

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



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BRIEFLY

Firing on army convoy: Search operation in Poonch enters second day

POONCH, Jan 13 (Agencies): A search operation continued for the second day on Saturday in a forest area near Krishna Ghati (KG) area of Poonch district where suspected terrorists opened fire on a convoy of army vehicles last evening.

As per a statement issued by the Indian Army, suspected terrorists fired upon a security forces convoy from a jungle near Krishna Ghati, at around 6 pm on Friday. There was no report of any loss in the targeted attack. However, the security forces immediately cordoned the area and launched a massive operation in the forest stretch.

Officials said that the searches are still underway in the area to look for the attackers. DySP Operations, Aijaz Choudhary told Greater Kashmir that police and army soldiers have been deployed on the Poonch-Mendhar to check every passing vehicle along the road.

Adani Foundation to support differently abled Kashmiri cricketer in his journey

SRINAGAR, Jan 13 (Agencies): Adani Foundation on Saturday announced that it will contact differently abled 34-year old Kashmiri cricketer Amir Hussain Lone and provide him every possible support in his journey.

Gautam Adani, Chairman, Adani Group saluted the courage and dedication of Amir Hussain towards the game and the spirit of never giving up in adverse circumstances. "This emotional story of Amir is amazing! We salute your courage, dedication to the game and the spirit of never giving up even in adverse circumstances. @AdaniFoundation will contact you soon and provide you every possible support in this unique journey. Your struggle is an

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Army's 16 Corps GoC briefs LG about security situation in Jammu

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: The General Officer Commanding of 16 Corps Lt General Navin Sachdeva on Saturday briefed Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha about the security situation in Jammu region.

"Lt Gen Navin Sachdeva, GOC



White Knight Corps called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhavan today," the White Knight Corps said in a post on X.

The GOC briefed LG Sinha about the present security scenario, it said Lt General Sachdeva also presented the LG his book on China.

Soldier dies while carrying out 'Operational Task' in Baramulla

SRINAGAR, Jan 13

(Agencies): A 24-year-old soldier has died while carrying out an "operational task" in a forward area near the Line of Control (LoC) in Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir, the Army said on Friday. It said Gurpreet Singh, who died on Thursday, was from Punjab's Gurdaspur and is survived by his mother Lakhwinder Kaur.

"Chinar Corps regrets



the unfortunate demise of Gnr Gurpreet Singh while performing operational task in forward area in #Baramulla Sector," the Army's Chinar Corps said in a post on 'X'.

"In this hour of grief, the #IndianArmy stands in solidarity with the bereaved family & is committed to their well-being," it said.

"On behalf of #ChinarCorps Cdr, GOC 31 Sub Area, COS HQ Chinar Corps & all ranks laid wreath and paid homage to Gnr Gurpreet

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441 fresh covid cases in India

NEW DELHI, Jan 13

(Agencies): India has recorded 441 fresh COVID-19 infections while the number of active cases has come down to 3,238, the Union health ministry said on Saturday.

No deaths were reported in a span of 24 hours, according to the ministry's data updated at 8 am.

The number of daily cases was in double digits till December 5 but it began to rise again amid cold weather conditions and after the emergence of a new COVID-19 variant, JN.1.

After December 5, the highest single-day rise of 841 cases was reported on December 31, 2023, which was 0.2 per cent of the peak cases reported in May 2021. Of the 3,238 active cases, a large majority (around 92 per cent) are recovering under home isolation.

"The currently available data suggests that the JN.1 variant is neither leading to an exponential rise in the new cases nor a surge in the hospitalisation and mortality," an official source said.

India has witnessed three waves of COVID-19 in the past with the peak incidence of

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No respite in sight as MeT forecasts dry weather in J&K till Jan 23



SRINAGAR, Jan 13 (Agencies): Meteorological Department on Saturday said that prevailing dry weather conditions are likely to continue across Jammu and Kashmir till Jan 23, with a feeble western distur-

bance approaching on 16th and 20th evening of the ongoing month.

The prolonged dry spell in the Valley was broken as Gurez sector in Bandipora district received light snowfall overnight even as mini-

mum temperatures rose a few notches in several places, officials said on Saturday.

A feeble western disturbance hit Jammu and Kashmir on Friday night due to which light snowfall occurred in the Gurez area in north Kashmir, they said.

Drass in Ladakh also received very light snowfall but there was no accumulation of snow, they said.

Jammu and Kashmir recorded a 79 per cent rain deficit in December. There was no precipitation in the first week of January as well.

Several parts of the

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Indian Army Unit showcases avalanche rescue prowess on LoC in Gulmarg

BARAMULLA, Jan 13

(Agencies): In a display of remarkable resilience and expertise, an Indian Army unit deployed on the Line of Control (LoC) in the Gulmarg sector of the Baramulla district showcased its exceptional capabilities in avalanche rescue operations in high snow levels and inclement weather conditions.

In a remarkable display of resilience and expertise, an Indian Army unit deployed on the Line of Control (LoC) in the Gulmarg Sector of the Baramulla district of North Kashmir showcased their prowess in



avalanche rescue operations and domination of the area during the winter snow season.

Daring harsh and challenging winter terrain, the unit seamlessly integrated avalanche dogs, an avalanche rescue team, Ski-patrol and an

efficient casualty evacuation mechanism into avalanche rescue protocols to ensure the safety of their personnel.

The heart of this training lies in the collaboration with highly trained avalanche dogs,

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Former model Divya Pahuja's body found in Haryana canal after 200 km search across 2 states

NEW DELHI, Jan 13

(Agencies): More than 10 days after she was shot dead in a Gurugram hotel, former model Divya Pahuja's body was found in Bhakra canal in Haryana's Tohana on Saturday. The Gurgaon police said the body had been disposed of in the canal in Punjab's Moonak area.

Pahuja, 27, was murdered on January 2, over five months after she was released on bail in connection with the alleged fake encounter of a Haryana-based gangster in a Mumbai hotel room in 2016.

According to the



police, the search for the body had been going on for over a week but it intensified after accused Balraj Gill, a lawyer at the Punjab and Haryana High Court who

was caught on Thursday, revealed that it had been disposed of in Bhakra canal.

"On Friday, we got the input that the body was disposed of in Bhakra

canal in Moonak. Teams were deployed in various parts of the canals as the body was expected to float from Moonak to other regions due to the flow of the water," Gurgaon Police spokesperson Subhash Boken said.

"We were informed by the local teams that the body was found around 10 am on Saturday and they are still recovering the body from the canal. It was an extensive operation stretching over 150-200 km of area as we routed each district and canal flow and deployed several

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PDD to install Smart Meters in Over 40,000 Distribution Transformers

SRINAGAR, Jan 13 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Department (JKPDD) is planning to install smart meters in over 40,000 Distribution Transformers (DTs) in the Kashmir area.

JKPDD Principal Secretary H Rajesh Prasad said, "JKPDD is all set to replace nearly 9,000 DTs that have turned obsolete or are out-aged."

Prasad added, "The



department is going to install smart meters in all 40,000 plus DTs functioning in the Kashmir region so that we have a complete chain

from feeder meter to DT meter to consumer meter."

He said that the department aims to measure

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Contact Person Mr. Sanjeev Kumar

9419143503

TENTH DAY/13TH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad and sudden demise of **Smt. Kanta Devi** W/o Late. Advocate Shamsheer Singh R/o Ward No. 01, Near Cooperative Society Kathua who Expired on 02-01-2024.

Tenth Day will be performed on 11-01-2024.

13th Day will be performed on 14-01-2024 at Ward No. 01, Near Cooperative Society Kathua.

Grief Stricken:-

Dr. Ravinder Singh- **Son**

Lect. Satinder Singh & Anuradha- **Son & Daughter-in-Law**

EX- Minister- Jatinder Singh alias Babu Singh- **Son**

Mobile Nos.: 94191-50074, 99060-98663



Smt. Kanta Devi

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform about the sad demise of **Shri Ramesh Kumar Raina** S/o Late Shri Shibnath Raina originally R/o Chowgam, Devsar, Kulgam, Kashmir on 7th January 2024 at Bhopal (M.P)

10th Day Kriya will be held at Khatlapur Ghat, Chota Talab, Bhopal on 16th January 2024 at 9 am sharp.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Sudha Raina -**Wife**

Son & Daughter in law & Grand Daughter

Romit, Akanksha & Aarohi

Varun Koul & Deepali Raina -**Son in law & Daughter**

Phoola Dhar - **Sister**

Asha Ji Dhar & Bushan Lal Dhar - **Sister & Brother in law**

Geeta Ji Raina & Moti Lal Raina -**Sister & Brother in Laws**

Ravi Ji Raina & Girja Raina

Munu ji Raina & Fancy Raina

Vijay Raina & Kamna Raina - **Brother & Sister in law**

Veena Dhar, Sunjay Dhar, Bharat Raina, Arti Kaul, Renu Pandith, Anita Dhar,

Babita Raina, Nitish Raina, Rohit, Rohan, Sheena, Bhoomi, Vidhya,

Shivranjini, - **All Nieces & Nephews**

Mobile Nos - 9425302538, 9753589936, 9419795215



Shri Ramesh Kumar Raina

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved **Shri Tej Ram Parihar (Retired District & Sessions Judge)**, R/o 28-A, D/C Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, on 3rd January, 2024.

Tenth Day shall be performed on Friday, 12th January at Lakshmi Narayan Mandir, Gandhi Nagar at 10:00 AM.

Kriya shall be performed on Monday, 15th January at our residence 28-A, D/C Gandhi Nagar, Jammu at 1:00 PM.

GRIEF-STRICKEN:

Sons & Daughters-in-law:

Shri Jagdish & Smt. Kanta Parihar

Shri Koushal & Smt. Asha Parihar

Shri Ashok & Smt. Suman Parihar

Daughters & Sons-in-law

Smt. Sushma & Shri Ravinder Kotwal

Smt. Sushila & Dr. Vinod Bhutyal

Dr. Sharda Parihar

Mobile nos.: 9899296036, 7006125123



Shri Tej Ram Parihar
(Retired District & Sessions Judge)

TENTH DAY / KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the sudden and sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Ram Kumar Gupta**, S/o Lt. Sh. Radhey Krishan, R/o Satani, Near State Bank, on 04-01-24.

TENTH DAY shall be performed on 13-01-24 (Saturday) at 12:00PM at our residence Near SBI, Satani, Dhar Road, Udhampur.

KRIYA shall be performed on 16-01-24 (Tuesday) at our residence.

GRIEF STRICKEN:

Smt. Savitri Devi (Mother)

Smt. Shashi Gupta (Wife)

Daughters & Son-in-laws

Meema Gupta & Rakesh Gupta

Arti Gupta & Deepat Mahajan

Komal Mahajan & Ankush Gupta

Rijul Mahajan (Son)

Brothers & Sister-in-laws

Sh. Vijay Kumar & Smt. Geeta (9419161228)

Sh. Jeevan Kumar (9898817453)

Sh. Deleep Kumar & Smt. Kamlesh (9419808476)

Sh. Keval Kumar & Smt. Kiran (9896695953)

Sisters & Brother-in-laws

Smt. Kanta Gupta & Sh. Sudesh Gupta

Smt. Usha Gupta

Smt. Babli Kumari & Sh. Kiran Kumar Gupta

M/S VIJAY BUILDERS, R.A. ENFIELD



Sh. Ram Kumar Gupta

10TH DAY/KRIYA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF & SORROW, WE REGRET TO INFORM THE SAD UNTIMELY DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED **SH VANSHAJ SUDAN** S/O LATE SH PARDEEP KUMAR SUDAN R/O 644-D SAINIK COLONY JAMMU WHO LEFT FOR HEAVENLY ABODE ON 5-1-2024.

TENTH DAY WILL BE PERFORMED ON 14-1-2024 (SUNDAY) AT 11.00 AM AT RAM MANDIR SAINIK COLONY JAMMU.

KRIYA WILL BE PERFORMED AT OUR RESIDENCE D-644 SAINIK COLONYJAMMU ON 15-1-2024 (MONDAY) AT 12 NOON.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt Prem Lata -**Mother**

Smt Kanta Rani W/o Late Sh Sunder Dass Sudan -**Grand Mother**

Smt Veena Bali W/o Late Sh Raj Kumar Bali -**Bua Ji**

Smt Kanchan Sudan & Sh Kuljeet Kumar Sudan -**Chachi Ji & Chacha Ji JKTCDC**

Smt Sheetal Sudan & Sh Rajeev Sudan -**Bhabi & Brother**

Smt Akriti Bali & Sh Parveen Bali (Airtel) -**Bhabi & Brother**

Sh Sushant Sudan -**Brother**

& Whole Sudan Family

Mobile: 9419132307, 6006869987, 7006772537



SH VANSHAJ SUDAN

10TH DAY (TENTH DAY/KRIYA)

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved late **Shri Rajinder Kumar Baru** S/o Late Sh. Ram Dhan Baru on 5th January, 2024

10TH DAY (Tenth Day) will be performed at our residence 319 Lane No. 2 Tara Vihar Paloura on Saturday, 13th January 2024 at 11 a.m.

KRIYA will be performed on Sunday 14th January 2024 at 12 Noon onwards.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Shrimati Bimla Sharma (W/o Lt. Madan Mohan) - Bhabi

Shrimati Shakuntla Devi (Lt. Sh. Jagdish Dutt Baru)

Smt. Priyanka Baru & Shri Rajan Baru - **Daughter-in-law & Son**

Moulik Sharma - **Grand Son**

And All Baru Family

Ph: 9103177770, 7780925884, 9906721243



Shri Rajinder Kumar Baru

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and sudden demise of **Smt. Vinod Mahajan (Guggi)** Wife of Sh. Darshan Mahajan R/o H.No. 42, Upper Laxmi Nagar, Sarwal, Jammu on 02-01-2024.

TENTH DAY shall be performed on 11-01-2024 (Thursday) at 12:00 Noon to 1:00 PM at Kotli Bhawan, Near Hari Mandir, Rehari, Jammu.

KRIYA shall be performed on 14-01-2024 (Sunday) at 11 AM at our residence H.No. 42, Upper Laxmi Nagar, Sarwal, Jammu.

DEEPLY MISSED AND REMEMBERED BY:

Sh. Darshan Mahajan- **Husband**

Sons & Daughter in Law:

Sahil Mahajan & Payal Gupta

Akhil Mahajan

Palvi Mahajan & Vicky Gupta- **Daughter & Son in Law:**

Sh. Satpal Mahajan & Smt. Prem Lata- **Jeth & Jethani**

Late Sh. Pawan Kumar Mahajan & Smt. Jyoti Mahajan- **Devar & Devrani**

Grand Children: Daiwik, Prashrey, Lavik, Anaya

Mobile: 7006654613, 9906341613



Smt. Vinod Mahajan (Guggi)

OBITUARY

With Profound grief and sorrow we inform about the sudden, and untimely demise of our beloved **Chand Krishan Koul S/o Late Hakim Prem Nath Koul**, Proprietor Chand Studios Muthi of village Peth Kanihama Magam - Budgam presently residing at H.No 458 Sector-2, Lovely Lane Vinayak Nagar- Muthi, Jammu on 09-01-2024.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed on 18-1-24 Thursday at Akhnoor Ghat and assembly will be held at Muthi Ghat near DSE-Jammu at 12 Noon, on 18-1-24.

IN GRIEF

Samast Koul and Saprou Parivaar of Peth Kanihama Magam-Budgam

Phone Number- 9419148738,7836858015,7889826594



Chand Krishan Koul

TENTH DAY /KRIYA/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved **Smt. Chanchala Devi** w/o Late Sh. Krishan Lal Dogra, who left for heavenly abode on 5th January, 2024.

TENTH DAY will be performed on 14-01-24(Sunday) at our residence (Hno.51, Mohalla Paharian, Jammu) at 11.00 am.

KRIYA will be performed on 17-01-24(Wednesday) at our residence at 12.00 Noon.

UTHALA will be performed on 19-1-24 (Friday) at Mahajan hall, shalamar road from 3:00-4:00 pm

GRIEF STRICKEN

Sons & Daughter-in-laws

Mr. Sanjeev Kumar & Mrs. Sheetal

Mr. Rajesh Dogra (Advocate) & Mrs. Sweety Dogra

Daughter & Son-in-law

Mrs. Neelam Mehta & Mr. Dinesh Mehta

Grand Children

Shivani & Amit Manchanda

Charu & Jaideep Mehta, Nikhil Dogra, Shivang Dogra,

Ritanshi Dogra, Prithish Dogra

Contact: 9419193000, 9419195349, 9460186825



Smt. Chanchala Devi

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, it is informed that our revered & beloved mother **Smt. Laxmi Shori** W/o Late Radha Krishan Pandit of Briarigan (Uma Nagri), Anantnag at present H.No. 113, Sector - 4, Pamposh Colony, Janipur Jammu left for heavenly abode on 09-01-2024.

The **Tenth Day Kriya** shall be performed on 18-01-2024 (Thursday) at Akhnoor Ghat and Assembly at Muthi Ghat around 11.30 am.

Grief Stricken

Daughters-in-law & Sons

Teja & Bansi Lal Pandit - 9018892224

Ashok Kumar Pandit - 7051735503

Desha & Rattan Lal Pandit - 7006199573

Daughters & Sons-in-law

Phoola & O.N. Koul - 8288819693

Vijay Raina - 9682116210

Rita & M.K. Koul - 9419120184

Grand Children, Great Grand Children

Samast Pandit Parivar & Relatives



Smt. Laxmi Shori

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved Father **Sh. Triloki Nath Pandit** S/o Vasa Dev of Mohripura Anantnag at present TRT Nagrota Block Flat No.11 Kandoli Nagrota. The **TENTH DAY** will be performed on 17-01-2024 (Wednesday) at Baderkali Mandir Thathwal Ghat and assembly will be performed at Muthi Ghat near Director School Education at 11AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN:

Wife : Smt Tathi

Sons and Daughters-in-Law

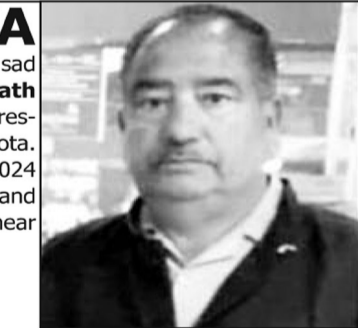
Sh. Raj Nath Pandit & Smt. Pummy Pandit

Sh. K.L. Pandit (Rinku) & Julie Pandit

Rakesh Kumar Pandit & Prerna Pandit

Grand Children: Aryan, Aarav, Krishna, Pranav, Paarth Pandit

Mobile No. 7889887586, 7006592293, 9682589553



SH. TRILOKI NATH PANDIT

TENTH DAY/KRIYA/RASAM PAGRI

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt Sansaro Devi** R/o Vill Kootah, near Radha Krishan Mandir.

Tenth Day will be performed on Sunday on 14th Jan 2024 at our residence at 12:00 Noon.

Kriya will be performed on Sunday on 17th Jan, 2024 at our residence Kootah.

RASAM PAGRI will be performed on Friday, 19th Jan 2024 at 3PM at our residence.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Son and Daughter in law

Lok Nath and Sureshtha Sundan

Ashok Kumar and Raj Rani Sundan

Devinder and Veena Sundan

Daughter and Son in law

Shakuntala and Lt Sh. Yashpal

Suman and Subhash Chander Abrol

Chander Kanta and Ved Verma

Sanyogita and Romesh Verma

Sunita and Surinder Kumar Verma

Grand Son and Daughter in law

Chetan and Upasna Sundan

Grand Children

Amit, Mridul, Dhruv, Sneha

Great Grand Daughter

Chetana Sundan

Contact details

9797470825

7780831041



Smt Sansaro Devi

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt Raj Rani Thotha** W/o Late Sh. Radha Krishan Thotha on 09-01-2024 presently residing at Govind Nagar Sector-2, H.No.306 near Reliance Tower Camp Road Talab Tillo, Jammu.

The **Tenth Day Kriya** will be performed on 18-01-2024 (Thursday) at Muthi Ghat near the Office of Director, School Education, Muthi at 9.30 am.

In Grief

Sons and Daughters-in-law

Shuban Ji Thotha & Laja Thotha

Ashok Kumar Thotha & Veena Thotha

Daughter & Son-in-law

Veena Nathoo & Bushan Lal Nathoo

Mob.No. 9797374727 & 9149917239

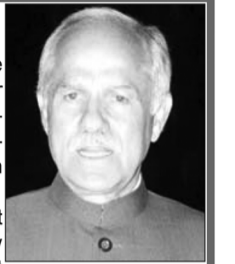


Smt Raj Rani Thotha

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform about the sad demise of our beloved **Shri Piaray Lal Dadroo** (erst-while Nai Basti, Anantnag) who departed for his heavenly abode on 06/01/2024.

TENTH DAY will be performed at Akhnoor on Monday the 15th January followed by an assembly at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education ,Muthi, at 12 Noon.



Shri Piaray Lal Dadroo

Ayush gets big boost in the North East

Union Minister Sonowal launches major initiatives to push Ayurveda, Homoeopathy in region

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush, Sarbananda Sonowal launched four major initiatives to boost Ayush sector in the North East India. A dedicated Panchakarma block, a first in the North East region, was inaugurated and dedicated to the nation by Sarbananda Sonowal at the Central Ayurveda Research Institute (CARI) here today.

A state-of-the-art Pharmacology & Bio Chemistry lab for Ayush, a first in the region, was also inaugurated & dedicated to nation by the Ayush Minister here today.

The Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal also laid the foundation stones, virtually, for the permanent campus of the Regional Research Institute for Homoeopathy (RRIH) along with the Integrated Ayush Wellness Centre to come up at Azara in the city. The Integrated Ayush Wellness Centre is a first of its kind centre in the country.



Sonowal said, "Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the traditional system of medicine has been revamped so that it adds strength to the health-care delivery system in the country. Given the proven results of our rich healing systems of medicine like Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Homoeopathy, Naturopathy and Sowa Rigpa, it is imperative that their centuries old treatments are incorporated into the modern medicinal practice. This is going to result in a powerful Integrated Medicine which will heal

both physical ailments and provide avenues for mental well being. The new Panchakarma block as well as the state of the art laboratories for Ayush are steps that will enable Ayush healthcare delivery system in the region, which will be particularly beneficial for the people of Assam and the North East."

It is to be noted that the foundation stones for the two buildings - 'Panchakarma Block' and 'Pharmacology & Bio Chemistry labs' were laid by Sarbananda Sonowal less than two years ago on 12 February, 2022, with an

aim to boost up capacity at Central Ayurveda Research Institute (CARI) in Guwahati.

Adding further, the Ayush Minister said, "Modi once said that our government ensures completion of projects that were started by us. Once the foundation stones are laid, it is evident that they are executed well within time so that they are dedicated to the nation. The inauguration of 'Panchakarma Block' and 'Pharmacology & Bio Chemistry' lab are yet another examples on how, under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra

Modi, we continue to embark on this journey for swift development of initiatives, ensuring speedy growth. I would like to assure you that Modiji's leadership will inspire us to deliver the permanent campus of Regional Research Centre for Homoeopathy as well as India's first Integrated Ayush Wellness Centre are inaugurated within its stipulated time so that we continue our tradition. We are also actively considering elevating the Central Ayurveda Research Institute into a national institute."

The Health & Family Welfare Minister, Assam, KeshabMahanta; the MP (Lok Sabha) for Guwahati, Queen Oja; the MLA (Dispur) Atul Bora; the MLA (West Guwahati), Ramendra Narayan Kalita also graced the occasion and joined the Union Minister, Sarbananda Sonowal at the launch of these big ticket initiatives for promotion of Ayush in the region.

Lohri celebrated at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhavan; NC prays for peace, tranquility



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: Lighting of sacred fire and offering of holy Prasad, comprising five main ingredients like Til, Gajak, Gur, Mongfuli, Phuliya besides Pop-corn marked celebration of Lohri at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhavan here this evening.

Various prominent workers joined the festival and greeting each other by wishing Happy Lohri and spreading the feeling of love and happiness all around. The entire atmosphere created a perfect ambience of Lohri with participants praying for peace and tranquility in Jammu and Kashmir.

Greeting the people, Sheikh Bashir Ahmed Provincial Secretary Jammu hoped the festival be a harbinger of peace and prosperity in the state. He said such festivals highlight the crucial need of fostering and further strengthening the bonds of brotherhood, which is essence

of all religions. Sheikh Bashir Ahmed described the festivals as repository of rich and glorious ethos of the state, which are being celebrated from times immemorial in a spirit of amity and brotherhood.

"Let us resolve to eschew the tendencies of hate and strive for harmony in the society", the speakers added.

Prominent among those present on the occasion included: Sheikh Bashir Ahmed Provincial Secretary Jammu, Bushan Lal Bhat Ex-MLC, Ankush Abrol Joint Secretary

Jammu Province, Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Abdul Gani Teli Chairman OBC Cell, Rakesh Singh Raka Vice President Central Zone, Dr. Vikas Sharma, Rita Gupta, Pinky Khalsa District President Jammu Urban Women Wing, Sandesh Shan, Mohd Aslam, Gurnam Singh, Som Raj Taroch, Tejinder Singh District President Jammu Urban YNC, Nitish Gowsami, Ajay Kumar, Sanjeev Kumar, Prabhat Kaphi, Veer Ji Bhat, Hanief Malik and Mohd Hashim.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system
Dy. Chief Materials Manager, N.Rly. Store Depot Mech. Workshop, AMRITSAR for and on behalf of President of India, invited tenders through e-procurement system for the supply of the following items:-

S. No.	Tender No.	Description	Qty.	Due Date
1	62245010	Slack Adjuster Complete for BVCM wagon, type IRSA-600 with control rod, RDSO DRG NO:WD-82064-S-01-RC ALT 12, Item No. 01 to 48. RDSO Spec. No.07-ABR-1992 Amendment No. 5 of Sept. 2016.	400 Nos	06-02-2024

NOTE-Above tenders with detailed description are uploaded on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in. The firm, who desires to participate against e-tenders, is advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which they would require to have a class III digital certificate from certifying Agencies authorized under IT Act 2000 by Govt. of India. Manual offers against e-tenders will not be accepted.
Tender Notice No. 13/2023-24 Date: 10.01.2024 149/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

BJP celebrates Lohri with religious fervour

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu & Kashmir, led by its senior leaders celebrated the pious festival of Lohri across the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

The main function of Lohri by the BJP was observed at party headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, where the senior party leaders danced to the tunes of traditional songs on the drum beats around the Holy Fire of Lohri. In between offerings to the Holy Fire, and exchanging wishes, the party leaders enjoyed the traditional mixture of popcorn, peanuts, rewri, gajak etc. on the occa-

wished the people for the pious occasion of Makar Sankranti on the occasion, on which the Sun God enters the Utrayan.

Jugal Kishore Sharma said that the auspicious event of Lohri corresponds with the beginning of 'Magh' month, which initiates only a day after Lohri indicating the finish of cruel winter and extended the message of Universal Peace and Love to all.

Ashok Koul said that it is always pleasurable to celebrate the "Lohri" as this gives the indication of brotherhood among us with the lovely change in weather in anticipation of good fortune for the whole world.

Kavinder Gupta, while



tion.

J&K BJP President Ravinder Raina accompanied by MP Jugal Kishore Sharma, General Secretary (organization) Ashok Koul, former Dy. CM Kavinder Gupta, Vice-Presidents Anuradha Singh Charak, Sofi Yusuf & Aseem Gupta, General Secretary Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, Devender Singh Rana, Vikram Randhawa, Tilak Raj Gupta, Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, Sanjita Dogra, Arun Prabhat, Ranjodh Singh Nalwa, Roshan Choudhary, Prof. Kulbhushan Mohtra, Balbir Ram Rattan, Ankit Gupta, YV Sharma, Prem Gupta, Sanjay Baru, Rekha Mahajan, Naresh Singh, Puneet Mahajan, Ankush Gupta and other BJP leaders joined the occasion at party headquarter, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

Ravinder Raina extended greetings to all the residents of nation. He said that this festival brings happiness, peace, and prosperity to every person. He also

extending the greetings of the Lohri festival to everybody, especially to the residents of J&K, prayed for the prosperity of Jammu & Kashmir.

Former Minister Sat Sharma, former MP Shamsheer Singh Manhas, Vice President Yudhvir Sethi, Parmod Kapahi, Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, Sanjita Dogra, Arun Prabhat Singh, Rajni Sethi, Adv. Rajesh Gupta, Kuldeep Kandhari, Keshav Chopra, and other party leaders celebrated the occasion of Lohri with religious fervor at the party office, in Kachi Chawni, Jammu.

Sat Sharma greeted people and said that "Lohri" depicts of our cultural ethos and exhorted them to celebrate such occasions together with all their near and dear ones.

Shamsheer Singh Manhas said that the festival depicts a profound love of nature, plentiful reap, and humans and also marks the realm of activeness among all living creatures.

DSS celebrates Lohri as mark of communal harmony



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: The Dogra Sadar Sabha (DSS) celebrated Lohri at Dogra Bhawan in the DSS complex with full gaiety and spirit of traditional inter-communal brotherhood for which the Dogras and their Dogriyat is known, various prominent persons joined the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the President DSS and former minister Th. Gulchain Singh Charak narrated the story of the famous folk lore

of "Dulla Bhatti" as to how this brave man from Muslim community saved the honour of a Hindu girl and cared for her as his own daughter.

He told that all the festivals in our diverse country are related to seasons and agriculture also and are celebrated together jointly by all communities without distinction of class or creed.

President DSS also explained that an allied event initiated by the DSS bringing to the fore-

front the distinguished ladies from the Dogra region naming the event as "Dhiyaan Dogren Diyan, Ek Malati" is also being celebrated every year wherein distinguished Dogra women achievers are honoured at the Sabha Bhawan.

Prominent among those who joined the celebrations were Prem Sagar Gupta (Gen Secretary), Dr Ashok Gupta, Ravi Singh, Rajesh Sharma, Vidya Sagar Sharma, Rajinder Gupta and Deepak Khanna.

FFMA reorganizes office bearers



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: A significant development, Freedom Fighter Memorial Association (FFMA) today reorganized office bearers to make important decisions about the association's leadership.

The new team include

Ved Gandotra (Patron), Rajiv Mahajan (Chairman), R.C Puri (Vice Chairman), Prof. S.S. Balwal (President), Th. Karnail Chand (Working President), Pritam Sharma (Senior Vice President), J.J Singh (General Secretary), Kamal Sharma (Vice President), Garu Ram

(Vice President), Rajinder Mittal (Advisor), Nirmal Kishore (Organising Secretary), Parbhat Kapahi (Secretary), Prof. R.P Sharma, Sewa Ram Rathore, Adarsh Sharma (Executive Members). Th. Karnail Chand shall also hold the post of Financial Secretary.

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

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
xenpwdelecdv.jammu@gmail.com
e-NIT No.EDJ/307 of 2023-2024 Dated 09-01-2024

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. No	Name of Work	Name of Division	Estimated Cost (in lacs)	Cost of document (in)	Earnest Money (in)	Time Allowed for completion	Time and date of opening of tender	Class of Contractor
1	Construction of DDC Office Building at Jammu Electrical Part.	PWD (R&B) Electric Division Jammu	37.38	600/-	74760/-	Linked with Civil Works	19-01-2024 At or after (12: 00 A.N)	"A" Class Electrical Contractor
2	Electrical upgradation / Repair of faculty Rooms of Department of Anatomy Govt. Medical College Jammu.	PWD (R&B) Electric Division Jammu	1.98	600/-	3960/-	Linked with Civil Works	19-01-2024 At or after (12: 00 A.N)	"A" Class Electrical Contractor
3	Electrical Repair Renovation of IEC Office GMC Jammu.	PWD (R&B) Electric Division Jammu	0.83	200/-	1660/-	Linked with Civil Works	19-01-2024 At or after (12: 00 A.N)	"A" Class Electrical Contractor
4	Const. Of Shopping Complex at Vacant Land Near CHC Ramgarh Electrical Part.	PWD (R&B) Electric Division Jammu	9.85	600/-	19700/-	Linked with Civil Works	19-01-2024 At or after (12: 00 A.N)	"A" Class Electrical Contractor
5	Construction of Sitting Area for Farmers adjoining Canteen at Krishi Bhawan Jammu Electrical Part.	PWD (R&B) Electric Division Jammu	1.48	200/-	2960/-	Linked with Civil Works	19-01-2024 At or after (12: 00 A.N)	"A" Class Electrical Contractor

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, 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.

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	09-01-2024
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 09-01-2024 to 18-01-2024, 4:00 P.M
3	Bid submission Start Date	09-01-2024
4	Bid Submission End Date	18-01-2024 up to 4:00 P.M
5	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	19-01-2024 at or after 12:00 A.N in the Office of the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Electric Division Jammu
6	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of e-challan through Treasury indicating Treasury Voucher No. & date and also indicating the name of work and NIT No. duly crediting to 0059 (Revenue) favouring Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Electric Division Jammu. uploading a copy of treasury challan/receipt. The original instruments in respect of cost of documents, and relevant documents of LI shall be submitted to the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Electric Division Jammu, at the time of allotment.
- Bid Security Declaration should be kept in the Bid documents as per tendered.
- 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 the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Electric Division Jammu. The date for same shall be intimated separately. No:- EDJ/15936-46

Dated:-09-01-2024
DIP/J-13820/23
Sd/-
Executive Engineer
PWD (R&B) Electric Division
Jammu

EDITORIAL

LOHRI-FESTIVAL
OF INDIA

Lohri is one of the famous festivals of India. It is the most popular festival of Punjab which is celebrated every year by the people of Punjabi religion. This festival is celebrated in the winter months. It is believed that on the day of Lohri, the day is the shortest day of the year and the night is the longest night of the year.

This day is celebrated as a farming festival by lighting bonfires, dancing and singing praises of Dulha Batti. It is a festival of Punjabis but today it is also celebrated by the people living in the northern states of India like Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, etc.

Lohri is the most popular festival of Punjab. There are many stories of celebrating Lohri among Punjabis like the name Lohri is believed to have originated from the word "Loi" (wife of Saint Kabir). Some say that the word originated from "loh" (a tool used to make chapati). Another belief behind celebrating the festival of Lohri is that Lohri was born in the name of Holika's sister. People believe that Holika's sister was saved, although Holika herself died in the fire.

Many people believe that the word Lohri originated from Tilorhi (a combination of Til and Rorahi). Farmers of the country celebrate Lohri as the beginning of the new financial year.

The history behind celebrating Lohri is very old. It marks the new year and marks the beginning of the spring season as well as the end of the winter season. People believe that the night of Lohri is the longest night of the year, from then onwards each day starts getting longer and the nights gradually start getting shorter. It is celebrated with great enthusiasm in praise of Dulha Batti. During the time of King Akbar, there was a dacoit who stole money from the houses of rich people and distributed it among the poor people.

He was like a hero to the poor people and helpless people, he saved the lives of various girls who were forcibly taken away from their home by strangers. He helped helpless girls in their marriages by paying dowry. Started celebrating Lohri festival in praise of Dulha Bhatti for his great deeds. The day of Lohri indicates the movement of the Sun in the direction from south to north, and its entry from the Tropic of Cancer to the Tropic of Capricorn.

This festival is celebrated by the people in India with a lot of happiness and joy like other festivals. It is a festival where all the family members, relatives and friends come together to celebrate. On the day of Lohri, everyone meets each other and enjoys sharing sweets. It is the most famous harvest festival which holds great importance for the farmers. People light bonfires on this day, sing songs and dance around it.

Golmal in the Maldives... & a new-style star shaadi

By: Shobhaa De

For the first column of 2024, why not begin with a New Year resolution? I have resolved to learn how to snorkel. So have thousands of loyal Indian citizens. Poochho kyon??? As with much else in our lives, we seek inspiration from our great leader, whose recent snorkeling shot (looking hot!) in Lakshadweep went viral. If he can, we can, we told ourselves after hastily cancelling booking to the "other" destination. The one that is so badnaam right now, even Munni is blushing. Amazing, what a well-staged, well-timed photo-op can do! Prime Minister Narendra Modi's snorkeling pin-up shot promoting India's latest tourist spot garnered more social media "likes" within seconds than all the bikini bod Insta posts of loved-up Bollywood couples chilling in the Maldives. So loyal are we to our beloved leader, even diehard Maldives fans promptly turned their tanned backs (and toned derrieres) on their fave luxe resort in the azure waters of the Indian Ocean, and started raving about Lakshadweep. Most hadn't heard of the pristine tropical archipelago of 36 atolls and coral reefs, situated 406 km west of Kochi in Kerala. Very few were confident about the pronunciation ("Dude... Lakha-WHAT???"). But it was suddenly cool to publicly declare undying love for a place with a population of 60K, which is not that easy to get to, and does not boast of sexy holiday options like the Maldives. Till last week, every celebrity worth his/her beach thong was busy bragging about a vacyy in Magical Maldives, flaunting the many, almost unimaginable luxuries available at snob resorts where

prices range from Rs 40 lakhs a night per secluded villa, to a more "affordable" Rs 10 lakhs at less posh resorts -- the ones shunned by international billionaires, the Russian mafia and Chinese moneybags. Over two decades, the Maldives entrenched itself in the high-end tourist circuit favoured by the very rich, the very famous and the very desperate. With resorts this remote, the Maldives provided a safe, discreet haven for global rockstars to take a well-earned break from the hungry, prying eyes of the intrusive public and pesky paparazzi. What can possibly be considered more luxurious than sun-bathing naked on a deserted sand bank with nobody around save a few disinterested seagulls... chilled champagne and Beluga but an arm's length away?

But wait... the Maldives just blew it! The Maldives messed up big-time last week! How utterly stupid of the three bak-bak Maldives ministers to badmouth India's Prime Minister? NaMo and his communications team can beat the best global marketers and ad gurus when it comes to optics. All the PM had to do was sit aaram se in a deck chair, staring thoughtfully at a dream-like, picture postcard perfect beach in Lakshadweep. Boom! War was instantly declared by those misguided Maldivian ministers, who felt threatened/insecure enough by the possibility of Indian tourists abandoning their country in favour of their very own island heaven. The consequences of their foolish outburst were swift and lethal. Mass cancellations and a "boycott Maldives" call snowballed across India, as leading movie stars handpicked by the PM's team raced to post pictures declaring Lakshadweep to be their favourite-est, most amazing holi-

day spot ever! Errr... one of them (Ranveer Singh) must have been in such a hurry, he posted pictures of the Maldives by mistake! So what? His heart was beating for Lakshadweep, okay? The others had collective amnesia and obviously forgot about multiple posts over Xmas, that showed them frolicking in the lagoon around their Maldivian water villas, proving they are as shallow as the lagoon itself. But our Bipasha Basu is different. She went ahead and posted pics of her birthday break in the Maldives, at the height of the boycott calls. I love her for it. Why be a hypocrite and follow the herd? The trolls were less forgiving!

Well, new converts to Lakshadweep will have to wait till end-2026, when the Taj Group opens two properties in Suheli and Kadmat. The impatient hordes will have to opt for a less luxe experience, which remain pretty pricey nevertheless, starting at 18K a night for a cottage in Bangaram. The bigger question remains: Will a tourist exodus to these remote islands and atolls signal an eco-disaster down the line? I came across a telling BBC clip that exposed the untold story about the Maldives and showed gigantic islands of smouldering garbage, an ugly sight that's kept carefully away from the tourists' gaze. The coral reefs there are fading rapidly, and a few have disappeared altogether. Tourists display zero sensitivity towards environmental issues and flagrantly ignore rules. Should we not be more concerned about the possible and permanent damage irresponsible tourists could inflict on Lakshadweep? Is it worth that monumental environmental cost -- just to score brownie points over the Maldives and "teach them a lesson" for the political

choices that the nation is currently making? Let them pick China over India! If it's Saudi Arabia or Qatar money and lifestyle the Maldivians want... hey, it's their country, their choice. Strategically, the Maldives is important to India. Let's work on strategy! Not wage a touristy war.

End note: I totally loved the blatant breaking of all desi shaadi rules by Aamir Khan's daughter Ira, who married her love, fitness trainer Nupur Shikare, and showed the world how couples can script their own weddings, and to hell with convention. Fans were delighted when the bridegroom wore a ganji and bicycle shorts at his baraat and jogged to the wedding registration venue, where the simply dressed dulhan was waiting in Kolhapuri chappals. "Go shower", she instructed her brand-new husband after the registration, and off he went with a big grin on his face. Then came a few yoga asanas, head stands and calisthenics on the morning of their traditional shaadi in Udaipur, with a pajama party for friends later, followed by a family singalong at which the father of the bride (superstar Aamir Khan) sang a medley with his ex-wife (Kiran Rao), as Reena Dutta, another ex-wife (the bride's mother), clapped from the audience. A Christian wedding and some more festivities later, it was a wrap. But not before the father of the bride had shed copious tears. How unique and fun! Hope it sends out a powerful signal to celebs who waste zillions on OTT destination weddings. The Khans and Shikhares powerfully demonstrated how the only thing that counts -- or should -- is the couple's happiness, along with mutual respect, understanding and deep love for your own. Bravo!

Victims of British Post Office scandal may get justice at last after 20 years

By: Farrukh Dhondy

The contemporary world is replete with cautions about Artificial Intelligence. There have always been sceptics and opponents of scientific advance. Medical science had recently invented the anti-Covid vaccine and some suck-nut-conspiracy-Charlies said it was a plot by Bill Gates to control the minds of humanity. They didn't say whether Gates was attempting through such control to make people buy Word. Or was he in fact an outer space alien in cahoots with giant lizards who wanted to leave their planet and settle on a depopulated globally-warmed earth...? (See? One can get carried away in this conspiratorial world!)

Even so, some cautions about AI are convincing. I haven't read any which say that Bill Gates, Elon Musk or even Infosys are inventing ways to control humanity. I have, using my limited common sense, gathered that AI will replace some human endeavour and put some people out of work -- as textile mills made sweating loom-workers redundant. I haven't come across opinion which wants AI banned. Experimenting with it, I asked it to write a Shakespeare sonnet about the UK's railway system. The result proved that AI is still in its infancy and not a hundred per cent convincing as a composer of sonnets in the Bard's style.

No doubt soon AI will be able to compose sermons each Sunday to be broadcast -- with holograms? -- in church, putting preachers out of work. I hope the Pope doesn't read this and make his priests redundant -- I'd feel guilty.

Technology has its pitfalls. Anyone who uses a computer has experienced some let-down.

The worst my computer has done is swallowed weeks of work: swathes of a novel in progress. I then spent wasted time looking for recovery methods online. Nothing worked. (Lucky readers --Ed)

But compared to the scandal that has been highlighted in recent weeks by a drama on UK's Independent TV network, my petty experience of computer-duplicity is as a teardrop to a tsunami of suffering. (Rubbish analogy --Ed... Little poetry yaar --fd)

This scandal is not new. It began in 1999 when the Post Office in Britain introduced a computer accounting system called HORIZON, which was manufactured by the Japanese multinational Fujitsu. These computer inventions were installed in the premises of the sub-postmasters who operated post offices throughout Britain's cities, towns and villages. These sub-postmasters were individuals and families running counters doing the post office's work -- selling stamps, receiving and sending out mail, parcels etc.

The Horizon computers, with operatives in the postal head-

quarters, calculated the financial plus and minus from these transactions. Now computers didn't, in 1999 at least, have a record or reputation for being malicious, though it's certain that AI is today perfectly capable of either being instructed to be, or even independently conniving to inflict malice.

Horizon seemed to have done so. Between 1999 and 2015 the Post Office was informed by Horizon that 736 sub-postmasters were engaged in swindling it of money as thousands of pounds had disappeared unaccountably from their computer ledgers.

The Post Office concluded that these sub-postmasters had pocketed the cash and demanded it be returned. The sums were so huge that in several cases the bewildered, innocent sub-postmasters, terrified by the prospect of being jailed, had to sell or remortgage their homes.

They were relentlessly prosecuted for false accounting and theft.

Under the leadership of a one dogged victim, Alan Bates, they started a campaign which has lasted twenty years and resulted in 93 convictions being overturned. In those twenty years, the false accusations triggered by Horizon and diligently and relentlessly pursued by the Post Office's senior officials, including chief executive Paula Vennells and even the Post Office minister of the time, Liberal Democrat MP Ed Davey appointed in David Cameron's

coalition government, resulted in miscarried jailings, bankruptcies, broken marriages, mental disorders, premature deaths and even one suicide.

Ms Vennells and Mr Davey told the prosecutors that Horizon was a hundred per cent reliable entity. Ms Vennells was awarded a CBE for her services to the Post Office -- such as they were -- in 2019.

At the end of last year after years of campaigning for justice by journalists, the satirical bi-weekly Private Eye and even the BBC, the ITV channel screened a drama about the scandal and historic miscarriages of justice and the campaign of the victims.

So, we have another instance of the power of the media as Hedgie Sunoch and his government have woken up to the fact that this historic scandal of British injustice must be put right. Hedgie has made all the right vote-conscious noises about putting things right and his justice secretary is contemplating a bill to quash all the convictions in one fell swoop.

There are objections as such legislation would be Parliament overruling the judiciary. But justice seems likely to be, tragically belatedly, done. And then there's the question of compensation...

Now, under a demand in a petition signed by more than a million people, Ms Vennells, a preacher in the Anglican church, has returned her CBE. What an active conscience!

KIA introduces Sonet at price starting Rs 7.99 lakh

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 13: Kia, India's leading premium carmaker, has introduced its most premium Compact SUV - the New Sonet, at a special introductory price starting from Rs 7.99 Lakhs (Ex-showroom) nationwide.

Unveiled in December 2023, this latest iteration of Kia's second best-selling innovation boasts 25 safety features, including an outstanding ADAS with 10 autonomous features and a robust 15 Hi-Safety features. The vehicle hosts over 70 Connected car features including 'Find My Car with SVM', which gives a surround view of car's proximity and Hinglish commands to make Sonet the most comfortable drive.

The New Sonet offers a diverse range of driving experiences with its availability in 19 different variants, including the 5 Diesel Manual variants starting from Rs 9.79 lakhs. Segment-best



ADAS Level 1, featuring 10 autonomous functions, is accessible in the top-of-the-line variants for both diesel and petrol engines.

The GT Line and X-Line variants in Petrol costs Rs 14.50 and Rs 14.69 Lakhs and the Diesel costs Rs 15.50 and Rs 15.69 Lakhs, respectively.

The new muscular and sportier Sonet retains its distinctive road presence with an upright body style. Packed with 10 autonomous features, like Front Collision-Avoidance Assist (FCA), Leading Vehicle Departure Alert (LVDA), and Lane Following

Assist (LFA), among others, the latest iteration of the popular compact SUV deeply resonates with the personality of modern Indian customers. Enabling a safer driving experience, it also boasts Robust 15 Hi-Safety features standard across the variants, consisting of 6 Airbags, Electronic Stability Control (ESC), and Vehicle Stability Management (VSM), to name a few.

With this introduction in Sonet, Kia has made 6 Airbags standard across its product portfolio.

Announcing the launch/price of the new

Sonet, Myung-sik Sohn, Chief Sales and Business Strategy Officer, Kia India, said, "We are once again premiumizing the Compact SUV segment by introducing the new Sonet. The old Sonet disrupted the segment with its exceptional design and technological prowess, and with the new Sonet, we are taking that winning proposition much higher. We are adding a substantial value-for-money proposition at the back of low maintenance and a top-tier safety proposition with the most advanced ADAS technology.

Additionally, it also proudly stands as the most connected car in its segment, featuring enjoyable Hinglish commands and futuristic features like the Surround View Monitor, all designed to provide the best Compact SUV driving experience for both shorter and longer commutes."

He further added, "We have observed that the Sonet is often the first

choice for many buyers, and therefore, we made a conscious decision to keep the price competitive to make the Sonet more accessible to them. With a compelling product proposition, we are "confident in winning consumers over once again."

Furthermore, the Sonet hosts 10 best-in-segment features, including Dual Screen Connected Panel Design, Rear Door Sunshade Curtain, and All Door Power Window one-touch Auto up/down with Safety, to name a few. Compared to the nearest rivals, the new Sonet has at least 11 advantages over them and is the most technologically advanced and feature-rich Compact SUV.

The new Sonet now includes an uplifted front facade with a new grille and new bumper design, Crown Jewel LED Headlamps, R16 Crystal Cut Alloy Wheels, and Star Map LED Connected Tail Lamps.

GDC Darhal celebrates National Youth Day

Top News Report

DARHAL, Jan 13: Government Degree College (GDC) Darhal celebrated National Youth Day on Saturday as a part of the Viksit Bharat @2047 on the theme "Arise, Awake, and Realise the Power You Hold" with great fervor and enthusiasm. The college campus was abuzz with a range of activities aimed at inspiring and empowering the youth.

The event witnessed active participation from students of all semesters, as well as the faculty. A painting and face painting competition were held, allowing students to showcase their artistic skills. Additionally, a poster making and Rangoli making competition on the topic of HIV/AIDS aimed to raise awareness about an

important issue affecting society.

To facilitate intellectual discussions, symposia and discussions were organized on various thought-provoking topics. These activities aimed to foster critical thinking and provide a platform for students to express their ideas, opinions, and solutions to pressing social issues.

A special highlight of the event was the live telecast of a speech by the Prime Minister, where he addressed the nation on the occasion of National Youth Day.

A mega celebration of National Youth Day in Nasik was also shown, adding to the excitement of the event.

Principal Prof Musaraf Shah extended his sincerest appreciation to all the participants for their active involve-

ment and dedication to making the event a grand success.

Dr. Mohd Akhlaq, NSS coordinator, played a pivotal role in coordinating the event and ensuring its smooth execution.

The judging panel consisted of esteemed senior faculty members, including Dr Ghulam Abbas, Dr M Saleem Wani, and Dr Taseem Ahmed. Their expertise and guidance played a vital role in evaluating the participants' efforts and honoring the best performances.

GDC Darhal takes pride in its commitment to promoting the holistic development of its students. Events like these are a testament to the college's dedication to nurturing young minds, helping them realize their potential, and creating responsible citizens for a better future.

Army organises ESM Meet at Station Headquarter, Pallanwala

Top News Report

AKHNOOR, Jan 13: An ESM meet was conducted on at Stn HQ, Pallanwala under the aegis of Indian Army and a total of 35 ESM and 30 Widows attended the meet.

The Army Officer in his address to ESM & Widows assured them of the continued support and assistance from Station Headquarter, Pallanwala.

ESM were also made aware of the latest advisories, policies and welfare schemes for ESM. The event resonated with the sentiments of the ESM who constantly desire everlasting association with the Indian Army.

The event also proved to be a suitable platform to honor selected ESM who have been proactively involved in the AOR and proved a vital



link between ESM and the Indian Army.

All the ESM and Widows were felicitated and Special token of appreciation was given to Sub Maj Farjul Singh (Retd) and Sep Puran Singh (Retd) by Commander during the meet for their continued dedication to the society especially for the cause of ESM.

While previous ESM

meets have also generated positive responses from the ESM, the gesture of felicitating them even after their retirement from the service added a special touch to the event.

Through this meet ESM and widows were provided the required guidance and assistance along with information regarding financial benefits.

Water shortage hits Nageenpora Kulgam, residents worried

Top News Report

KULGAM, Jan 13: Residents of Bungam Nageenpora Kund village in south Kashmir's Kulgam district have been facing shortage of portable water for the past few days.

Locals today accused the PHE department of neglecting their plight as the residents demanded immediate redressal of their genuine grievances.

The residents said that there is severe water shortage in their village for the past few days while the authorities are not paying any attention to their problems.

A local resident said that more than 100 households are without drinking water facility due to which the local residents are facing severe hardship.

"We are being deprived of water facility and despite repeated requests neither the concerned department nor the administration is bothering to address our problems," said another resident.

Meanwhile, the residents appealed to the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam and other concerned officials to resolve the issue as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) Jal Shakti Department, Qazigund, Muhammad Rafiq, said that due to drought and lack of snowfall this year, the water flow in the springs has reduced, due to which water in the village has decreased. He added that we are working on it to solve this issue at earliest.

RDD Rajwar organises farewell function for Sarpanchs, Panchs

Top News Report

HANDWARA, Jan 13: Rural Development Department (RDD) in Rajwar organised a farewell function for Sarpanchs and Panchs as the term of Panchayats and Block Development Councils (BDCs) in Jammu and Kashmir ended on January 9.

The function was chaired by Block Development Officer (BDO) Rajwar, Haji Ab Rashid, in which several Sarpanchs & Panchs from different Panchay-



ats of Rajwar, besides the officers, employees of RDD participated.

On the occasion, BDO Rajwar and other officials praised the efforts, made by Sarpanchs & Panchs, for the last five years, in their respec-

tive Panchayats.

During the programme, the Sarpanchs & Panchs were felicitated with garlands, while they shared their experiences with the participants about their tenure.

Army organises ESM Outreach Programme at Maitra

Top News Report

RAMBAN, Jan 13: The Indian Army continues to foster strong relationship with its Veterans, their families, and the courageous Veer Naris (war widow) as part of its ongoing commitment to support and assist those who have served the nation.

In line with this commitment, the Indian Army organized an outreach programme at Maitra, Ramban District, aimed at addressing the concerns and well-being of the Veterans and Veer Naris.

The event was attended by Veterans and Veer Naris across the district to provide a platform for resolution of their griev-



ances and challenges.

As a mark of respect and appreciation the veterans were felicitated during the event to express the gratitude of the grateful nation for their services. This interaction not only enabled the attendees to express their concerns but also highlight-

ed the Indian Army's dedication to providing practical solutions and support to its community members.

The Ex-servicemen expressed their appreciation for the Indian Army's efforts to organize such rallies and provide support to veterans.

DC Kishtwar Dr Devansh greets people on Lohri, Makar Sankranti



Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Jan 13: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Dr Devansh Yadav today extends heartfelt greetings to the people of Kishtwar, especially the staff and their families of the DC Office Complex, on the auspicious occasion of Lohri and Makar Sankranti.

DC Kishtwar emphasizes the cultural significance of these festivals, celebrating growth and prosperity and marks the beginning of the auspicious period of the Year.

Expressing gratitude to our resilient farmers, he acknowledges their invaluable contribution to the nation-building process. "May these festivals bring

prosperity, happiness, and joy for all," says Dr Devansh Yadav, wishing everyone a festive season filled with positivity.

Youva Rajput Sabha celebrates Lohri, launches New Year Calendar

JAMMU, Jan 13: Youva Rajput Sabha (YRS) team celebrated Lohri at Maharaja Hari Singh Ji Statue Near Tawi Bikram Chowk Bridge.

On this occasion Team YRS lead by President Vikram Singh Vicky celebrated Lohri in Traditional Dogra Style and congrats and gave best wishes to whole Jammu and Kashmir and paid tribute to Maharaja Hari Singh also.

Vicky briefed that Team YRS always believes in brotherhood and Team YRS always stand for the rights and betterment of J&K and said that everyone had to celebrate our traditional festivals.

While celebrating Lohri Team YRS also launched their New Year 2024 Calendar and congratulated everyone for the declaration of Holiday on 23rd September and also congrats for the inauguration of Ayodhya Ram Mandir on 22nd of January.

Team YRS including Former president Surinder Singh Gilli, Rajan Singh Happy, Rajveer Singh and Core committee members and all stakeholders who present in today's festival celebration congrats and gave their wishes to whole Nation and they pray for the betterment and brotherhood of J&K.

MRM welcomes socio-political figure Badhana, holds workers meeting

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: While welcoming newly joined prominent socio political figure from Poonch Maqsood Ahmed Badhana, Muslim Rashtriya Manch (MRM) J&K and Ladakh Organiser Gulshan Kumar convened workers meeting at Jammu on Saturday.

Maqsood Ahmed a prominent Socio political personality who hails from Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir joined Muslim Rashtri-



ya Manch (MRM) during an impressive organisational function in its head office at Jammu.

Expressing his views, Maqsood Ahmed said that MRM is the sole organisation that has a vision and capability to bring about Social and Economic transformation in the country. "The agenda of this organisation is to carry all the sections of the society together towards accomplishing equitable development of all the regions, religions and castes," Maqsood claimed.

Speaking on the occasion, Gulshan Kumar said that other organisations are playing divisive politics in

Jammu and Kashmir but in today's world, there is no space for fake and vote bank politics as people are mature enough to understand their designs.

Gulshan said that MRM is the sole organisation that is committed to serving the people irrespective of caste, colour and creed.

Prominent among those who were present on the occasion included, Choudhary Ali Mohd Chechi (Co-Convenor JKUT), Amir Iqbal Khan (Spokesperson and Media/IT head JKUT), Fayaz Ahmed Wani (Secretary District Kishtwar) and others.

Blood donation camp organized in Shopian

Top News Report

SHOPIAN, Jan 13: A blood donation camp was organized by Youth of Kashmir Blood Donors in collaboration with district hospital shopian at the main campus of hospital in which 19 donors gave blood to the needy ones.

The donors include Shahnawaz Ahmad famous truck vlogger commonly known as (Sethi Express) and Muneeb Wani (Wani Talks).

"Blood donation is a social service and people especially youth



should come forward to donate blood which helps in saving the precious lives", said Shanawaz.

He appreciated volunteers who donated their blood and also congratulated the stakeholders for conducting the blood donation camp for

a better cause.

These teams have always worked tirelessly day and night for the benefit of people.

Their main motive is to aid the needy ones. Doctors and paramedics were also present on the occasion.

Here's how television celebs plan to celebrate Lohri this time

Great enthusiasm
Rinku Dhawan

Lohri marks the end of winter season and is a favourable period for harvesting, which is especially crucial for farmers in Punjab. Typically, our families gather together and offer prayers. It symbolises the New Year and marks a fresh start. The celebration revolves around food and dance. This year, I'll be joining the festivities in my society, where people celebrate with great enthusiasm.

Folk tale
Nikhil Nanda

Lohri is celebrated with great fervour in Punjab is intertwined with the folklore of Bhatti Wala, who heroically saved Hindu and Sikh girls from being abducted by the Mughals. Bhatti Wala earned widespread respect for his actions. Even a song is dedicated to him and the two girls he rescued, Sundari and Mundari.

Sweet affair

Arav Chowdhary

During the festive occasion of Lohri, a significant tradition involves gathering around a bonfire, where a special sweet called revari is offered to the fire God. This ritual holds cultural and symbolic importance, signifying the collective celebration of the end of winter and the anticipation of a prosperous harvest. My wife is Punjabi, so we celebrate Lohri every year with great fervour. I extend heartfelt



wishes for a joyous Lohri and a delightful Makar Sankranti to everyone, hoping that the warmth of the bonfire and the sweetness of the festivities bring prosperity to all.

Banish negativity
Aneesha Madhok

I am so proud to be a Punjabi and celebrate Lohri with great fervour. Through the festival, I have always connected with my grandparents for they are truly

rooted in tradition. We all get together, usually at my nani's home, dance around the fire and get rid of all negative thoughts. Lohri is a time to pray and seek blessings for the family and loved ones. The festival heralds the start of the harvest season and the ripening of winter crops.

Great significance
Charrul Malik

I eagerly wait for the arrival of Lohri, a festival that holds a

special place in my heart. Since childhood, we have been celebrating this festival with great fervour, although in Mumbai Lohri is not celebrated much. Lohri, also known as the til-gud festival, marks a day of new beginnings as we pay homage to the Fire God. It holds great significance for farmers. This annual celebration serves as a connection to our cultural roots and I enjoy it to the core.

Sweet celebration
Mohit Kapoor

On Lohri, people pray to God for an even better one in the coming year. The story of Dulla Bhatti is also associated with this festival. We used to celebrate it with our parents during childhood. This time we are planning to have a small rooftop event. It is customary to distribute sweets, especially til (sesame seeds), gur (jaggery), and peanuts during Lohri. These items are considered auspicious and symbolise abundance.

Fond memories
Angad Hasija

Lohri always meant family time for me. It is all about positivity, vibrancy, and looking forward to an even better tomorrow. Lohri has always been celebrated in a big way at home ever since I can remember. It is an important festival for Punjabis. I have fond memories of Lohri.

Namrata Sheth talks about working with Raveena Tandon in Karmma Calling



Namrata Sheth will be seen playing the role of Karma Talwar in Disney Plus Hotstar's show Karmma Calling. The trailer was dropped recently and there was an evident rivalry between Namrata's character and that of Raveena Tandon.

Talking about working with Raveena Tandon, Namrata says, "I was incredibly nervous for many reasons. I went through several rounds of auditions before locking the role. I met Raveena ma'am at a look test and she was just instantly so warm and lovely that she made the entire experience very easy. It ended up being more fun than intimidation because she had so much expertise and professionalism."

Namrata adds, "Looking at her made me feel like I had to pull my socks up every single day, but it was all so inspiring. She is a fun person to be with on the sets. It was the most educational experience for me, so I was not nervous after a while." Karmma Calling releases on January 26.

Love lanes: Dua Lipa is dating British actor Callum Turner

Singer Dua Lipa is dating British actor Callum Turner.

The singer and the actor were spotted dancing at an after-party for the premiere of his show Masters of The Air in LA on Wednesday night, sparking speculation they were dating.

Now a source has confirmed the news. "It's new, but they're mad about each other," the insider said. Even though it's early days, they're clearly serious enough for her to come to his big event.

"She was at the premiere to support him," the source said.

The Dance the Night singer appears to have no other connection to the Apple TV+ limited series.

In addition to the war series, which is produced by Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg, Turner is also starring in George Clooney's latest, The Boys in the Boat, right now.

He previously appeared in two instalments of Fantastic Beasts series.



From traditional suits to shining jewellery to stylish footwear, ace your Lohri look with these tips by designers who have made many a celebrity shine

It's not just the first festival of the year, Lohri is so much more. It's a sign that harsh winter days are coming to an end soon and spring is about to make its way. It's a traditional welcome of longer days, a celebration of harvest season with bonfire, dhol beats, bhangra, gidda and Punjabi cuisine!

As we embrace the last phase of cold weather, let's do it in style much like our favourite Bollywood stars. For this vibrant festival, celebrity designer Khushi Shah of Shanti Banaras, believes you need to add your own special touch to the outfit. "It's a time to connect your past, present and future... a celebration of our culture and traditions. More than just about looking good, our focus is about feeling a part of something bigger, something that's been passed down through generations. While designing for celebrities or anyone for that matter, we blend our hand-woven heritage with the lively spirit of the festival."

So, whether it is an Anarkali suit, a lehenga, salwar kameez or saree, Khushi's tip for the special day is to, "Choose handloom pieces woven with time-honoured techniques. Silks that shimmer like molten gold, cottons whispering tales of comfort and brocades singing festive grandeur — let your fabric echo



the enduring spirit of Lohri."

Jewel in the crown

Lohri is all about warmth, togetherness and the joy of being connected to our roots. And we can't miss a touch of the jewel to the region's favourite festival, which symbolises

prosperity and community spirit.

"When styling with fine jewellery for Lohri, consider pieces that complement your traditional attire. Gold, diamond or kundan-polki jewellery is a popular choice, adding a touch of elegance and richness to

the ensemble. Heavy earrings, jhumkas or chandbalis with bangles, and a statement polki necklace can elevate the look. Balancing the jewellery with the outfit is key, ensuring that the overall appearance is harmonious and in sync with the festive vibe of Lohri. Incorporating traditional symbols like maang tikas can also add cultural significance to your ensemble, making your Lohri celebration even more special," says Gautam Soni, managing director of The House of MBJ.

Foot comfort

Any opportunity to dress is an opportunity to experiment, believes designer Aprajita Toor and she gives some cool ideas for your footwear options. "The flames of Lohri welcome light and vibrancy to the year, and the significance runs much deeper than just trends and fashion. However, one can hardly forget the hot pink ensemble Preity Zinta donned in the film Veer Zaara, a visual representation of the magnitude of celebration.

It would be interesting to see new takes on such classic styles. Dancing and celebrating to your contentment requires comfortable footwear and outfits like the traditional Patiala suits, which can be mixed with dhoti or harem pants, paired up with sneakers or gladiators."

Renowned classical singer Prabha Atre, doyen of Kirana Gharana, dies at 92

'Atre suffered a cardiac arrest during her sleep at her residence. She was rushed to a private hospital in Kothrud area of the city, where she was declared dead at 5.30 am'

Renowned classical singer Dr Prabha Atre passed away following a cardiac arrest at her residence here at the age of 92 early on Saturday, sources close to her said.

Atre, who represented the Kirana Gharana of the Hindustani classical music, had been honoured with all three of Padma awards by the Indian government.

"Atre suffered a cardiac arrest during her sleep at her residence. She was rushed to a private hospital in Kothrud area of the city, where she was declared dead at 5.30 am," a



source said.

Since some of the close family

members of Atre live abroad, her funeral will be performed

once they arrive, the source added.

Born on September 13, 1932, Atre was known as a multifaceted personality. Besides being a classical vocalist, she also excelled as an academician, researcher, composer and author. A science and law graduate, she had a doctorate in music.

She was awarded the Padma Vibhushan, the nation's second-highest civilian honour, in January 2022. She was earlier honoured with the Padma Shri award in 1990 and the Padma Bhushan in 2002.

Act of faith: Naqiyah Haji speaks about her journey



Naqiyah Haji, who plays the character of

Nikki in Star Bharat's show Shaitani Rasmein,

is in a happy space. She says, "I always wanted to be an actress and started my career as a model. I participated in many fashion contests, after which I worked in ad films with famous Bollywood actors like Anushka Sharma and Tiger Shroff. And then came along the show Shaitani Rasmein. Although I had auditioned for some other character, I was selected for the role of Nikki. But, I consider myself fortunate to have bagged this role. I have full hope that the audience will give a lot of love to my character."

The show airs from January 15.

“Appeasement Politics”: Anurag Thakur Jabs Trinamool Over Attack On Sadhus

KOLKATA, Jan 13 (Agencies): Lashing out at the ruling Trinamool Congress in West Bengal over the Purulia incident where a group of sadhus (seers) were allegedly thrashed by a mob, Union Minister Anurag Thakur said that “appeasement politics has created” such an environment in the state.

Notably, a video went viral on Friday that showed a group of seers being purportedly stripped and assaulted by a mob in the Purulia district.

“Appeasement politics has created such an environment.... The question is how Bengal is being driven by this appeasement politics. And why is there such anti-Hindu thinking?” Mr Thakur said speaking to reporters on Saturday.

Claiming that in 2020 a curfew-like situation was created in West Bengal to prevent Hindus from celebrating the foundation stone laying of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, the Union Minister



said, “Now Hindu sadhus were thrashed.”

“When the foundation stone of the temple at Ram Janmabhoomi (Ayodhya) was laid, a curfew-like situation was created in Bengal so that Hindus were prevented from celebrating the event. Now, Hindu sadhus were thrashed and even attempted to murder. The state government is silent. When media highlighted this issue some investigation was done,” Mr Thakur said.

Meanwhile, BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla also said that the Purulia incident seems akin to Maharashtra’s Palghar incident some years back when some Hindu seers were lynched by a mob during the Uddhav Thackeray government.

“Palghar part two was seen in West Bengal’s Purulia. Saints were beaten up brutally and mercilessly by the goons of TMC. Palghar part one took place under Uddhav Thackeray

(former Maharashtra CM). Now Palghar part two is taking place under Mamata Banerjee,” Mr Poonawalla said.

The BJP spokesperson asked, “Is it a crime to be Hindu in West Bengal?”

“Is it a crime to be Hindu? If today sadhu, saints are being beaten like this in West Bengal, what is the situation of law and order?... This is the shocking state of affairs in West Bengal,” Mr Poonawalla said.

The viral video showed a group of sadhus (ascetics) purportedly stripped and assaulted by a mob in the Purulia district on Friday.

The Purulia Police, however, said that there was a misunderstanding between three Gangasagar-bound sadhus with three minor girls over a “language problem”. The girls got scared and local people, alleging a kidnapping attempt, manhandled the sadhus and damaged their vehicle, police said.

Arvind Kejriwal gets 4th summons from Enforcement Directorate in Delhi liquor policy case



NEW DELHI, Jan 13 (Agencies): The Enforcement Directorate has issued summons for the fourth time to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for questioning in the Delhi excise policy-linked money-laundering case, official sources said on Saturday.

Kejriwal, who is also the national conven-

ner of the Aam Aadmi Party, has been asked to depose before the agency on January 18, they said.

The 55-year-old Kejriwal had refused to depose before the ED for the third time on January 3, saying the “non-disclosure and non-response approach” of the agency cannot sustain the test of law,

equity or justice and its “obstinacy” is tantamount to assuming the role of judge, jury and executioner.

The chief minister was earlier asked to depose on November 2 and December 21 in 2023.

It is alleged that the Delhi government’s excise policy for 2021-22 to grant licences to liquor traders allowed cartelisation and favoured certain dealers who had allegedly paid bribes for it, a charge repeatedly refuted by the AAP.

The policy was subsequently scrapped and Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena recommended a CBI probe, following which the ED registered a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

Seven-month-old boy mauled to death by stray dogs in Bhopal

BHOPAL, Jan 13 (Agencies): A seven-month-old boy was mauled to death by a pack of stray dogs in Madhya Pradesh capital Bhopal, police said on Saturday.

A video of the incident, which occurred in Ayodhya Nagar, on Wednesday, went viral on social media and was brought to the notice of the police and the administration, an official said.

The police exhumed the baby’s body, which his family had buried on the day of the incident, and sent it for post-mortem, he said.

The baby belonged to a family of labourers. Before the incident, his mother placed him on the ground as she had some work nearby, inspector Mahesh Nilhare of Ayodhya Nagar police station said.

A pack of dogs bit the child and dragged him away, he said.

People in the vicinity raised an alarm, but by then, the dogs had disfigured and severed an arm of the infant, killing him on the spot, the official said.

The child’s family, hailing from Guna, buried his body in a village

close to Bhopal, he said, adding that the police would register a first information report in connection with the case.

Meanwhile, an official said that the district administration has provided financial help of Rs 50,000 to the boy’s family, and another Rs 50,000 would be disbursed soon.

The Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) has caught eight stray dogs from Ayodhya Nagar. The district collector has asked the civic body to run a campaign to catch stray dogs, he added.

Mallikarjun Kharge named INDIA bloc chief at key meet, Nitish Kumar’s name proposed as convener

NEW DELHI, Jan 13 (Agencies): A key meeting of the anti-BJP INDIA bloc on Saturday agreed on the name of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge as chairman of the opposition alliance with the name of Bihar chief minister and JDU chief Nitish Kumar proposed as convener.

CPI general secretary D Raja, who attended the virtual meeting of the bloc, told The Tribune that the proposal to name Kharge as alliance chairman was accepted at the meeting.



Raja said though Nitish Kumar’s name as convener of the bloc was also proposed, it would be announced after Kharge consults TMC chief Mamata

also absent. He had nominated Sanjay Raut to attend but Raut could not join the meeting.

Kharge’s name was proposed and accepted by all bloc leaders as earlier suggested by TMC chief Mamata Banerjee and AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal.

The leaders also discussed the progress on seat-sharing talks and resolved to conclude these as early as possible.

A physical meeting of the alliance is expected during or before the upcoming interim

budget session to discuss joint programme ideas, strategies and issues for the 2024 Lok Sabha election.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin, who attended the meeting, said he would conclude seat-sharing talks after Pongal.

The parties feel the nomination of Kharge as chairman of the INDIA bloc will help galvanise vast sections of marginalised votes behind the bloc at a time when the BJP is actively pursuing a campaign plan to woo the poor, women, farmers and youth.

Bengaluru woman arrested for killing husband and projecting it as a case of heart attack

BENGALURU, Jan 13 (Agencies): Bengaluru police on Saturday arrested a woman on charges of killing her husband with the help of her lover and then trying to project it as a case of heart attack.

The incident was reported from HSR Layout area.

The accused has been identified as Nandini Bai, a resident of HSR Layout, while her deceased 30-year-old husband was named Venkata Nayak.

The police have also arrested

her lover Nitish Kumar.

According to the police, Nandini had called Nitish home on January 9 while Venkata was out. But he returned home and caught the two red-handed, following which an argument ensued between Nandini and Venkata. Following this, Nandini and Nitish hit the victim with a stone, leading to his death.

They dragged his body near the toilet and placed the stone there. She then called the police and claimed that her husband



had collapsed near the toilet and died after banging his head on the sharp-edged stone.

The police initially registered a case of unnatural death. However, the post-mortem report

revealed that it was a case of murder and preliminary investigation also confirmed that it was not a natural death.

The police detained Nandini and she confessed to the crime on being questioned.

The probe revealed that Nandini and Nitish were childhood friends and hailed from Sathya Sai region in Andhra Pradesh. They had an affair and Nitish would come from Andhra Pradesh to meet Nandini whenever her husband was away.

Woman burnt alive in Telangana as bus catches fire after overturning

HYDERABAD, Jan 13 (Agencies): A woman was burnt alive and four other passengers were injured when a private bus caught fire in Telangana’s Jogulamba Gadwal district, early on Saturday.

The incident occurred on Hyderabad-Bangalore national highway near Erravalli crossroads at around 2.30 am.

The Volvo bus of a

private travel company, which was on its way to Chittoor from Hyderabad, overturned and caught fire. The bus was carrying 40-50 passengers. While almost all passengers jumped out by breaking glass windows, a woman was caught in the flames and was charred to death.

Four passengers were also injured in the accident. Three of them were admitted to a hos-

pital in Gadwal while the fourth was shifted to Hyderabad.

Upon receiving the information, a fire tender rushed to the spot and doused the fire. The bus was completely gutted. Police suspect that the driver fell asleep at the wheel which led to the accident.

Police registered a case and took up investigation.

Delhi Police assistant sub-inspector, native of Haryana’s Mahendergarh, ‘shoots self’ dead at police picket in south Delhi

NEW DELHI, Jan 13 (Agencies): A Delhi Police assistant sub-inspector allegedly shot himself in the head while on duty at a picket in south Delhi’s Kotla Mubarakpur area, officials said on Saturday.

ASI Ramavtar and Sub-Inspector Prem Singh were deployed on night picket duty at BP Marg, an official said.

“At 3 am, Ramavtar informed Prem Singh that he wanted to rest for 10 minutes and went to sit in his car which was parked near the barricade,” the official said.

“When Prem Singh went there after some time, Ramavtar was found dead. He had a bullet injury in his head,” the official said, adding that his service revolver was found lying nearby.

Another official said Ramavtar, a native of Mahendergarh in Haryana, joined the force in 1993 and was currently posted at Kotla Mubarakpur police station.

The ASI’s family had been informed, the officer said. The reason behind the “extreme step” is being probed, he added.

Two girls on way to coaching class hit by train due to dense fog in UP, one dead

JALAUN, Jan 13 (Agencies): A girl died and another was seriously injured after a train hit them while they were on the way to their coaching centres here, police said on Saturday.

The two friends -- Varsha (18) and Kajol (17) -- were trying to cross the Ajnari railway crossing to get to their coaching centers in the Orai area when an unknown train hit them, they said.

Kajol died on the spot while Varsha

received serious injuries, they added.

Police, who were alerted by people living near the railway crossing, reached the spot and sent the seriously injured Varsha to the medical college in Orai and sent Kajol’s body for post-mortem.

The principal of the Medical College Dr Rajesh Kumar Maurya said that Varsha has been referred to Kanpur Medical College for further treatment.

“Love, Not Lust”: Court Grants Bail To Man Accused Of Raping 13-Year-Old

MUMBAI, Jan 13 (Agencies): The Bombay High Court has granted bail to a Maharashtra man who was arrested for raping a 13-year-old, saying that they had an affair and the sexual relationship was out of love, and not lust.

Justice Urmila Joshi-Phalke observed that the girl was a minor but had told the police that she voluntarily left her house and stayed with the accused Nitin Dhaberao. While granting relief, the court observed that Dhaberao was also “of the tender age of 26 years”.

“The applicant is also of the tender age of 26 years, and out of the love affair, they come together,” Justice Joshi-

Phalke said in her order.

“It seems that the alleged incident of sexual relationship is out of the attraction between the two young persons and it is not the case that the applicant has subjected the victim to a sexual assault out of lust,” the court added.

In August 2020, the girl’s father had filed a missing complaint. After the cops tracked her down, the girl told them that she had left the house willingly as she was in a relationship with the accused.

She told the police that the accused had even promised to get married to her, which is why she stole ornaments and cash from her house and went to stay with Dhaberao.

4 Killed After Truck Collides With Pick-Up Vehicle In Maharashtra’s Beed

BEED, Jan 13 (Agencies): Four persons, including a father-son duo, were killed after a truck collided with a pickup vehicle in Beed district of Maharashtra, police said on Saturday.

The accident occurred around 9.30 pm on Friday on Ahmedpur-Ahmednagar highway at Sasewadi village in Beed taluka, they said.

“The pickup vehicle was on its way to Patoda via Manjarsumbha in the district

when the truck carrying pipes from the opposite direction collided with it.

After the collision, the pickup vehicle got stuck to the truck and got dragged for some distance,” a police official said.

Three occupants of the pickup vehicle, identified as Prahlad Gharat (63), his son Nitin (41), Vinod Sanap (40), and truck driver Gahinath Garje (31), died on the spot, police said.

Massive Blaze At Mumbai High-Rise, 6 Floors On Fire



MUMBAI, Jan 13 (Agencies): A massive fire broke out at a high-

rise building in Mumbai’s Dombivli, and several fire engines

have been rushed to the spot to control the blaze.

Rescue teams managed to get everybody out in time, and nobody is on the six floors which have been set ablaze.

Authorities said the cause of the fire is still not known.

According to the fire brigade, the fire began around 11 am on Saturday morning and spread till the 18th floor. The building is still under construction and only the first three floors are currently occupied.

Taiwan votes in key election under Chinese threats

Voting began at 8:00 am (0000 GMT) at nearly 18,000 polling stations across the island, with almost 20 million people eligible to cast ballots.

TAIPEI, Jan 13 (Agencies): Millions of Taiwanese voted Saturday for a new president in the face of threats from China that choosing the wrong leader could set the stage for war on the self-ruled island.

Beijing slammed front-runner Lai Ching-te, the current vice president, as a dangerous "separatist" in the days leading up to the poll, and on the eve of the vote, its defence ministry vowed to "crush" any move towards Taiwanese independence.

Communist China claims self-ruled Taiwan, separated from the mainland by a 180-kilometre (110-mile) strait, as its own and says it will not rule out using force to bring about "unification", even if conflict does not appear imminent.

Voting began at 8:00 am (0000 GMT) at nearly 18,000 polling stations across the island, with almost 20 million people eligible to cast ballots.

In a Taipei school, 54-year-old professor Karen was the first in line to enter a polling booth.

"I looked into the ballot box and felt that I've never been as excited as this moment, because there is one candidate I believe who can bring hope to the future of Taiwan," she told agency.

A 70-year-old retiree surnamed Liu arrived early at a New Taipei



City elementary school, the same station where current President Tsai Ing-wen voted.

"I hope the next administration will do as well as the current one," she said.

Taiwan has strict election laws for polling day that effectively prevent media from asking voters about their specific choices to avoid influencing the outcome.

"Hard-won democracy" Results are expected Saturday evening, with the outcome watched closely from Beijing to Washington -- the island's main military partner -- as the two superpowers tussle for influence in the strategically vital region.

During a raucous campaign, Lai, of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), pitched himself as the defender of Taiwan's democratic way of life.

"Please go out and vote to show the vitality of Taiwan's democracy," he told reporters

before casting his ballot in a school gymnasium in the southern city of Tainan.

"This is Taiwan's hard-won democracy. We should all cherish our democracy and vote enthusiastically."

His main opponent, Hou Yu-ih, of the opposition Kuomintang (KMT), favours warmer ties with China and accuses the DPP of antagonising Beijing with its stance that Taiwan is "already independent".

Hou's KMT has said it will boost economic prosperity, while maintaining strong relationships with international partners, including the United States.

Taiwan bans the publishing of polls within 10 days of elections, but political observers say the 64-year-old Lai is expected to win the top seat, though his party is likely to lose its parliamentary majority.

The race has also seen the rise of the upstart populist Taiwan Peo-

ple's Party (TPP), whose leader Ko Wen-je has drawn support with an anti-establishment offer of a "third way" out of the two-party deadlock.

China censorship Located on a key maritime gateway linking the South China Sea to the Pacific Ocean, Taiwan is home to a powerhouse semiconductor industry producing precious microchips -- the lifeblood of the global economy powering everything from smartphones to cars and missiles.

China has stepped up military pressure on Taiwan in recent years, periodically stoking worries about a potential invasion.

Chinese President Xi Jinping in a recent New Year's address said the "unification" of Taiwan with China was "inevitable".

As voters cast their ballots, agency reporters spotted a fighter jet in the skies above the island of Pingtan, the

nearest Chinese point to Taiwan's main island.

The hashtag "Taiwan election" was among the top trending items on China's social media platform Weibo before it was blocked at around 9:45 am local time (0145 GMT).

Chinese warplanes and naval ships probe Taiwan's defences almost every day, and Beijing has in recent years also staged massive war games -- simulating a blockade of the island and sending missiles into its surrounding waters.

The Chinese military said the night before the polls it would "take all necessary measures to firmly crush 'Taiwan independence' attempts of all forms".

Hours before the vote, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met a senior Chinese official in Washington and stressed the importance of "maintaining peace and stability" across the Taiwan Strait.

Critics of the DPP blame current President Tsai Ing-wen for provoking China by insisting that Taiwan is "already independent", a stance that Beijing considers a red line.

Under Taiwanese law, Tsai can not run again as he has served the maximum two terms.

As well as a president, voters will also elect lawmakers to Taiwan's 113-seat legislature.

2 Indians Among 12 Killed As Bus Veers Off Bridge, Falls In Nepal River



KATHMANDU, Jan 13 (Agencies): At least 12 people have been confirmed dead, including two Indian nationals, in a road accident in the Dang District of mid-western Nepal, the police confirmed.

The identities of only eight is known as of yet in the accident, which

took place overnight at Bhalubang on Friday late at night.

"The passenger bus was en route to Kathmandu from Banke's Nepalgunj but it veered off the bridge and fell into the Rapti River. We only have ascertained the identity of eight passengers, which

includes two Indians," Ujjwal Bahadur Singh, Chief Inspector of Police at the Area Police Office, Bhalubang, confirmed to agency over the phone.

As per the police, an additional 22 passengers have sustained injuries in the bus accident.

The Indians have been identified as Yogendra Ram (67) from Malahi of Bihar and Mune (31) from Uttar Pradesh.

"The bodies have been taken to Lamahi Hospital for postmortem," the Chief Inspector added.

At least 10 dead in China mining accident: state media

BEIJING, Jan 13 (Agencies): At least 10 people were killed and six are missing after an accident at a coal mine in central China's Henan Province, state media said Saturday.

The accident, a likely coal and gas explosion described as an "outburst", happened around 2:55 pm (0655 GMT) on Friday in Pingdingshan, state broadcaster CCTV said.

Search and rescue efforts were continuing, CCTV said.

State news agency Xinhua said 425 people were working underground when the blast took place.

Those in charge of the mine have been taken into custody by authorities, Xinhua said.

Mining safety in China has improved in recent decades, as has media coverage of major incidents, many of which were once overlooked.

However, accidents are still common in an industry with a poor safety record and where regulations are not neces-



sarily enforced.

In 2022, 245 people died in 168 accidents, according to official figures.

Last month, 12 people were killed and 13 injured in a mining accident on the outskirts of Jixi city in northeastern Heilongjiang province.

Eleven people were killed in November in an accident at another coal mine in the same province.

And in September, at least 16 people were killed in a coal mine fire in southwest China's Guizhou province.

Winter storm to bring snow, winds, ice and life-threatening chill to US, forecasters warn

ST. LOUIS, Jan 13 (Agencies): Brutally cold weather could prove a deadly challenge Saturday amid a continuing wave of Arctic storms that have hammered much of the country with blinding snow, freezing rain and whipping winds.

Governors from New York to Louisiana declared states of emergency ahead of predicted snow and bone-chilling temperatures. In St. Louis, the National Weather Service bureau warned of rare and "life-threatening" cold.

The fierce weather blitzed campaign schedules in Iowa, the lead-off GOP caucus state. With a blizzard warning covering most of the state, Nikki Haley, Ron DeSantis and former President Donald Trump all shuffled their schedules ahead of Monday's presidential vote.

Near-record cold in Kansas City will make for a frigid NFL playoff game Saturday night when the Chiefs host Miami. Fans will be allowed to bring in blankets and first-aid stations were set up at Arrowhead Stadium. On Sunday, fans in Buffalo will contend with up to a foot (30 centimeters) of snow and fierce winds as the Bills host Pittsburgh.

The National Weather Service on Friday warned that a powerful storm would rock the Midwest to the Great Lakes through Saturday with heavy snow, strong winds and blizzards. Dangerously frigid weather would follow across the Rockies and the Plains, while heavy rain across the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic



would threaten river and coastal flooding.

Some areas of the Northeast had flooding concerns. Emergency responders helped evacuate some residents from their homes in Paterson, New Jersey, early Friday as the Passaic River started overflowing its banks. The new storm, combined with one earlier in the week, created flooding worries in Maine and New Hampshire, too.

It was minus 11 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 24 Celsius) in Bismarck, North Dakota on Friday morning, and forecasters warned the weekend could see temperatures reach 20 below F (minus 29 C) by early Sunday.

Black ice from freezing rain caused wrecks and brought Kansas City, Missouri, to a standstill.

At the Double Cross Cattle Company, a ranch south of Roberts, Montana, Tyson Ropp used an axe on Friday morning to chop through inches of ice covering a trough so that his bulls could get to their water.

"It's just Montana," he added with a shrug. But the weather won't spare any part of the country this weekend, forecasters said.

In the county that includes Portland, Oregon, which is more used to wintery rain than ice and snow, officials declared a weather emergency and opened severe weather shel-

ters for the homeless. The county and non-profit groups this week distributed thousands of jackets, gloves, ponchos and other items.

In California, a warning of high avalanche danger was issued for parts of the Sierra Nevada, including the Lake Tahoe area, where an avalanche at a ski resort killed one man on Wednesday. The same was true in Idaho, where a man was presumed dead in an avalanche Thursday. "EVERY state in the US has an active NWS watch, warning, or advisory," the National Weather Service announced Friday as it posted a color-coded map that showed portions of states under threat from storms, winds, floods, blizzards and avalanches.

Chicago was expecting several inches of snow through the weekend, with wind gusts to 50 miles per hour (80 kilometres per hour) and wind chills as low as minus 15 degrees F (minus 26 C) that could cause frostbite to exposed skin in just 15 minutes, the weather service warned.

Authorities said a suburban Chicago man had died of exposure, apparently becoming the first cold-related death of the season. The man, whose identity wasn't released, was found Thursday in the suburb of Schiller Park, the Cook County medical

examiner's office said.

Advocates worried for the growing population of migrants sent up to Chicago from the U.S.-Mexico border -- more than 26,000 have arrived since last year. By Friday, dozens were staying in eight parked "warming buses" to avoid sleeping outside while they await space in city-run shelters.

Angelo Travieso, a Venezuelan bused up from Texas, wore a light jacket and sandals with socks after sleeping on one of the buses.

"I slept sitting because there is almost no space left," he said. "The buses are also small and you practically have to stay inside because of the heating, because it is deadly cold outside."

Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker released a letter Friday pleading with Texas Gov. Greg Abbott to stop sending migrants to Chicago during the dangerous weather.

"At least pause these transports to save lives," the letter said.

In a reply, Abbott refused to stop what he called "voluntary" trips "until President Biden steps up and does his job to secure the border."

The South wasn't immune to winter's wrath. Severe storms with winds reaching 70 mph (113 kph) stretched across Mississippi on Friday.

The governors of Arkansas and Louisiana declared states of emergency Friday in anticipation of stormy and frigid weather, with temperatures plunging to subfreezing in New Orleans by next week.

Abbott, meanwhile, urged Texans to get ready for a chill with ice on the way Monday.

Turkey launches airstrikes against Kurdish militants in Iraq and Syria after nine soldiers were killed

Three weeks ago, PKK-affiliated militants tried to break into a Turkish base in northern Iraq, according to Turkish officials, leaving six soldiers dead.



ISTANBUL, Jan 13 (Agencies): Turkey carried out airstrikes targeting Kurdish militants in neighbouring Iraq and Syria on Saturday, the Turkish Defense Ministry said. This comes a day after an attack on a Turkish military base in Iraq killed nine Turkish soldiers.

Turkey often launches strikes against targets in Syria and Iraq it believes to be affiliated with the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, a banned Kurdish separatist group that has waged an insurgency against Turkey since the 1980s.

The defense ministry said aircraft struck targets in Metina, Hakurk, Gara and Qandil in north Iraq, but didn't specify areas in Syria. It said fighter jets destroyed caves, bunkers, shelters and oil facilities "to eliminate terrorist attacks against our people and security forces ... and to ensure our border security." The statement added that "many" militants were "neutralized"

in the strikes.

On Friday night, attackers attempted to infiltrate a military base in northern Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdish region, killing five soldiers. Four others died later of critical injuries. The Turkish Defense Ministry said 15 militants were also killed.

There was no immediate comment from the PKK, the government in Baghdad or the Kurdish region's administration. Turkey launched Operation Claw-Lock in northern Iraq in April 2022, during which it established several bases in Duhok Governorate. Baghdad has repeatedly protested the presence of Turkish troops and called for their withdrawal.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan expressed his condolences for the deaths of the Turkish soldiers on the social media platform X, formerly Twitter.

"We will fight to the end against the PKK terrorist organization within and outside our borders," he

wrote.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was to hold a security meeting in Istanbul later Saturday, Fahrettin Altun, the president's communications director, wrote on X.

Meanwhile, Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya announced police had detained 113 people suspected of ties to the PKK following raids across 32 Turkish provinces.

He added that four people were arrested after police identified 60 social media accounts that "praised the separatist terrorist organization for provocative purposes" or had spread misleading information.

Three weeks ago, PKK-affiliated militants tried to break into a Turkish base in northern Iraq, according to Turkish officials, leaving six soldiers dead. The following day, six more Turkish soldiers were killed in clashes.

Turkey retaliated by launching strikes against sites that offi-

cialists said were associated with the PKK in Iraq and Syria. Defense Minister Yasar Guler said at the time that dozens of Kurdish militants were killed in airstrikes and land assaults.

It wasn't immediately clear if Friday night's attack and the one three weeks earlier targeted the same base. The Rudaw news website, based in Erbil in northern Iraq, reported that the base attacked on Friday was located on Mount Zap in the Amedi district, which lies 17 kilometres (10 miles) from the Turkish border.

Meanwhile, Turkey's state-run news agency Anadolu said a senior PKK militant was "neutralized" in Iraq. Faik Aydin was targeted in an operation run by the Turkish intelligence agency, or MIT, some 160 kilometres (100 miles) inside the Turkey-Iraq frontier, Anadolu reported.

The PKK, which maintains bases in northern Iraq, is considered a terror organization by Turkey's Western allies, including the United States. Tens of thousands of people have died since the start of the conflict in 1984.

Turkey and the U.S., however, disagree on the status of the Syrian Kurdish groups, which have been allied with Washington in the fight against the Islamic State group in Syria.

LEAD Director met Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha at Vibrant Gujarat Summit 2024

Discusses possibilities for Industries expansion in Jammu and Kashmir

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: The Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir Economic Growth and Development Dialogue (LEAD) Director, Sunil Shah, held a meeting with Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, during the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit in Gandhi Nagar. The meeting included the participation of key officials such as Principal Secretary Mandeep Bhandari, Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir Industries Department Vikramjit Singh, and MD of Industries Department



JKTPO.

During the event, LEAD Director Sunil Shah organized a special meeting between Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and officials from the Gujarat Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Following discussions, it was agreed that LEAD would organize a visit,

comprising 10-15 industrialists from Gujarat, to Jammu and Kashmir in the near future. The purpose of this visit is to explore opportunities for establishing new industries on a larger scale in Jammu and Kashmir.

Ajay Patel, along with other prominent entrepreneurs, had personal meetings with

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha during the event. The discussions involved notable figures from companies such as Astral Company, Zydus Hospital, Shalabh Hospital, Hocco Ice Cream, Shivalik Builders, Officials of CREDAI, Officials of GESIA, a delegation from the hotel industry, and represen-

tatives from the Meghmani Group. During this period, MoU was also signed with Welspun and Kiri Industry.

LEAD Director Sunil Shah actively participated in all these meetings alongside the Industries Department team from Jammu and Kashmir. He informed that significant industrial delegations from Gujarat would soon visit Jammu and Kashmir to explore the potential for expanding industries in the region. This collaborative effort aims to promote economic growth and development in Ladakh and Jammu Kashmir.

Rekha Mahajan greets people on Lohri, wishes happiness and prosperity

Top News Report



prosperity, peace, and development in the state as well as in the country. Rekha Mahajan also extended his greetings on the eve of Makar Sankranti. Also known as the festival of kites, she said that Makar Sankranti is celebrated to commemorate the upcoming harvest season. Makar Sankranti is observed to pay homage and thank the Sun God, Surya for blessing the harvest

with useful and effective resources, Rekha added.

Rekha Mahajan, while extending the greetings of the Lohri festival to everybody, especially to the residents of J&K, prayed for the prosperity of Jammu and Kashmir. She said that the festival depicts a profound love of nature, plentiful reap, and humans and also marks the realm of activeness among all living creatures. Rekha said that the auspicious event of Lohri corresponds with the beginning of 'Magh' month, which initiates only a day after Lohri indicating the finish of cruel winter, she added and extended the message of Universal Peace and Love to all.

Dr. Jain suggests to celebrate birthdays with handicapped children

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: Red Cross Home for Handicapped Udhewala, celebrated Lohri Festival with Handicapped children, teachers & other staff of the home.

This function is being celebrated every year with great fervor and as a result of special efforts taken by PC Kapoor, it's President.

It aims at encouraging a better understanding about people affected by disabled children, learning about their true abilities, and being aware of their rights, dignity & welfare.

Most of the inmates are deaf and dumb, they presented colourful programme at par excellence.

Unfortunately, India is far behind in providing various comfortable facilities for the disabled.

Rajat Gupta, a social activist, Chairman Unique Outsourcing & Main donor of the home was Chief Guest on the occasion, Prof Lalit Mangotra President Jammu Dogri Sanstha presided over and Rajinder Gupta Chairman Tagore College & Dr Shreyansh Kumar Jain State Yoga Commissioner & State Chairman Indian Yoga Association were Guests of Honour.

Prof Mangotra threw light on the importance of the celebration of Lohri Function. Dr Jain felicitated Rajat, Rajinder, Mangotra & especially Satish, 1st inmate of the home & President Awardee.

Dr Jain appealed to the participants to provide children with disabilities with a loving environment. Children who are shown warmth & love grow up to be loving, warm persons.

A child with a disability who is shown warmth and love grew



up to be an adult with improved health. He also requested to celebrate Birthdays/Anniversaries among the disabled inmates and give them more time to make transitions & follow directions.

Many activities & tasks can be taught for some children with disabilities. You need to keep patience to understand when they are in trouble.

Representatives from Bhar-

tiya Yog Sansthan, Sarv Uthan Trust, Vichar Kranti Manch International, Confederation of Voluntary, social and Charitable Organisation, and others also participated.

Bonfire, on account of Lohri celebration, was lightened by Jai Lal Sharma State Gen Secy BYS.

Nirmal Vikram, a Dogri scholar, conducted the proceedings and presented a vote of thanks.

Rajnath to lead 8th Armed Forces Veterans' Day celebrations with rally at AFS Kanpur

Top News Report

JAMMU / NEW DELHI, Jan 13: Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh will lead the 8th Armed Forces Veterans' Day nation-wide celebrations on January 14, 2024, with an Ex-Servicemen rally at Air Force Station, Kanpur. He will also lay a wreath at the War Memorial to pay homage to the bravehearts for their supreme sacrifice and dedicated service

to the Nation.

This year, the event is being celebrated by the three Services at 10 locations across the country, namely Srinagar, Pathankot, Delhi, Kanpur, Alwar, Jodhpur, Guwahati, Mumbai, Secunderabad and Kochi. The event at Secunderabad will be presided over by Raksha Rajya Mantri Ajay Bhatt. The event in New Delhi will be held at the Manekshaw Centre and attended by Chief of the Air Staff and Chief

of the Naval Staff.

As a part of scaling up of the Veterans' Day, the Chief Ministers/Lieutenant Governors have been urged to celebrate the day in their respective States/Union Territories.

During the event, the Veterans will be felicitated with a medal/souvenir/recognition certificate etc. As part of the celebrations, 'We for Veterans' Anthem, an ode to the Veterans, will also be played.

The Armed Forces Veterans' Day is celebrated on 14th January every year as it was on this day in 1953 that the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army Field Marshal KM Cariappa, who led the forces to victory in the 1947 war, formally retired from the Service.

The day was first celebrated in 2016 and it is commemorated every year since by hosting such interactive events in the honour of the Ex-Servicemen.

8-year old boy gets new lease of life post MT for rare case of brain stroke

Top News Report

MOHALI, Jan 13: An 8-year old boy got a new lease of life after he underwent a successful Mechanical Thrombectomy (MT) for a rare case of brain stroke among kids at Max Hospital, Mohali recently.

The kid was unable to speak when he woke up in the morning. He was rushed to a nearby health center from there he was brought to Max due to his deteriorating condition. After a thorough evaluation of the child by a team including neurology, pediatrics and interventional radiology experts, it was decided to perform MT. The complex interventional radiology procedure went well and the child is doing perfectly fine, started his daily routine including going to school and doing his all routine work as usual.

Explaining this unusual and rare occurring of brain stroke in kid, Dr Sanjay Mishra- director neurology at Max said that pediatric stroke is a rare condition affecting one in every 4,000 newborns and an additional 2,000 older children each year.

He said, "Strokes are less common in babies than in adults, but they do happen. Babies have a higher risk than teenagers. Babies have strokes for different reasons than adults. Premature babies may have brain bleeds because their blood vessels are very fragile. Babies have blood that clots more easily than older kids, which can cause strokes in the weeks around birth."

Blood diseases like sickle cell or hemophilia, can also cause strokes. Genetic diseases that affect the blood vessels or the blood can cause strokes in kids of any age. Other children might have a stroke after injuries to the head or neck if they damage the blood vessels inside. Rarely, infections can create narrowing of the blood vessels in the brain and cause a stroke.

Children with heart problems are also at risk, said Dr Mishra.

Talking about common symptoms of stroke in babies, Dr Tegbir Singh Sidhu- senior consultant interventional radiology explained that it is sometimes hard to

tell if a baby is having a stroke because babies and younger kids can't always tell us what's happening.

In infants, the symptoms can be seizures that keep happening in one part of the body, and sleepiness that is so severe that a baby won't wake up to feed normally. The weakness or stiffness on one side of the body or in one arm or leg can be a sign, he informed.

Meanwhile in children, the symptoms are sudden weakness on one side of the face and body, or not using one side of the body normally, falling to one side repeatedly, difficulty talking, slurred speech ("like they are drunk"), no words coming out, or words that do not make sense, loss of feeling in one side of the body or face, vertigo ("feeling like the room is spinning or moving") with balance problems and difficulty walking or double vision and sudden, very bad headache that is different from your child's normal headaches. All these symptoms need to be checked immediately and addressed by an expert.

FROM PAGE 1

Soldier dies while carrying out 'Operational Task' in Baramulla

Singh of 18 RR Bn, who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty on 11 Jan 2024. Our deepest condolences to the bereaved family," the Army said.

No respite in sight as MeT forecasts dry weather in J&K till Jan 23

Valley saw a rise in minimum temperatures due to cloudy skies. Night temperatures settled several degrees above the normal for this time of the season.

Srinagar city recorded a minimum temperature of 0.2 degrees Celsius on Friday night, up from the previous night's minus 4 degrees Celsius.

Qazigund recorded a low of minus 2 degrees. The ski resort of Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 1 degree Celsius — up from minus 3.2 degrees Celsius on Thursday night.

Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district, which serves as one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath Yatra, recorded a minimum temperature of minus 0.6 degrees Celsius — up from minus 5.3 degrees Celsius the previous night.

The minimum temperature in Kokernag town settled at minus 1.2 degrees Celsius, while it was minus 0.3 degrees Celsius in Kupwara.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of

'Chilla-i-Kalan', a 40-day harsh winter period during which a cold wave sweeps the region and temperatures drop considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies as well as water in pipes.

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

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

441 fresh covid cases in India

daily cases and deaths being reported during the Delta wave during April-June 2021. At its peak, 4,14,188 cases and 3,915 deaths were reported on May 7, 2021.

Since the pandemic began in early 2020, more than 4.5 crore people have been infected and over 5.3 lakh have died across the country.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease stands at over 4.4 crore with a national recovery rate of 98.81 per cent, according to the ministry's website.

According to the website, 220.67 crore doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in the country so far.

Indian Army Unit showcases avalanche

rescue prowess on LoC in Gulmarg

adept at locating buried individuals under snow. These canine heroes, working in tandem with the Avalanche Rescue Team, navigate treacherous snow-covered landscapes to swiftly identify and pinpoint potential avalanche victims.

The Ski-Patrol, specially trained and equipped with avalanche safety gear, demonstrated their mastery in alpine environments, effectively reaching remote locations where traditional means might fall short. Their agility and skill were paramount in accessing areas inaccessible to standard rescue teams.

Additionally, the unit showcased a streamlined casualty evacuation process, ensuring that any injured personnel are rapidly and safely transported to the nearest available medical facilities.

This comprehensive approach not only reinforces the unit's commitment to the safety and well-being of its personnel but also highlights their proficiency in handling complex scenarios, particularly in the unforgiving winter conditions of the LoC.

This awe-inspiring demonstration not only reinforces the military's dedication to excellence but also sheds light on the crucial role played by specialized units in ensuring the security and welfare of our forces in challenging environments.

PDD to install Smart Meters in Over 40,000 Distribution

Transformers

the energy right from the source to make it more accountable.

"KPDCL currently operates approximately 40,000 Distribution Transformers (DTs). Additionally, there are proposed plans to add 9,000 DTs under the RDSS. Among these DTs, 10,000 are to have smart meters installed under the PMDP, while the remaining DTs covered under RDSS," reads an official document.

It also states that the primary objective of implementing smart meters at the DT level is to enable accurate energy accounting and monitoring.

The Principal Secretary said, "The 10,000 DTs under PMDP have not been started yet because it is being covered under RDSS of which tendering has been done and installation have been initiated."

Former model Divya Pahuja's body found in Haryana canal after 200 km search across 2 states

teams in each region through which the canal flows," said Assistant Commissioner of Police (Crime) Varun Dahiya. He added that the body will be sent to Fatehabad for postmortem.

Shamser Singh, DSP Tohana, said that the family of the victim has been informed about it. "Gurgaon Police's crime team, NDRF and a team from Tohana are at the

site to recover the body. We identified her by the tattoo on her right shoulder," the DSP added. According to police, during the investigation, it was found that Gill, a resident of Panchkula Sector 5, and Ravi Banga, a resident of Gurudwara Road, Model Town in Hisar, were involved in Pahuja's murder. The main accused Abhijeet Singh had directed Gill and Banga to dispose of the body, the police added.

Five people have been arrested in the case so far — Singh, the owner of City Point Hotel in Sector 14 where Pahuja was killed; hotel staff Omprakash and Hemraj, who allegedly helped Singh move the body; Megha, who allegedly helped Singh dispose of the body; and Gill, who was caught at Kolkata airport on Thursday evening.

Adani Foundation to support differently abled Kashmiri cricketer in his journey

inspiration for all of us," Gautam Adani said in a post on X. Notably a 34-year-old differently-abled cricketer Amir hails from Waghama village of Bijbehara in south Kashmir's Anantnag. He currently captains Jammu & Kashmir's Para cricket team, and has been playing cricket professionally since 2013 after a teacher discovered his crickering talent and introduced him to Para cricket. Amir bowls using his feet and bats by holding the bat between his shoulder and neck. Amir lost both his arms in an accident at his father's mill when he was eight years old.

We have strong pipeline of leadership: Wipro CEO

Recently, CFO Jatin Dalal exited the firm and joined rival Cognizant. The company has initiated legal proceedings against him and demanded Rs 25 crore in damages.

BENGALURU, Jan 13 (Agencies): Wipro has seen at least 10 top-level exits in 2023 alone and speaking about leadership churn, Wipro CEO and MD Thierry Delaporte said it is a part of our strategy.

Addressing the media, he said, "If you go back to our strategy that we elaborated in October 2020, this was precisely part of the strategy to acquire, enhance, grow, build and invest in talent, in particular leadership talent. We have a



strong leadership team today and a strong pipeline of leadership."

Recently, CFO Jatin Dalal exited the firm and joined rival Cognizant. The company has initiated legal proceed-

ings against him and demanded Rs 25 crore in damages. Wipro has also filed a complaint against Mohd Haque, a former senior vice president and head of healthcare and medi-

cal devices- Americas, alleging a violation of the non-compete clause in his employment contract. He also joined Cognizant recently.

Though the management did not comment on particular cases, it said that all of us have contractual obligations. "We are not against any individuals going anywhere, it is about contractual obligation," Saurabh Govil, Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO), Wipro, said.

Tata buys Capital Foods for Rs 5,100 cr

NEW DELHI, Jan 13 (Agencies): Tata Consumer Products has signed a definitive agreement to acquire 100% equity shares of Capital Foods, owner of the brands 'Ching's Secret' and Smith & Jones', for an enterprise value of Rs 5,100 crore.

In all, 75% of the equity shareholding will be acquired upfront and the balance 25% shareholding will be acquired within the next three years. With this the Tata Group company managed to outdo consumer-goods giants such as ITC, Nestle HUL and Kraft Heinz which were also in the race to acquire Capital Foods.

Sunil D'Souza, MD & CEO, Tata Consumer Products said, "We believe this is a good



strategic and financial fit. It will open up significant market opportunities in the fast-growing non-Indian cuisines segment, leveraging the sales and distribution platform that we have built...This transaction will accelerate momentum in our business and is margin accretive to our business."

Capital Foods has strong umbrella platform brands with a portfolio of unique products for in-home consumption

in fast growing categories. Ching's Secret is a market leader in Desi Chinese across its product categories - Chutneys, Blended Masalas, Sauces and Soups. Smith & Jones is a fast-growing brand catering to in-home cooking of Italian and other western cuisines. The overall size of the categories in which Capital Foods operates in is estimated at Rs 21,400 crore.

This acquisition now pits Tata against Nes-

tle's Maggi, the market leader in Desi Chinese segment. Ajay Gupta, Founder of Capital Foods said, "The journey ahead is going to be a giant leap for us, full of endless possibilities and definitely exhilarating!" Gupta had founded his company in 1996 and currently holds about a 9.45% stake while the rest is held by private equity funds General Atlantic and Artal Asia.

75% shareholding to be acquired upfront. 75% of the equity shareholding will be acquired upfront and balance 25% will be acquired within the next three years. With this the Tata Group company managed to outdo consumer goods giants such as ITC, Nestle HUL and Kraft Heinz which were also in the race

Double whammy for economy: India's inflation rises to 5.69 pc in December; factory output slows to 8-month low of 2.4 pc in November

NEW DELHI, Jan 13 (Agencies): In a double whammy for the economy, retail inflation soared to a four-month high of 5.69 per cent in December, while industrial production fell to an 8-month low of 2.4 per cent in November, according to a set of government data.

The annual retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose, mainly due to a spurt in prices of vegetables, pulses and spices, as per the data.

The inflation was 5.55 per cent in November 2023 and 5.72 per cent

in the year-ago month (December 2022).

As per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), the rate of price rise in the food basket, which constitutes nearly half of the CPI, increased to 9.53 per cent in December against 8.7 per cent in the preceding month and 4.19 per cent in December 2022.

The previous high inflation was recorded at 6.83 per cent in August this fiscal.

As regards the industrial output measured in terms of the Index

of Industrial Production (IIP), the growth decelerated to 2.4 per cent in November, the lowest level in the current fiscal.

The IIP for October 2023 was revised to 11.6 per cent from provisional estimates of 11.7 released last month. It was 7.6 per cent in November 2022.

The previous low of IIP was at 1.9 per cent in March 2023.

The deceleration in the growth of IIP during November was mainly on account of poor show by the manufacturing sector, which reported

a growth of 1.2 per cent during the month compared to 6.7 per cent a year ago.

The power generation growth also slowed to 5.8 per cent in November 2023 compared to 12.7 per cent growth in the year-ago period.

Mining output growth came down to 6.8 per cent in the month under review from 9.7 per cent growth a year ago.

As per use-based classification, the capital goods segment contracted 1.1 per cent in November this year compared to a growth

of 20.7 per cent in the year-ago month.

Consumer durables output during the month declined by 5.4 per cent against 5 per cent growth a year ago.

Consumer non-durable goods output contracted by 3.6 per cent compared to a 10 per cent expansion a year earlier.

Infrastructure/construction goods reported a marginal growth of 1.5 per cent against a 14.3 per cent expansion.

The data also showed that the output of primary goods logged 8.4 per cent growth in the

month compared to 4.8 per cent in the year-ago period.

The intermediate goods output in November remained flat at 3.5 per cent.

The latest CPI data showed that inflation in the vegetable segment was 27.64 per cent on an annual basis, followed by 'pulses and products' at 20.73 per cent and spices at 19.69 per cent.

However, prices of 'oil and fats' declined by 14.96 per cent.

The retail inflation was higher in rural areas at

5.93 per cent in December, while it was 5.46 per cent in urban India.

However, the inflation in the food basket was lower in rural areas compared to urban centres.

Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist, Icmra, said the sequential uptick in the headline CPI inflation in December 2023 was entirely led by the food and beverages segment, with all the other sub-groups either reporting an easing or similar year-on-year prints compared to the previous month.

"Within the food seg-

ment, vegetables were expectedly the main culprit, even as seven of the 12 sub-segments witnessed a moderation in their year-on-year inflation print in the month," she said.

The Reserve Bank of India has been tasked by the government to ensure retail inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

According to the NSO data, the lowest inflation was witnessed in Delhi at 2.95 per cent and the highest in Odisha at 8.73 per cent.

Lab-grown retinas give clue why we see colours which dogs or cats can't

NEW YORK, Jan 13 (Agencies): With human retinas grown in a petri dish, researchers have discovered how an offshoot of vitamin A generates the specialized cells that enable us to see millions of colours an ability that dogs, cats and other mammals do not possess.

The findings, published in the journal PLOS Biology, increase understanding of colour blindness, age-related vision loss, and other diseases linked to photoreceptor cells.

They also demonstrate how genes instruct the human retina to make specific color-sensing cells, a process scientists thought was controlled by thyroid hormones.

"These retinal organ-

oids allowed us for the first time to study this very human-specific trait," said author Robert Johnston, an associate professor of biology. "It's a huge question about what makes us human, what makes us different."

By tweaking the cellular properties of the organoids, the research team found that a molecule called retinoic acid determines whether a cone will specialize in sensing red or green light.

Only humans with normal vision and closely related primates develop the red sensor.

The team found that high levels of retinoic acid in early development of the organoids correlated with higher ratios of green cones.



Similarly, low levels of the acid changed the retina's genetic instructions and generated red cones later in development.

"There still might be some randomness to it, but our big finding is that you make retinoic acid early in development," Johnston said. "This timing really matters for learning and understanding how these

cone cells are made."

Green and red cone cells are remarkably similar except for a protein called opsin, which detects light and tells the brain what colors people see.

"Because we can control in organoids the population of green and red cells, we can kind of push the pool to be more green or more red," said author Sarah Hadyn-

iak, who conducted the research as a doctoral student in Johnston's lab and is now at Duke University.

Scientists still don't fully understand how the ratio of green and red cones can vary so greatly without affecting someone's vision.

If these types of cells determined the length of a human arm, the different ratios would produce "amazingly different" arm lengths, Johnston said.

To build understanding of diseases like macular degeneration, the researchers are working with other Johns Hopkins labs. The goal is to deepen their understanding of how cones and other cells link to the nervous system.

How to add physical activity to your daily routine when it's cold outside

Maintaining an active lifestyle in the cold months is difficult, no matter how crucial it is for both physical and mental well-being.



NEW DELHI, Jan 13 (Agencies): Winter can be a tempting time for people to curl up under a warm blanket and survive on warm liquids. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast the continuation of cold wave conditions in northern parts of India, including Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Punjab, and some areas of Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. Dense fog conditions have brought schools and many offices to a standstill. In times like this, maintaining an active lifestyle in the cold months is difficult, no matter how crucial it is for both physical and mental well-being.

Dr Meenakshi Fullara, HOD, Physical Rehabilitation, Aakash Healthcare, told news agency that winter it is an opportunity time to embrace the chilly weather and prioritise exercise.

"Exercising in colder temperatures offers numerous benefits, such as enhancing endurance, improving cardiovascular functions, and even alleviating musculoskeletal pains. Rather than slowing down, take advantage of this season to stay active and reap the rewards it brings to your overall well-being," advised Dr Meenakshi Fullara.

As per the expert,

exercising in the cold months not only boosts your immune system, aids in burning calories, enhances sleep quality and strengthens muscles but also plays a significant role in overall health. "One of its notable advantages is combating seasonal mood swings, a common occurrence during shorter, darker winter days," added Dr Fullara.

The reduced exposure to natural light can lead to vitamin D deficiency, which can be avoided as exercising stimulates the release of mood-boosting endorphins, fostering a sense of well-being and mental resilience. There are numerous ways to engage in exercises during colder months, allowing for a variety of options and methods to keep you active.

"Nature walks serve as an excellent option, offering a refreshing way to exercise," said the expert.

Additionally, participating in yoga sessions, engaging in online workouts, or practising resistance and strength training using tools like therabands and wrist weights provide significant benefits for muscle development and bone strength.

"Incorporating stretch-

ing exercises, such as spot running or brisk walking, alongside activities like dancing, can also contribute positively to your fitness routine," suggested Dr Fullara.

Embrace the great outdoors

Winter offers unique opportunities for outdoor activities that can invigorate your mood. Consider brisk walking or jogging to get your heart rate up while enjoying the crisp air. Remember to dress in layers to regulate body temperature and protect yourself against the cold.

Indoor alternatives When the weather outside is frightful, bring your workout indoors. Online workout classes offer a variety of options, from aerobics to dance to strength training all of this can be done at home. Active housework, such as vacuuming and sweeping, counts towards your fitness goals too.

Stay motivated Setting short-term goals can keep you motivated throughout the winter. Track your progress and celebrate small accomplishments along the way. Find an accountability partner or join a group to add social pressure and camaraderie to your routine.

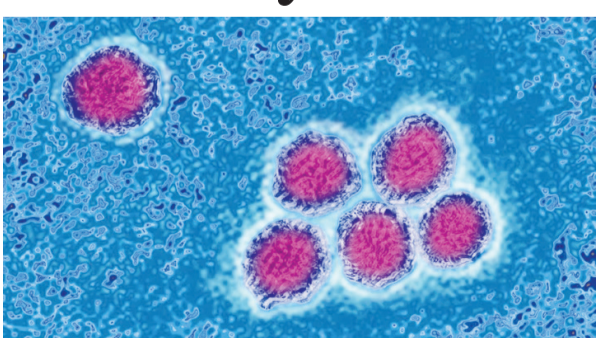
Stay safe and healthy Always monitor the weather and plan ahead to ensure safety. Wear appropriate gear, stay hydrated, and don't forget to apply sunscreen on sunny winter days.

Zika virus could potentially treat childhood cancer, finds study

NEW DELHI, Jan 13 (Agencies): In a significant development, a team of US researchers has successfully used Zika virus to shrink or eliminate neuroblastoma tumours in mice, raising the possibility of the virus serving as a potential cancer therapy in the future.

The study, published in Cancer Research Communications, suggested that Zika virus could be a highly effective interim therapy for high-risk neuroblastoma patients.

Neuroblastoma, a rare childhood cancer that often arises in the sympathetic nervous system or adrenal glands, poses a significant challenge



as over half of high-risk patients do not respond well to traditional treatments like chemotherapy or radiation, leading to recurrence.

The Zika virus, known for causing serious birth defects in pregnant women by targeting the developmental protein CD24, has been explored in recent years for its potential to kill

cancer cells expressing this protein.

Researchers from the Nemours Children's Health System conducted experiments on mice with neuroblastoma tumours showing high CD24 levels.

Half of the mice were injected with a saline solution, while the other half received the Zika virus.

Monitoring tumour sizes three times a week revealed that mice injected with the Zika virus experienced nearly complete tumour loss, with the highest dosage leading to complete elimination, as confirmed by an independent pathologist, reported by the news agency.

In a four-week follow-up, no tumour recurrence was observed, and the mice displayed no symptoms of Zika infection or side effects.

The researchers also see the potential for Zika virus to treat other cancers expressing elevated CD24 levels in both children and adults.

India eye series win over Afghanistan as fringe players look to impress; Virat Kohli to return

India had won the first game at Mohali by 6 wickets to take a 1-0 lead

INDORE, Jan 13 (Agencies): A series win over Afghanistan is still not counted among the grandstand cricketing feats, but a clutch of players will be eager to achieve that here on Sunday in the second T20I as it can transform them into contenders from sidekicks.

India had won the first game at Mohali by six wickets to take a 1-0 lead.

It is then imperative for Jitesh Sharma, Washington Sundar and Axar Patel to produce a defining effort against the Afghans to keep themselves within the selectors' sight as the move to find a perfect squad for the T20 World Cup has gathered steam.

That India will not play another T20I series ahead of the marquee event in June increases the gravitas around their performance against Afghanistan.

Jitesh has all the reasons to place himself among the front-runners as the wicketkeeper-batter has overtaken Ishan Kishan in the pecking order since replacing the latter from the fourth T20I against Australia at Raipur last year.

The Maharashtra man has struck a couple of useful 30s down the order, but he would not have missed the need for a bigger knock to cement his claim.

In the often-fickle selection landscape of Indian cricket, Jitesh, at 30, would know very well that only constant performances can help him save that frontrunner status.



Tilak Varma offers a very similar case. The left-hander had made an excellent start to his T20I career last year, making 39, 51 and 49 not out against the West Indies in an away three-match series.

But since then, Varma has tapered off. The next 13 innings have produced only one more fifty, against a below par Bangladesh in the Asian Games, with three 20-plus scores and one 30-plus knock dominating the rest of the outings.

Those numbers are certainly not enough for the 21-year-old to land inside the larger scheme of things, and the effort to turn him into a part-time off-spinner too seemed to be having a feeble life.

However, it remains to be seen whether Varma can retain his place in the side as star batsman Virat Kohli is available for this match after skipping the first game.

After missing out on the

50-over World Cup with an injury, Axar now seems to be back in the thick of things in both red- and white-ball formats.

On Friday, the left-arm spinner was included in the India squad for the first two Tests against England, and he dished out a fine spell at the PCA Stadium on Thursday night as well -- 4-0-23-2.

So, the Gujarat man will be eager to weave on the pattern and contribute to a series triumph here.

Sundar, too, has earned a recall but has not set the stage ablaze so far on his return. He will also eye a change in the second match.

The hope in the hearts of Jitesh and Varma might just have received a fillip as the Indore pitch often gives plenty of assistance to batsmen, as they can expect a fruitful outing here.

But it mandates Axar and Sundar to be at their absolute crafty best. The former had

shown how to tame unhelpful conditions through that admirable spell at Mohali.

However, it will be immature to take this Afghan side for granted. They have the wherewithal to hurt India on their day.

The young Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Azmatullah Omarzai and the experienced Mohammad Nabi can tear apart a bowling unit as mercilessly as any other.

Despite the absence of star spinner Rashid Khan, the Afghans have the services of Mujeeb ur Rahman, who was in good rhythm in the first match, Naveen-ul-Haq and Fazalhaq Farooqi.

If they can fire in unison, it will not be far-fetched to expect cracker of a contest.

Squads:

India: Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli, Tilak Varma, Rinku Singh, Jitesh Sharma (wk), Sanju Samson (wk), Shivam Dube, Washington Sundar, Axar Patel, Ravi Bishnoi, Kuldeep Yadav, Arshdeep Singh, Avesh Khan, Mukesh Kumar.

Afghanistan: Ibrahim Zadran (captain), Rahmanullah Gurbaz (wk), Ikram Alikhil (wk), Hazratullah Zazai, Rahmat Shah, Najibullah Zadran, Mohammad Nabi, Karim Janat, Azmatullah Omarzai, Sharafuddin Ashraf, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Fareed Ahmad, Naveen ul Haq, Noor Ahmad, Mohammad Saleem, Qais Ahmad, Gulbadin Naib, Rashid Khan.

Jurel in squad for first two Tests against England



NEW DELHI, Jan 13 (Agency): On his IPL debut in April last year, Dhruv Jurel smashed a 15-ball 32 as an impact player for Rajasthan Royals against Punjab Kings. The innings was enough for all and sundry to take note of the wicketkeeper-batter from Uttar Pradesh. His team might have lost the contest but Jurel succeeded in making an impact, which most of the aspiring players dream of.

Soon after the knock, the 22-year-old childhood coach Parvendra Yadav told this daily that his ward will play for India in 2024/25. His prophecy seems to have come true as Jurel was on Friday named in the 16-member squad announced for the first two Tests against England.

Even as chances of him finding a place in the playing XI seem unlikely with the squad comprising first-choice gloveman KL Rahul with KS Bharat as his backup. However, the inclusion in the squad is a big move forward for the right-hand batter from Agran. The first match is scheduled in Hyderabad from January 25 to 29 while the second Test is slated from February 2 to 6 in Vizag.

It was Yadav, who insisted Jurel start keeping the wickets which once forced him to stop attending training sessions. Incidentally, Jurel failed to make it to the under-14 state as a batter making him change his outlook. "He then started taking wicketkeeping seriously and got a chance in the playing XI as the regular

stumper got injured ahead of the final against Madhya Pradesh if I remember correctly. He slammed a ton and then never hesitated from taking up the dual responsibility."

As Parvendra promised, the all-round ability helped Dhruv to make it to the India U-19 squad for the Asia Cup where he led the team to the title in 2019. He was also a part of the India U-19 team that lost the World Cup final to Bangladesh in South Africa.

More recently, the 22-year-old was a part of the India A squad that played two matches against their South African counterparts in December last year. He had made a 69 in the second match at Benoni. He also scored 63 for UP against Kerala in a first-round group game of the Ranji Trophy at Alappuzha.

Jurel made his First-Class debut in 2022 against Vidarbha and so far has made 790 runs from 15 matches at an average of 46.47 with a hundred and five fifties in the domestic circuit.

Shami's absence

Rohit Sharma will lead the side while pacer Jasprit Bumrah will be his deputy. Senior pacer Mohammed Shami was not named in the squad as he continues his recovery from an injury that he suffered during the 2023 ODI World Cup. Shami was also not a part of the India squad that toured South Africa. Karnataka pacer Prasad Krishna was also not considered as he also picked up a left quadriceps injury during the Ranji Trophy match against Gujarat on Friday. Pace bowling all-rounder Sharad Thakur also missed out but left-arm spinner Axar Patel made an expected comeback to the side.

India Test squad for the first two Tests: Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul (WK), KS Bharat (WK), Dhruv Jurel (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohd. Siraj, Mukesh Kumar, Jasprit Bumrah (vice-captain), Avesh Khan.

It was hostile environment in Ahmedabad in World Cup match against India, says Pakistan's former team director Mickey Arthur

KARACHI, Jan 13 (Agency): Mickey Arthur, Pakistan's former team director, admitted that the ODI World Cup match against India at Ahmedabad was one of the toughest moments during his stint, taking the side through a hostile environment.

Arthur moved on after Pakistan failed to reach the semifinals of the showpiece event last year, while former all-rounder Mohammed Hafeez replaced him in the role.

"It was extremely tough not having any Pakistan support. The one thing that really drives the Pakistan team is the incredible support they receive at grounds and hotels. Here we never had that, and that was quite tough in a World Cup, particularly for the players," Arthur was quoted as saying by the 'Wisden'.

"As you can imagine it was a tough, hostile environment in Ahmedabad. But we were expecting this, and to their credit our players never moaned or complained once. They cracked on and tried their best -- nevertheless it ultimately does play a role in motivation when you can't see or hear that support base around you," he added.

Pakistan's World Cup campaign was as usual marked by high-level off-field turbulence, including news about dressing room discord and leaked WhatsApp conversations of then skipper Babar Azam.

However, Arthur said all those outside commotions never really affected the team.

"The outside noise with Pakistan is incredible, you just have to



check your Twitter feed to see so many fires that are ignited out there, that have absolutely no truth attached to them," he said.

"You end up -- and I found this out the first time -- you're just constantly extinguishing those fires and chasing your tail. What we knew within our team was our game plan, and the defined roles that the players had, and we cracked on with it. There were unequivocally no massive disagreements with the players," Arthur added.

Arthur, who guided Pakistan to 2017 Champions Trophy title, defended his decision to work with the Pakistan team as director while holding on to his job with English county Derbyshire.

The South African said he found the remarks about him being an online coach by former Pakistan players to be unbelievably ignorant.

"Anybody who knows me will also know that I will not commit 100 per cent if I can't do it. With Pakistan I was never an 'online coach' as I put together the coaching staff, I was in constant contact with them every single day and knew exactly what was going on within the team."

Arthur also made it clear he only accepted the job second time with Pakistan cricket because of his great relationship with former PCB chairman Najam Sethi who hired him in April last year.

"I trust Najam Sethi implicitly. We have a very good relationship, and I went in to try and help him because I owe him a lot. He's the one who gave me my opportunity to return to international cricket after I had been sacked by Australia. He and I built up a good relationship. One of the reasons I returned was to specifically work with Najam again," he said.

Arthur also advised the PCB to have a system where players start trusting the structure and believing in the selection process and play for the team.

"If it's constant change and instability, players go into self-protection mode, and they end up playing for themselves, just thinking about the next tour.

It's frustrating to witness that because players aren't given a proper chance, there's no honest communication and they know things are always going to change," he said.

Paris trip a game of qualifiers

After failing at Asian Games, India looking to make most of final chance to qualify for 2024 Olympics

CHANDIGARH, Jan 13 (Agency): India's astonishing fourth-place finish at the Tokyo Olympics was the pinnacle for women's hockey in the country. It instantly elevated the team's status in world hockey -- from also-rans India were upgraded to medal contenders in the following tournaments.

They got a taste of what it was like being respected, and even feared, by their opponents. But the tag of Olympics semifinalists also brought along new challenges. They had to bear the burden of heightened expectations. India also could not fly under the radar any longer, just as they did at the 2018 Asian Games and the Tokyo Olympics.

The Tokyo finish was achieved mainly with grit and some luck, but it presented the team an opportunity to build a lasting legacy. Since then, though, the team has shown neither the ability nor the consistency needed to stay in the top bracket.

They followed their Olympics performance with third-place finishes in the 2022 Pro League and Commonwealth Games, but were knocked out in the 'pre-quarters' of the World Cup. They went to the Hangzhou Asian Games as the highest-ranked side.

Having come agonisingly close to winning the title in 2018, India also had the belief to go one step further this time and seal the Paris Olympics berth. But the 0-4 semifinal loss to China came as a big jolt -- the defeat ended their title aspirations, and can still have greater repercussions.

India's biggest challenge in their pool will be New Zealand, who belie their No. 9 ranking. The Kiwis are known for their resilience and can never be discounted in big tournaments.



Despite their preparations for the Tokyo Olympics being disrupted by pandemic-related restrictions and a controversy about the team environment that led to a change in the coaching staff, New Zealand still reached the quarterfinals. They lost the CWG bronze to India after a shootout defeat, but bounced back by beating Janneke Schopman's team on their way to a fifth-place finish at the World Cup.

Coached by former men's team captain Phil Burrows, New Zealand are a triple threat -- they are tough to break, can dominate possession and have one of the best strikers in women's hockey, Olivia Merry. "We play hockey to be in these big moments, so it's a challenge but also a really exciting opportunity," Merry said.

History beckons India open their campaign against USA today. Despite being a

lowly 15th in the rankings, USA have a history of troubling India. The two teams played out a 1-1 draw in the 2018 World Cup and their thrilling Tokyo Games qualifying tie in 2019 ended 6-5 in India's favour.

A side fettered by funding issues, USA were unlucky to miss the 2022 World Cup. But, with an eye on the 2028 LA Games, USA are rising again -- they finished second at last year's Pan American Games after losing 1-2 to powerhouse Argentina. They have also gained valuable exposure by regularly playing against top teams in the Pro League.

India's easiest match in the pool, on paper, will be against Italy. They finished ninth at the 2018 World Cup riding on their solid defence. Though Italy have since slipped to world No. 19, they can still frustrate India.

To even get through their pool, India will need to be at their best -- defending solidly, attacking at pace and finishing their chances, especially from penalty

corners. The team's drag-flickers recently got some help from Olympics medallist Rupinder Pal Singh. India cannot afford to let their intensity level drop at crucial moments, which has led to their recent decline.

Job half-done

Even if they reach the last-4 stage, India's job will be half-done. The other pool includes world No. 5 Germany, Japan and a dark-rising Chile, who qualified for the World Cup for the first time in 2022 and finished third in the Pan American Games.

Germany, who were fourth at the previous World Cup and third at the European championships, will be the team to beat. A possession-craving side, Germany like to attack in numbers and can unlock any defence with their fast and intricate passing. They also have a dangerous drag-flicking battery. In their most recent meeting, Germany beat India 3-1 in a five-nation tournament, where the Savita Punia-led side lost three of their four games.

Japan and India have had a charged rivalry in recent times. Japan stunned India 2-1 in the final of the 2018 Asian Games but have lost their surprise factor since then. India won their last three games against Japan, including a 2-1 win in the Asian Games bronze-medal match and a 4-0 win in the Asian Champions Trophy final.

The ACT title win in Ranchi was a confidence boost for India, who will be desperate to prove that their Tokyo run was not a one-off success.

Lohri celebrated with customary rituals, fervour at Aryans



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: Lohri was celebrated at Aryans Group of Colleges, Rajpura, Near Chandigarh. Bonfires, eating festive foods, ground nuts, dry fruits etc and dancing on the drum beats amid Lohri songs

besides distributing gifts marked the winter festival. Staff members and students of the College participated in the program with enthusiasm. The students enthralled all with their spectacular dance performances. It is to be mentioned

that Lohri falls on the Paush month and is usually celebrated with much splendour on January 13. The festival is considered to be one of the most important occasions in Punjab, especially for the newborn and newly-wedded couples.

NC leaders felicitate local journalists Babu Rampaul lauds media persons for their untiring approach



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: On the eve of Lohri festival, Dr Vikas Sharma, Zonal Secretary JKNC and District Coordinator Jammu (Urban), today organized a function to felicitate the media-persons of Jammu.

Former Minister and President Central Zone (Jammu, Samba & Kathua) JKNC, Babu Rampaul was the chief guest on the occasion. Whereas, Ankush Abrol, Provincial Joint Secretary JKNC, was the guest of honor.

Media-persons from different organisations of Jammu were invited to the function. All of them were felicitated by the JKNC leaders and presented with a token of love on the eve of

Lohri festivals. While acknowledging the role played by media-persons in the development of society, Babu Rampaul expressed gratitude to them for working day and night to highlight the plight of people through their respective platforms.

He said that being the fourth pillar of democracy their role assumes more importance as people have high faith in them and expect them to highlight their issues before the administration and government.

Ankush Abrol also lauded the dedication and selfless approach of media persons who work day and night to ensure complete coverage of all the events that happen across Jammu.

He also expressed gratitude to them.

Dr Vikas Sharma too lauded them and saluted their dedication. "Media persons brave harsh weather conditions, repression from authorities and several other issues but ensure that all sections of society could get adequate coverage on their platforms which is a highly commendable task."

At the end, the NC leaders extended Lohri greetings to all the media persons and wished them a great time ahead.

Others who spoke on the occasion were Adv. Rajinder Chamyal, BD Dalotra, Surjit Kumar, Dr. Rajesh Singh, Rajinder Kumar, Vinod Kumar, Abhishek Uppal and others.

YV Sharma says Omar Abdullah "shaming" ECI is unfortunate

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: YV Sharma expressed shock at the recent statement of Omar Abdullah, the former Chief Minister of J&K, wherein he said that the "Election Commission of India should feel ashamed of holding elections in J&K which led the Supreme Court of India to issue directions to it for holding elections till 30.09.2024" while passing a judgement on the abrogation of article 370 of the Indian constitution.

YV Sharma said that it doesn't behave former Chief Minister to pass such remarks about the constitutional body like the Election Commission of India which has the reputation of managing & organising elections in the largest democracy of the world in a very fair & fearless manner.

YV Sharma said that it is for Omar Abdullah to introspect & ponder over as to how J&K reached this point in history. He will realize that it is not because of the present government at the centre or that of the UT of J&K but because of the intransigent & unrealistic attitude followed by the political leadership of erstwhile state since the division of the subcontinent. Their attitude of imposing their superiority, doublespeak - rather triple speak; one in Kashmir, the other in Jammu & the third in Delhi, inciting the people for unattainable mirage of freedom & recently praying for "Chinese intervention for resolving the Kashmir problem" & a constant endeavour to pit one people against other in the name of religion & language that resulted in constant bickering between the erstwhile state & central governments that caused ever increasing chasm & distrust between the two impacting the lives of the gullible people of J&K negatively. It also increased distrust between the people of the two regions of the state/UT, the people of Ladakh and

the people within the Kashmir Valley that resulted in exodus of 500,000 Kashmiri Hindus.

Sharma said that Omar Abdullah had been in the Union Government and behaved very responsibly during his tenure in the Union Cabinet. He must remember that vested interests in the erstwhile state of J&K precipitated the problem manifold, and the abrogation of Article 370 and 35A were the results of the misdoings of the powers ruling in the state for the last so many years. Being citizens of the state/UT, nobody has any business to espouse the cause of Pakistan, China, or any other foreign power that creates an adverse atmosphere for the country whose citizens all of us are. Pakistan has been acknowledged as an established nursery of extremism and terrorism throughout the world, and its misadventures of sending militants, arms, and drugs to destabilize the UT must be condemned by one and all. There will be no exaggeration in saying that speaking one word in favor of Pakistan or espousing the cause of talks with them will jeopardize the future of this part of the country. Whatever has happened has to be corrected by everybody unitedly, and the present government at the center is doing everything in this direction.

Sharma said that the ground situation in UT has been transformed a lot; people have benefited from the developmental efforts after the abrogation of Article 370. He assured Omar Abdullah that elections will be held, statehood would be revived, and everything will be done for the welfare, benefit, safety, and security of the territory and the people of this paradise on earth. Let's all work unitedly for J&K UT and for the country to achieve the aim of welfare for one and all, which is the goal and motto of the Government headed by Narendra Modi.

AAP Jammu starts 3rd day Badlao Yatra from Talab Tilloo



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: The AAP-Jammu started its third day Badlao Yatra from Talab Tillo-Borhi Chowk to Ghou Manhasa, Jammu.

During the Yatra the AAP volunteers were raising slogans against ruling dispensation for their utter failure on all fronts.

The AAP volunteers said that since 2014 the BJP has failed to fulfill even a single promise.

In spite of the tall claims of the BJP government at the centre, the ground situation is entirely different.

The AAP volunteers said that the public at large is fed up with the monotonous, dull & boring Mann Ki Baat of Modi in Democratic governments instead of Maan Ki Baat by one man, replaced by Jan Ki Baat. Man Ki Baat was used in the past by the great dictators like Hitler, Mussolini & Napoleon Bonaparte. They were at the head of the Army men of their Nation. In Jan Ki Baat the grievances of the public go to the government. Modi's Maan Ki Baat is not the opinion of the public at large.

The AAP volunteers' have expressed great shock and anguish over the barbarism witnessed by world over the brutal sexual assault on women in Manipur violence, even as a Kargil Hero Subedar failed to

protect his own wife at the hands of saboteurs in Manipur bringing Himalyan shame over the civilization of Bharat-India.

Modi instead of Maan Ki Baat should speak on Manipur issue in the Parliament, meant for debates & discussions. Why PM scared of speaking on Manipur violence in Parliament?

Referring to long drawn agitation of women wrestlers at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi, the AAP leaders expressed astonishment over the advisors of autocratic style of working of PM, Narendra Modi or his aides who are so ignorant of the under currents of this most sensitive women wrestlers' issue, where honor and dignity of whole women folk of Haryana, Punjab, western UP, Rajasthan as also various parts of the country, is at stake and this may prove Waterloo for the ruling dispensation, the AAP leaders forewarned and further said that usual drama & Jumla Baazi of distributing of 71,000 & 75,000 appointment letters by PM, so far, at a time of Lok Sabha elections in 2024, will certainly catch no straw they claimed and said that farmers, women folk and un-employed Educated youths cannot be befooled any more now.

They further said that the new style of 'Jumla

Bazi' or "Aage Dour, Peechhe Chhor" just to make mockery of people's memory and befool them

People only will have to pay them in the same coin in times to come. All their tall promises and tall claims have proved "Mungeri Lal Ke Haseen Sapne", but said "Kaba Kis Munh Se Jao Ge Ghalib, Sharam Tum Ko Magar Nahin Aati".

They said that AAP is the only solution of all evils in the society & all traditional Political Parties are the chips of the same block, as AAP has revolutionized & galvanized the lives of Delhites which can be done here also in J&K if AAP is brought to power.

They further said that time has come now when every Indian is appreciative of Delhi Model of governance which, in the first instance, hammers a death blow to the virus of caste, creed & colour and instead ensures development of all sections of society.

Prominent among those who joined the "Badlao Yatra" include Adv. Dalvinder Kumar Bhagat, Kuldeep Kumar Rao, Nirmal Mahna, Rajesh Pangotra, Hera Lal Verma, Romesh Lal Bhagat, Adv. Arvind Bandral, Shadi Lal, Karan Attri, S. Amrik Singh, Sandeep Singh Parihar, Amar Nath Thakur, Virji Kachroo, Harsh Dev Singh, and hundreds of others.

Large number of devotees pay obeisance at 11v Wala Peer



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: A large number of devotees paid obeisance at 11v Wala Peer at Shahzadpur and prayed for peace and prosperity of all.

Speaking on the occasion, R.L.Kaith said, "11v Wala Peer is the most universally

acclaimed saint of all times and the greatest helper."

Head Sewadar Baba Prem Lal told the devotees that a large number of people from all walks of life, attend the Ziyarat on every Thursday to get their wishes fulfilled and the problems solved.

ABVP's Central University Jammu unit celebrates National Youth Day

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) Central University of Jammu unit and Vidhyarthi Ceva Educational Trust on the occasion of National Youth Day organises seminar on the topic "Swami Vivekananda: Youth Icon of Bharat".

In this seminar, Prof Vinay Kumar (Dean, Basic and Applied Sciences, Central University of Jammu) was chief guest and Dr. Sumit Kotwal (State Vice President, ABVP Jammu Kashmir) was present as Guest of Honour in this program.

In the beginning of the program, Prabhakar Bhardwaj (Unit President, ABVP CU Jammu) delivered the welcome address, he welcomed all the guests attending the program.

He said that ABVP has been celebrating 12th January as National Youth Day on the occasion of the birth anniversary of



Swami Vivekananda, a seminar has been organized so that the life and philosophy of Swami Vivekananda can reach the youth so that the Indian youth can become physically, mentally and spiritually strong.

Guest of Honour, Dr. Sumit Kotwal while giving a brief introduction of Swami Vivekananda, explained and analysed the Bhaktiyoga, Karmayoga and Gyanyoga.

He talked about the youth to be scientifically, technologically as well as mentally and spiritually strong.

Swami Vivekananda considered the universal development of the individual as important for nation building. That is why he laid emphasis on education for the all-round development of man and called for the need to work for the physical, mental and spiritual development of

man. Chief Guest, Prof. Vinay Kumar said that Swami Vivekananda, a great thinker, young monk is inspiration for youth and an ideal personality, who is considered as the pioneer of contemporary Indian philosophy.

While discussing on education, he underlined the importance of Vivekananda regarding education. He said that according to Swami Vivekananda, education means life building, personality building and character building.

He further said that Swami Vivekananda ji believed that the whole of India cannot be uplifted by any one class or community, that is why he called upon the youth, women, farmers, labourers etc. for the upliftment of the nation and he said Arise, Awake and don't stop until the goal is not achieved.

Vote of thanks was presented by ABVP Central University Jammu unit Secretary Shagun Sharma and the stage was moderated by Prachi Mahajan.

Dogri Sanstha releases Calendar for 2024



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 13: Dogri Sanstha Jammu released calendar for next year 2024 in a simple but an impressive function organized at Dogri Sanstha, Karan Nagar, Jammu. This years' calendar has pictures of 6 prolific Dogri writers Rattan Kesar, Padam Dev Singh Nir-dosh, Ram Lal Sharma, Mohan Lal Sapolia and O.P. Sharma Sarthi.

On this occasion, Prof. Lalit Magotra, President Dogri Sanstha Jammu said that Sanstha has been releasing calendar every year with the

focal point of making the young generation aware of their elders who have contributed immensely in preserving mother tongue Dogri. He further added that although they are not with us physically but will ever remain in our memories thanks to their colossal contributions in Dogri literature.

Rajeshwar Singh 'Raju', General Secretary of Sanstha while sharing his views on the concept of having the pictures of eminent dogri litterateurs on the calendars said that it is an effort not to recall

their contributions only but also paying homage to the stalwarts of Dogri literature by Dogri Sanstha, a pioneer organization working for preserving and promoting mother tongue Dogri and Duggar cultural traditions since it was formed way back in 1944.

The calendar has been designed by Pawan Verma, well known Dogri poet and theatre activist. The function was attended by galaxy of eminent personalities including working committee members and executive body members of Sanstha.