TOP NEWS OF J&K



JAMMU, THURSDAY, JANUARY 04, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper

ENTERTAINMENT

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: Lieu-

tenant Governor Manoi

Sinha addressed the 8th

Convocation Ceremony

of SKUAST Jammu at

Baba Jitto Auditorium,

A total of 590 students

including 347 female

students were awarded

degrees in various sub-

On the occasion, the Lt

on Wednesday.

jects.

16

Janhvi Kapoor calls dating actors 'chaotic'



NATIONAL

Mallikarjun Kharge asks Congress Workers to ensure Victory in 2024

SPORTS

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Coco Gauff Marches On With Dominant Win In Auckland



e-paper: www.topnewsjk.in

RNI No. JKENG/2010/39369

Regd. No. JK-435

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

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

BRIEFLY

Search **Operations to** track down terrorists underway in Kulgam

SRINAGAR, Jan 4 z(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

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.

district, which serves

Gulmarg skiing

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

damaged. The structure belongs to Haji Ab Gani Dar.

shops gutted in Kupwara blaze

Residential house, over one dozen

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

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 (HADP), operational at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) in the Pombai area of Kulgam.

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

He conferred medals

to the meritorious stu-

dents and extended

his felicitations to the

Technology.

"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

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 Amargrah 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.

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

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar 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 the 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-Khari 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 highspeed 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

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 Kash-

An official said that a

fire that broke out in the

wee hours of this morn-

ing left an old structure

mir's Kupwara district.

by a team from various authorities, inspected the infrastructure, including a cut-andcover tunnel, two major bridges, and three major tunnels in the Banihal-Khari sector. This marks the second statutory inspection by Deshwal before deciding on the opening of the Banihal-Khari 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 Khari and Banihal before returning in a high-speed electric train from Banihal." Once the CRS grants permission, trains

are expected to operate between Khari 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

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 min-

istry 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



CADNICA ELECTRONIC SOLUTIONS

Contact Person Mr. Sanjeev Kumar

9419143503

OBITUARY/ TENTH DAY KRIYA

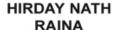
With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and sudden demise of our beloved Hirday Nath Raina S/o Late Sh Mashewar Nath Raina of Trichal Pulwama presently residing at Flat no 2, Block 134, Lane 22, Jagti colony, Nagrota.

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

Suman Raina (Wife)

& Samast Raina Parivar,

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



SHRI RAM JI PANDIT



RAINA

10TH DAY KRIYA

MOB NO: 7889974415, 7889349854

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND REGRET, IT IS TO INFORM, THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED FATHER **SHRI RAM JI PANDIT** S/O LATE SH. AFTAB RAM ORIGINALLY R/O AKHRAN KULGAM AND AT PRESENT SATTANI DHAR ROAD UDHAMPUR. 10TH DAY KRIYA WILL BE PERFORMED ON 6Th JANUARY (SATURDAY) 2024 AT DEVIKA GHAT **UDHAMPUR AT 9:00 AM**

GRIEF STRICKEN SH. SOOM NATH PANDIT (BROTHER)

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

SMT, ANITA PANDIT & SH, KANWAL JI PANDIT (DAUGHTER IN LAW & SON SMT DAISY PANDIT & MAHARAJ KRISHAN PANDIT (DAUGHTER IN LAW AND SON) SMT. PUPLY KUMARI & SH. CHAND KRISHAN (DAUGHTER IN LAW & SON)

SMT. REETA KUMARI & SH. ASHOK KUMAR RAINA (DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW SMT. GIRJA BHAT & SH. OMKAR NATH BHAT (DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW) SMT USHA KUMARI AND SH. BUSHAN LAL BHAT (DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW) SMT LALITA BHAT & SH. PRAN NATH BHAT (DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW)

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

GREAT GRAND SON- SHIVA Phone no-9797305248,8493058455

TENTH DAY

With profound grief sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved Sh. Ram Lal Sharma S/o Late Sh. Baniya Ram, Gurha Brahmana (Bindra Da Bagh) Akhnoor, Jammu, who left on 26-12-23.

Tenth Day will be performed on Thursday 4-01-24 at their residence at 12.00 PM. Kriya will be performed on 5-01-24 at 1 PM at their residence.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-Smt. Mangi Devi (Wife)

Sachin Sharma (Son)

Smt. Premika Sharma (Daughter-in-law) Bhabhi & Brother

Smt. Mangal Devi & Sh. Som Dutt Sharma Sister & Jiju

Smt. Bandana Devi & Sh. Pawan Kumar

Smt. Pooja Devi & Sh. Ravi Kumar Smt. Rita Sharma & Sh. Rakesh Kumar

Smt. Rajani Sharma & Sh. Satish Kumar

Grand Daughter: Shanaya Sharma, Anaya Sharma Shanaya Caterers, Shanaya Food's & Sharma Enterprise

Ph: 9622209060, 7889836327

TENTH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

WITH IMMENSE GRIEF, WE INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED SH. **DEWAN CHAND SHARMA EX MANAGER** SBI S/O FAQEER CHAND SHARMA R/O 194 LAST MORH SARWAL, JAMMU ON DEC

TENTH DAY WILL BE HELD ON FRIDAY 5TH OF JAN, 2024 AT 11AM AT OUR RESIDENCE. KRIYA WILL BE PERFORMED ON SATUR-DAY 6TH OF JAN, 2024 AT OUR RESIDENCE AT 12 NOON.

UTHALA/RASAM PAGRI WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY 8TH OF JAN, 2024 AT SHIV MANDIR SARWAL FROM 3PM TO 4 PM. **GRIEF STRICKEN:**

SH. DEWAN CHAND SHARMA **EX MANAGER SBI**

Sh. Ram Lal Sharma

DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW AND SONS SMT. KANCHAN SHARMA W/O LATE ASHWANI SHARMA

SMT.RAJNI SHARMA & BUNTY **DAUGHTER & SON-IN-LAW**

SMT.PAMMA & SURINDER SHARMA

BROTHER & BHABI:

SMT.RADHA SHARMA & SHAM SHARMA SMT. ANITA SHARMA & ASHOK SHARMA

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad and sudden demise of Mr Ashok Sharma (Twinkle) (Library Assistant) S/o Late Sh Darbari Lal Sharma R/o H No. 762 Ext-T.A Janipur Colony Jammu, near Shakti Academy School on 5 January 2024

Tenth Day/Kriya will be held at Trimurti Mandir, near Ram Leela Ground, Janipur Colony, Jammu. Grief Stricken

Smt Lalita Sharma- Mother Mrs Monika Balotra (Wife)

(Senior Astt Jammu University)

Vanshika - Daughter Krishna- Son

Sister & Brother-in-law Smt Suman Gupta and Sh Mukesh Gupta



(Twinkle)

SH. J.B SINGH

9419730087, 7780992761 9419145106

TENTH DAY

It is intimated with profound grief and sorrow that our beloved father **Sh. J.B Singh** S/o Sh S M Pathania H. No 210 Rehari Mohalla Jammu left for his heavenly abode on 27-12-2023.

TENTH DAY will be held at Rani Talab on 05th of Jan 2024 at 11.00 AM. KRIYA will be performed on 08-01-2024

(Monday) at our residence. The **ASSEMBLY** will be held at our residence

210 Rehari Mohalla Jammu at 9.30 AM. **GRIEF STRICKEN**

Sons & Daughter in Law

Devinder Pathania & Anju Pathania Daughters & Son in Law

Renu Pathania & Adv. Narinder Kumar

Kiran Pathania Dr Kanchan Pathania

TENTH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

With profound grief we inform sad demise of our beloved Smt Neelam Sharma W/o Sh. Suresh Sharma R/o H. No F125 Sec 14 Shiva Ji Chowk Nanak Nagar.

10TH DAY will be performed on 03-01-2024 (Wednesday) at Gorkha Mandir Shivaji Chowk Nanak Nagar at 10.30 AM.

KRIYA will be performed on 04-01-2024 (Thursday) at our residence.

UTHALA will be performed on 05-01-2024 (Friday) at Gorkha Mandir Shivaji Chowk Nanak Nagar from 3 PM to 4 PM

Sanmotra Family

MOBILE NO: 9906045411, 6006341985, 7006824062

CHOUBARSI FOUR YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE YOU

LEFT US FOR ETERNAL JOURNEY YOUR MEMORIES ARE STILL FRESH AND

YOUR PRESENCE IS FELT EVERYWHERE AND EVERYTIME CHOUBARSI of our beloved Lt Th. BALWAN SINGH S/o LATE TH. FARANGI SINGH BHALWAL shall be performed on 5th January 2024 (Friday) at Trikuta Yatri Niwas, Ved Mandir Complex, Ved Mandir Road, Amphalla, Jammu at 10:00 A.M

onwards.

DEEPLY REMEMBERED BY: -

Daughter-in-Laws & Sons Lt. Smt Santosh Kumari & Sh Krishan Pal Singh Bhalwal

Smt Sudershana & Sh Prem Pal Singh Bhalwa

Smt Sudesh & Sh Kulbushan Singh Bhalwal Smt Champa Rani & Sh Kuljit Singh Bhalwal Smt Neelam & Sh Raghunandan Singh Bhalwal Smt Chiterlekha & Sh Bhupinder Singh Bhalwal Smt Sunita & Sh Jagdeep Singh Bhalwal

Daughter & Son-in -Law Lt. Smt Suman Baloria & Sh Virender Singh Baloria

All Grand Daughters & Son-in Laws, All Grand Sons and Daughter-in-Laws All Great Grand Daughters and Sons 9419246878, 9958952398, 9419173218

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of Sh. Niranjan Nath Bhat (Bushan Lal) S/o Late Smt. and Sh Keshav Nath Bhat R/o House No. 25. originally R/o Danow (Kulgam).

7th January 2024 at Akhnoor Ghat and gathering will be held at Muthi Ghat from 12:00 noon onwards.

GRIEF STRICKEN Smt. Basanti Bhat- Wife

Sh. Kanya Lal Bhat and Smt. Bimla Bhat Sh. Ashok K Bhat and Smt. Jyoti Bhat

Smt. Phoola Pandit and Sh. Dwarika Nath Pandit Smt. Princy Pandita and Sh. Sameer Ji Pandita

Daughter and Son-in-law

Phone: 9858199860, 8860790802

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW, WE INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF MR VISHAL GUPTA (TEACHER) S/O SMT SHARDA GUPTA AND SH JIA LAL GUPTA R/O HNO 429, BEHIND ASHRAM DIGIANA JAMMU.

TENTH DAY WILL BE PERFORMED ON THURSDAY, 04-01-2024 AT VISHWAKARMA HALL RANI TALAB, DIGIANA JAMMU (NEAR RADHA KRISHNA MANDIR) TIME 11AM -12 NOON.

KRIYA WILL BE PERFORMED ON SUNDAY, 7TH JAN 2024 AT HOME.

GRIEF STRICKEN NEHA GUPTA (WIFE) DAUGHTERS AND SON RIDHI, PAJAS AND RIDHANSH SISTER AND BROTHER IN LAW SMT RAJNI AND SH VISHAL GUPTA

SMT MEENAKSHI AND SH AMIT GUPTA SHAGUN AAYAN AARVI AND SARANSH (NIECE AND NEPHEW)

7006060959, 7006555212

SH. SOHAN LAL BHAT

(VILLAGE KILAM)

MRS. CHUNI

MATTOO

OBITUARY

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW, WE REGRET TO INFORM THAT OUR BELOVED FATHER SH. SOHAN LAL BHAT (VILLAGE KILAM) S/O SH. NEELKANTH OF VILLAGE KILAM, ANANTNAG, KASHMIR CURRENTLY RESIDING AT H. No. 209, H BLOCK, SHAHEED BHAGAT SINGH NAGAR, LUDHIANA PUNJAB, HAS LEFT FOR HIS HEAVENLY ABODE ON 01 JAN

HIS 10TH. 11TH & 12TH DAY KRIYA WILL BE UARY 2024 RESPECTIVELY AT HARIDWAR.

PERFORMED ON 10TH, 11TH & 12TH of JAN-**GRIEF STRICKEN:**

Mrs. Santosh Kilam (Wife)

Mr. Sanjay Kilam & Mrs. Pooja Avasthi Kilam (Son & Daughter-in-law) Mr. Ajay Kilam & Mrs. Kavita Dhar Kilam (Son & Daughter-in-law) Sanjna Kilam, Shehjaar Kilam, Bhavye Kilam, Maharishi Kilam (Grand Children) SAMAST PARIVAR:

KILAMS, TINGLOOS, BHATS CONTACT NUMBERS: +91 9646701212, +91 9530730021

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform that our beloved Mrs. Chuni Mattoo, wife of Prof. J.L Mattoo, original resident of Bana Mohalla, Srinagar, left for heavenly abode on 2nd January, 2024 at her residence 54, lane no. 5, Hazuri bagh, Talab Tillo, Bohri, Jammu.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed at Muthi Ghat (Near DSE) on 11th Jan 2024 at 9.30 AM. **GRIEF STRICKEN:**

MATTOO'S AND KOUL'S Prof. J.L Mattoo (Husband) Brother and Sister-in-law: Late. H.L Koul and Rekha Koul Daughter-in-laws and Sons: Dr. Ruchita and Dr. Rakesh Mattoo Mrs. Kalpana and Mr. Upendra Mattoo

Mr. Subash Mattoo Grandchildren: Sobhna, Urvashi, Jayati



Smt Neelam Sharma

GRIEF STRICKEN







Lower Muthi near Kailash Resort, Jammu

TENTH DAY will be performed on Sunday,

Brothers and Sisters-in-law

Sisters and Brothers-in-law

Smt. Priya Bhat and Sh. Anil Kilam Daughter: Divya Bhat



Sh. Niranjan Nath Bhat

(Bushan Lal)

MR VISHAL GUPTA (TEACHER)

7298367147,

LATE SHRI SURJEET SINGH Date of Death 28-12-2023

YOU ARE ALWAYS THERE" 10TH DAY on 5th Jan 2024.

Timing: 11 AM TO 12 NOON. Venue: Shiv Mandir

Colony, Udhampur. DEEPLY REMEMBERED BY Son & Daughter-in-law

Rajinder Singh Baloria - Son Mob. No.: 9906073786

13TH DAY KRIYA/RASAM PAGRI

WE REGRET TO INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED SMT SHANTI DEVI WO LATE TH BHAG SINGH R/O BATTAL (MANSER) WHO LEFT FOR HER HEAVENLY ABODE ON 24/25-12-2023.

13TH DAY KRIYA RITUALS WILL BE PERFORMED ON JANUARY 5TH 2024 UPTO 1PM FOLLOWED BY RASAM PAGRI AND PAREETI BHOG AT OUR HOME. IN GRIEF RASAM PAGRI AND PARCETI BHOG AT COME TO MISSING REPORT SEWA SINGH MANKOTIA SONS AND DAUGHTER IN LAWS SEWA SINGH MANKOTIA AND LT SMT SANTOSH KUMAR LT. SH GAURI SINGH MANKOTIA AND SMT CHAMPA DEVICE AND SONS AND GRAND DAUGHTER IN LAWS

SUDHIR SINGH AND MEENU RAMESHWAR SINGH AND KOMAL SAMESHWAR SINGH AND KOMAL SAMES SONIKA AND KANWAR SINGH WRS SONIKA AND KANWAR SINGH

IRS SHIVANI AND VIKRAM SINGH MRS SHIVANI AND VIRKAM SINGH MRS RUCHI AND NISHANT SINGH DAUGHTERS AND SONS IN LAW SUDERSHAMA AND SHIVDARSHAM SINGH SAMBYAI SUDESH AND KARNAIL SINGH SUMBRIA GEETA AND RANJODH SINGH BANDRAL SHUBH AND SUDHIR SINGH JASROTIA SUNITA AND LATE SURJIT SINGH ANDOTRA

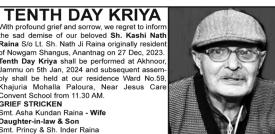
THIRTEENTH DAY With profound grief & sorrow, we regret t inform the sad demise of our belove Smt Suman Lata on 24th Dec 2023.

ainik Coloney, Jammı Angrez Singh Bhau (Husband)

Vivek Singh Bhau (Son) Daughter and Son-in-law Mrs. (Maj) Bhavna Jaggi & Col Arun Jaggi MOBILE NO. 7006450266, 9922944064



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SH. KASHI NATH RAINA

Daughter-in-law & Son Smt. Princy & Sh. Inder Raina Daughter & Son-in-law Smt. Kiran & Sh. Bharat Ji Bhat Sisters-in-law & Brothers Smt. Sarla & Sh. Mohan Lal Raina Smt. Babii & Sh. Hira Lal Raina Smt. Rozy & Sh. Chaman Lal Raina mt. Jyoti & Sh. Nanna Ji Raina Sint. you & Sil. Namina Jordana Sisters & Brothers-in-law Smt. Jaikishori W/o Lt. Sh. Shambu Nath Pandita Sh. J.N. Koul H/o Lt. Smt. Jaya Koul Sh. Hira Lal Bhatt H/o Lt. Smt. Santosh Bhatt

mt. Sarla Pandita & Sh. Ashok Kumar Pandita 10th DAY KRIYA



LATE SHAM LAL BHAT





TENTH DAY With profound grief sorrow,we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Ram La** Sharma S/o Late Sh. Baniya Ram, Gurhi Brahmana (Bindra Da Bagh) Akhnool lammu, who left on 26-12-23 Tenth Day will be performed on Thursday 4-01-24 at their residence at 12.00 PM. Kriya will be performed on 5-01-24 at 1 PM

GRIEF STRICKEN:-Smt. Mangi Devi (Wife) Sachin Sharma (Son)
Smt. Premika Sharma (Daughter-in-law)
Bhabhi & Brother

Smt. Asha Kundan Raina - Wife

Daughter-in-law & Son

RIEF STRICKEN :

rother and Sister-in-law : h. Badri Nath Bhat & Lt. Smt. Asha Kiran Bhat on and Daughter-in-law : . Sh. Kavinder Bhat & Sheetal Bhat eepak Bhat & Priyanka Bhat

Sh. Ram Lal Sharma Smt. Mangal Devi & Sh. Som Dutt Sharma Sister & Jiju Smt. Bandana Devi & Sh. Pawan Kumar Smt. Pooja Devi & Sh. Ravi Kumar Smt. Rita Sharma & Sh. Rakesh Kumar

Smt. Rajani Sharma & Sh. Satish Kumar Grand Daughter: Shanaya Sharma, Anaya Sharma Shanaya Caterers, Shanaya Food's & Sharma Enterprise Ph: 9622209060, 7889836327

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of **Smt Ram Kishori Koul** W/o Late Sh Onkar Nath Koul R/o Zeer Bagh Bhadarwah at present H.No. 52 Lane No. 2 Shiv Vihar Janipur Colony Jammu o

10TH DAY KRIYA will be performed at Jia Pota Ghat Akhnoor and ASSEMBLY will be held at 12:00 Noon on 06-01-2024 at Muthi Ghat near Director School Educa GRIEF STRICKEN Vidva Parkash Koul (Devar) Sons and Daughters in law

Anoop Koul and Sunita Koul Daughters and Sons in Law Jrvashi Zutshi W/o Late Sh S.P. Zutshi Asha Misri and Anil Misri

Anil Koul and Meenakshi Koul

SAMAST KOUL AND RAZDAN PARIVAR

It is with deep sorrow and profound grief we regret inform the sad demise of our beloved Sh. Makhan I Koul (Papaij), son of Late Sh. Shivji Koul, origins from Rang Teng, Ali Kadal, near Reshpeer Temp Srinagar and at present H.No 10772, Block A, Ro Nagar Enclave, Jammu on 02-01-2024.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-

Mob No.: 7006781310, 9419120318, 7006521813

"QUIETLY REMEMBERED EVERYDAY NO LONGER IN OUR LIFE TO SHARE **BUT IN OUR HEARTS**

Housing LATE SHRI SURJEET

SDPO Katra, Mr. Surinder Baloria, Mrs. Saroj Jamwal

SMT SHANTI DEVI



13TH DAY KRIYA will be performed or Friday, 5th Jan 2024 at our residence, F-89 GRIEF STRICKEN



the contents on their own before acting there upon."



SMT RAM KISHORI KOUL

SH. MAKHAN LAL



he **10th-Day** rituals will be performed at Akhnoor the **Assembly** will be held at Muthi Ghat on 10-

GRIEF STRICKEN:Sons and Daughter-in-Law
Smt. Shakuntala Koul W/o Late Sh. Roshan Lal Koul
Sh. Ashok Kumar Koul and Girja Koul
Sh. Bharat Bushan Koul and Nirmala Wali
Daughters and Son-in-Law
Smt. Veena Monga and Sh. Satish Kumar Monga
Smt. Sunita Bazaz and Sh. Daleep Bazaz
Grand Son and Daughter-in-Law
Mr. Sumit Koul and Mrs. Shiveeta Koul
Grand Daughters and Son-In-Law
Mrs. Minisha Koul and Mr. Anshoo Raina
Mrs. Shivangi Koul and Mr. Loveesh Bhatt
Mrs. Shafalee Koul and Mr. Loveesh Bhatt
Mrs. Shafalee Koul and Mr. Sandeep Koul
Great Grand Children: Shivika, Shivanj, Esha, Kavis
Great Grand Children: Shivika, Shivanj, Esha, Kavis

Great Grand Children: Shivika, Shivani, Esha, Kavish, Arav, Aavya, Aveer and Shivansh y and Raina (Hastu) Family











SMT SUMAN LATA

DISCLAIMER

DSS delegation calls on CS, discusses issues

Top News Report

JAMMU. Jan 4: A delegation of Dogra Sadar Sabha led by its Chairman Th Gulchain Singh Charak (Former Minister) comprising of Col Karan Singh (Retd.) Vice President DSS, Maj. Gen. Sunita Kapoor (Retd.) Convener DSS Mahila Wing, G A Khwaja (Retd), Additional General Secretary DSS, Gambhir Dev Singh Charak (I/C Youth Wing DSS), Jagdeep Singh, Chhankar Singh, Chhatter Singh, Ravi Singh, Sardar Singh Numberdar, Dharam Chand, Arvinder Singh Amn (Retd) Secretary JKAACL, Baldev Singh Numberdar called on the Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo to welcome him.

The delegation also apprised the Chief Secretary of some burning Issues of J&K UT for addressing the same on priority basis.

The Sabha welcomed the abolition the practice of Darbar move & desired to further strengthen the working of Civil Secretariat both at Jammu & Srinagar

The Sabha briefed the Chief Secretary about the Constitution of the Mubarak Mandi Jammu Heritage Society & its working with regard to the restoration of Mubarak Mandi Complex & requested the chief Secretary to examine the progress on its work & expedite the conservation of project to restore its pristine glory of Dogra Heritage Treasure on war footing without converting its any portion into hotel etc. It was also request-



ed that the complex be opened for the public to visit the site & see the progress. They also suggested that the light & sound program should be started to showcase the creation of this Historical state by the valiant Dogra rulers.

The Sabha also desired to start "Duggar Channel" on the lines of "Kashir Channel" to promote Dogra Culture in D D Kendra Jammu with the specific purpose of countering the propaganda from across the border as whole of the population of POJK is Dogri speaking.

The DSS also stressed for protection & maintanence of Irrigation Canals with the specific request to declare the Ranbir Canal as the Heritage site on the lines of Sabarmati River

front in Gujrat. It is also stressed that the Sarore Toll plaza should be relocated as per the National norms which is 60 km distance between the two toll plazas whereas, the distance between Sarore & toll plaza at Bann is hardly 40-45 kms. The Sabha requested to relocate the Sarore toll plaza so as to maintain a distance of 60 km.

Due to un planned

earth work of four laning of Nationbal Highway 44 between Jammu & Srinagar, the Ramban section of the Highway has endangered the soil in the absence of Sufficient protection wall & Muck Mismanagement.

The environment is threatened & the areas have become more landslide and erosion prone. About 300 houses have got damaged in the process and the people were forced to shift to rented accommodation. The Sabha stressed for addressing the issue to save the general public from colossal losses.

The Members also stressed for Including the Dogra Sadar Sabha Bhawan which is more than 100 years old Heritage in the Smart City project for its upgradation & Improvement.

The Numberdar's & Chowkidar's Issues were also taken up by the delegation .It was brought to the notice of Chief Secretary that the experienced & professional hands had been dismissed irrationally & raw handed young men are being appointed in their places which is wrong & demanded that these grass roots institutions should be properly strengthened.

They also demanded that the road runs from the front gates of the Civil Secretariat, Jammu, lies closed for the public to their utter discomfort, for security reasons. This blockade has divided the old Jammu city into two halves, thereby putting the students, the old people especially the mourners while taking the dead bodies of their loved ones for Crema-

tion at Jogi Gate & the

tourists in Jammu city to

great inconvenience.

Dogra Sadar Sabha, Jammu and Kashmir hails the establishment of Martyrs Memorial as "Balidaan Stambh", at Pratap Park, commemorating the fallen jawans of security forces. However, they demanded establishment of a befitting War Memorial at Dal Lake, Srinagar for the thousands of valiant Jawans of Indian Army who laid down their lives to protect the life and honour of Kashmiri

people. There is a need to Strengthen School and College Infrastructure and Streamline Education Mechanism in the UT at Par with the Aims and Objectives of **New National Education** Policy 2020.

DSS notes with satisfaction that the decision of the government that all subjects in schools and colleges will be taught in mother tongue. However, it is desired that expeditious steps must be taken to strengthen infrastructure like proper Classrooms, books and educators to teach the students in their mother tongue.

Balwant Thakur meets Chief Secretary, shares his cultural concerns

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: Eminent cultural figure, the former cultural Diplomat of India Padma Shri Awardee Balwant Thakur met the Chief Secretary at the civil secretariat and apprised him about his larger cultural concerns.

In the absence of a defined cultural policy in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, the entire movement is in shambles.

The premier cultural institution of Jammu and Kashmir mandated to preserve and promote the creativity and pure art practices is totally directionless

Being an autonomous institution, it should run its activities and programmes in a defined manner under the guidance and direction of the top experts representing respective fields of art, performing arts, literature, tribal, ethnic and folk arts.

On the contrary whatever aimlessly little is happening is being done at the whims and fancies of an individual who is not having a distant relation with arts practice or art handling. The entire art activity is being handled by the vendors and contractors who are eating up 85 to 90 percent of the budget in the name of tents, chairs, light and sound.

Ideally the budget meant for art and culture should be utilised purely and judiciously for the promotion of arts and the artists.

The ethnic, traditional



and folk art practices are at the verge of extinction. There is neither any policy nor any initiative for its preservation and promotion.

Great masters of different art forms are totally neglected and there is no policy in place to preserve their legacy by engaging younger generations to learn the dying arts from them. Time is not far when Jammu and Kashmir will be devoid of all the traditional art forms and practices.

Instead of reducing this institution to a song and dance company, a major revamping is required so the burning concerns of arts, culture, literature and artists/litterateurs/scholars are addressed in the right earnest. Majority senior artists of J&K who dedicated their entire lives in the service of arts are currently striving for their survival.

During the COVID pandemic, the arts fraternity was the one which suffered the most. In the absence of any sustenance support majority full-time artists shifted to other occupations.

This is the high time to come up with new policies and schemes aimed at bringing them back to the practice of art and utilise their priceless wisdom and expertise of ages for the larger welfare and good health of arts and culture in this region.

He appealed the worthy Chief Secretary to address the burning cultural issues on priority he shared with him.

On the occasion he also presented the Chief Secretary a book on him which was published in Mauritius and was internationally released by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Mauritius.

GOVERNMENT OF UNION TERRITORY JAMMU & KASHMIR JAMMU POWER DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LIMITED OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, ELECTRIC DIVISION-III, JPDCL REHARI JAMMU CIN No: U40300JK2013SGC003898, E-mail:edthreedistribution@gmail.com

Cancellation Notice of e-NIT No. ED-III Jammu/63 of 2023-24 dt. 02.12.2023

Subject :- Laying of 11 KV line on PCC Poles 9.0 Mtr. long using XLPE Cable 120 mm sq, 3-Core & ACSR Rabbit from 3.15 MVA, 33/11 KV Receiving Station opp. JDA Flats Muthi to JDA Flats & JDA Commercial Complex at Muthi under Deposit Contribution work.

Due to insufficient qualified required bidders, e-NIT No. ED-III Jammu/63 of 2023-24 dt. 02.12.2023 floated by this office stands cancelled.

No. ED-III/TS/3199-3202 Dated: 01.01.2024

DIP/J-4746-P/23

Sd/-Executive Engineer, JPDCL, Elect. Division-III,



UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION UDHAMPUR

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Fresh e-NIT No. 173 of 2023-24 Dated 30.12.2023 (3rd Call)

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir e-tenders are invited on percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Union Territory of J&K, CPWD, Railways, MES and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:-

S.	Name of Work	Advertised	Cost of	Earnest	Time	Class of	Head of
No.		Cost	document	Money	Allowed for	Contrac	Account
		(Rs. in lacs)	(in Rs)		completion	-tor	
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1.	Repair of drian from the house of lucky baria	4.76	600/-	@2% of	30 Days	"D"	Drainage
	to house of Madan Sharma (Kele Wali Gali)			advertised			Sector
	Ward No. 8 Udhampur			cost			
2.	Construction of Drain from house of Kailash	4.76	600/-	@2% of	30 Days	"D"	Drainage
	Kailoo to Hanuman Temple Main Bazaar			advertised			Sector
	Udhampur by way of Precast drain Ward No.			cost			
	12 Udhampur						
3.	Up-gradation of approach road from Masjid	17.07	600/-	@2% of	30 Days	"B/C"	UT
	Sharif taking off from Bansa Muttal road Km			advertised			Capex
	3rd RD 250-District Reasi (L= 325 mtr.) by			cost			Budget
	way of Providing and Laying 75 mm thick						
	Wet-Mix, 50 mm thick Bituminous Macadam						
	(BM), 25 mm thick Semi Dense Bituminous						
	Macadam (SDBC) and construction of Breast						
	Wall along with drain.						

Position of AAA:-Accorded Position of T.S:-Accorded Position of Funds:-Available

Date of Issue of Tender Notice

Period of downloading of hiddin

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website http://jktenders.gov.in as per below schedule:-

30-12-2023

	reflod of downloading of bidding documents	F10III 30-12-2023 to 00-01-2024, 1000 fils				
3	Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting.	-				
4	Bid submission Start Date	01-01-2024 from 900 Hrs				
5	Bid Submission End Date	08-01-2024 up to 1800 Hrs				
6	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	09-01-2024 on or after 1200 Hrs in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division, Udhampur.				
7	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed.				
	Dit of or other complete					

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of e-challan through Treasury indicating Treasury Voucher No. & date, name of work duly crediting to 0059 (Revenue) favoring Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division, Udhampur uploading a copy of treasury challan and EMD/Bid Security in the shape of CDR/FDR (The date of Treasury Challan/ Bid Security/Affidavits between date of start of bid submission and bid submission end date) duly pledged to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division, Udhampur as mentioned in the bid documents. The earnest money of the unsuccessful bidder shall be released only after submission of Treasury Challan.

2. The electronic bidding system would not allow any late submission of bids after due date and time as per server time. Bidders may modify their bids by uploading their request for modification before the deadline for submission of bids. For this, the bidder need not make any additional payment towards the cost of tender document. For bid modification and consequential re-submission, the bidder is not required to withdraw his bid submitted earlier. The last modified bid submitted by the bidder within the bid submission time shall be considered as the bid. For this purpose, modification/withdrawal by other means will not be accepted. In online system of bid submission, the

modification and consequential- submission of bids is allowed any number of times. The bidders may withdraw his bid by uploading their request before the deadline for submission of bids; however, if the bid is withdrawn, the resubmission of the bid is not allowed. No bid shall be modified or withdrawn after the deadline of submission of

3. The date and time of opening of Financial-Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Financial-bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division, Udhampur. The date for same shall be intimated separately. No:- 23972-78

Dated: - 30.12.2023 DIP/J-13400/23

Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Udhampur

VBSY merely a photo-shoot event and total failure: Ajay Sadhotra BJP Govt betrayed people of J&K by not fulfilling promises: Rattan Lal ing said that the developmental of

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: Ajay Kumar Sadhotra, Additional General Secretary Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) and former minister, has asserted that Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY) is merely a photography event being organized by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Govt to hide its failures.

He said that the people can't be fooled by holding such events for publicity and therefore this much hyped programme has proved to be a flop show rather total failure.

The senior JKNC leader expressed this in his address during Party's review meeting of Chenani and Ramnagar Assembly Constituencies of Udhampur Rural District held at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan Jammu. The meeting was presided over

by Ram Parshotam Sharma, District President Udhampur Rural. While welcoming the senior leaders of the party, he highlighted multiple problems and issues confronted by the people in the said constituency.

Ajay Sadhotra said that the incumbent Govt has miserably failed to address people's issues particularly the educated youth of Jammu and Kashmir because of its anti people policies. Moreover, these miseries of the people have further multiplied



due to the shortage of manpower in administration. He said that thousands of posts in Govt Departments of J&K are lying vacant since long so much so that even the health centres and schools are without adequate staff.

Accusing the administration of being least bothered about filling the said posts, Sadhotra said that this stands proved by the existing scenario in Ramnagar and Chenani Assembly Constituencies where the problems of general public have

increased manifold today. Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President, JKNC, said that BJP as well as the UT Administration have betrayed the people of Jammu and Kashmir especially those of Jammu by promising the moon and delivering nothing on ground. He asserted that Jammu BJP leaders from top to bottom are in utter frustration today as they have no say in the party's high command and therefore they cannot address the people's problems.

The senior NC leader said that the performance of the BJP's proxy regime in J&K has been quite dismal as per the expectations of people which is evident from the fact that its Jammu leaders are shying away from meeting the people. He asserted that in the present hopeless scenario, holding of Assembly, ULB and Panchayat polls is the only panacea to end people's miseries.

Surinder Choudhary Central Secretary while addressing the meet-

far flung areas are totally standstill and the people are suffering for nonavailability of essential commodities such as supply of ration, electricity, water supply etc the condition of roads and other communication system are in worst condition.

Abdul Gani Malik Zonal President Udhampur Reasi and former minister in his address on the occasion urged the party workers to reach out to the people and take the requisite steps to address their issues.

Sheikh Bashir Ahmed, Provincial Secretary JKNC Jammu asked the party workers to remain present at the grass roots level 24X7 and intensify their efforts to further strengthen the party base.

Among those who were present include: Babu Rampaul Zonal President Central Zone and former minister, Qazi Jalal Ud Din Ex-MLA, Pardeep Bali, Ayub Malik Provincial Secretaries Jammu, Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Abdul Gani Teli Chairman OBC Cell, Rakesh Singh Raka Vice President Central Zone, Vijay Lakhshmi Datta, Naresh Anthal, Vijay Kumar, Jagdish Bhaderwaj, Saif Ali, Mir Qasim, Parkash Chand, Parshotam Kumar, Yash Pal Singh, Romesh Kumar, Bushan Kumar, Prem Nath Nomi, Krishan Dass and Subash Kudyar.

Lord Shri Ram is everyone, no one should become 'Numberdar': Shiv Sena

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: After hundreds of years of long wait and struggle, the inauguration of the grand Shri Ram temple, the consecration and consecration ceremony of Ramlala is going to be organized in Ayodhya on 22nd January 2024.

Hearty congratulations to the entire country and Sanatan Samaj, Lord Shri Ram is everyone, all devotees, especially the organizations involved in the temple movement. should get the privilege of witnessing this moment, stated by Manish Sahni, president Shiv Sena (UBT), Jammu and Kashmir unit.

In a press conference held at the party state office in Jammu today. state chief Manish Sahni said that the inauguration and consecration ceremony of Shri Ram temple in Ayodhya on January 22 is the realisation of a dream.

After hundreds of years of struggle, sacrifices and waiting, we are



blessed with this joyful moment. The politicization of this grand religious ceremony and the uproar arising from the selective invitation are hurting the religious sentiments

of Ram devotees, he said. Young, old and women from all over the country had joined this movement to reclaim the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi temple. How can the fearless style of Bala Saheb

Thackeray and the struggle of Shiv Sainiks be forgotten in the battle of Ram Mandir

Party's national president Uddhav Saheb Thackeray had given the slogan "Pehele Mandir Phir Sarkar". The Suryavanshi Kshatriyas of Saraivanshi village, 15 kilometers away from Ayodhya, did not even wear turban and shoes for hundreds of years because of the pledge to

build the temple.

Sahni said that he has no problem in inviting celebrities and people who had no contribution in the temple movement, but ignoring those including Shiv Sena who was actively the part of the movement was absolutely unacceptable.

Along with this, preventing common Ram devotees from being a part of this historical moment cannot be justified at all.

He said that Lord Shri Ram belongs to everyone, no one should try to become "Numberdar"

He said that a memorandum has also been sent to Shri Ram Mandir Janmabhoomi Teerth Trust, not to make it celebrity show, give due recognition to this who have fought for it.

President Mehila Wing Meenakshi Chhibber, Gen Secretary Vikas Bakshi, Vice President Sanjeev Kohli, Balwant Singh, President Kanghar wing Raj Singh and Mangu Ram were present on the occasion.

EDITORIAL

MAINTAIN PEACE AND HARMONY

eace 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

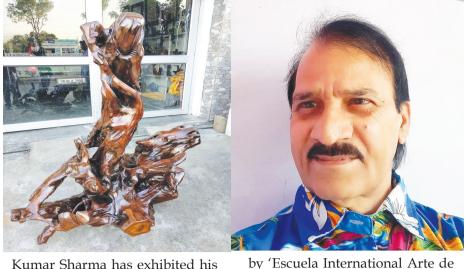
By: AvtarMota

"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

"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 wellknown 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 VidyaRatanKhajurua, 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 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

(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

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 noninvasive 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 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 Thurs-

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.

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 foolproof 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

The Deputy Commissioner assigned the responsibilities for dif-

ferent 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 dis-

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, Astt. 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 institu-

Address concerns of Job aspirants: Shabnam

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 4: Social Activist and JKPYC Baramulla Vice President Shabnam Khan has urged the admistration to address the concerns by the job inspirants 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 inspi-

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 Dharma Guru and Mahamandaleshwar 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 Ramavana.

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 Mahamandaleshwar 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 Mahamandaleshwar.

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 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,

SMVDU wins Winter Cricket Tournament

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. Niranjan 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

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

Police party from PS Kishtwar, led by Inspec-

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.

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.

Fast Forward: Let the camera roll...

After getting back on its feet with actioners like Pathaan, Jawan and Gadar 2 in 2023, the Hindi film industry promises an eclectic mix of genres in 2024. Here's what to watch out for

The past year helped the film industry recover from Covid-induced financial stress and move towards profits. As we enter the New Year, there's anticipation and excitement in the air. And how can movies, our source of entertainment, be ignored? We bring you a list of films that are expected to work their magic at box office, thanks to the buzz they have created since their announcement. Here's your chance to save the dates!

Franchise frenzy Fighter: The year's first big release is the Hrithik Roshan, Deepika Padukone and Anil Kapoor-starrer Fighter. It is directed by Siddharth Anand, who belted out blockbusters like War and Pathaan. Part of YRF spy universe, Fighter releases exactly a year after Pathaan, on January 25. Chances are that the audience will get to catch a glimpse of SRK (Pathaan) and Salman Khan (Tiger) in this film. Fighter follows the story of Air Force pilots and promises an entertaining story with action.

Love Sex Aur Dhokha 2: Next on the list is filmmaker Dibakar Banerjee's highly awaited sequel to his 2010 sleeper hit Love Sex Aur

Dhokha. The narrative will focus on the role of social media in current times and how things may take a sinister turn on different social media platforms. The film will release on February 16.

Metro... In Dino: Another film which has caught people interest is Metro... In Dino. Directed by Anurag Basu, the film is said to be the spiritual sequel of 2007 film Life in a... Metro. An ensemble star cast includes Aditya Roy Kapur, Sara Ali Khan, Anupam Kher, Neena Gupta, Pankaj Tripathi, Konkona Sen Sharma, Ali Fazal and Fatima Sana Shaikh. The Barfi director has announced the release date, which is March 29.

Bade Miyan Chote Miyan: This upcoming release is an attempt to bring back the nostalgia of 1998 film Bade Miyan Chote Miyan, which starred Amitabh Bachchan and Govinda in the titular roles. It has two action heroes Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff. Prithvirai Sukumaran will serve as the antagonist. The film is set to release in theatres on Eid.

Stree 2: The fan-favourite 2018 horror-comedy is set to return with its sequel and it promises more fun and jump scares in equal proportion. The franchise's



second instalment stars Shraddha Kapoor, Rajkummar Rao, Aparshakti Khurana, Abhishek Banerjee and Pankaj Tripathi. It is set to arrive in theatres on August

Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3: Kartik Aaryan worked in the sequel of Bhool Bhilaiyaa and made it his franchise. In its third instalment, Kartik will be seen reprising his role of Rooh baba. The 2022 film actually brought much respite to Hindi cinema industry while it was struggling after the pandemic. Directed by Anees Bazmee, Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3 is set to

Welcome To The Jungle: The Welcome franchise of Firoz A Nadiadwallah has announced its third instalment, which is titled Welcome To The Jungle. It stars Akshay Kumar, Suniel Shetty, Sanjay Dutt, Raveena Tandon, Lara Dutta, Jacqueline Fernandez, Disha Patani, Arshad Warsi, Paresh Rawal, Johnny Lever, Rajpal Yadav, Tusshar Kapoor and Shreyas Talpade. It is directed by Ahmed Khan and it will hit theatres on December 20.

Soorarai Pottru remake: Superstar Akshay Kumar

Remake ready

winning spree at the boxoffice after OMG 2 and what better way to do that with the Hindi remake of one of the most loved Tamil films. Soorarai Pottru, which originally starred Tamil actor Suriva, is set to release in Hindi on February 16 in theatres. The original Tamil film was inspired by events from the life of G R Gopinath, the founder of Indian low-cost airline Simplifly Deccan, as described in his memoir Simply Fly: A Deccan Odyssey.

Biopic worthy Main Atal Hoon: The

upcoming biopic drama is based on late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Helmed by director Ravi Jadhav, actor Pankaj Tripathi will be seen portraying the role of Vajpayee. The actor has created enough buzz after his first character look was released. The film is cowritten by Rishi Virmani and Ravi Jadhav. It will release on January 19.

Fresh take

Merry Christmas: Katrina Kaif and Vijay Sethupathistarrer Merry Christmas will finally see the light of the day after being postponed twice. Helmed by Sriram Raghavan, Merry Christmas is a genre-defying tale. It is shot in two languages, with different supporting actors. In Hindi, the supporting cast have names like Sanjay Kapoor, Vinay Pathak, Pratima Kannan and Tinnu Anand whereas in Tamil version, actors Radhika Sarathkumar, Shanmugaraja, Kevin Jay Babu, and Rajesh Williams will be seen. It will hit the theatres on January 12.

Kalki 2898 AD: The first big clash in theatre this year will between Merry Christams and Kalki 2898AD. The latter is a sci-fi action film has been helmed by Nag Ashwin. The

film stars Amitabh Bachchan, Kamal Haasan, Deepika Padukone, Prabhas, and Disha Patani in lead roles. It is expected to be a mythology-inspired sci-fi spectacular set in the future.

Auron Mein Kahan Dum Tha: Ajay Devgn, who was last seen in Bholaa, is returning with another entertainer, titled Auron Mein Kahan Dum Tha. The film, directed by Neeraj Pandey, also stars Tabu, Saiee M Manjrekar and Shantanu Maheshwari. The film will be Pandey's first directorial in five years after his last Aiyaary. It is touted to be a musical journey spanning over a period of 20 years. The film will release on April 26. Also Ajay Devgn and Rohit Shetty's hit franchise Singham is expected to hit the theatres this year.

Chandu Champion: The upcoming film, directed by Kabir Khan, is based on a true story of a sportsperson. Chandu Champion went on the floors with its mahurat shot in London. The film is scheduled to release on June 14.

Jigra: Alia Bhatt, who had a great run in 2023, will be seen in the Vasan Bala directorial. It is set to release on September 27.

'Kho Gaye Hum Kahan' hits 6.3 million view hours in first week of premiere: Netflix

"Kho Gaye Hum Kahan", a coming-ofdigital-age drama, has amassed 6.3 million view hours in the first week of its release on Netflix, the streamer said on Thursday.

According to Netflix, the movie -- starring Ananya Panday, Adarsh Gourav and Siddhant Chaturvedi -- has also made it to the top 10 non-English films section on its platform. It premiered on December 26.

Directed by first-time filmmaker Arjun Varain Singh, "Kho Gave Hum Kahan" revolves around three best friends as they navigate life while striving to balance their online identities with their true selves.

The film is produced by Excel Entertainment's Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar and Tiger Baby's Reema Kagti and Zoya

Describing the movie as his dream project. Singh said he wanted to tell a story which resonated with the generation he grew up with and it is extremely gratifying to see the audience reception.

"As the first story that I have penned down along with Zoya and Reema, this film will always be a special part of my journey ahead. I would like to thank Netflix for giving me a platform through which I could share



digital age with entertainment lovers around the world as well as Excel Entertainment and Tiger Baby for believing in me and my story," the director said in a statement.

Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar said Singh has proved his mettle as a debutant director.

"The story is close to our hearts and we,

along with Tiger Baby, wanted to give this generation a story to call their own. We thank the audience for giving 'Kho Gaye Hum Kahan' so much love and appreciation, it fills our hearts with pride and joy," they said in a joint statement.

Kagti and Zoya Akhtar expressed gratitude towards the audience who enjoyed the film.

"We are super proud of the cast and crew of 'Kho Gaye Hum Kahan', who put their all into this project, which has now become a global sensation. To all who watched the film, we thank you for giving us this positive response. Our film is streaming on Netflix, for all to cherish and bond over," the producers said.

"A film's true success is marked by its ability to move the viewers and we are humbled by the love coming our way for 'Kho Gaye Hum Kahan', a film that truly captures today's zeitgeist. Creative collaborations such as these feel fulfilling when the film resonates so deeply with audiences across all ages..." added Ruchikaa Kapoor Sheikh, director, original films, Netflix India.

"Kho Gaye Hum Kahan" also stars Kalki Koechlin and Anya Singh with cameos by Malaika Arora, Farhan Akhtar and Sapan

Janhvi Kapoor calls dating actors 'chaotic'



Janhvi Kapoor has opened up on dating

actors and called it "chaotic," adding that

actors often get very 'competitive and weird'. Dating actors can be tricky at times and looks like Janhvi has had enough of it.

The gorgeous diva spilled the beans on the Koffee couch. Koffee with Karan host Karan Johar asked, "You also have a philosophy which we have spoken about that you don't really want to date actors, because you think it is somewhere or the other turbulent." Janhvi said, "It is chaotic for sure. Vanity is such a big part of this profession. You need to be with someone who is okay to let you have your moments also. But I find with actors, they get competitive and weird."

Have one more album in me, but I would probably choose acting: Selena Gomez

Actor-singer Selena Gomez says going forward she would like to focus more on acting as she might just hang up her boots after her next potential album.

While she had fun on music tours, Gomez said she realised acting would be something to "settle on" eventually while working on the popular Disney Channel sitcom "Wizards of Waverly Place" (2007). Known for various col-

laborative singles such as "We Don't Talk Anymore", "Taki Taki", and "Calm Down (Remix)", the 31-year-old also has albums "Revival", "Rare", and "Revelacion", which came out in 2021, to her credit.

"I started having a lot of fun with music and then touring was really

But I was doing my TV show at the same time ('Wizards') and I just found it really fun.

"I just kept going but the older I get, the more I'm kind of like, I would



like to find something to just settle on. I do feel like I have one more album in me, but I would probably choose acting. I am going to wanna chill because I'm tired," she said in Tuesday's episode of the "Smartless" podcast.

Gomez, who will next be seen in the fourth season of Hulu's "Only Murders in the Building", said she always wanted to be an actor.

"I never really intended on being a singer fulltime but apparently that hobby turned into something else. I don't think I'm the best singer but I do know how to tell stories and I love being able to make songs,' she added.

We are careful about making sure violence in 'Aarya' is not gratuitous: Ram Madhvani

'Aarya' creator Ram Madhvani says he doesn't view the Sushmita Sen-starrer series as a crime drama but as the story of a family whose matriarch is forced to make certain choices to protect her children.

The writer-director said in the world of his show, no crime will go unpunished, which is why they were careful about how they depict violence.

"We are very careful about making sure that the violence is not gratuitous or just for the sake of it. She (Aarya) is doing certain things because she wants to protect her children. She is going to get justice at the end of it," Madhvani told agency in an interview.

"What used to happen in the climax of Hindi films... at the end, you would see the shot of the Central Jail... the hero would have to suffer punishment and so would Aarya. That's the value system for the family audience that we put into the show. You can't do bad things and get away with it. Even though there are tropes of thriller, crime, noir, I'm interested in family dynamics," he added.

According to Madhvani, it's fitting that Sen's Aarya gets shot at by an unseen assailant in the trailer of the third season, the first part of which started

streaming on Disney+ Hotstar in November.

The first season of the show, which is the official Hindi adaptation of the Dutch series 'Penoza'. co-created by Sandeep Modi, released in 2020 and followed the journey of the titular character getting pulled into the world of crime and drugs after her husband Tej Sareen (Chadrachud Singh) is murdered.

'Aarya' was full of laughter and joy but in season two, she wanted to run away and in season three, she doesn't laugh, observed the director.

"She's not doing it because she wants to, or wants revenge, or likes bloodshed. She's doing this because that's the only way to protect the children. What we are looking at is not violence, we are looking at a story about a character. In this case, Aarya is doing certain things for a greater reason and unfortunately, nothing is going right," Madhvani added.

According to the creator, the moral choices the characters in 'Aarya' are being forced to make is what keeps the viewers interested in the drama

"You need to put your character through all of this. The conversation is not that she is enjoying the violence, it's about is she right or wrong? Should she be doing this or not? Was she forced into this? That's what keeps you interested."

What also keeps fans hooked is the catchphrase "Apne panje baahar nikalo". This one-liner is spoken by Daulat, Aarya's confidant played by Sikandar Kher, in every season of the show each time in a different context.

Madhvani, whose roots lie in advertising, described the popular dialogue as a "war cry".

"We all need this kind of a slogan. Coming from advertising, it's very important to have a baseline. A lot of times we are in the room because we are also such Hindi film fans from Manmohan Desai to Mukul Anand.

"We are fans of dialogue 'baazi'. When we are writing, we put a dialogue 'baazi' audit, that every episode should at least have such two-three lines which we can also use in the trailers. Not all lines hit you, but those that do are called 'T-shirt slogans'," he explained.

Like her character, Sen too went through a lot while working on the third season of the show. The actor suffered a massive heart attack and underwent angioplasty last March.

The director, a self-confessed Sen fan, said he has huge respect for her.

"Just to have spent time with her, hung out with her, chatting with her has been one of the milestones of my life. I'm grateful she's back, she's healthy. She was on the ramp two weeks after what she went through. Hats off to her energy and strength."

Madhvani said many fans of the show, including his friends, were not happy when the makers premiered only the first four episodes of the series. The decision, he said, was made by Disney+ Hotstar.

"Even my eye doctor said 'What is this? Why have you only released four episodes?' I had a chat with Gaurav Banerjee (from Disney+ Hotstar) and some people felt that we should have released all eight. They have done it in the past and found that it helps in sustaining interest and longevity."

Asked if the show will return for another run, the producer said the greenlighting power of more seasons rests with the audience.

"Please love the show. Please ask for more and as you ask for more, we are hoping that Disney+ Hotstar will come to us and say 'Hey, listen. The audience wants more'," he said.

'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 Ishwarcharandas 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

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 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 discus-

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



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.

Republic for foiled plot to kill Sikh separatist in US of the foreign court and

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 Gurpatwant 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

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

"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

Supreme Court rejects plea of Indian detained in Czech

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

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.

representation.

The 52-year-old was charged with murderfor-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): Nationalist 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

Addressing an event in Maharashtra's Shirdi on Wednesday, Awhad, an NCP-Sharad Pawar faction leader, said, "Ram is ours, he is of the Bahuian. 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 Ayodya, 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



shlok (verse) 102 which mentions it.'

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

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

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 sum-

mons 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,

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 affi-

davit 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 Bhilai 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.

Hundreds cut off after Japan quake that killed 78

Access was blocked to small communities in the hardest-hit Noto Peninsula region -- with 300 people desperately waiting for aid at a school in the town of Ooya in the Suzu area.

NANAO, Jan 4 (Agencies): More than 50 people were reported missing Thursday as Japanese rescuers battled to reach hundreds still cut off from help three days after a devastating earthquake left at least 78 dead.

As the frantic search for survivors continues, more than a dozen communities remained isolated by landslides and blocked roads in central Japan, where the 7.5-magnitude quake struck on Monday.

The powerful main tremor, followed by hundreds of aftershocks, injured at least 330 people, local authorities said.

Authorities also published a list on Thursday of 51 people whose whereabouts could not be confirmed.

Further scenes of destruction were seen by AFP in the coastal town of Anamizu, including cars crushed under crumbling concrete and whole facades torn off three-storey structures.

Thousands of soldiers, firefighters and police officers from across Japan combed through the rubble of collapsed wooden houses and toppled commercial buildings for signs of life.

Around 29,000 households were without electricity in Ishikawa prefecture on the Sea



wooden houses -- had been pri-

oritised for emergency vehicles.

or risk facing a huge traffic jam

ahead," an officer was heard

warning drivers, approaching

At a nearby gas station, a long

queue of cars was waiting out-

side for it to open as the clock

Although there were no fuel

shortages at the station for now,

workers there told agency they

were rationing gas nonetheless.

Monday's main shockwave

triggered tsunami waves at

least 1.2 metres (four feet)

high in Wajima, and a series of

smaller tsunamis were reported

them one by one.

ticked past 8 am.

"Either reconsider carrying on,

of Japan coast, and more than 110,000 homes across Ishikawa and two neighbouring regions had no water.

Access was blocked to small communities in the hardest-hit Noto Peninsula region -- with 300 people desperately waiting for aid at a school in the town of Ooya in the Suzu area.

"Even if I give my food to my children, it is not enough at all. I have eaten almost nothing for the past two days," a woman in her 30s with three children in Suzu told the Asahi Shimbun newspaper.

'Critical' 72 hours

In the city of Nanao, police managing traffic told drivers that one of the main roads leading to Wajima -- where a huge fire

that one person was swept away by the tsunami in Noto's Suzu area, with the coast guard investigating. "This is a very difficult situa-

Broadcaster NHK reported

"This is a very difficult situation. But from the viewpoint of protecting lives, I ask that you make every effort to save and rescue as many lives as possible by this evening, when the critical 72 hours of the disaster will have passed," Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said at a government meeting on Thursday.

He was due to speak again in the afternoon, 72 hours after the main quake hit -- a timeframe when the hope of finding survivors typically fades.

Japan experiences hundreds of earthquakes every year and most cause no damage, with strict building codes in place for more than four decades.

Earthquakes have hit the Noto region with intensifying strength and frequency over the past five years.

The country is haunted by a massive 9.0-magnitude undersea quake in 2011, which triggered a tsunami that left around 18,500 people dead or missing.

It also swamped the Fukushima atomic plant, causing one of the worst nuclear disasters in history.

South Korea, US Conduct Week-Long Firing Drills Amid Tensions With North Korea



SEOUL, Jan 4 (Agencies): South Korean and U.S. troops have conducted joint combat firing drills near the border with North Korea involving heavy weapons, as Pyongyang lambasted the allies for dangerous moves pushing the region to the brink of "an inferno of nuclear war."

The exercise by a South Korean Army mechanised infantry brigade and U.S. Army armoured Stryker brigade was to test and enhance combat readiness simulating enemy aggression, South Korea said in a statement on Thursday.

The drills took place over a week starting on Dec. 29 and ended on Thursday, the South Korean Army said.

Korean Army said. The allies have dramatically increased the scale and intensity of joint drills in the past year amid escalating tension on the Korean peninsula as Pyongyang tested both longrange ballistic missiles and tactical weapons designed to strike targets in the South and

the Pacific.

The U.S. has also deployed more military assets near the Korean peninsula including a nuclear missile submarine, aircraft carriers and large bombers.

Wrapping up a major ruling party meeting, leader Kim Jong Un on Saturday lashed out at Washington for deploying large weapons and vowed to increase the North's nuclear arsenal and grow attack capabilities to "pacify the South."

The North called the joint firing drills "reckless war manoeuvres" and mocked South Korea for backing Washington's hegemonic ambitions "when it has no chance of winning or survival."

"With the instinct of confrontation deep in their bones, the puppets again marked the new year by making the aggressive choice that stokes war," the North's official KCNA news agency said in a commentary.

"2024 is the year of the highest risk of conflict," it said.

The joint drills involved more than 110 large combat weapons including South Korean army tanks, anti-aircraft artillery and combat earthmovers supported by U.S. military attack aircraft and armoured fighting vehicles, the Army said.

South Korea's navy on Wednesday conducted live firing drills and antisubmarine manoeuvres in the waters in the east, west and the south involving destroyers, frigates and corvettes, the navy said.

Flights delayed, highways closed as thick fog engulfs Chinese cities

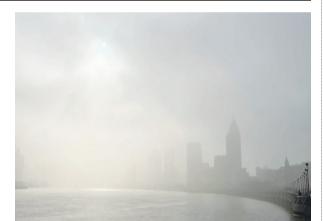
Dense fog affected Shandong, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangxi and Fujian provinces with visibility below 200 m, while some parts of southern Jiangsu and southern Anhui had visibility below 50 m, China's National Meteorological Centre said.

BEIJING, Jan 4 (Agencies): Extremely heavy fog in several Chinese provinces on Thursday led to dangerously low visibility, closing highways, delaying flights out of Shanghai and prompting weather forecasters to release a string of warnings and advisories.

Dense fog affected Shandong, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangxi and Fujian provinces with visibility below 200 m, while some parts of southern Jiangsu and southern Anhui had visibility below 50 m, China's National Meteorological Centre said.

The Central Meteorological Observatory issued yellow and orange warnings for heavy fog up to 7:45 am local time (23:45 GMT). Haze is expected in many areas on Friday, Chinese weather forecasters predicted.

Some areas of Anhui issued red warnings for heavy fog, the most seri-



ous advisory, and many highways were temporarily closed, according to state media broadcaster CCTV news.

In Nanjing, capital of China's eastern Jiangsu province, several areas were hit by extreme fog, causing snarls in public transportation to varying degrees, CCTV reported.

China has a three-tier colour-coded warning system for thick fog, with red being the most serious, followed by orange and yellow.

The fog also caused dozens of scheduled

and many flights out of Shanghai Pudong International Airport to be delayed or diverted over the last three hours, according to FlightView.com's flight tracking app.

A Reuters witness flying to Harbin from Shanghai reported that her plane was delayed for hours.

"We just returned to the gate, so it looks like forever," said the frustrated traveller, revealing a photo of a wall of dense grey mist outside a plane window that was covered with rain drops.

Myanmar's military government pardons 10,000 prisoners to mark Independence Day

BANGKOK, Jan 4 (Agencies): Myanmar's military government on Thursday pardoned nearly 10,000 prisoners to mark the 76th anniversary of gaining independence from Britain, but it wasn't immediately clear if any of those released included the thousands of political detainees jailed for opposing army rule.

The head of Myanmar's military council, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, pardoned 9,652 prisoners to mark the holiday, state-run MRTV television reported.

Min Aung Hlaing also granted amnesty to 114 jailed foreigners who will be deported, MRTV said in a separate report.

The prisoner releases were expected to begin Thursday and take several days to be completed. At Insein Prison in Yangon — notorious for decades for housing political detainees — relatives of prisoners gathered at the gates

from early morning.

The identities of those granted pardons were not immediately available. There was no sign that among the prisoners being released would be Aung San Suu



The 78-year-old Suu Kyi is serving 27 years' imprisonment after being convicted of a series of politically tinged prosecutions brought by the military. The charges on which she was convicted include illegally importing and possessing walkie-talkies, election fraud, corruption, violating coronavirus restrictions, breaching

seized power from her

elected government in

February 2021.

and sedition.

Her supporters and independent analysts say the cases against her are an attempt to discredit her and legitimize the military's seizure of power while keeping

the Official Secrets Act

her from taking part in the military's promised election, for which no date has yet been set.

According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, a rights monitoring organization, 25,730 people have been arrested on political charges since the army takeover.

Of those arrested, 19,930 people were still in detention as of Wednesday, AAPP reported. At least 4,277 civilians, including prodemocracy activists, have been killed by security forces in the same period, the group says.

Most of those detained are being held on incitement charges for allegedly causing fear, spreading false news or agitating against government employees.

Mass prisoner releas-

es are common on

major holidays in the Southeast Asian nation. Myanmar became a British colony in the late 19th century and regained its indepen-

dence on Jan. 4, 1948. In the capital, Naypyitaw, Myanmar's military government celebrated the anniversary with a flag-raising ceremony and a small military parade at City Hall.

Myanmar has been under military rule since the army's takeover, which was met with massive resistance that has since turned into what some U.N. experts have characterized as civil war.

Despite huge advantages in trained manpower and weaponry,

the military government has been unable to quash the resistance movement. After an alliance of ethnic minority armed groups launched a coordinated offensive against the military last October in Shan state in the north and Rakhine in the west, it is now facing its greatest battlefield challenge since the conflict began.

Min Aung Hlaing did not touch on the country's extended political crisis in his Independence Day message, which was published in the state-run press. Vice-Senior Gen. Soe Win, the vice-chairman of the ruling military council, delivered Min Aung Hlaing's speech at a flag-saluting ceremony, which was broadcast live on state television.

He appealed to ethnic minority groups, many of which are engaged in armed struggle against military rule, to strengthen national unity, and promised that the military government would hold an election and hand over state responsibilities to the elected government. However, he did not give a time-frame for the election.

Pakistan witnessed 306 militant attacks, a 17 per cent spike in terrorist violence in 2023: Report

ISLAMABAD, Jan 4 (Agencies): Pakistan witnessed a 17 per cent spike in terrorist violence in 2023, with a total of 306 militant attacks that killed 693 people, according to a new think tank report which said banned groups like the Pakistani Taliban, Islamic State Khorasan, and the Balochistan Liberation Army accounting for over 82 per cent of the terrorism-related deaths

The security report for 2023 by the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) released before the February 8 general elections raises questions over the security of electoral candidates and political leaders during the election campaign and polling, the Dawn newspaper reported on Thursday.

The report said militants' intensifying attacks indicate that the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and its affiliates will continue to resort to an intensified terrorism onslaught to 'force' Pakistan to reinstate the process of dialogue.

The report emerged days after the interior ministry informed the Senate that the continuous influx of TTP members in significant num-

bers, with recruitment, training and placing of suicide bombers, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's merged districts is 'a cause of concern'.

Military sources told the Dawn newspaper that Afghanistan has not been able to fulfil its commitments made in the Doha agreement as TTP continues to use Afghanistan as a base for terrorist activities inside Pakistan.

The Pak-Afghan border, described as 'difficult and porous', poses a formidable challenge despite security measures.

The PIPS report highlights Pakistan's ina-



dequate response to the rising terrorism and militancy challenge, exacerbated by negotiation attempts with the TTP and the waning political focus due to ongoing crises.

Escalating tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan, fuelled by issues like TTP and Afghan refugees, demand a comprehensive and sustainable counterterrorism strategy, it said.

The report correlates a surge in terrorist violence with the Taliban's ascendancy in Afghanistan, noting the Afghan Taliban's inability or unwillingness to control TTP's cross-border activities.

In 2023, security and law enforcement agencies intensified anti-militant kinetic actions with 129 operational strikes, compared to 87 in 2022, resulting in 425 deaths and 51 injuries.

Of these strikes, 97 occurred in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 28 in Balochistan, three in Punjab, and one in Karachi, Sindh, the report said.

A total of 306 terrorist attacks took place in Pakistan in the year including 23 suicide bombings which killed 693 people (330 security

personnel, 260 civilians, and 103 militants) and injured 1,124 others.

These attacks marked an increase of 17 per cent from the year before, and the number of people killed in these attacks also represented an increase of 65pc from those killed in similar attacks during the previous year, it said.

That comparative upsurge of 17 per cent in terrorist violence was contributed by an increase in the number of attacks reported from all four provinces.

Compared to 2022, the frequency of terrorist incidents in the Balochistan province increased by 39 per cent, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by 3 per cent, in Sindh by 87 per cent and in Punjab by 100 per cent.

Experts argued that short-term success in countering terrorism through kinetic approaches neglects the root causes of violent extremism.

Eliminating terrorists doesn't address enduring ideological drivers.

To decrease support for insurgent ideas, especially among Baloch people, address disappearances with fair policies, preventing misuse by militants, the report said.

Awareness programme organized by Civil Defence Jammu



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: One day awareness programme was held at NCC camp, Nagrota, which was organized by Civil Defence, Jammu under the supervision of DySP, Anita Pawar, Dy. Controller Civil Defence, Jammu.

The programme was

organized in the premises of the NCC Camp. Nagrota where 540 NCC cadets (Boys) from various Colleges and Schools of Jammu

province participated. Awareness about First Aid, Fire Fighting and other improvised rescue methods during the disaster was given by the Civil Defence experts to the NCC stu-

A demonstration on first aid & fire fighting was also presented by the Civil Defence team.

The main objective of the awareness programme was to inform the students about precautionary measures during natural or manmade disaster.

On the occasion, Col. R.S Jasrotia, 2nd J&K, BN NCC, Jammu, Camp CATCJ-6, Paramjit Kumar, Chief Warden CD Jammu, Ram Dayal Saini SI, in charge Civil Defence Trainings and other staff of the NCC Camp, Nagrota was also present.

Era of social, economic, political justice began in Modi's regime: Rekha

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: Accelerate the public outreach program initiated by the Bharatiya Janata Party at the grass root level, **BJP District President** Jammu South Rekha Mahajan conducted the "Booth Jan Samvad Abhiyaan" in Ward 52 in Trikuta Nagar Mandal in Jammu South

The programme was organized by Ex Councillor Ajay Gupta in the presence of Mandal President Neeraj Puri.

While delivering the public gathering, Rekha Mahajan, claimed that for the first time in the country, the person standing last in the queue in society became the direct beneficiary of government

She said science and technology have become such a tool of India's development that administrative reforms, power, railway reforms, curbing corruption, tax transparency, GST to One Nation-One Tax, Skill India, Startup India, and Digital India, steps in the interest of farmers and women, changes in the field of education to defense modernization, and such projects pending for decades are being realized, which

impossible. In its true sense, success is being achieved in fulfilling the objectives of the Constitution, and a new era of social, economic, and political justice has begun, Rekha

previously seemed

Rekha counted that the PM Modi-led Government's phenomenal policies play a vital role in strengthening morale and uplifting the improvised segments.

She stated that the endeavors taken by the central government remained instrumental in enriching the prosperity and well-being of the population and contributing significantly to the enrichment of the lives of citizens in J&K and every decision made, and every action taken, has been guided by the desire to improve the lives of people under the leadership of PM Modi, we will keep working even harder to build a developed India.

R-day 2024 arrangements reviewed at Bhaderwah

Top News Report

BHADARWAH, Jan 4: Additional Deputy Commissioner Bhadarwah, Dil Mir Choudhary on Wednesday convened a meeting to of upcoming Republic day 2024.

Discussions centered on security, first aid, sanitation, Fire and Emergency Services, Seating arrangements, Power & water Supply, and issuance of invitation cards. The departments were asked to illuminate the Government buildings and offices on the National Event.

All the concerned departments were directed to put in place all the required arrangements before 24th January the day of full dress rehearsal.

During the meeting, it was apprised that venue of the function will be the New Bus

stand kotli Bhadarwah, where National Flag will be unfurled at 9:55 AM and the contingents of JKAP, NCC Senior Division, NCC Junior Division and Tinny Platoons from Government/Private Schools shall perform March past parade. Besides, cultural pro grams will be performed by the students of various schools.

It was also decided that the day shall start with playing of Shenai Vadan by the Information Department Bhaderwah.

The Full Dress Rehearsal of the programme will be held on 24th January 2024. The meeting was attended by ASP Bhadarwah, 2 IC 4RR Bhadarwah, Tehsildar Bhalla, BDO Bhadarwah, CDPO Bhadarwah AEE Jal Shakti Bhadarwah, AEE JPDCL Bhadarwah, TSO Bhadarwah, TSWO Bha-

darwah, and other representatives of vari-

ous departments.

passenger amenities on NHW near Doda

Top News Report

DODA, Jan 4: Deputy Commissioner of Doda, Harvinder Singh, accompanied by SSP Doda Abdul Qayoom, on Wednesday conducted a critical visit to the landslide site near Pul Doda. This inspection was crucial due to a significant landslide that severely disrupted road connectivity, choking traffic movement, especially near ongoing road construction work. The landslide's impact has raised concerns about the area's safety and accessibility.

During their visit, the **Deputy Commissioner** engaged in discussions with the General Manager of NHIDCL about the current challenges posed by the landslide. He issued directives to the concerned authorities and officials responsible for road maintenance, emphasizing the urgency of clearing the landslide debris to restore smooth traffic flow and

ensure public safety. Swift response is crucial to minimize disruptions and potential risks to commuters.

Furthermore, DC Doda reviewed the ongoing construction works, including the building of bathrooms and passenger sheds along the national highways. The GM of NHIDCL assured that the work was being executed on a priority basis, with a focus on timely completion.

The visit, attended

by the SSP Doda. ACR Doda, the GM of NHIDCL, and Tehsildar Doda, reflects the administration's proactive approach in addressing infrastructure needs and responding to natural disasters. By assessing both the landslide's impact and the progress of essential infrastructure, the officials demonstrated their commitment to ensuring public safety and enhancing travel convenience on national highways.

DC inspects landslide site, Katra Businessmen form Chamber of **Tourism Trade and Industry Katra**



Top News Report

KATRA, Jan 4: Leading businessmen of Katra announce the establishment of a new society namely Chamber of Tourism Trade and Industry Katra dedicated to do all such things as may be considered conducive to the betterment of relations between the Government, the business community and the public

The newly formed Chamber of Tourism Trade and Industry aims to watch and to safeguard the interests of the members of the society,to advise the govt deptts, the businessmen, the ndustrialists and the traders regarding all matters affecting their mutual interest so as to benefit

the society at large, to strive for the betterment of all types of trade and Industry and to improve their lot and to ensure honesty and root out corruption in business dealings.

It is pertinent to mention here that society as Chamber of Tourism Trade and Industry Katra has been registered by Industries and Commerce Deptt. of J&K Ut under the registration no 591-CSA of 2023.

President of Chamber of Tourism Trade and Industry Katra, Raj Kumar Padha addressing a press conference announced the nomination of Rajneesh Purohit as General Secretary, Babu Ram Sharma as Senior vice President, Dharun Sharma and

Raman Goswami as Vice Presidents, Ramnik Sharma as Treasurer, Karan Vaid and Atul Sharma as Secretaries, Manav Sanmotra as Legal Advisor, Vishal Kapoor, Jagdev Singh, Arun Sharma and Vivek Gupta as Executive Members of the newly formed body.

Shiv Kumar Sharma former president of Hotel and Restaurant Association of Katra informed that the formation of Chamber came in response to the growing need for a dedicated forum where business and industry owners and professionals could address challenges, share best practices, and collaborate on projects that would shape the future of Katra business community

Membership to Chamber of Tourism Trade and Industry Katra is open to business owners who are having units in tourism sector, any trading activity, any industry and professionals. We welcome individuals who are passionate about business to join us in this exciting journey.

Jammu and Kashmir clinches gold at National ODOP awards 2023



Top News Report

JAMMU / NEW DELHI, Jan 4: In a landmark achievement, the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir has clinched gold (state category B) for promoting ODOP initiative during the national One District One Product (ODOP) awards ceremony, held on Wednesday at Bharat Mandapam, Pragati Maidan.

The event, held during the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Utsav 2024, recognized exceptional contributors to the ODOP Initiative, showcasing India's cultural heritage, rich diversity, artistic

skills, and entrepreneurial spirit. Khalid Jahangir, Managing Director Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO), received the award on behalf of the UT. The JKTPO has been designated as nodal agency in the Union Territory of

Jammu and Kashmir for ODOP which played a pivotal role in promoting ODOP products from the region, showcasing a remarkable commitment to the

Additionally, the Shopian district of Jammu and Kashmir secured bronze award under category of District Awards for Agriculture sector. This recognition highlights the district's commendable contribution to the ODOP initiative, particularly in the field of horticulture, with Apple as ODOP product.

The ODOP awards ceremony is a testament to India's journey towards self-reliance, and the winners from Jammu and Kashmir have exemplified excellence in promoting the ODOP initiative. The Union Territory, under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, stands

as a shining example of commitment to fostering innovation and contributing to the nation's economic and cultural growth.

Chief Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir, along with the Commissioner Secretary of Industries and Commerce, has been a guiding force in propelling the ODOP initiatives in the region.

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution. and Textiles, Piyush Goyal, extended congratulations to the Indian Missions Abroad, states and district awardees. He urged upon them to continue motivating others to promote ODOP products, benefiting local weavers, artisans, and farmers.

Piyush Goyal highlighted the efforts of Indian Missions Abroad in promoting ODOP during the G20 summit and

expressed anticipation for the continued growth of the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Utsav in the coming years.

Union Minister of External Affairs, Dr. S Jaishankar, who is also the Chief Guest on the occasion, emphasized the significant role of ODOP in representing India's diversity on the global stage. He shared instances of presenting local ODOP products to global leaders during India's G20 Presidency, highlighting the initiative's impact on foreign policy, foreign economic policy and foreign commerce policy.

Dr. Jaishankar expressed confidence that ODOP would contribute towards stronger tourism in the coming years as more people become aware of the rich art, culture, and history associated with different regions of India.

Pertinently, JKTPO has been instrumental in promotion of ODOP and remains steadfast in its commitment to further boost these initiatives. A comprehensive activity plan, dedicated to promotion of ODOP products in Jammu and Kashmir, has been devised to further boost the ODOP with focus on products of each district. The JKTPO with the support of the government will take further proactive steps to foster growth and recognition of ODOP products in the region.

With their talent, intellect, young women are gaining prominence in **Agricultural Science &**

secure the progress of the nation," the Lt

Technology: Sinha

Acknowledging the important contribution of women in agricultural development and allied sectors, the Lt Governor said, "Women have toiled hard as unsung heroes in the field since the start of agriculture thousand years ago. Now, their achievements in agricultural science and technology give us the hope and confidence that they will produce path-breaking discoveries and inventions in agriculture".

At the convocation, the Lt Governor called upon agricultural universities and educational institutions to develop innovative agriculture technologies and enhance productive capabilities of the farmers.

As Jammu Kashmir leaps towards building a modern and sustainable agriculture and allied industry through Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), educational institutions will have to take innovative approach to minimize the input cost for farmers and maximise output with efficient growing techniques and technological support, he said.

"A huge opportunity awaits India in Agri Innovation, Agri Technology and Processed

Food and institutions like SKUAST will play a major role in creating cutting-edge technology and new methods to revolutionise the food processing sector," the Lt Governor further added. The Lt Governor assured every possi-

ble support to SKUAST Jammu from the UT Administration in terms of resources and extended his wishes for the university's continued success in its endeavours towards shaping a brighter and prosperous

He further advised the SKUAST Jammu to work on a dedicated project with immense export potential like Tulip's planting material that could address the agriculture & allied sector's need of the country.

Dr. B.N. Tripathi, Vice Chancellor SKUAST Jammu read out the university report and highlighted the academic, research and extension activities of the

Due to adverse weather conditions and poor visibility, the landing was not possible in Jammu. Therefore, the Vice President of India was not able to attend the convocation, he said.

The Lt Governor also planted a tree sapling in the vicinity of the university.

Jugal Kishore Sharma, Member of Parliament; Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Shailendra Kumar, Principal Secretary Agriculture Production Department; Santosh D Vaidya, Principal Secretary Finance Department; Alok Kumar, Principal Secretary, Higher Education Department; Vice-Chancellors of various Universities, Heads of educational institutions, senior officials,

FROM PAGE 1 students and faculty members of SKUAST were present.

South Kashmir's Kulgam gets automatic Weather **Station**

Vigyan Kendra receive good-quality support in farming. Additionally, he added that in the event the spray is washed away by rain, it may lead to scab and fungal infections attacking the orchards.

"The proactive approach of the weather station enables farmers to make timely decisions, such as scheduling orchard sprays based on weather forecasts, preventing economic losses due to the high costs and labour associated with pesticides," he said.

The officer further emphasised that the weather station is a government initiative, and people should benefit from such devel-

"There are 29 HADP projects, and people should avail themselves of the benefits of these projects. Last time, we demonstrated a drone based on sensors. The drone automatically sprays the areas that require spraying," he said.

Winter vacations in Jammu schools extended up to Jan 6

The winter vacation, ordered vide this office order No. 1354-DSEJ of 2023 dated

18-12-2023 is hereby extended upto 6th of January, 2024, in respect of all Government/Private recognized Schools, falling in Summer Zone of Jammu Division, in view of inclement weather conditions.

Any default on part of the Head of the Schools/ Teaching staff in observance of the above schedule shall attract action under Rules.

High Speed Train test conducted on Udhampur **Baramulla Railway Line**

cuts across the lesser Himalayas and traverses highly jointed and fractured dolomite. A segment of about 300-350 m crosses a major shear zone known as the Main Boundary Thrust (MBT), making tunnel excavation in this stretch a challenging task due to the presence of a shear zone and high water ingress.

Active Covid-19 cases in Country recorded at 4.423

national recovery rate of 98.81 per cent, according to the ministry's website. According to the website, 220.67 crore doses of Covid vaccines have so far been administered in the country.

Slight respite from severe cold conditions

in Kashmir

Qazigund recorded a low of minus 3.4 degrees Celsius while Kokernag town saw the minimum settle at minus 2.4 degrees Celsius and Kupwara recorded a minimum of minus 3.9 degrees Celsius.

Kashmir has been going through a prolonged dry spell with no precipitation forecast over the next few days, the officials said, adding December month was 79 per cent deficit on rainfall.

There has been no snowfall in most plain areas of Kashmir while upper reaches of the valley have also received lesser than usual amount of snow by the end of

The open skies have resulted in the minimum temperature sliding further in most parts, including Srinagar, the officials said. Kashmir is currently under the grip of 'Chilla-i-Kalan' — the 40-day harshest winter period when a cold wave grips the region and the temperature drops considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies, including the Dal Lake as well as the water supply lines in several parts of the valley.

The chances of snowfall are the highest during this period and most areas, especially the higher reaches, receive heavy

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

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

& Mahindra, Maruti

and Hindustan Unilever

were among the lag-

In Asian markets,

Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai

and Hong Kong settled

in the negative territory.

European markets

were trading in the

green. The US mar-

kets ended lower on

button to keyboards to summon

Wednesday.

gards.

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,

eration of keyboards.

software giant's AI chatbot.

erative AI technology.

egai ramifications.

articles.

Microsoft adds AI

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies):

Pressing a button will be one way to

summon an artificial intelligence agent

as Microsoft wields its computer indus-

try influence to reshape the next gen-

Starting this month, some new per-

sonal computers that run Microsoft's

Windows operating system will have a

special "Copilot key" that launches the

Getting third-party computer manu-

facturers to add an AI button to lap-

tops is the latest move by Microsoft to

capitalize on its close partnership with

ChatGPT-maker OpenAI and make

itself a gateway for applications of gen-

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

The New York Times last month sued

both OpenAl and Microsoft alleging

that tools like ChatGPT and Copilot —

formerly known as Bing Chat — were

built by infringing on copyrighted news

The keyboard redesign will be Micro-

soft's biggest change to PC keyboards

since it introduced a special Windows

key in the 1990s. Microsoft's four-

artificial intelligence



Nestle, Power Grid, Infosys, Bajaj Finserv and HDFC Bank were the other major winners. HCL Tech, Mahindra

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

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.

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?



oriented keyboards for nearly three decades.

The newest Al 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 maker is fast

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 Al-specific key to launch its voice assistant on its now-discontinued Pixelbook.

replace a menu key.

squared logo design has evolved, but

the key has been a fixture on Windows-

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 inhouse 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.

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.

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

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.

green.

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

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

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

Suryakumar Yadav in running for T20 Cricketer of Year



DUBAI, Jan 4 (Agencie): 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

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 forthree 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-aiff.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' is 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 goalkeep-

er, 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 some-

thing 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

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 vou." 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

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

lunch after winning the

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 nineover 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 Prasidh 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



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 quarterfinals. 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 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.

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 NHAI 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 Batwal 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 Ulema 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 Manoi 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 manage-

The program aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills required to effectively respond to various disaster scenarios, including natural calamities, and other emer-

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

The Samalan was a concluding event of weeklong '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 nonlocals in Jammu and elsewhere.

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

Awareness lecture on Agniveer Scheme by ARO Jammu held

Top News Report

NAGROTA, Jan 4: The Agnipath 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 for 540 NCC Cadets 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

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.



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