Jan 4 (Agencies): A magnitude 3.9 earthquake hit Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district in the early hours of Thursday, officials said.

There were no reports of any loss of life or damage to property, they added.

The earthquake, with its epicentre near Kishtwar, occurred at 12.38 am, the National Centre for Seismology said.

The quake hit at latitude 33.34 degrees north and longitude 76.67 degrees, at a depth of five kilometres.

Residential house, over one dozen shops gutted in Kupwara blaze

KUPWARA, Jan 4 (Agencies): Over one dozen shops and a residential house were gutted in a fire incident on Thursday morning at Dar Gali in north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

An official said that a fire that broke out in the wee hours of this morning left an old structure

damaged. The structure belongs to Haji Ab Gani Dar.

An official said that the F&ES reached the spot immediately after receiving information in this regard.

An employee of F&ES part of the operation, said that they immediately swung into the

action and rescued a family, adding that no injury or loss of life was reported in the incident.

Meanwhile, Tehsildar Kupwara said that the damage and the exact number of shops gutted in the fire incident are being verified and shall be shared accordingly later.

Active Covid-19 cases in Country recorded at 4,423

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): India saw a single-day rise of 760 new cases of Covid while two more people succumbed to the viral disease, the health ministry said on Thursday.

The number of active cases of the infection has been recorded at 4,423, it said.

The new fatalities — one each from Kerala

and Karnataka — were reported in a span of 24 hours, according to the ministry's data updated at 8 am.

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

■ Turn to page 9

Crystal
Telecom - Security - Software

CRYSTAL NEXA/SN SERIES

CRYSTAL CLARITY, ELEVATING CONNECTIONS, INTERCOM REIMAGINED

Ports	4Ports - 64 Ports
Trunks	4 - 10 Trunk's
FND	Tri-Color
Scheduler	Small, ABS Body
KTS	Pluggable Add on
Paging	Yes
Hotel Fn	Yes
MMOH	Pluggable Add on

www.crystalpbx.com

CADNICA ELECTRONIC SOLUTIONS

Contact Person Mr. Sanjeev Kumar

9419143503

EDITORIAL

MAINTAIN PEACE
AND HARMONY

Peace and harmony are the most important needs of any country. Citizens of any country can feel safe and prosperous when there is an atmosphere of peace in their country, but still sometimes peace in some country or the other gets disturbed. You know that India is a country of diversity, here unity is seen in diversity.

People of different religions live in India and celebrate any festival together. The constitution here provides freedom to all the people. Laws are made to maintain peace in any country, so that no person can disturb the peace.

Any country is built due to peace and harmony, because if there is peace and harmony in the country, then that country can be developed, but due to vested interests this peace gets destroyed. There are many reasons due to which there is unrest in the country.

The biggest interference in the peace of any country is done by terrorists, due to which many people die. Due to which protests and demonstrations are held everywhere. After terrorism, the second most attempt to defame religion causes dissatisfaction in the society. There are many political parties which, for their own benefit, try to mislead the people of the society by using rude language against the people of the other party, which leads to unrest in the country.

The reservation system has created more unrest for the general category people. In such a situation, people from many other communities have also started demanding reservation for the people of their own communities, in such a situation these people keep protesting from time to time. Apart from this, due to unemployment, inflation and many other types of riots in different states, the possibilities of peace and harmony in the country are destroyed.

There are many such examples in history due to which peace and harmony in the country was completely destroyed. Some of these are Murders in Haryana in 1987; Riots in Hyderabad in 1990; Terrorist attacks were carried out on the Red Fort in 2000; Riots in Gujarat in 2002; Bomb blast in Delhi in 2007; 2008 bomb blasts; Pune bomb blast in 2012; Muzaffarnagar riots in 2013; and Jat reservation movement in 2016.

These are all examples that peace and harmony had ended in India. Sometimes it seems that people have lost the habit of living in peace. Many times people of the society get into such big fights over small things that they do not even hesitate in killing people.

Peace and harmony can be maintained in any country until each of its citizens becomes mature about their sensitivity, which is why unrest arises in the society.

GANESH KUMAR SHARMA (Born 1956), A SCULPTOR WHO PLAYS MAGIC WITH HIS HAMMER AND CHISEL

By: AvtarMota

"Every block of stone has a statue inside it and it is the task of the sculptor to discover it." Michelangelo

The sleepy border village of Sanoora falls in the Ghagwal block of the Samba district. It is about 10 km from Samba town. The residents of the village used to be either farmers or would join the army. However, with the spread of education, the literacy rate of village Sanoora has reached 87% (males 94% and females 80%). This village has produced Ganesh Kumar Sharma, a leading sculptor of the UT whose sculptures demonstrate his creativity, manual dexterity and a profound understanding of forms and materials. About himself, Ganesh Sharma has this to say:-

"I have learnt this art out of sheer personal interest. I am the only member from my family in this field. I belong to a family that has served the nation through our army. My father was in the army and my brother retired as colonel in the army. I did my schooling from a government school in Sanoora village and later joined the degree college at Kathua. I was drawn towards art from my childhood. After finishing my college studies, I enrolled myself as student in Institute of Music And Fine Arts, Jammu. Starting with watercolour paintings, it was Shri VidyaRatanKhajuria, the well-known sculptor who moulded my attitude towards sculptures. He remained my life-long Guru. Amongst other sculptors from Jammu, Shri RavindraJamwal is doing excellent work currently. His installation work is quite impressive. I am also impressed by the work of Sri RajendraTikoo. When I was about to leave the IMFA (Jammu) Shri RajinderTikoo another well-known sculptor also joined as faculty. I am impressed by the work of LatikaKatt of Delhi. Her sculptures bear the profound influence of Auguste Rodin. She has a variety, technique and something to say through her sculptures. Many sculptors in our UT are doing very good work. So many I mean."

Trained by great sculptor VidyaRatanKhajuria, Ganesh



Kumar Sharma has exhibited his work in many solos held in various cities of the country. Two times Gold Medalist from the USA, Ganesh Sharma has done 24 solo shows of his work in India and abroad and attended about three hundred National-level exhibitions in the UT and various other cities of the country. Not only Lalit Kala Akademi, his work is in possession of many galleries, hotels, corporate offices and private individuals in India and abroad. He adds this:-

"Presently, I live in Hiranagar town. I receive many invitations to join overseas exhibitions but I am constrained to decline all as I can't travel much. Through some divine intervention only, I survived from a major road accident in 1991. It kept me confined to bed for 2 years. I was operated 19 times but in the hospital also, I didn't give up my passion for art. I wanted to get up as early as possible and resume my creative work. Covid 19 opened the online platform for exhibitions. I have been joining many national and international online exhibitions. I don't remember the number of online exhibitions wherein I participated. God has been kind that way."

Some Awards conferred upon him could be listed as under:-

- (1) J&K State Government Award and Gold Medal on Republic Day in 2006.
- (2) National Award received from the then PM Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1998.
- (3) Best Artist Award' (online participation) by the Egyptian International Foundation for Fine Arts.
- (4) Awarded in the prestigious virtual international Exhibition 'Homage to Venezuela' (online participation) organised

by 'Escuela International Arte de America'.

(5) OSCAR, a magazine for Arab and international literature and arts declared Ganesh Sharma as one of the 100 most creative personalities of the world for the year 2023.

(6) International Picasso Fine Arts Award (online participation) organised by Oxford University jointly with two other universities.

(7) Awarded by Arnay Palma International Academy of Arts And Literature, Hungary for participation (online).

(8) Broadway Award by J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages.

(9) Award in All India Exhibition organised by Academy Of Fine Arts, Amritsar, Punjab.

From the long list, I have mentioned only 9 awards. Through online exhibitions post Covid 19 epidemic, many awards and a global recognition has come his way.

UNIQUE SCULPTURES OF GANESH SHARMA

Art, in all its forms, has the incredible power to inspire, provoke thought, and evoke emotions. Sculpture, with its three-dimensional nature, takes this experience to another level. It engages our senses, inviting us to explore its contours, textures, and forms. Sculptures remind us of the importance of tangible objects and the beauty of physicality. Through their presence, sculptures enrich our surroundings, infusing them with aesthetic pleasure and cultural significance. Whether created in traditional or contemporary styles, they serve as timeless markers of human creativity and expression.

I saw Ganesh Sharma's sculptures recently. He must have made about 650 sculptures till now

using Devar stone (from Kashmir), granite, marble (black and white), terracotta and wood (Deodar and Sheesham). He has also created some masterpieces on drifted wood. He uses the elements of art to create an effect and convey his intent. These sculptures are based on principles of art and design like balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm, and unity/variety. I could see some of his sculptures representing human torso (male and female) or faces that convey a special type of originality that captures the imagination. His sculptures reflect perfection in carving, assembling, modeling, and casting. In his female faces or forms done in abstract format, he chisels and polishes aesthetic sensuousness. These sculptures have the power to create a mood, convey a story. Ganesh Sharma knows well the art of depicting things by focusing on geometrical forms and reducing the recognizable characteristics of his subjects by experimenting with space and form. This is how he represents the broad possibilities of art. Influence of V R Khajuria is starkly visible in Ganesh Sharma's work. In his simplicity and humbleness, Ganesh Sharma doesn't know how profound and delightfully creative sculptures he creates that could compete with any frontline sculptor on the national scene.

About Ganesh Sharma's work, noted artist and critic, Dr Alka Chadha Haraplani writes this:-

"Ganesh simplifies shapes in his sculptures to their elemental form and brings out the essence of things with his nuances of hammer and chisel. Be it human torso, face, family, bird or biographic form, all are chipped, scrapped, carved, drilled, polished, filed and forged as a combination of curvilinear lines -enigmatic, gestural and symbolic. There is a magical play of positive and negative space in his sculptures. One can see the way in which wood is burnt at different places to bring out tonal gradations. The armature for support, tautness and compressions, chiselling and then the stone cutting machine - all contribute in becoming a modelling tool for his movement of lines and highly polished and finished surface of his sculptures."

Benefits of Hydra Facial



By: Shahnaz Husain

HydraFacial is one of the most popular non-invasive skin treatment that uses special devices to cleanse and hydrate your skin. It usually uses HydraPeel Tip, a pen-like device with patented technology for cleansing, exfoliating, extracting, and hydrating the skin with serums to get rid of the skin's dead skin cells creating an instant "wow factor" in terms of brightening and firming skin.

This system uses a vortex

swirling action to deliver hydration and remove dead skin, dirt, debris, and impurities while cleaning and soothing your skin.

This magical painless treatment tackles everything from dehydration to discoloration, aging to acne, and uneven skin texture.

The treatment starts with loosening and opening the pores and then prepping the skin using a mix of glycolic acid, salicylic acid, and several botanical ingredients for better cleansing.

Once the pores are open enough, the professional uses vacuum-powered extraction equipment that gets rid of the dirt and oils clogged inside the pores. It is a non-invasive procedure and is practically painless.

Hydration and Nourishment As it is renowned for its hydrating properties, this contains hydrating serums containing antioxidants, peptides, and hyaluronic

acid directly into the skin. A powerful moisturizing agent, hyaluronic acid, attracts and retains water, promoting deep hydration and helping to plump the skin.

Pore Refinement

For those struggling with enlarged pores, Hydra Facial offers a solution. The treatment includes a gentle extraction process that helps clean out pores, reducing their size and minimizing their appearance. Clearing out debris and oil from the pores contributes to a refined and more polished complexion.

Fine Line and Wrinkle Reduction

The hydrating and rejuvenating effects of Hydra Facial extend to addressing fine lines and wrinkles. The treatment helps stimulate collagen production, a key protein responsible for skin elasticity.

Improved Skin Texture and Tone

Exfoliation and hydration work well to enhance the

overall texture and tone of the skin. By sloughing off dead skin cells and replenishing moisture, Hydra Facial promotes a smoother, softer, and more even skin surface. This dual action contributes to a noticeable improvement in skin texture and tone after just one session.

One of the remarkable aspects of Hydra Facial is its versatility. Also, whether you have sensitive, oily, or combination skin, Hydra Facial is generally safe and effective for various skin types. The customizable nature of the treatment allows skin care professionals to adjust the intensity based on individual skin needs, ensuring a personalized and comfortable experience.

(The author is an international fame beauty expert and is called the herbal Queen of India)

Abhinav praises 'Modi magic' as PM tops list of most popular global leader

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: As Prime Minister Narendra Modi was ranked as the "world most popular leader" in the world by a US-based decision intelligence company, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) District Secretary Jammu South Abhinav Anand remarked that "Modi's magic" has been endorsed even by an international survey.

He stated according to the survey by 'Morning Consult' PM Modi has a global approval rating of 76 per cent.

Abhinav Anand expressed, that after the recently concluded assembly election results in five states, even an international poll has given a thumbs up to "Modi's guarantee and magic", which is about



his model of governance and delivery in the last successful ten years. He also noted that Modi scored high ratings even during an international crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic when other world leaders suffered in popular support. Abhinav Anand elaborates that It

is because he had been able to deliver on development and growth while managing inflation and taking more than 13.5 crore people out of poverty. He said the approval rating will be reflected in the Lok Sabha upcoming polls in 2024. Anand said PM Modi's excellent administrative skills and legislative experience spanning decades coupled with empathetic leadership has found him a place in the hearts of millions of Indians," he added.

Abhinav Anand counted that It also showed people continue to believe in Bharatiya Janata Party ideology and see it as a beacon of trust, hope, and credibility, a positive signal for the party ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls

as visionary Prime Minister Modi gets set for a chance to equal Jawaharlal Nehru's record of three straight stints as PM. "The election results of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh are showing that the people of India have faith only in the politics of good governance and development and their faith in the BJP remains intact. Abhinav Anand highlights that the PM used "Modi ki guarantee" for the first time during the unveiling of Bharat Mandapam, setting the tone for the state polls as the phrase was used by party leaders to emphasize Modi's promises were pragmatic and deliverable. Anand said the country was moving ahead under the clairvoyant leadership of PM Modi with the goal of a developed India.

Kishtwar Administration discusses arrangements for Republic Day 2024



Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Jan 4: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishtwar, Dr. Devansh Yadav on Thursday chaired a meeting of line departments and other stakeholders here in the Conference Hall of DC Office Complex to discuss the arrangements for the celebration of Republic Day 2024.

The meeting was informed that the main function would be held at district headquarter Kishtwar, while local administration would hold celebrations at Sub-Division, Block and Tehsil levels. The Deputy Commissioner directed the district heads of different departments to ensure their presence as well as the subordinate officers and officials in the R-Day function both at the district headquarter as well as SDM, Tehsil and Block levels.

The arrangements for unfurl of flag, March past, Cultural items, sitting arrangements, stage setting and Venue preparation and refreshment for the R-Day celebration were discussed in the meeting. It was informed that the day would begin with the playing of Shanai Vadan.

Besides, directions were given to Police Authorities to make fool-proof security arrangements.

Concerned department were instructed to ensure the adequate provision of drinking water, power supply, Medicare facility, sanitation, transport, traffic regulation, illumination of government buildings, deployment of fire tenders, seating arrangement, besides distribution of invitations etc.

The Deputy Commissioner assigned the

responsibilities for different arrangements to each department and constituted several Committees to monitor the process.

Senior officers of Civil and Police administration besides other stakeholders gave valuable suggestions to make the R-Day celebration a grand event in the district.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Kishtwar Sham Lal, ADC, Inderjeet Singh Parihar; ASP, Rajinder Singh; ACR, Varunjeet Singh Charak ; PO ICDS, Dr. Rishi Sharma; SDM Marwah Mohd Ashraf, Asst. Commissioner Panchayats Zakir Hussain Wani, Tehsildar headquarter Chander Shekhar Sharma, DySP Hq, DySP DAR, besides other District officers, Officers of CRPF, Army and representatives of different departments and Educational institutions.

Address concerns of Job aspirants: Shabnam

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 4: Social Activist and JKPYC Baramulla Vice President Shabnam Khan has urged the administration to address the concerns by the job aspirants regarding selection of police sub inspectors.

In a statement, Shabnam Khan said aspirants of SI post from Kashmir region feel disillusioned and want absorption of more aspirants.

Shabnam Khan said that the unemployment problem in Jammu and Kashmir has assumed as alarming proportions which was eating vitals of the society.

"Unemployment is one of the main causes of turmoil that has gripped the whole region since 1990.

Growing drug abuse and suicidal tendencies among the youth in Kashmir is also the outcome of grim unemployment problem," Shabnam Khan added.

Lord Valmiki is Trikaldarshi, whole world is following Ramayana written by him: Chandel



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: National Chairman of the National Valmiki Sena, Raju Chandel, extended invitation to Dharmaraj Gaur and Mahamandaleswar of Valmiki Society, Shri Krishna Vidyarthi, to participate in the consecration ceremony of the Shri Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

The invitation was presented by the Executive President of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Alok Kumar.

Chandel expressed joy over the invitation and emphasized the global significance of Bhagwan Valmiki's teachings through the Ramayana.

He also mentioned the Prime Minister's decision to name the Ayodhya airport after Bhagwan Valmiki and the installation of a monumental idol of Bhagwan Valmiki in the Shri Ram Temple.

He applauded the

Modi government for its unprecedented respect and recognition of Bhagwan Valmiki, which was seen as a gesture not witnessed in previous administrations.

He conveyed overwhelming joy in the Valmiki Society for the invitation extended to their spiritual leader, Shri Krishna Vidyarthi Ji.

Additionally, the National Founder of Valmiki Sena and others extended congratulations to the Executive President of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Alok Kumar, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi for inviting Mahamandaleswar Shri Krishna Vidyarthi Ji to the sacred occasion.

They expressed admiration for the Modi government's gesture and extended millions of salutations for the invitation to their revered Mahamandaleswar.

Kishtwar District Athletics Championship concludes



Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Jan 4: Kishtwar District Athletics Championship organized by District Amateur Athletic Association concluded at Chowgan Ground, here on Thursday.

The event was graced by the presence of Ashraf Wani, who attended as the Chief Guest.

The championship was a great success, with athletes from across the district participating and showcasing their skills in various athletic

events. Rajesh Kumar Sharma, Athletic coach and other team members welcomed the chief guest at the venue and brief about the scheduled programme.

The chief guest said the event provided a platform for young athletes to showcase their talent and compete at a district level. It also aimed to promote a culture of sports and physical fitness among the youth.

The athletes were given an opportunity

to compete against each other, learn from their experiences, and improve their performance in the future.

They also appreciated the efforts of the District Athletic Association. The championship concluded with a grand closing ceremony, where the winners were awarded medals and certificates.

The top-performing athletes were recognized for their outstanding performances. Total 150 boys and girls participated in district championship.

SSP Doda holds public meeting



Top News Report

DODA, Jan 4: Continuing its efforts to organize public outreach programmes to listen to the grievances of general public, SSP Doda, Abdul Qayoom on Thursday, paid a visit to Mohalla and held public meeting there which was attended by prominent persons/ elderly people, PRI functionaries.

The participants while speaking on the occasion complimented the efforts of police by way of conducting such public outreach programmes in remote areas for listening the issues and grievances of the general public.

The participants highlighted many demands

and issues of the area. A patient hearing was given to their demands and they were assured that their demands will be taken up at appropriate level and would be resolved on priority.

SSP Doda while addressing the participants urged upon them to maintain brotherhood, communal harmony and cooperate with Police by providing inputs/information if any kind of criminal activities /smuggling like drug smuggling /bovine smuggling is noticed in their neighborhood by them.

On this occasion, an interaction session was also held by SSP Doda with VDGs of Mohalla,

Punyalla, Phalshore, Korara, Khankoot, Bhakhna, Mandrana, Dal Mohalla, Sheva, Bhata in which the VDGs raised many demands during the interaction and they were assured that their genuine demands will be resolved.

They were briefed to maintain alertness in their AOR by conducting day / night patrolling and provide inputs to Police if any movement of unknown /suspicious person is noticed by them in their areas.

They were also directed to conduct LRPs/ SRPs with nearest Pickets of Police /CAPF /Army and remain vigilant in their areas.

Jammu University enters semi-final of All India Vice-Chancellor's T-20



Top News Report

JAMMU / NAGPUR, Jan 4: In the ongoing All India Vice-Chancellor's T-20 Cricket Tournament (M) 2023, University of Jammu beat PAU University Ludhiana by 3 wickets in the quarterfinal and entered the semi-final PAU University Ludhiana scored 159 for all-out in 20 overs. Rupinder scored 36 in 23 balls. Kailash 32 in 18 balls, Simar 28 in 31 balls. For the University of Jammu Raj Kumar Bakshi took 3 wickets for 19 runs in 4 overs. Balwant also took 3 wickets, Karan and

Rajesh took 1 wicket, and the University of Jammu scored 163 runs in 18 overs for 7 wickets. Niranjana scored 64, Aman was not out 25. Balwant 20 is not out. Raj Kumar Bakshi, 14, for PAU University Ludhiana Guri Sohi and Dev Chandolia took 2 wickets each; Vinod, Kalaish, and Barinder took 1 wicket each; Raj Kumar Bakshi was declared man of the match.

Dr. Daud Iqbal Baba, Director of Sports and Physical Education, University of Jammu, congratulates the team

and officials and gives their best wishes for the coming matches.

JUNTEU congratulated the University of Jammu Cricket (M) team for today's win, and give their best wishes for the semis.

Notorious bootlegger arrested, 46 bottles of Desi Whiskey Recovered



Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Jan 4: In a relentless pursuit to eradicate the menace of illicit liquor trade, Kishtwar Police apprehend-

ing One more notorious bootlegger and seized 46 bottles of JK Desi Whiskey.

Police party from PS Kishtwar, led by Inspect-

tor Parvaiz Ahmed Khanday, during routine patrolling and naka checking.

Naka party arrested one person and during checking 46 bottles of illicit JK Desi Whiskey were recovered from his possession.

The accused was identified as Bashir Ahmed, son of Noor Din, and a resident of Gujjarbasti Padyarna.

In this regard case, FIR No. 05/2024 under Section 48(a) Excise Act, registered at PS Kishtwar and the investigation taken up.

SMVDU wins Winter Cricket Tournament



Top News Report

KATRA, Jan 4: SMVD University staff cricket team won the Winter Cricket Tournament organized by SMVD Narayana Hospital which was 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.

Aman Thakur was the pick of bowlers who claimed four wickets while Vishal and Sarthak took two wickets each, Rajeshwar Sharma, took 1 wicket.

In response the SMVD University Staff team convincingly won the match by nine wickets and achieved the target in 17 overs. The chase was led by the captain of the team, Sumit Sharma and 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 Activities, SMVD University and M. Muthu Mathavan, Facility Director, SMVD Narayana Hospital congratulated the winners and handed over the prizes to winner and runner up teams.

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.

Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Pragati Kumar appreciated the efforts of University staff Cricket team and congratulated them for bringing laurels to the University.

'Ahlan Modi': PM's mega event in UAE on Feb 13 ahead of Hindu temple opening

The event, 'Ahlan Modi', is slated to be held on February 13 just a day before Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate the BAPS Hindu temple in Abu Dhabi.

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to address a massive gathering of Indian community members in Abu Dhabi in the UAE on February 13.

The event, 'Ahlan Modi', is slated to be held just a day before the Prime Minister is set to inaugurate the BAPS Hindu temple in Abu Dhabi. Over 50,000 people are expected to attend the event.

PM Modi has accepted an invitation to inaugurate the BAPS Hindu temple, the largest such temple in the UAE, according to a statement from the BAPS



Swaminarayan Sanstha, Representatives of the BAPS organisation, led by Swami Ishwarachandas and Swami

Brahmaviharidas, met the Prime Minister at his residence in Delhi and extended the invitation for the inauguration on February 14, the Swaminarayan Sanstha stated.

It added that PM Modi has "graciously accepted" the invitation to inaugurate the temple in the Arab country.

The BAPS Hindu temple has been designed to resemble a blossoming lotus flower.

Last year, PM Modi visited the UAE where he attended the COP28 climate summit in Dubai on November 30-December 1.

Mallikarjun Kharge asks Congress Workers to ensure Victory in 2024



NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday accused the BJP of raising emotive issues to hide its failures of 10 years and asked workers to get united to ensure the party's victory in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Addressing a meeting of party leaders

from across the country, Mr Kharge told them to sink their differences, not raise internal issues in the media and work as a team to ensure the party's victory.

"The BJP is pushing emotive issues to cover up the failures of its government in the last 10 years. They deliberately involve Congress in every issue," Mr Kharge said at the meeting.

"We have to unite and give a befitting reply to the lies, deceit and wrongdoings of the BJP on grassroots issues in front of the people," he added.

The Congress president also lauded Rahul Gandhi for undertaking the Kanyakumari to Kashmir Bharat Jodo Yatra and expressed confidence that his Bharat Nyay Yatra from Manipur to Maharashtra will bring issues of social justice to centre of the national discussion.

YSR Telangana Party founder YS Sharmila joins Congress in Delhi; merges her party with it

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): YS Sharmila, founder of YSR Telangana Party, joined the Congress here on Thursday, sources said. She also merged her YSR Telangana Party with the Congress.

Earlier, Sharmila arrived in the national capital on Wednesday night.

A "very eminent personality" will join the party at 10.30 am on Thursday at the AICC headquarters here, the Congress said on Wednesday.

Upon her arrival at the Delhi airport, when Sharmila was asked whether she was joining the Congress, she told reporters, "Yes, looks



like it."

After chairing her party meeting on Tuesday in Hyderabad, Sharmila had said she and other leaders would meet the top leadership of the Congress, including president Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi, and make a

"crucial" announcement in Delhi.

Sharmila is the daughter of the former chief minister of undivided Andhra Pradesh, the late YS Rajasekhara Reddy, and the younger sister of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Supreme Court rejects plea of Indian detained in Czech Republic for foiled plot to kill Sikh separatist in US

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Thursday rejected a plea for consular access moved by a family member of Indian national Nikhil Gupta, who is in a Czech prison following charges by the US relating to a foiled assassination attempt on Sikh separatist Gurbaj Singh Pannun.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta said, "There is nothing much we can do. You are entitled for consular access under the Vienna convention, which you have already got."

The bench told senior advocate CA Sundaram, appearing for kin of Gupta, that this court should respect the jurisdiction and sovereignty

of the foreign court and law of that land and, therefore, it could not go into the merit of the matter.

"We will not allow you to speak anything about the foreign court," the bench told Sundaram, when he tried to submit that Gupta had been placed under solitary confinement and was not granted any consular access post his indictment.

Sundaram said it is purely a human rights issue and he had sought assistance from the Indian embassy and Ministry of External Affairs, which he had not got.

"I am an Indian national...I have not received any assistance to enable me to defend myself in a foreign country. Con-

sular access does not mean that a person once comes and meets you and then it is done and dusted," Sundaram said.

The bench said looking at the prayer of Gupta in the writ petition, it cannot do much. When Sundaram sought direction to the Union of India for looking into his representation, the bench said it is for the Government of India to consider it and it cannot pass any such orders.

The bench noted that on September 17 last year, Gupta had received consular access in the matter and he had also moved the Delhi High Court, where certain orders had been passed.

On December 15 last year, the top court had

deferred the hearing on a habeas corpus plea moved by a family member of Gupta.

Gupta was arrested in the Czech Republic on June 30. He has alleged grave human rights violations in solitary confinement, including being forced to consume beef and pork. He has also alleged that he was denied consular access, the right to contact his family in India and the freedom to seek legal representation.

On November 29 last year, Gupta was charged by federal prosecutors in the United States in connection with his alleged participation in a foiled plot to assassinate Pannun on American soil.

The 52-year-old was charged with murder-

for-hire, which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison, and conspiracy to commit murder-for-hire, which carries a maximum sentence of a 10-year jail term.

US authorities had said Gupta allegedly agreed to pay an assassin USD 100,000 to kill the Sikh separatist leader living in New York City.

The prosecutors had said Czech authorities arrested and detained Gupta on June 30, pursuant to the bilateral extradition treaty between the US and the Czech Republic.

Gupta was arrested in the Czech Republic at the request of the US in connection with his alleged participation in the plot to kill Pannun.

NCP leader apologises after row over his 'Lord Ram was non-vegetarian' remark

MUMBAI, Jan 4 (Agencies): National Congress Party (NCP) leader and former Maharashtra Minister Jitendra Awhad, who courted controversy by saying Lord Ram was 'non-vegetarian', apologised for the comments on Thursday.

However, Awhad, who mentioned that he "doesn't speak without research", stated that the Hindu epic Ramayana mentions what he said.

Addressing an event in Maharashtra's Shirdi on Wednesday, Awhad, an NCP-Sharad Pawar faction leader, said, "Ram is ours, he is of the Bahujan. Ram used to hunt and eat. You want us to become vegetarians, but we consider him our ideal and eat mutton. He was not a vegetarian but a non-vegetarian." His remarks, just days ahead of the consecration of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, invited sharp criticism from the BJP,

and the party also filed a complaint against Awhad for making "objectionable remarks" against Lord Ram.

He apologised for the remarks on Thursday. "I don't speak without research... I don't want to intensify, but if someone is hurt by what I said then I apologise," the NCP leader said.

However, he added, "There have been numerous instances where I have delivered speeches, and I have



never distorted anything in my speech. I do not wish to escalate this issue. But in Valmiki Ramayana, there are many kand (books) in which there is Ayodhya kand, in which there is a shlok (verse) 102 which mentions it."

Awhad further said,

"Those who cannot talk logically will talk about cases against me, but those who chat 'Ram Ram', I want to tell them that Ram stays in our hearts."

The NCP leader, in his Wednesday speech, had also said that there was an attempt to turn India into a vegetarian nation. He claimed that 80 per cent of the country's population is still non-vegetarian and that they were also devotees of Lord Ram.

ED has sent false summons to me, BJP wants to stop me from campaigning in general election: Arvind Kejriwal



NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday said the Enforcement Director-

ate had sent false summons to him.

Addressing a press conference here, Kejriwal said his biggest

strength and asset is his honesty.

He said he had explained to the ED why their summons was illegal, and they had no answer to it.

The Delhi CM said there is no excise scam, and the BJP wanted to stop him from campaigning in the general election.

He said he would cooperate if legally valid summons was sent.

Two cops killed, three injured as car rams into patrolling van in Bengal's Howrah



HOWRAH, Jan 4 (Agencies): Two policemen, including a sub-inspector, were killed and three others were injured when a speeding vehicle rammed into their stationary patrolling van in West Bengal's Howrah district on Thursday, an officer said.

The incident took place on National Highway 16 in Barunda area under the jurisdiction of the Bagnan police station early on Thursday.

A Howrah city-bound vehicle rammed into the rear of the police patrolling van which was parked by the roadside and fled the spot, the officer said.

Those in the patrolling van were taken to a nearby hospital, where Sub-Inspector Sujoy Das (45) and home guard Palash Samanta (31) were declared dead, he said.

The remaining three policemen, identified as driver Abu Bakar (28) and home guards Sukhdeb Biswas (25) and Alok Bar (26) were shifted to Kolkata-based SSKM Hospital for better treatment and they are currently under observation, the officer said.

ADG and IGP (South Bengal) Siddhi Nath Gupta, who along with Howrah (Rural) SP Swati Bhangalia visited the spot, said efforts are on to nab the vehicle and further investigation is underway.

Enforcement Directorate files fresh charge sheet in Mahadev app case

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): The Enforcement Directorate has filed a fresh charge sheet before a special court in Raipur in a money laundering case investigation linked to alleged illegal betting and gaming through the Mahadev online book app, official sources said Thursday.

The federal agency will share this second prosecution complaint (charge sheet) with authorities in Dubai to secure either the deportation or extradition of the two main promoters of the app-- Ravi Uppal and Sourabh Chandrakar, they said.

The two were recently detained in Dubai on the basis of an Interpol red notice issued against them at the behest of the ED.

The agency is understood to have shared the contents of the first charge sheet with the UAE authorities, on the basis of which a non-bailable warrant was secured against the two leading to issuance of the Interpol red notice (RN).

The about 1,700-1,800 page fresh charge sheet was filed on January 1 and five accused, including alleged cash courier Aseem Das, police constable Bheem Singh Yadav, Shubham Soni, a prominent executive linked to the app, among others have been named as accused, they said.

The special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court is

expected to take cognisance of the charge sheet on January 10, ED counsel Saurabh Pandey said.

Agency had reported in December that the federal agency will soon file a second charge sheet in the case and share its contents with Dubai authorities to strengthen its case against the two promoters and to secure their custody.

Das and Yadav were arrested by the agency in November, just before the first phase of polling for the assembly polls in Chhattisgarh.

Soni, who had claimed to be the owner of the app, earlier issued a video statement and sent an affidavit to the ED claiming to have "proof" about kickbacks paid to politicians and their linked persons for allowing the app to run its illegal businesses without any legal action.

The agency, in its first charge sheet filed before the special PMLA court in Raipur had named Chandrakar and Uppal along with some others.

The ED alleged in the first charge sheet that Chandrakar got married at Ras Al Khaimah, UAE in February, 2023 and about Rs 200 crore "in cash" were spent for this event in which private jets were hired to ferry his relatives from India to the UAE and celebrities were paid to perform.

The agency had earlier said that the alleged illegal funds generated

by the app were shared as bribes to politicians and bureaucrats in the state even as it has summoned many celebrities and Bollywood actors for questioning on the mode of payment and their links with the online betting platform.

The projected proceeds of crime in this case is about Rs 6,000 crore, according to the ED.

The agency had claimed in November, just before the first phase of Chhattisgarh assembly polls, that forensic analysis and statement made by Asim Das have led to "startling allegations" that Mahadev betting app promoters have paid about Rs 508 crore to former Chhattisgarh chief minister and senior Congress leader Bhupesh Baghel so far, adding these allegations were "subject matter of investigation".

Baghel had called these charges an attempt to "malign" his image while the Congress called its "vendetta politics" of the Centre against its CM.

Das had later submitted before the special court in Raipur that he had been framed as part of a conspiracy and he had never delivered cash to politicians.

The two promoters hail from Bhalai town in Chhattisgarh and the Mahadev online book betting application is an umbrella syndicate arranging online platforms for enabling illegal betting websites.

Ayurveda doctor shot dead by bike-borne men in Uttar Pradesh



JAUNPUR, Jan 4 (Agencies): A 35-year-old Ayurveda doctor was shot dead in Uttar Pradesh's Jaunpur by three bike-borne men on Thursday, police said.

The incident took place around 2:30 am in the Jalalpur area in Jaunpur when the accused entered the house of Dr Tilakdhari Singh Patel, located in the same building as his clinic, and shot him dead, Superintendent of Police (City) Brijesh Kumar Gautam said.

According to the locals, Patel used to keep the door of his residence open at night to help patients reach him in case of an emergency.

The doctor, a BAMS degree holder, was running his clinic 'Sai Chikitsalaya' for the past eight years in a rented accommodation, the police said.

The SP said the motive behind the murder was yet to be ascertained, adding that the body had been sent for post-mortem.

Efforts were on to nab the accused who went absconding after the incident, he added.

Markets rebound after falling for two days; Sensex jumps 491 points

The Nifty climbed 141.25 points or 0.66 per cent to 21,658.60 points

MUMBAI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded on Thursday after falling in the past two days and ended nearly 1 per cent higher, mainly on buying in HDFC Bank and Bajaj Finance.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 490.97 points or 0.69 per cent to settle at 71,847.57 points. During the day, it rallied 598.19 points or 0.83 per cent to 71,954.79 points.

The Nifty climbed 141.25 points or 0.66 per cent to 21,658.60 points.

Among the Sensex firms, Bajaj Finance jumped 4.44 per cent and NTPC rose over 3 per cent.

IndusInd Bank, Axis Bank, Tata Motors,



Nestle, Power Grid, Infosys, Bajaj Finserv and HDFC Bank were the other major winners. HCL Tech, Mahindra & Mahindra, Maruti and Hindustan Unilever were among the laggards.

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

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

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.92 per cent to USD 78.97 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 666.34 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

On Wednesday, the BSE benchmark fell 535.88 points or 0.75 per cent to settle at 71,356.60 points while the Nifty slipped 148.45 points or 0.69 per cent to 21,517.35 points.

Microsoft adds AI button to keyboards to summon artificial intelligence

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Pressing a button will be one way to summon an artificial intelligence agent as Microsoft wields its computer industry influence to reshape the next generation of keyboards.

Starting this month, some new personal computers that run Microsoft's Windows operating system will have a special "Copilot key" that launches the software giant's AI chatbot.

Getting third-party computer manufacturers to add an AI button to laptops is the latest move by Microsoft to capitalize on its close partnership with ChatGPT-maker OpenAI and make itself a gateway for applications of generative AI technology.

Although most people now connect to the internet — and AI applications — by phone rather than computer, it's a symbolic kickoff to what's expected to be an intensively competitive year as tech companies race to outdo each other in AI applications even as they haven't yet resolved all the ethical and legal ramifications.

The New York Times last month sued both OpenAI and Microsoft alleging that tools like ChatGPT and Copilot — formerly known as Bing Chat — were built by infringing on copyrighted news articles.

The keyboard redesign will be Microsoft's biggest change to PC keyboards since it introduced a special Windows key in the 1990s. Microsoft's four-

squared logo design has evolved, but the key has been a fixture on Windows-oriented keyboards for nearly three decades.

The newest AI button will be marked by the ribbon-like Copilot logo and be located near the space bar. On some computers it will replace the right "CTRL" key, while on others it will replace a menu key.

Microsoft is not the only company with customized keys. Apple pioneered the concept in the 1980s with its "Command" key marked by a looped square design (it also sported an Apple logo for a time). Google has a search button on its Chromebooks and was first to experiment with an AI-specific key to launch its voice assistant on its now-discontinued Pixelbook.

But Microsoft has a much stronger hold on the PC market through its licensing agreements with third-party manufacturers like Lenovo, Dell and HP. About 82% of all desktop computers, laptops and workstations run Windows, compared to 9% for Apple's in-house operating system and just over 6% for Google's, according to market research firm IDC.

Microsoft hasn't yet said which computer-makers are installing the Copilot button beyond Microsoft's in-house line of premium Surface devices. It said some of the companies are expected to unveil their new models at next week's CES gadget show in Las Vegas.

IndiGo flight tickets to get cheaper as airline removes fuel surcharge

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Low-cost carrier IndiGo on Thursday announced the removal of fuel surcharges on all its domestic and international flights, citing a decline in Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) prices.

The decision, effective immediately, comes after the airline introduced the fuel charge in October 2023 in response to a series of consecutive ATF price hikes.

"IndiGo is pleased to announce the removal of fuel charge applicable on its on domestic and international routes, effective January 04, 2024. The fuel charge had been introduced in October 2023, following a surge in Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) prices,"



IndiGo said in a statement.

"With recent reduction in ATF prices, IndiGo is withdrawing the charge," the airline added.

ATF prices, which had surged in October to Rs 1,18,199.17 per kilolitre, marking a 5.14 per cent increase over the previous month and a 2.32 per cent year-on-

year hike, witnessed a subsequent decline of nearly 6 per cent in November 2023.

In the new year, jet fuel prices continued to decrease for the third consecutive month, reaching Rs 1,01,993.17 per kilolitre in Delhi.

IndiGo, the country's leading airline in terms of market share, had ini-

tially communicated that the fuel charges would range from Rs 300 to Rs 1,000, based on the distance traveled. Given that ATF can constitute nearly 40 per cent of an airline's costs, this move is expected to offer significant relief to travelers on low-cost airlines.

"As ATF prices are dynamic, we will con-

tinue to adjust our fares and components thereof to respond to any change in prices or market conditions. IndiGo remains committed to its promise of providing affordable, on-time, courteous, and hassle-free travel for our customers," IndiGo added.

In the quarter ending September 30, IndiGo reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 188.93 crore, with revenue from operations increasing by 19.57 per cent to Rs 14,944 crore compared to the same period the previous year.

Its parent company, InterGlobe Aviation, was trading 0.15 per cent higher at Rs 2997.55 per share on Thursday at around 2 pm.

China's BYD is rivaling Tesla in size. Can it also match its global reach?



BEIJING, Jan 4 (Agencies): A less flashy Chinese electric vehicle maker is fast closing the gap with Tesla, the longtime, market-leading pioneer.

BYD Co., based in the southern China tech hub of Shenzhen, dethroned Texas-based Tesla Inc. as the top seller of electric cars in the last three months of 2023, according to sales figures released by the companies this week.

"This was an expected milestone event, given China's share of the global EV market and BYD's position in the domestic market," said Jing Yang, the director of China corporate research at Fitch Ratings.

Tesla retained the crown for all of 2023, but BYD's sales have skyrocketed on the back

of a government-driven EV boom in China. The rise of BYD and other Chinese electric vehicle makers is a challenge not only for Tesla but also the world's major automakers as Chinese competitors push into Europe, Southeast Asia and other overseas markets with a relatively affordable option for drivers who want to go green.

Aggressive price cutting helped Tesla beat analysts' estimates for sales in the October to December quarter, but BYD did even better. The Chinese automaker sold 526,409 electric cars in the three-month period, topping Tesla's 484,507 units.

Its results were boosted by a surge in sales of small, low-cost EVs such as its Seagull and Dolphin models, said

Cui Dongshu, secretary-general of the China Passenger Car Association. Whether that growth in small vehicles can be sustained remains to be seen, he said.

For the entire year, BYD's EV sales rose 73% in 2023 to nearly 1.6 million vehicles, the company said in a filing Monday with the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. The total still fell short of Tesla, which announced the next day that its annual sales were up 38% to 1.8 million cars.

Unlike Tesla, BYD also makes hybrid vehicles. Including its 1.4 million hybrids, BYD far outpaced its American competitor in 2023 with sales of 3 million passenger cars.

China's subsidies for EVs were phased out at the start of this year,

but a fierce price war among makers including BYD and Tesla has kept sales buoyant. China is a major market and production base for Tesla, which exports cars to Europe from China.

BYD's growth has been primarily at home, where it has benefited from the huge Chinese market and government policies to encourage the EV industry. It rivals Tesla in size but not yet in reach.

"Most of BYD's EVs were sold in China despite its fast-growing overseas sales, whereas Tesla is already a global player," Yang said.

The company is expanding into new markets. It announced last month that it would build an electric vehicle factory in Hungary, its first in Europe.

Chinese EV makers are still in the early stages of going abroad and may run up against regulatory or trade barriers, Yang said, particularly in markets that are home to major automakers such as the U.S., Europe, Japan and South Korea.

The EU has launched a trade investigation

into subsidies to electric vehicle makers in China and the U.S. has passed legislation that favors domestically produced electric cars.

"The main concern for global automakers is the influx of cheap Chinese EVs into their home markets and other major markets before they can produce EVs at lower costs," Yang said.

Company founder Wang Chuanfu has said that BYD, or "Biyadi" in Chinese, was chosen mainly because it was a simple and unusual name, two characteristics that make it easier to register a new company in China.

At the time, it was a rechargeable battery maker that Wang set up in Shenzhen in 1995. BYD launched an automobile subsidiary in 2003 that initially made gasoline-fueled cars. By 2008, Wang was eyeing the electric vehicle market.

BYD, which also manufactures electric buses, has stopped producing gasoline cars. While the origins of its name are unclear, the company has turned its acronym into a slogan: "Build Your Dreams."

New AI tool may help better detect, treat cancers: Study

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Researchers have developed a new artificial intelligence (AI) tool that interprets medical images with unprecedented clarity and may help clinicians diagnose and better treat cancers that might otherwise go undetected.

The tool, called iStar (Inferring Super-Resolution Tissue Architecture), and developed by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania, US, provides both highly detailed views of individual cells and a broader look at the full spectrum of how people's genes operate.

The imaging technique, described in the journal Nature Biotechnology, would allow doctors to see cancer cells that might otherwise have been virtually invisible, the researchers said.

This tool can be used to determine whether safe margins were achieved through cancer surgeries and automatically provide annotation for microscopic images, paving the way for molecular disease diagnosis at that level, they said.

The researchers said iStar has the ability to automatically detect critical anti-tumor immune formations called "tertiary lymphoid structures," whose presence correlates with a patient's likely survival and favourable response to immunotherapy, which is often given for cancer and requires high precision in patient selection.

This means that iStar could be a powerful tool for determining which patients would benefit most from immunotherapy, they said.

"The power of iStar stems from its advanced techniques, which mirror, in reverse, how a pathologist would study a tissue sample," said Mingyao Li, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania.

"Just as a pathologist identifies broader regions and then zooms in on detailed cellular structures, iStar can capture the overarching tissue structures and also



focus on the minutiae in a tissue image," Li explained.

To test the efficacy of the tool, the researchers evaluated iStar on many different types of cancer tissue, including breast, prostate, kidney, and colorectal cancers, mixed with healthy tissues.

Within these tests, iStar was able to automatically detect tumour and cancer cells that were hard to identify just by eye, according to the researchers.

Clinicians in the future may be able to pick up and diagnose more hard-to-see or hard-to-identify cancers with iStar acting as a layer of support, they said.

In addition to the clinical possibilities presented by the iStar technique, the tool moves extremely quickly compared to other, similar AI tools.

For example, when set up with the breast cancer dataset the team used, iStar finished its analysis in just nine minutes.

By contrast, the best competitor AI tool took more than 32 hours to come up with a similar analysis, making iStar 213 times faster.

"The implication is that iStar can be applied to a large number of samples, which is critical in large-scale biomedical studies," Li added.

New antibiotic shows promise in killing drug-resistant bacteria

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Scientists have developed a new type of antibiotic that could treat bacteria that is resistant to most antibiotics currently available on the market.

This bacteria has been known to kill a large percentage of people due to its invasive infection.

According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the bacteria, called *Acinetobacter baumannii*, can cause serious infections in the lungs, urinary tract and blood. It is resistant to a class of broad-spectrum antibiotics called carbapenems.

In 2017, carbapenems-resistant *Acinetobacter baumannii*, also known as CRAB, was at the top of the World Health Organisation's list of antibiotic-resistant "priority pathogens." This bacteria is known to be one of the greatest threats to human health.

According to the latest study, published in the journal Nature, scientists have stated that no new antibiotic that could kill *A. baumannii* has been developed for over 50 years.

In a series of experiments conducted on mice, researchers from Harvard University and the Swiss healthcare company Hoffmann-La Roche showed that the new antibiotic called zosurabalpin was effec-



tive against more than 100 CRAB clinical samples that were tested.

The new antibiotic, called Zosurabalpin, considerably reduced the levels of bacteria in mice with CRAB-induced pneumonia, the authors wrote. It also prevented the death of mice with sepsis caused by the bacteria. Zosurabalpin stops *Acinetobacter baumannii* from growing by blocking the movement of big molecules called lipopolysaccharides to the outer covering of the bacteria.

These molecules are important for keeping the covering strong. Because of zosurabalpin, these molecules pile up inside the bacteria, making the inside of the bacteria very harmful, and that leads to the death of the bacteria.

The study authors shared that zosurabalpin is now in phase 1 clinical trials to assess the safety, tolerability and pharmacology of the molecule in humans.

Although the report was published on January 3, the human trials for the new antibiotic are yet to happen.

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) happens when bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites change over time and no longer respond to medicines.

This makes infections harder to treat, increasing the risk of disease spread, severe illness and death. As a result of human activity, AMR has become a global health threat and a silent pandemic affecting humans.

T20 World Cup 2024 schedule: India vs Pakistan set for June 9 in New York, final likely in Barbados

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): India will be taking on Pakistan on June 9 in New York during the T20 World Cup 2024 and will be playing Ireland in their campaign opener, four days before the match against their arch-rivals.

The Indian team, who will be chasing their second T20 World Cup crown, are expected to play their group games in the USA and the Super 8 matches in the West Indies if they qualify, according to sources.

India will face the Irish side in New York on June 5 to kickstart their campaign. Following the match against Pakistan, India will face USA on June 12 in New York as well before heading to Florida to face Canada in their final group stage game.



T20 World Cup 2024 schedule for India in the group stages:
India vs Ireland on June 5 (New York)
India vs Pakistan on June 9 (New York)
India vs USA on June 12 (New York)

India vs Canada on June 15 (Florida)
T20 World Cup final likely in Barbados
If India qualifies for the Super 8 stages, then their first match of the round will be on June 20 in Barbados. The Indian team is

expected to play all their Super 8 matches in the West Indies.

The final of the tournament is expected to be played at the same venue on June 29 according to the sources.

Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli keen to play T20 World Cup

According to a recent report by agency, Indian stars Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli are keen to be a part of the squad for the T20 World Cup. Both Rohit and Kohli have not played in the shortest format for India since the T20 World Cup semifinal against England in November 2022.

The same report also stated that a total of 30 players will be monitored during the IPL with the T20 World Cup 2024 in mind.

Suryakumar Yadav in running for T20 Cricketer of Year



DUBAI, Jan 4 (Agencies): India star Suryakumar Yadav was today named as one of the four nominees for the ICC Men's T20 Cricketer of the Year 2023.

The 33-year-old Indian, who won the accolade in 2022, dominated 2023 in the shortest format with 733 runs from 17 innings at an average of 48.86 and a strike-rate of 155.95. Young India opener Yashasvi Jaiswal was also named as one of the four nominees for the ICC Men's Emerging Cricketer of the Year 2023

Sri Lanka Cricket Announces Dhananjaya De Silva As New Test Captain

COLOMBO, Jan 4 (Agencies): The Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) newly-appointed Chairman of Selectors Upul Tharanga on Thursday announced batter Dhananjaya de Silva as the new captain of the Test team. The immediate concern is to fix the top-order concerns and poor fielding that contributed to SL's poor performance in the recent ICC Cricket World Cup 2023 in India, in which they placed at ninth with just two wins in nine matches, reported Sri Lanka Cricket. Also, batter Kusal Mendis (ODIs) and all-rounder Wanindu Hasaranga (T20Is) are being looked at as captains in white-ball cricket.

"The new Chairman of Selectors, Upul Tharanga while announcing that Dhananjaya de Silva had been appointed as the new captain of the Sri Lanka Test Cricket Team, and that much as the option would have been for one captain for all three formats that there was no other choice than to go for three separate captains in Kusal Mendis for ODIs and Wanindu Hasaranga (for T20Is) because there was no suitable automatic choice, observed that his selection committee's immediate concern was to fix the inconsistency bugging the top order batting as well as poor fielding that had led to the country's recent world cup debacle. However, he said that Hasaranga had been earmarked as a long-term choice," said a statement from SLC.

Dhananjaya replaces Dimuth Karunaratne, who led SL in 30 Tests, winning 12, losing 12 and six draws. He led SL to a series win in South Africa back in 2019, becoming the first-ever Asian side to do so. During his stint as a captain, Karunaratne also reached to the top of the ICC Test Batting Rankings. Tharanga said that currently, his selection team was also leasing with the High-Performance Center to fix the shortcomings.

"We came apart at the World Cup due to the bugging inconsistency in the batting where mainly the top four who are the nucleus failed to click. If a

batsman scored in one game his failure thereafter was a major setback and we aim to arrest that major drawback. All these players are not short of talent, but there is an obvious shortcoming where consistency is concerned and we have already spoken with the coaches concerned regarding sorting out this problem," said Tharanga.

"The fielding too was found wanting with a lot of dropped chances where mainly half chances went a begging which at that level of the game have to be taken in keeping with the adage 'catches win matches,'" opined Upul Tharanga, the former Sri Lanka opening batsman addressing the media at the Sri Lanka Cricket headquarters.

He was of course, pleased with the overall bowling performances of the team saying that the bowlers had played their part.

He said that a selection benchmark would be in place for selections with emphasis on the National Super League where promising players would be identified and given due recognition for national duty.

Fielding questions as to team discipline and the recent misbehaviour of ODI captain, Kusal Mendis, the chief selector said that his committee was addressing that area seriously, and that so far the report from the SSC committee on the matter had not reached the SLC for them to look at it.

The question of Mendis' inconsistent batting performances at the World Cup was another key subject with Tharanga contending that they had opted for Mendis as the ODI captain considering that he was suddenly thrown into the job after regular captain Dasun Shanaka's injury. "We took into account that therefore, Mendis needed a fair chance to settle down to the job," he contended. Meanwhile, selector Indika de Saram made the point that regular players particularly the batters would be pressurized to perform by looking at promising prospects who were knocking on the door for recognition.

"Time To Work With More Intensity, Passion": Sandesh Jhingan On AFC Asian Cup

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): India is all set to participate in the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Asian Cup for the fifth time in history, once the ball gets rolling in Doha, Qatar, on January 13, the previous editions being in 1964, 1984, 2011, and 2019. While the first edition remains India's most successful stint at the Asian Cup after they finished runners-up behind Israel (it was a round-robin tournament), the Blue Tigers have never made it past the group stage after that, as per an All India Football Federation (AIFF) press release.

Many of the current batch of players, however, have the unique experience of playing in multiple editions of the Asian Cup, something that India was not privy to previously. As many as eight players in the current squad have experienced the magic of the Asian Cup final rounds before, while two players at opposite ends of the pitch have been a part of the continental showpiece on three occasions - Gurpreet Singh Sandhu and Sunil Chhetri.

While the 2011 edition was remembered for former India captain Subrata Paul's exceptional performance between the sticks against a strong Australia side, an 18-year-old Gurpreet was sitting on the sidelines, soaking it all in.

"The experience of sharing the dressing room with the likes of Subrata Paul, Bhaichung Bhutia, Renedy Singh, and all these legends and seeing them at the height of their careers was an absolute joy. I used to enjoy myself in training a lot," Gurpreet said to the-aiiff.com.

"I would get pushed around a lot as a young, skinny, lanky



keeper. But I was just like a sponge, learning on and off the pitch. Now as one of the senior members of this team, I just share whatever knowledge I have acquired in these years," he added.

The 31-year-old believes that the transition of the Indian team began after the 2011 Asian Cup, which has now resulted in a bunch of experienced players in the 2023 edition.

"There's been a big transition over the years. A lot of the players in 2011 were on the verge of ending their careers, so we had fresh players come in after that. Now we are at a stage where many of the boys have already played an Asian Cup before - Sandesh (Jhingan), Subha (Subhasish Bose), and Anirudh Thapa were all part of the Asian Cup last time and will be playing their second edition this time around," said Gurpreet.

"Over the years, this has grown to be an experienced and educated lot in terms of footballing aptitude, albeit a hungrier side," said India's number one goalkeeper.

For the Blue Tigers goalkeeper,

turning up with the right intent could be all it takes. "I have learnt over the years that one needs to show the right intent that we have. As a player, I did not know how important it could be to show intent in the last two Asian Cups. In 2011, I was just 18 and was lucky to even be in the side, and in 2019, I was playing at that stage for the first time, but I think I have the correct experience now to come with that intent and have it rub off on the others," he said.

Centreback Sandesh Jhingan has been a key fixture at the heart of the Indian defence for the better part of a decade now. The 30-year-old has played a key role in India's qualification campaign for both the 2019 and 2023 editions. However, the defender feels that the Blue Tigers are at a stage where qualification for the AFC Asian Cup should no longer be something to celebrate.

"When we had all just come into the national team at that time, Gurpreet, Amrinder (Singh), myself, and we all had a dream to see India in the World Cup one day. That may still

be a distant dream, but being a regular in the Asian Cup is certainly one step closer to it," said Jhingan.

"I feel we are now at a stage where qualification to the Asian Cup should be normal and that we should not celebrate it."

"We should instead be looking forward to making it to the next stage, which is to qualify from the group stage onwards. For sure, it feels good to play in consecutive Asian Cups, but right now, it's time to work more with more intensity and passion," he added.

The Blue Tigers centreback remembers the 2019 edition of the Asian Cup clearly, when India won the first game against Thailand, before losing against hosts UAE and Bahrain, to be knocked out.

"Everyone talks about the Bahrain game, but I think we should have done better against the UAE. We should have taken our chances against them. This is a stage where the margin for error is very low, and even the smallest of mistakes can really hurt you," he said.

Fullback Subhasish Bose chimed the same tune as Jhingan and said that the next step for the Blue Tigers is to attempt to make it past the group stage, no matter the challenges.

"We did well in 2019 to win the first game against Thailand but lost the next two games. This time, we have a difficult challenge ahead, but our mentality should be to try and qualify for the knockout round. We have certainly improved a lot as a team in the last few years, and now we want to prove it on the pitch," he concluded.

"Never Seen The Pitch That...": South Africa Coach's Blunt Remark After Day 1 Mania In 2nd Test

CAPE TOWN, Jan 4 (Agencies): South African batting consultant Ashwell Prince said "there was something wrong" at Newlands after an extraordinary 23 wickets fell on the first day of the second Test against India on Wednesday. South Africa were shot out for 55 and were struggling at 62 for three in their second innings, still 36 behind after India were bowled out for 153. Prince gave credit to Indian opening bowlers Mohammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah but said conditions were greatly in favour of the bowlers. Siraj took a career-best six for 15 in the first innings as South Africa were bowled out before lunch after winning the toss.

"I've never seen the pitch that quick on day one," said Prince, who played 11 of his 66 Test matches, as well

as most of his domestic career, at Newlands and is currently coach of Western Province, based at the ground.

"As a batsman you don't mind pace in the wicket if the bounce is consistent but the bounce was a little bit inconsistent.

"You expect a bit of seam movement on day one but seam movement with inconsistent bounce is a different situation.

"Sometimes it happens that a great bowling line-up bowls out a team cheaply but if both batting line-ups can't bat there's something wrong."

Prince said the conditions had taken South Africa by surprise, prompting them to bat in bright sunshine.

"There was a bit of grass on the pitch but the tendency at Newlands is for it to take spin later on so it made

sense to bat. I don't think anyone could have foreseen how the pitch would play."

- Siraj stars -

Siraj, meanwhile, said maintaining control was crucial on a pitch which assisted him.

"There was good communication from the wicketkeeper (KL Rahul) about the right lengths to bowl," said Siraj.

South Africa's first innings total was their lowest in almost 92 years, since they were bowled out for 36 and 45 by Australia on a rain-affected pitch in Melbourne in February 1932.

It was the lowest total by any team in a Test against India, beating 62 by New Zealand in Mumbai in December 2021.

Siraj bowled superbly in an unchanged nine-over spell.

India cruised into the

lead in 9.4 overs, before the afternoon drinks break.

The tourists seemed set for a substantial advantage when they reached 153 for four, with the experienced Virat Kohli and KL Rahul at the crease.

But the remaining six wickets fell for no runs in 11 balls.

Lungi Ngidi had Rahul caught behind and took two more wickets in the same over.

Kagiso Rabada had Kohli caught at second slip for 46 in the next over, Mohammed Siraj was run out and Prasad Krishna caught at second slip.

Stand-in South African captain Dean Elgar was dismissed twice on the first day of his final Test match.

Elgar was out for four and 12 in an ignominious end to a Test batting career which yielded 5,347 runs in 86

matches at an average of 37.92.

Elgar, who made a big century in the first Test, was bowled by Siraj in the first innings and caught by Kohli at first slip off Mukesh Kumar in the second.

The Indian players ran to shake his hand as he reluctantly left the field after his second dismissal.

Elgar's opening partner Aiden Markram made just two in the first innings but was more in command in the second innings and was unbeaten on 36 at the close.

However, Tony de Zorzi and debutant Tristan Stubbs both fell for one run each.

South Africa won the first Test in Centurion by an innings and 32 runs in a match which lasted only three days.

The current match seems destined to be shorter.

Coco Gauff Marches On With Dominant Win In Auckland



Anna Blinkova in the first round, won only 10 points in the second set of a match that was over in 70 minutes.

"She started off playing very well and I was able to raise my level. I thought I served well and I did better on the returns," said Gauff, who sent down five aces.

The American will next play eighth seed Varvara Gracheva, the world number 42.

On the other side of the draw, seventh seed Petra Martic of Croatia beat China's Yue Yuan 6-2, 6-2 and will play the winner of the match between number two seed Elina Svitolina and Emma Raducanu.

Former US Open champion Raducanu has slipped to 301 in the world after being sidelined by injury for the past eight months.

The Australian Open starts on January 14.

AUCKLAND, Jan 4 (Agencies): Coco Gauff stepped up preparations for the Australian Open with an emphatic 6-3, 6-0 win over rising Czech Brenda Fruhvirtova at the Auckland Classic on Thursday to march into the quarter-finals. After a few issues

at the start in which US Open champion Gauff dropped her first service game and had to save two break points on her third, the 19-year-old proved unstoppable in the battle of the teens. The 16-year-old qualifier Fruhvirtova, who beat world number 48

CCI Jammu delegation calls on Nitin Gadkari



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: A delegation of Chamber of Commerce & Industry Jammu led by its President Sh. Arun Gupta alongwith Anil Gupta, Sr. Vice President CCI, Rajeev Gupta, Jr. Vice President CCI, Manish Gupta, Secretary General CCI and Rajesh Gupta Secretary CCI called on Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Road, Transport and Highways at New Delhi and briefed him about the concerns regarding the proposed construction designs of Katra-Delhi express way especially Kunjwani to Narwal section and Kunjwani to Satwari section and submitted a memorandum.

Two of our senior members Devender Rana, Seh Parbhari BJP Himachal State Unit and Sham Lal Langer, Ex-Sr. Vice President CCI who were present at Delhi were requested by Arun Gupta to accompany the delegation.

During interaction Arun Gupta said that Jammu & Kashmir is currently experiencing unprecedented development under your leadership. Massive infrastructure projects are transforming the Union Territory, contributing significantly to its overall growth and prosperity.

He also expressed that certain concerns and recommendations regarding the ongoing infrastructure development projects in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly the Katra Delhi Expressway.

Arun Gupta drew the attention of the Minister to the proposed construction design of the expressway flyover between Kunjwani to Narwal, which includes the implementation of blind walls. While we acknowledge the importance of infrastructure development, we are concerned that the blind walls on both sides of the expressway may disrupt vital connections between shops, businesses, and residences.

In the era of advanced technologies, we question the adherence to old patterns, especially when modern infrastructure technicalities are readily available. The blind walls may not align with the current needs of the community and may cause inconvenience to residents, hinder emergency services, and impact the daily commutes of pedestrians.

The land use of this area is mainly commercial. Varied types of commercial activities in the form of wholesale, Malls, Hospitals, retail, or small-scale services are carried out in this area.

About 6 kms away from the project starting point at 515 KM +000, a wholesale fruit market, mandi, and garages for heavy vehicles, including bodybuilding units of trucks and buses, are situated. The project will impact 502 commercial establishments (approx.), which include 365 shops, 10 Vehicle showrooms

including Private Vehicles, Construction equipment along with their service centers, 37 godowns, 5 Schools, 65 office spaces, 7 Hospitals, 5 Malls, and 8 shops in sheds in both government and private structures. In addition to the commercial establishments, the impact of the livelihood would be on the households (HH) losing their shops. There will be direct impacts on source of income for households losing godowns, as these are used only to support businesses; hence, losing them will result in a economical disturbance and inconvenience in storing goods. Thus, the loss of livelihood will be posed to 587 commercial establishments which implies for loss of income and which directly impacts the economy of Jammu.

The portion from Kunjwani to Narwal encompasses residential and commercial areas, and we believe that a community-friendly pillar-based design for the expressway flyover would be more suitable. This modification would not only address the concerns of the local community but also contribute to the overall success of the expressway project.

Additionally, we wish to bring to your attention the livelihood of 65 shopkeepers are in great danger with the construction of proposed flyover from Kunjwani to Satwari section, upto the Government College for Women in Gandhi Nagar, Jammu. These shopkeepers, who have been running their establishments for over six decades, now face the threat of losing their livelihoods due to the proposed flyover design.

Understanding the importance of these businesses in supporting the local community, we earnestly request your office to consider a slight shift of the flyover by 1.5 meters to save the livelihoods of atleast 45 shopkeepers. This adjustment would not only preserve the economic stability of these families but also showcase the government's commitment to supporting local businesses.

We trust that your esteemed office will consider our concerns and recommendations with the seriousness they deserve. Your intervention in these matters will undoubtedly contribute to the success of the Katra Delhi Expressway while ensuring the well-being of the local communities it serves.

Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Road, Transport and Highways telephonic talked to the Chairman NHAJ regarding the issues discussed in the meeting. He also assured that he will personally look into the issues and find out the solution regarding the above problems.. he also said that we are of the opinion that the general public should not be harassed while taking up the developmental projects.

Shock expressed over demise of Havildar Suresh Kumar Kaith

Top News Report

AKHNOOR, Jan 4: The Jammu and Kashmir Batwala Sabha members at a meeting held in Piri Trai here on Thursday, expressed deep shock over the sad, sudden and untimely demise of Havildar Suresh Kumar Kaith who was in 18 Assam Rifles and hailed from Village Piri Trai of Tehsil Akhnoor.

Members offered their deepest condolences to the bereaved family and prayed to Almighty to grant eternal peace to the departed soul.

Members included former Corporator Rashpal Bhardwaj,

JKBS' Chairman Dilay Ram Kaith, President (TSO Retd) Rachhpal Kaith, Senior Vice President Birender Kaith, General Secretary R.L.Kaith, Hony Captain Kamal Dass Kaith (Retd), Subedar Badar Chand Sandhu (Retd), Naib Subedar Kaku Ram Kaith (Retd), Naib Subedar Jameet Raj Kaith (Retd), Havildar Boxer Mast Ram Kaith (Retd), Havildar Ajay Kumar Kaith (Retd), Parma Nand Kaith, Chajju Ram Kaith, Tirath Ram Kaith, Rashpal Chand Kaith, Subash Chander Motan and Sunil Kumar Kaith.

Govt move to establish Madrasa Board in J&K is commendable: Mufti Basharat

Top News Report

DINGLA, Jan 4: Sunni Ulama Council in a press conference held at Jamia Moin un Sunnah Dingla Poonch, welcomed the decision of the LG administration and the central government.

Yesterday, the Jammu and Kashmir government formally constituted a four-member committee for the establishment of Madrasa Board in Jammu and Kashmir, which has been entrusted with the responsibility of preparing the draft for the establishment of Madrasa Board in Jammu and Kashmir.

Mufti Basharat Hussain Saqafi, General Secretary, Sunni Ulama Council, while speaking, said that for the last 13 years, we have been demanding the establishment of Madrasa Board in Jammu and Kashmir like other states of the country, but the previous governments have rejected our long-standing and legitimate demand.

The demand was never taken seriously but the present LG government

has taken our demand into action and started working on it yesterday for which we would like to thank the Hon'ble LG Jammu and Kashmir Manoj Sinha and the Union Govt. and we welcome this decision because the formation of Madrasa Board will benefit the students of hundreds of madrasas spread across the length and breadth of Jammu and Kashmir and the degrees of Madrasas will be recognized at the government level due to which our children will be able to serve the country by getting higher education in the top universities of the country after graduating from Madrasas.

Maulana Saqafi further said that due to the seriousness of the government for the establishment of the Madrasa Board, we are hopeful that the Madrasa Board will be established in Jammu and Kashmir soon. He further said that affiliation of Madrasas to Madrasa Board should be optional and not mandatory so that Madrasas management can decide to join or non-affiliation of their own accord in this regard.

Two days training program conducted by 2nd Bn SDRF at NCC Training Academy



Top News Report

NAGROTA, Jan 4: The 2nd Battalion of the State Disaster Response Force (2nd BN SDRF) continued its commitment to enhancing disaster preparedness and response capabilities by conducting the 2nd day of a comprehensive lecture series and demos at the NCC Training Academy in Nagrota.

The lecture and demos on Thursday are part of the ongoing efforts by 2nd BN SDRF to educate and train NCC Cadets in disaster response and management.

The program aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills required to effectively

respond to various disaster scenarios, including natural calamities, and other emergencies.

The lectures covered a wide range of topics, including Disaster Preparedness at National and State Level; First Aid and Medical Assistance in Disaster Situations; Communication and Coordination during Emergencies; Evacuation Procedures; and Psychological Support for Disaster Victims.

The lectures were conducted by a team of seasoned experts and trainers under Paramjit Kumar, Chief Warden, Civil Defence Jammu who have hands-on experience in disaster management. Participants, including

540 NCC cadets, had the opportunity to engage in interactive sessions.

Col RS Jasrotia, the camp commandant expressed his satisfaction with the active participation and enthusiasm of the attendees, stating, "Effective disaster management requires a well-trained and informed community. We are here to impart the knowledge and skills needed to save lives and mitigate the impact of disasters. Together, we can build a resilient society."

The 2nd BN SDRF remains committed to strengthening the capacity of individuals and communities in disaster-prone areas, ensuring a safer and more prepared future for all.

Jammu Province Bachao Manch organises "Ekta Samalan"



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: Jammu Province Bachao Manch (JBM) organised "Ekta Samalan" here on Thursday in a function at Press Club Jammu under the stewardship of its Chairman Ashok Sharma, former MLA.

The Samalan was a concluding event of week-long 'Ekta Abhiyan' launch by the organisation on December 24, 2023 from Bawa Da Jarh.

While speaking on the

occasion the Chairman JBM and former Law Maker Advocate Ashok Sharma said that there is dire need to have broader unity among the people of Jammu Province to restore the lost glory, dignity and pride of the people of Jammu Region in particular and J&K in general.

He pleaded for restoration of Statehood with land and job guarantee to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Unemployment and Drug menace are the enemies of

the youth which need iron hands to check these social evils but the present dispensation have completely forgotten its responsibility to view seriously and act.

Imposition of unwarranted taxes and enacting of anti-people legislations have deepened the trust deficit in public life which also require immediate attention, added Ashok Sharma.

Kuldip Sharma Chief Advisor cum Spokesperson in his address expressed serious concern over the forced intrusion of the non-locals in Jammu and elsewhere.

He urged upon the people of Jammu Province to unite themselves on single social platform ike JBM to save the coming generation from such future unbecoming situations.

Awareness lecture on Agniveer Scheme by ARO Jammu held



Top News Report

NAGROTA, Jan 4: The Agniveer Scheme has been designed to enable a youthful profile of the Armed Forces. It provides an excellent opportunity to the Youth who are keen to don the uniform.

To make the cadets

aware of this magnificent scheme, an informative and educative Lecture was organised by the Army Recruiting Office, Jammu at Trg Academy Nagrota on 04 Jan 2024. The NCC Cadets exhibited keen interest and cleared

many of their doubts.

In addition to the Agniveer Scheme, NCC Cadets were also made aware of the various types of entries existing to join the Armed Forces as Officers and Jawans and the benefits especially for the NCC Cadets given by the Central Government.

05 Jan 2024

YOGESH SAWHNEY
FORMER MINISTER J&K

J&K Pradesh Congress Committee