

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 04, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



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Namibian President Hage Geingob dies in a hospital where he was receiving treatment,



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BRIEFLY

One dead, four injured in Srinagar road accident

SRINAGAR, Feb 4 (Agencies): One person lost his life while four more were injured in a road accident in Bemina area of Srinagar on Sunday. A police official told news agency Kashmir Scroll that a car carrying five persons hit a divider at Bemina chowk, resulting in injuries to all five occupants.

He said that three injured were shifted to JVC hospital Bemina where one of them was declared brought dead and the rest were shifted to SMHS hospital for specialised treatment.

Three injured persons who were shifted to SMHS hospital were identified as Layat, son of Hilal Ahmad Shanggloo, resident of Chat-tabal Srinagar, Zahid Zahoor son of Zahoor Ahmad Wani and Hashim Nazir, son of Nazir Ahmad Khanday.

All flights cancelled at Srinagar International Airport

SRINAGAR, Feb 4 (Agencies): All the flights scheduled for today at the Srinagar International Airport have been cancelled due to fresh snowfall and bad weather.

Director Srinagar Airport, Javed Anjum told that all the flights scheduled for today have been canceled due to bad weather. Meanwhile, seven trains have also been canceled since morning in the Valley in view of heavy snowfall.

The Kashmir Valley received fresh snowfall since late last night, disrupting normal life, besides affecting surface and air traffic.

'Fake' Doctor Apprehended, Clinic Seized in Anantnag

SRINAGAR, Feb 4 (Agencies): Health Department on Saturday apprehended an alleged doctor and sealed his clinic in south Kashmir's Anantnag district. "It has come to the notice of undersigned that one alleged fake doctor is practicing in Anantnag. Taking cognisance of the matter, a team of

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4 of family killed in road mishap at Udhampur



SRINAGAR, Feb 4 (Agencies): A devastating car accident near Jajarkotli on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway has left a family shattered, claiming the lives of four members and leaving one critically injured. The accident took place around 12:15 A.M

at Salora in Udhampur district, when a car driven by Nitin Dogra, was crushed between two trucks.

Reports suggest that the car, en route from Jammu to Udhampur, was struck from the rear by a truck, causing it to collide with another truck ahead. The impact of the

collision was severe, resulting in critical injuries to all five occupants of the car.

Emergency services rushed to the scene, swiftly transporting the victims to the Associated Hospital Government Medical College (GMC) in Udhampur. Tragically, upon arrival

at the hospital, Nitin Dogra, his wife Ritu Dogra, and their daughters Khushi Dogra and Vani Dogra were pronounced dead. Their fifth child, Brinda Dogra, remains in critical condition and has been transferred to GMC Jammu for specialized medical care.

Kashmir draped in white after widespread snowfall



SRINAGAR, Feb 4 (Agencies): Most parts of Kashmir including Srinagar witnessed major snowfall of the season even as weatherman forecast more, officials said on Sunday.

They said it started snowing early in the morning, blanketing the plains while higher reaches saw more snowfall.

A meteorological department official said that plains received 3-6 inches of snowfall while 8-12 inches were recorded in the middle and higher reaches of Kashmir Division.

He said Srinagar recorded 5.3 cms snow till 0830 while it was snowing. Qazigund, he said, received 10cms, Pahalgam 12cms, Kup-

wara 21cms, Kokernag 11 cms and Gulmarg 20cms while Banihal and Batote received 11 cms and 0.5 cms respectively.

Regarding minimum temperature, he said, Srinagar recorded a low of minus 0.7°C against minus 1.7°C on the previous night and it was normal for the summer capital of J&K for this

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Police directed to enhance surveillance to thwart attempts to disturb peace in Jammu



JAMMU, Feb 4 (Agencies): A senior Jammu and Kashmir Police officer has called for enhanced surveillance

to thwart anti-national elements' attempts to disturb the peaceful environment in the Jammu region, an offi-

cial said on Sunday.

Deputy Inspector General of Police (Jammu-Samba-Kathua Range) Sunil Gupta passed the directions during a crime-and-security review meeting at the district police lines in Jammu, a spokesperson said.

Officers were directed to enhance surveillance through measures such as area domination and strengthening

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Three Nationals of Myanmar charge-sheeted by NIA In Human Trafficking Case

NEW DELHI, Feb 4 (Agencies): The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has filed a charge-sheet against three nationals of Myanmar in a case involving the illegal infiltration and trafficking of foreign nationals, primarily of Rohingya origin, into India through the India-Bangladesh border, an official said on Sunday.

The accused are Rabi Islam alias "Rabiul Islam", Shafi Alam alias "Sofi Alam" alias "Sayedul Islam", and Mohammad Usman — all permanent residents of Maungdaw district in Myanmar — a spokesperson of the federal

agency said.

According to the NIA, they had entered India illegally, in collusion with traffickers and touts, without valid travel documents and were also involved in facilitating the infiltration of numerous other foreign nationals through unauthorised and illegal border routes.

Part of a well-organised network of traffickers and touts involved in various illegal activities, they were also engaged in luring vulnerable Rohingya women, who had taken refuge in Bangladesh, into India on the false promises of marriage to Rohingya

men, the official said.

The NIA said such women were then sold for forced marriages across various Indian states, including Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, Telangana and Haryana.

The NIA's investigation uncovered instances and evidence of forgery of documents and established that Rabi Islam and Mohammad Usman had obtained Aadhaar cards fraudulently.

The duo had also used these cards to procure multiple SIM cards and open bank accounts, further concealing their true identities, the spokesperson said.

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Policeman shoots himself dead in Jammu

JAMMU, Feb 4 (Agencies): A policeman allegedly shot himself dead with his service rifle inside a police station here, officials said on Sunday. Selection Grade Constable Iqbal Hussain, a resident of Poonch, was found dead with a bullet injury at

police station Nowabad in the city late Saturday night, they said.

Prima facie, he used his service weapon to shoot himself, the officials said, adding the motive behind his taking such an extreme step was not known immediately.

Thieves break into 9 shops in Mendhar Poonch, FIR registered

JAMMU, Feb 4 (Agencies): Thieves broke into nine shops including a medical store at Nakamanjhari area of Gursai in Mendhar area of Poonch district and stole valuables, officials said on Sunday.

They said that the theft was carried out during

the intervening night of February 3 and 4. A police official told GNS that an FIR (case) has been registered and police are investigating the matter. Asked about the value of valuables stolen, the official said that the same is being collected.

UP ATS arrests Pak ISI Agent working at Indian Embassy in Moscow

LUCKNOW, Feb 4 (Agencies): The Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) of Uttar Pradesh Police has arrested a person working in the Indian Embassy, Moscow, for his alleged involvement in anti-national activities with Pakistani intelligence agency ISI and providing them important confidential information regarding the strategic activities of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian military establishments, an official statement issued here on Sunday said.

Satendra Siwal, the son of Jaiveer Singh, a

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9419143503

TENTH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of **Chanchal Gupta W/o Sh Madan Lal Gupta** R/o 215, Street No. 1, Rajpura Shakti Nagar, who left for heavenly abode on 23/01/24 Tuesday.

Tenth Day will be held at Pawan Ice Cream Road, Opp CID Office Hari Ghat on 01/02/24 Thursday at 11.00 am to 12.00 Noon.

Kriya will be performed at home R/o 215 Street No. 1, Rajpura Shakti Nagar, Jammu on 4/2/2024 at 12:00 Noon Sunday.

Uthala will be held on 05/02/24 Monday Pawan Ice Cream Road, Opp CID Office at Hari Ghat from 03:00 to 04:00 pm.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Sh Madan Lal Gupta (Husband)
Munish Gupta & Neetu (Son & Daughter in law)
Shashi Kant & Neha (Son & Daughter in law)
Mohinder & Anita (Son & Daughter in law)
Gokul / Anamika / Kavish / Samarth
Grand Children
Contact : 9419308191, 8803177490, 9419352347



Late Smt. Chanchal Gupta
1958-2024

10TH DAY/13TH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of **Late Sh. Varun Slathia S/o Charanjeet Singh Slathia** R/o Bari Brahmana who left for their heavenly abode on 26-01-2024.

10TH DAY will be performed on (Sunday) 4th Feb 2024 at 11.00 AM.

13TH DAY will be performed on (Wednesday) 7th Feb 2024 at 12.00 PM at H. No 72 ward No 6, Bari Brahmana.

GRIEF STRICKEN

ALL NEAR AND DEAR ONES
7780852132, 9419212609



LATE SH. VARUN SLATHIA

KRIYA AND UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform that **Sh. Inder Mohan Bakshi, SSP (Retd) J&K Police** left for his heavenly abode on Saturday 27th January, 2024. **Kriya** will be performed on Monday 5th February, 2024 at our residence H.No.166, Old Rehari, Jammu at 12:00 Noon.

Rasam Pagri & Uthala will be performed on Monday 5th February, 2024 at "Celebration Banquet" Marble Market Jammu from 4.00 PM to 5.00 PM.

IN GRIEF:-

Son & Daughter-in-law
Mr. Rajesh Bakshi (Chief Prosecuting Officer ACB, JKPS) & Mrs. Vidushi Bakshi (Govt. Teacher)

Daughters & Sons-in-law

Mrs. Nivedita Nayyar & Mr. Sunjay Nayyar
Mrs. Shivani Virdi & Mr. Sunil Virdi
Mrs. Versha Arora & Mr. Som Arora
Dr. Sweera Kumar W/o Late Dr. Ashutosh Kumar - **Sister**

Brother & Sister-in-law

Sh. Chander Mohan Bakshi (retd. DySP JKP) & Sunil Vinod Bakshi
Smt. Alka Bakshi W/o Late Sh. Sunil Bakshi (Ex. Agriculture Officer) - **Daughter-in-law**

Grand Daughter & Grand Son-in-law

Mrs. Samridhi Surana & Mr. Nitesh Surana
Grand Children: Siddhant, Vanshika, Aryamann, Vedika, Ananditta
Verdan, Yashasvi, Vidwan

Relatives & Friends
9419116333, 9419210965



SH. INDER MOHAN BAKSHI
SSP (Retd) J&K Police
15th Aug 1938 - 27th January 2024

OBITUARY/TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Ashok Kumar Kachroo S/o Late Dwarka Nath & Somawati Kachroo** original resident of Bagadagi, Kralyar Rainawari, Srinagar and at present F 59 Phase 1 New Palam Vihar Gurugram 122017 on 31-01-2024.

10TH DAY KRIYA will be performed on 09-02-2024 at 10.00 AM Block T Gauri Shankar Mandir New Palam Vihar Gurugram

GRIEF STRICKEN

Kachroo's, Koul's, Labroo's, Razdan's Raina's, Bangroo's

MOBILE NO: 9818214055, 9910695689, 9891278383, 9967803832



SH. ASHOK KUMAR KACHROO

10TH DAY & KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Smt. Krishna Sharma W/o Lt. Pt. Dina Nath Sharma (Ex-Vice President, JMC & Former Vice President, State BJP) R/o 39 A New Plots Jammu at present H.No. 404/2, Upper Roop Nagar Jammu near JDA Club.**

10TH DAY will be performed on 5.2.24 at 11.00 AM and **Kriya** will be performed on 6.2.24 at 12.00 Noon at our residence.

Grief Stricken:**Sons & Daughter in laws**

Smt. Raj Sharma & P.C.Sharma (Former Addl. Advocate General)
Smt. Rakesh Raina & Chander Mohan Sharma (Sr. Leader, State BJP)
Smt. Anuradha Sharma & Satish Chander Sharma (Rtd. Chief Manager, J&K Bank)
9419188010, 9419188008, 9915031585, 8800910975, 8803501676



Smt. Krishna Sharma

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt. Kamlesh Rani W/o Late Bhim Dev Jamwal R/o 13/6 Lower Roop Nagar, Jammu on 05-02-2024 (Monday).**

Tenth Day shall be performed on 5-02-2024 at our residence at 9.00 am.

KRIYA will be performed on 8-02-2024 (Thursday) at our residence.

Grief Stricken**Sons & Daughters-in-Law**

Yash Dev Jamwal and Rekha Jamwal
Shalinder Dev and Rachna Jamwal
Sheetal Dev and Seema Jamwal
Grand Children: Vasu Dev, Vasundra, Arjun Dev, Keshav Dev, Samar Dev, Vaibhav Dev.



Smt. Kamlesh Rani

10TH DAY /KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, it is to inform the sad demise of our beloved **Dr. Payre Lal Fotedar S/o Late Sh. Sham Lal Fotedar** originally from Martand Mattan Anantnag Kashmir on 31st Jan 2024, presently at 40 B Pocket 6, DDA MIG Flats Mayur Vihar Phase 3 Delhi.

10th Day Kriya will be performed on Friday 9th February 2024 at 10:30 am at Murad Nagar Ghaziabad UP.

Grief Stricken

Dr. Shailee & Dr. Vikas Fotedar (Daughter in law & Son)
Smt. Shanoo & Sh.Rahul Fotedar (Daughter in law and Son)
Smt. Kishni and Sh.T.N Pandita (Sister and Brother in law)
Sh. Udey Nath Fotedar (Brother)
Smt. Santosh Fotedar (Bhabi)
Smt. Lalita Fotedar (Bhabi)
Smt. Basanti ji & Sh.Ashok Fotedar (Bhabi and Brother)
Smt. Sweety ji & Sh. Vijay Fotedar (Bhabi and Brother)

Grand Children

Bhavik Fotedar and Divya Fotedar
Phone Nos.: 9418490779, 7018527071, 9312091678, 8082024370



Dr. Payre Lal Fotedar

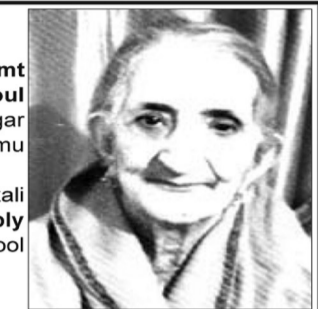
OBITUARY

With profound grief and sorrow it is to inform that **Smt. Indrawati Koul W/o Late Sh Bishembar Nath Koul** originally resident of Jogi Lanker Rainawari Srinagar presently at H No. 67 Lane No. 5 Buta Nagar Jammu attained nirvan on 31st Jan Wednesday 2024.

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed at Mata Baderkali Mandir Thalwal Jammu on 9th Feb Friday. **Assembly** will be held at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education at 11:00 am.

Grief Stricken

Smt Krishna Koul W/o Late P K Koul (Daughter in law)
Surinder Koul and Smt Babli Koul (Son and Daughter in law)
Daughters and Son in laws
Rani Tickoo W/o Late P N Tickoo
Sharika Kantroo W/o Late B L Kantroo
Basanti Waffa W/o Sh J L Waffa
Prabha Kak W/o Late T K Kak
Veena Raina W/o B L Raina
Grand Children
Sameer & Sheetu, Lisha & Aman, Suveni & Kapil
Great Grand Children
Danshu, Vanshu



Smt Indrawati Koul

Mob No. 7780922925, 7051474096, 8082152311

TENTH DAY KRIYA

Shri Sham Sunder Kaul S/o Late Shri Damodar Kaul originally of 22-Wazir Bagh, Srinagar (Kashmir) passed away on 28-01-2024 at Noida.

The **10TH DAY KRIYA** will be performed at Ganga Canal, Muradnagar (UP) on 6th Feb, 2024 at 10:00 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Pushpa Kaul & Pran Nath Kaul
Swaran Dhar & Manmohan Dhar
Renu Fotedar & Animesh Fotedar

SAMAST KAUL PARIWAR

MOBILE NO: 7503646104, 9891838676



SHRI SHAM SUNDER KAUL

13TH DAY/UTHALA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW, WE INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED **LATE SH. VIKRANT BANOTRA S/O LATE SH. MADAN LAL R/O MOHALLA KAMA KHAN, H.NO.110, W.NO.7 POONCH.**

13TH DAY WILL BE PERFORMED ON 4TH OF FEB. (SUNDAY)11.00 AM AND **UTHALA** WILL BE PERFORMED ON 5TH OF FEB. (MONDAY) 3:00 PM AT OUR RESIDENCE.

GRIEF STRICKEN:

BANOTRA & DOGRA FAMILY
MOB: 8492938006, 9419200708, 6005680267



LATE SH. VIKRANT BANOTRA

10TH DAY/KRIYA & UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad & untimely demise of **Madhu Bala (Retd. Sr. Asstt. Information Department) W/o Er. Dewakar Sharma (AEE Mech) R/o Katra at present C-9, Nideesh Enclave near Astro Mahindra Showroom Channi Jammu.**

10th Day shall be performed on Sunday 4th Feb. 2024 at 11 am onwards.
Kriya shall be performed on Monday 5th Feb. 2024 at our residence and **Uthala** on same day i.e. 5th Feb. 2024 at 4.30 PM - 5.30 PM at Panch Mandir Channi Himmat Jammu.

Grief Stricken:

Om Prakash Sharma -**Father-in-law**
Heena & Gaurav Madan -**Daughter & Son-in-law**
Ishan & Ridhi Sharma -**Son & Daughter-in-law**
(Ishan Electricals & Mechanical Engg Works & Ishan Garments)
Er. Suraman & Rekha Sharma -**Devar & Devrani**
Dinkar (Panka Amrit Medicos Katra) & Namrata Sharma -**Devar & Devrani**
Rabia & Riyaan Madan -**Grand Children**
Contact: 9858193944, 7006952910
Fondly Remembered By: Barkulia and Rattan Pal Family



Madhu Bala (Retd. Sr. Asstt. Information Department)

TENTH DAY KRIYA

The **Tenth Day Kriya** of our beloved **Karma Yogi Sh. Vijay Kumar Raina (Shair)**, originally resident of Shair House, Kanya Kadal/ Rawalpura, Srinagar will be performed on 6th February, 2024 (Tuesday) at Akhnoor Ghat. **Assembly** will be held at our residence, House, No 39, Sector-1, Phase-II, New Rajinder Nagar, JDA Housing Colony, Bantalab, Jammu from 11:30 AM onwards.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-

Usha (Bakshi) Raina
Dr Surinder Kaul & Rekha
Princy & Navneet Kotwal
Vinay & Ekta Raina
Raj Karni Mattoo
Anjali & CL Mattoo
Ashok Kumar Raina
Prof Dilip Kumar & Nrimala Raina
Santosh Kaul (Bagh)
Dr R. K Jalali & Reeta
Ranjana & Vijay Kaul
Sunil & Anita Mattoo
Renuka & Praful Parimoo
Shivika Raina
Seema & Rajesh Raina
Anil & Soniya Raina
Sunil & Alka Kaul

Sumir & Payal Kaul
Sumeet & Nidhi Raina
Nisha & Deepak Kaul
Megha & Puneet Kaul
Nikhil & Aakriti Jalali

Siddhant, Arjun, Sasha, Sameeksha, Aanchal, Simran
Mehak, Aditya, Aarnav, Aarush, Medhir & Saanvi
Ph # 9910124669, 9810124669



SH. VIJAY KUMAR RAINA (SHAIR)

OBITUARY/TENTH DAY KRIYA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW WE REGRET TO INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED **SH. MOHAN LAL KAUL** SON OF LATE. SH. M.N. KAUL ORIGINALLY RESIDENT OF KRAL-KHUD HABBA KADAL, SRINAGAR AT PRESENT C-201, BROTHERHOOD APPPTS, H-BLOCK, VIKASपुरी, NEW DELHI- 110018 ON MIDNIGHT OF 28TH AND 29TH JANUARY 2024.

TENTH-DAY KRIYA WILL BE PERFORMED ON TUESDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY 2024 AT GANG NEHAR, MURADNAGAR (CHOTA HARIDWAR) AT 10:30 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-

SAMAST KAUL PARIVAR AND RELATIVES
CONTACT NO. 9811812774, 9711723925



SH. MOHAN LAL KAUL

10TH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad and peaceful demise of our beloved **Smt. Nancy Koul (Ranjii) W/o Late Sh. Trikati Nath Koul** originally from old Fateh Kadal Srinagar at present H.No. 452-A Sector-2 Vinayak Nagar Muthi (near Love Lane Matador Stand) on 31-01-2024.

The **10th Day** shall be performed on Friday the 9th of Feb 2024 at Akhnoor: Assembly at Home at 12 Noon.

Grief Stricken

Ramesh Kumar Koul and Veena Koul - **Beta and Bahu**
Manoj Kumar Koul and Rajni Koul - **Beta and Bahu**
Vijay Kumar Koul and Swarna Koul - **Beta and Bahu**
Sh. Girdari Lal Koul and Smt. Lalita Koul - **Devar & Devrani**
Sh. Bishan Lal Koul and Smt. Jyoti Koul - **Devar & Devrani**
Sh. Anur Kishan Koul - **Jijee**
Smt. Sarla Raina & Sh. Ashwani Raina - **Nanad & Jijalije**
Sh. Tej Krishna Raina & Smt. Veena Ji Raina - **Bhaiya & Bhai**
Smt. Mohini Koul - **Bethan**
Smt. Kirti Koul (Hanjooa) & Sh. Rajesh Koul - **Beti & Jamai**
Smt. Doora Tutoo W/o Lt. Sh. M.K. Tutoo - **Niece**
Anshu, Priyanka, Sukhad - **Pota, Potee**

Contacts : 9419789050, 9796446692, 9483900085



Smt. Nancy Koul (Ranjii)

Tenth Day/Kriya/Uthala

With profound grief & sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh Kamlesh Kumar Thakur S/o Lt. Nathi Lal Thakur** who left us for heavenly abode on 26-01-2024.

Tenth Day will be performed on 3-02-2024 (Saturday) at 11.00 am at our residence H.No. 14 Saraswati Lane Bohri, Jammu.

Kriya will be performed on 5-02-2024 (Monday) at our residence H.No. 14 Saraswati Lane Bohri, Jammu.

Uthala will be performed from 4.00 pm to 5.00 pm at Tawi Mahal Banquet Hall near Udhaywala Jammu.

Grief Stricken

Smt Krishna Devi -**Mother**
Smt Radha Kumari -**Wife**
Smt Jasbir Kour & Laxman Singh (Govt Contractor) -**Bhabhi & Bhaiya**
Smt Poonam Kumari & Rakesh Kumar -**Younger Brother**
Miss Priyanka Kumari -**Daughter**
Miss Sandhya Kumari -**Daughter**
Mr Hitesh Kumar -**Son**
Ph No. 9419108304, 9906014160, 7006297886



Sh Kamlesh Kumar Thakur

TENTH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform that **Sh. Oma Dutt Sharma S/o Late Pt Mansa Ram Sharma R/o Ramkot (Bilawari) who left for heavenly abode on 26th Jan 2024.**

The **10th Day** will be performed (Sunday) at our residence Ramkot on 4th Feb. 2024 at 11 A.M. **Kriya** will be performed on (Monday) 5th Feb 24 at our residence.

Uthala will be performed on (Wednesday) 7th Feb 24 at our residence at 3 PM to 4 PM.

GRIEF STRICKEN:

SONS & DAUGHTER IN LAW
Sh Ram Paul Sharma & Smt Seema Sharma (9906373119)

Sh Om Parkash Sharma & Smt Renu Sharma (9419197801)

Sh Satish Sharma (Ex. Gen. Sect. BJP J&K) & Smt Anita Sharma (9419143931)

Daughters & Sons in law
Smt Anvita Prabha & Sh. L D Khajuria

Smt Shashi & Sh Naresh Dubey

Grand Childrens :
Dr Vijay Khajuria & Dr Reema, Sonia Khajuria

Er. Sushant Sharma & Geetika, Er. Sumit Sharma & Sanya

Er. Prerak Sharma, Pranika Sharma, Aradhya Sharma

Anubhab Dubey, Arushi Dubey



Pt. Oma Dutt Sharma

10TH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of **Sh. Shankar Dass S/o Lt. Sh. Shonku Ram R/o 121/5 Trikuta Nagar, Jammu** who left for heavenly abode on 27/1/2024.

10th Day will be performed at Trikuta Palace Main Market Trikuta Nagar, Sec.-5A, Jammu on 5/2/2024 (Monday)

Satsang : 12.00 Noon.

Gura Ka Langar : 1.00 pm.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt. Samtri Devi (Wife)

Sons & Daughter-in-Laws

Sh. Daleep Raj & Smt. Kamli Devi

Sh. Joginder Kumar & Smt. Nimmo Devi

Sh. Raj Kumar & Smt. Ritu Devi

Sh. Mohinder Kumar & Smt. Prabha Devi

Son-in-Laws & Daughters

Sh. Jagdish Raj Digra & Smt. Rani Devi

Sh. Prem Kumar & Smt. Asha Devi

Sh. Prabh Dayal & Smt. Champa Devi

Grand Sons : Parveen Kumar, Chetan Kumar, Mukesh Sarmal, Pankaj Sarmal, Vishal Sarmal, Moksh Sarmal, Shubam Sarmal

Sarmal Family
Phone No. : 9419128832, 9419135684, 7006880412



Sh. Shankar Dass

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform about the sad demise of our beloved father **Sh. Shyam Sunder Lal Trakroo** originally resident of Gogji Bagh Srinagar presently residing at 403 Tulip, Bellevue Greens Apartment Near SAS Nagar Jalandhar. **10TH DAY KRIYA** will be performed at Beas ghat, Beas, Jalandhar Amritsar highway, on 9 Feb 2024 at 11 AM.

Ruling govt completely crushed our age-old movement for rights of PoJK refugees: Chuni

Accuses govt of 'taking away all their rights on land, property, job, political empowerment' under well-thought of plan

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: Accusing "black-sheep" sitting in power corridors of reducing the problems of J&K people to a perception of 'mere Kashmir problem', the 'S. O. S. International'—a frontline organization of PoJK Displaced Persons—today blamed the ruling NDA government at the Centre for completely crushing the age-old movement of PoJK refugees under its ill-conceived intentions.

During a refugee awareness rally called by S. O. S. International, the only registered organization of refugees of Mirpur, Pallandri, Bagh, Kotli, Bhimber, Chhamb, Muzaffarabad and Gilgit under the chairmanship of Rajiv Chuni here on Sunday, it was alleged that the government has taken away all rights of refugees vis-a-vis land, property, job, language, clan, tribe, ethnicity, political empowerment, education under a well-thought of plan to crush their movement.

"In October 2014, the then cabinet of the Jammu and Kashmir government had approved a comprehensive package for the displaced persons of PoJK. The package was an outcome of the decades-long struggle of community leaders. We demand that the Government of India should religiously and in-principle fulfill the package, announced for PoJK refugees before the formation of the BJP-led government at the Centre in 2014, without any further delay," Mr Chuni said while addressing a large rally.

He further said, "This package included Rs 25 lakh compensation for each PoJK community family, reservation in professional and technical colleges of the country for our youths and a provision of creation of 8500 jobs for the youths belonging to PoJK community. Unfortunately, the BJP leadership in Jammu and Kashmir has never bothered to utter a single word about this package and they continue to



maintain a cryptic silence over it".

He also demanded that all 5,300 PoJK displaced families settled outside Jammu and Kashmir should be brought into the ambit of the package passed for PoJK refugees by the then J&K government in October 2014. "We failed to understand the rationale behind the exclusion of these families from the ambit of the relief package. They have not committed any crime or sin and they need to be treated at par with other PoJK displaced persons staying in Jammu and Kashmir," Mr Chuni said.

The senior refugee leader also took a dig at the Centre for reserving a single seat for the displaced PoJK people and described it as "humiliating" and "insulting" for a community of 17 lakh people.

Mr Chuni termed it a "grave injustice" with the displaced PoJK people, saying "the people displaced from Kashmir has a total population of 1.57 lakh (as per the statement of Union Home Minister in the Parliament) and they have been allotted two seats while the PoJK community of 17 lakh people have been meted out to grave injustice and humiliation when only one seat has been reserved for them".

"Instead of ensuring political empowerment of PoJK

displaced persons who have remained the victim of decades-long turmoil, the Centre has tried to rub salt on their wounds by reserving a single seat for them in J&K Assembly. The PoJK DPs had been demanding eight seats in J&K legislative assembly for decades and it had been strongly recommended by various Commissions and Committees over the years but the ruling dispensation at the Centre played a cruel joke on PoJK displaced persons," the senior refugee leader said.

"In 1957, a total of 25 seats were reserved for the displaced PoJK community. One of the seats was taken away from us while the remaining 24 seats are still reserved. The Wadhwa Committee as well as Interlocutors report while considering the genuine and legitimate demand of PoJK DPs for reserving eight seats for them in J&K assembly. The K C Pant-led Interlocutor panel, NN Vohra-led Interlocutor panel and later a panel composed of MM Ansari and Radha Kumar as Interlocutors also made similar recommendations. Thereafter, the European delegation while assessing the plights and sufferings of PoJK people in the camps also favoured reservation of seats for us," Mr Chuni reminded the Central government.

The S. O. S. International chairman said, "A parliamentary standing committee headed by former vice president of India, Venkaiah Naidu, in its report submitted in December 2014, also recommended allotting eight out of the 24 seats reserved for PoJK community to the displaced people from PoJK living in Jammu and Kashmir to ensure their political empowerment even if it requires amendment in J&K Constitution. Recently, the Delimitation Commission has also advocated for an adequate number of seats for PoJK refugees for their political empowerment".

He added that these recommendations were strong evidence for the present dispensation at the Centre to reserve eight seats for the displaced PoJK people in the J&K assembly based on their population in the Union Territory and outside J&K. "It is unfortunate that we have been left politically disempowered despite these strong recommendations".

He also demanded that the displaced PoJK persons be provided equal facilities which are being given to the displaced people of Kashmir Valley.

The senior refugee leader also took a swipe at the Centre for denying Sched-

uled Tribe (ST) status to the displaced PoJK persons staying in Jammu, Samba, Reasi, Udhampur and Kathua districts.

"It is sheer mockery that the government has tried to create a divide among the displaced PoJK persons. Our people (PoJK refugees) living in Rajouri and Poonch districts have been given ST status under Pahari quota but the same is being denied in Jammu district and other parts of the country. How can the government justify this disparity if a section of the community gets some benefits and others are deprived of it? This is a deliberate attempt to create a wedge within the community," he said.

The refugee leader also demanded that the PoJK displaced persons living in Jammu and Kashmir be allowed to visit their religious shrines including temples and Gurdwaras in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

"An attempt is being made to give control of Sharda Peeth Shrine in PoJK to the people who had never been associated with the shrine before the migration in Kashmir Valley. The real stakeholders including the displaced PoJK persons from Mirpur, Pallandri, Bagh, Kotli, Bhimber, Chhamb and Muzaffarabad have kept out of the purview of Sharda Peeth Shrine which is quite unfortunate," he said.

He also asked the displaced PoJK refugees to get ready for a decisive battle for the fulfillment of their legitimate rights. He also warned the BJP-led Centre government to meet all genuine demands of the displaced persons before the Lok Sabha elections or else be ready to face wrath of lakhs of PoJK refugee voters.

Others who addressed the gathering includes; Prof. NN Sharma, VK Datta, Bhairam Singh, Jagjit Singh, Prof. Suresh Gupta, Prof. PP Raina, Ved Raj Bali, Daleep Singh Chib, Daleep Sharma, Sanjeev Kumar & Prateek Raina.

The blessings of people are with Modi ji: Ashish Sood

Ashish Sood, Ashok Koul address series of meetings at BJP headquarter



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: Gearing up the party's activities ahead of the 2024 Parliament Elections, the Jammu and Kashmir BJP held a series of meetings of different teams formulated for the election management at party headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, on Sunday.

These meetings were chaired by J&K BJP Seh-Prabhari Ashish Sood and BJP General Secretary (organization) Ashok Koul.

In these meetings, Ashish Sood and Ashok Koul reviewed the progress of the ongoing programmes and also sought the details related to the party's Morchas, new joinings, wall writing, and women's self-help groups & NGO sam-park teams.

Ashish Sood, while speaking in these meetings, said that the upcoming Lok Sabha elections are a challenge to every activist of the party as their efforts on the ground will ensure the party's massive victory and show the INDI Alliance its place. He said that although there is enthusiasm in the

Public to return Modi as PM for the third term, still we have to work more to register record-breaking win in the elections.

"The blessings of the people are with Modi ji and we are winning this Parliamentary election. But we must leave no stone unturned to win every single vote that we can", said Ashish Sood.

Ashok Koul said that the BJP Cadre in Jammu and Kashmir has a long history of struggle and sacrifices and has vast experience of defeating the designs of anti-national and dynastic forces. He said that in view of the Lok Sabha elections also, every activist of the party is reaching the people at their doorsteps with various schemes of the Modi Government and convincing them to stand with BJP, support it in Polls, and become part of the progress and prosperity of J&K by bringing BJP and Narendra Modi back in power.

BJP NEM Priya Sethi who coordinated these meetings, stressed on the increased work hours by these teams during the Lok Sabha Polls.

Apni Party committed to politically empower women in J&K: Manjit Singh



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: Apni Party Provincial President, Jammu, and Former Minister, S. Manjit Singh today said that the Apni Party is committed to politically empower women in Jammu and Kashmir.

While speaking at an active worker's meeting in ward number 47 at Kassim Nagar in Bahu constituency, the Former Minister, S. Manjit Singh appreciated the participation of women in political activities and awareness among them about their rights.

"The awareness among the women about their political rights is important because it would empower them as well as the society," he said, while addressing the worker's meeting which was organized by Sheetal Sharma, provincial secretary of women wing, and ward number

47's president.

He said that women have an important role in a society that would upgrade their living standard.

He said that the participation of women in political activities provides them the opportunity to elect their representative so that they can address their problems. Meanwhile, he welcomed dozens of women led by Congress Party leader Darshana Devi with her supporters to join the Apni Party.

While welcoming the new entrants into the Party fold, Manjit Singh expressed hope that the joining of women will strengthen its root in Bahu constituency.

He said that the Apni Party has emerged as a hope for the people due to which different sections of society are joining the Party.

"We have made commitment with the people

to bring positive changes in Jammu and Kashmir and accordingly, the welfare schemes for the women including enhancement of widow pension scheme up to Rs 5000, four free cooking gas cylinders to each economically poor family under Ujjwala scheme, enhancement of marriage assessment up to Rs 1 lakhs for the girls of poor families, 500 units of free electricity during summer and 300 units of electricity during winter season," he added.

Prominent among those who were present occasion include Neelam Gupta, Vice President, Women Wing, Shikha Bhardwaj, Provincial Secretary Women Wing, Shivani Koul, Provincial Secretary, women wing, Adv Kuldeep Sudan, Legal Cell, Provincial General Secretary, Vaibhav Mattoo, Senior District Vice President of Jammu Urban, Vishal Jotshi, Press Secretary, District Jammu, Shubam Choudhary, district president youth, Dalbir Singh, District President, Minority Cell, Ravinder Kour, activist of ward number 43 president, Surinder Singh of ward number 48 president, Vicky Sudan, and others.

BJP will win all five Lok Sabha seats in J&K: Vibodh



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: BJP J&K General Secretary and former MLC Vibodh Gupta conducted a meeting of senior party leaders at party headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, Jammu as the party ramps up its campaign for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir. Senior leaders deliberated on a host of organisational programmes, people's feedback and the strategy ahead. Addressing the meeting of senior BJP leaders, Vibodh Gupta expressed confidence, stating that the BJP will win over 400 Lok Sabha seats nationwide in the upcoming 2024 Parliamentary elections. He emphasised the party's commitment to securing a third consecutive term with Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the helm and also predicting victory in all five parliamentary seats from Jammu and Kashmir. Highlighting the public's satisfaction with the pro-people initiatives of the Prime Minister-

led central government, particularly the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A, Vibodh Gupta asserted that these bold initiatives ushered in an unprecedented wave of development, steering Jammu and Kashmir towards peace and prosperity. Sewa, Sushashan and Garib Kalyan (service, good governance, welfare of the poor) has been the theme of Prime Minister Narendra Modi led central government which has won the heart of Indian voters, he added. He also noted the intensified efforts of party workers in preparation for the Lok Sabha election, with significant outreach programs on the horizon. The senior BJP leaders who engaged in the meeting included Priya Sethi, Sham Choudhary, Munish Sharma, Ashwani Sharma, Omi Khajuria, Rekha Mahajan, Pramodh Kapahi, Sunil Dutt, Dr. Krishan Lal, Suraj Singh, Nand Kishore, Ajay Sharma, Surinder Kumar, Suneet Raina, Ravi Sharma, Pushpinder Singh, and Akash Chopra.

ENIT NO. 180 OF 2023-24 DATED 30-01-2024

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI PHE MECHANICAL DIVISION UDHAMPUR
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
E-NIT JSPHEMUDHRI 4800F 2023-24 DATED 30-01-2024

Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division, Udhampur, on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir UT, invites tenders by e-tendering mode from registered firms who have sufficient experience in the relevant field of electro-mechanical/electrical works.

Sl.	Name of the work	Qty	Name of Division	Cost of Tender Document / Tender Fee (in Rs)	Earnest Money (in Rs)	Bid validity
1	Replacement of 3000 GPH x 200 meter head HC pump at pumping station Ramnagar stage-2 nd and 5000 GPH x 250 meter head HC pump at pumping station Ritti Barta stage-1 st .	01 job	Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Division Udhampur	Rs. 200.00 (Non-refundable in shape of treasury challan in favour of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Division Udhampur)	(Rs. 1988.00) 2% (in case of non-registered firms) Or (Rs.994.00) 1% (in case of firms registered with DIC / SSI / MSME)	90 days

- Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 31-01-2024 (18:00Hrs.)
- The Bids shall be deposited on the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 31-01-2024 (18:30Hrs.) to 07-02-2024 (3:00 Hrs.).
- After opening tender only successful bidder shall be asked for submitting the hard copies of documents with CDR and tender fee
- The complete bidding process will be online <http://jktenders.gov.in>.
- The technical bid will be opened on line on 08-02-2024 at 11.00 A.M or any other subsequent date in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division Udhampur.
- The Financial bids of the bidders shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division Udhampur after evaluation of technical bids. The date shall be communicated separately.
- Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 5 & 6 of the table (and for DIC/SSI/MSME registered firms as per Industrial Policy of J&K govt.) payable at Udhampur pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, PHE Mechanical Division, Udhampur.
- Bid security will have to be in form of CDR / FDR / BG of any scheduled bank and shall have to be valid for six months or more after last date of receipt of Bid. The cost of downloaded tender documents shall be in form of Treasury Challan / e-Challan in favour of Executive Engineer PHE Mechanical Division, Udhampur payable at Udhampur.
- Firms who will fulfill the following parameters are eligible to participate.
 - Average Annual financial turnover during the last 3 years, ending 31 March of the previous financial year, should be at least 30% of this estimated cost.
 - Experience of having successfully completed similar works during last 07 years ending last day of month previous to the one in which applications are invited should be either of the following-
 - Three similar completed works costing not less than the amount equal to 40% of the estimated cost
 - Two similar completed works costing not less than the amount equal to 50% of the estimate cost
 - One similar completed work costing not less than the amount equal to 80% of the estimated cost.
 Definition of "similar work" should be clearly defined.
- The bid shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 90 days from the date of opening bids. If any bidder / tenderer withdraws his bid / tender before the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the earnest money of the firm shall stand forfeited.
- The tenderers are advised to visit the site of work before uploading their tenders so as to acquaint themselves with exact site conditions.
- Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in>

NO. JSPHEMUDHR/2023-24/6311-14
Dated:-30-01-2024

DIP/J-14639/23

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Division
Udhampur

EDITORIAL

AGRICULTURAL
INFRASTRUCTURES

Since the inception of Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) Scheme in July 8, 2020, Rs 152 crore was sanctioned by Banks and other lending institutions to create 144 infrastructure units sanctioned under the Scheme in the NER region. This includes 78 Primary processing Centres, 26 Warehouses, 5 Cold Stores and Cold chains, 2 Sorting and Grading Units and 33 other miscellaneous infrastructure projects.

In order to support farmers in adopting mechanization and modernizing Indian agriculture, Agriculture Infrastructure Fund Scheme provides for incentives by way of 3% Interest subvention on AIF Loans and reimbursement of guarantee fee on collateral-free AIF loans lent by lenders for Farm/Harvest Automation, setting up of Custom Hiring Centres, Purchase of drones, putting up specialized sensors on field, Block chain and AI in agriculture etc. Introduction of Remote sensing and Internet of Things (IOT) such as automatic weather station, Farm advisory services through GIS applications constitute other such initiatives in the category of Infrastructure for smart and precision agriculture. AIF also aims at improvising Supply chain services that includes creation of e-marketing platforms.

In order to give a fillip to the food processing units, under AIF scheme primary processing is encouraged and convergence of this Scheme with other Government Scheme is being facilitated to offer multiple Scheme benefits to beneficiaries. Other initiatives include creation and modernization of storage and Primary Processing activities and improving cold chain which include: Reefer Van & Insulated vehicles, Ripening chamber and Sorting and Grading units.

Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), provides assistance for development of Post-Harvest Management (PHM) for perishable horticulture crops which includes establishment of pack house, Integrated pack house, pre-cooling, staging cold room, cold storages, controlled atmosphere (CA) storage, reefer transport, setting up of ripening chambers and Integrated cold chain supply system etc. This scheme also provides assistance for setting up of food processing units in North East and Himalayan States only. For Food Processing Units credit linked back ended assistance @ 50% of eligible project cost, in North Eastern and Himalayan States of the maximum project cost of Rs. 800.00 lakh/unit is available.

Under Agricultural Marketing infrastructure (AMI) sub-scheme of Integrated Scheme for Agricultural Marketing (ISAM), since inception i.e. from 01.04.2001 and up to 31.12.2022, a total of 42164 storage infrastructure projects (Godowns) with capacity of 740.43 Lakh MT have been assisted in the country.

Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) Scheme has been implemented in 704 districts of 28 States & 5 UTs to educate the farmers. Under the scheme Grants-in-aid is released to the State Government with an objective to support State Governments' efforts to make available the latest agricultural technologies and good agricultural practices in different thematic areas of agriculture and allied sector (including boost up the production and educate the farmers) to farmers through different extension activities viz; Farmers Training, Demonstration, Exposure Visit, Kisan Mela, Mobilization of Farmers Group and organizing Farm Schools etc.

Under Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) Scheme of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, a farm machinery training and testing institute at Biswanath Chariyal was set up in 1990. The institute is imparting training to farmers, technicians, engineers, rural youths and women in the field of tractors and agricultural machines. The institute pays stipend to farmers @Rs.200 per day along with to & fro from their residence to attend training. Institute organizes field's demonstrations and training at villages also. Under this scheme, the training institutes organize demonstrations of advanced machines in the field and garden friendly tools and equipments. Besides, these institutes test the machines as per BIS codes to ensure supply of quality machines to farmers.

Is it always so wrong to sit on the fence?

By: Shashi Warriar

I t's uncomfortable having friends quarrel in your house. I know, because it happened the other day and I still haven't got over it. We live a kilometre from the highway that takes people from Kerala to the Mookambika temple in Kollur. Since both my wife and I have roots in Kerala, we have lots of friends and relatives there who sometimes drop in on the way to or from parts north of Mangalore, usually Kollur, but other places as well. Not all such visits are pleasant. Some weeks ago, we had a visitor from Kozhikode.

He's 30 years old, a professor at the university, and a staunch leftist: let's call him Abhay. I know him through his father, a good friend, and I last met this youngster two decades ago, when he was just 10. He was going not to Kollur but to Agumbe, to see if the tribals in the area were being exploited. We had just settled him into a comfortable chair and served him some tea when the doorbell rang a second time. On the doorstep was another friend, from Kannur, a businessman with a successful digital marketing business, who believes that going to the temple is good for him. Let's call him Anthony.

I welcomed him, too, in, and introduced Anthony and Abhay to each other. And then the friction started. "Are you too on your way to Kollur?" asked Anthony.

"The temple?" responded Abhay. "No way! I don't believe in such... Things."

I was relieved he didn't use a stronger word, but the contempt in his voice came through unmistakably. The function at the Sri Ram temple in Ayodhya was just over, and I knew that people had varied opinions about it. The atmosphere in the room grew chilly, but Anthony kept his cool. "Ah!" he said. "Is that what you teach? Atheism?"

"Well," replied Abhay, "no. I teach literature. Revolutionary literature. I certainly don't encourage circuses in the name of religion. Like Ayodhya."

Anthony turned to me. "And what do you say?" he asked, as if I had a sort of casting vote.

I don't really believe in going to temples and so on but somewhere in the back of my mind is a fear that maybe there is something to religion so I'm not sure. Besides, I find it hard to label all devotees of Ram part of a political circus. I kept quiet for a few moments, during which Abhay, too, turned to me as if for a decider. "I don't know," I said, finally.

The atmosphere changed again. Abhay and Anthony found something in common: their disdain for me. And then Anthony got a call from his wife, who after a couple of minutes of innocuous talk, seemed to mention Israel and Gaza, and Anthony responded supporting Israel. When Anthony hung up, Abhay seemed to come awake. "What Israel is

doing is indefensible," he said.

"Is October 7 defensible, then?" asked Anthony.

"Given how Israel has treated Gazans," said Abhay, "yes."

"And how is it that Gaza came to be in this situation, do you remember?" asked Anthony.

I missed some of the rest of the conversation though it was heated because I did remember the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948, 1967, and 1973, and some earlier history, about how the British promised Palestine to the Arabs after the World War I, but reneged on the deal. But then, Judaism's holiest sites were in Palestine, and so the Jews were first... Or were they? It all hinged on how far back you went, and I'm no historian.

Anthony, patting me on the shoulder, brought me back to the present. "Well," he asked, "what do you think? Whose land is it?"

"I really don't know," I replied. "Depends on how far back you go."

This time, both of them had trouble hiding their contempt for me. If they hadn't been in my house they'd have called me names, the mildest of those being "Coward!" Anthony, being closer to me in age, and, besides, an old friend, was the more honest. "How can you not know?" he asked. "Don't you read the news?"

I admitted I did. I also admitted to being largely unemployed and, therefore, reading history and watching boring old videos on YouTube and

listening to podcasts and so on.

Some of Anthony's honesty seemed to have rubbed off on Abhay, so he picked up where Anthony left off. "If you've been doing all that it must be evident to you that Israel is at fault here!"

"I'm afraid it isn't," I said, shrinking back into my seat.

"It must be clear to you that it's Hamas at fault here!" said Anthony. "Just as clear that it's Ukraine and the West at fault in Ukraine's war against Russia!"

That stopped their broadsides at me. "It's that thug Putin at fault!" said Abhay to Anthony. "He had no business in Crimea! That's what Hitler did in Czechoslovakia in 1939!"

"Nato has no business including Ukraine!" said Anthony. "Especially after all those promises starting 15 years ago that it wouldn't expand an inch!"

Both were beginning to raise their voices but I was too ignorant and they too disdainful for me to get between them, so I just kept quiet. The one good thing about the situation was that I didn't have to make small talk, which is something I fear because I'm no good at it.

They argued their way through another cup of tea before leaving, and, when they did, I was only relieved I didn't get caught up in their debate. Sitting on the fence is uncomfortable, but taking sides is worse!

Can Artificial Intelligence Replace Human Intelligence?

By: Vijay GarG

Artificial intelligence (AI) used to be something we've all heard of but didn't exactly understand or know its real-life applications. But, as free and easy-to-use AI tools like ChatGPT, Midjourney, or Whisper AI become available online, a new AI era has begun. Now, users can generate copy, long content, images, presentations and even websites using simple commands and instructions. It's mind blowing! But, as it's natural, many wonder, "Can artificial intelligence replace human intelligence?" The short answer is no. AI cannot replace human intelligence entirely. While AI can perform certain tasks more quickly and accurately than humans, it lacks the same level of general intelligence, creativity, and social understanding humans possess. In this blog, we will explore what AI is, its limitations and its possibilities.

What is AI? Before we dive into the question of whether AI can replace human intelligence, let's first define what we mean by AI. At its core, AI is a technology that enables machines to perform tasks that would typically require human intelligence, such as recognising patterns, making decisions, and processing natural language. AI is often powered by machine learning algorithms, which allow the system to learn and improve over time.

While AI has been around in some form for several decades, recent advances in computing power and data analysis have led to a rapid acceleration in AI development. Today, AI is used in various applications, from self-driving cars to virtual personal assistants.

The Limits of AI But, despite AI advances and possibilities, it's important to remember that there are limits to what it can do. One major limitation is

that AI is only as good as the data it's trained on. If the data is biased or incomplete, the AI system will reflect those biases and limitations.

AI is also incapable of true creativity or innovation. While AI can generate new ideas and solutions based on existing data, it cannot think outside the box and create original ideas. This is because AI is based on algorithms and patterns, whereas human creativity is driven by intuition, inspiration, and imagination. Therefore, AI can be a valuable tool for augmenting human ingenuity but can never replace it.

Additionally, AI is not capable of empathy or emotional intelligence. While AI can recognise and analyse emotions, it can't truly understand them or respond to them in a meaningful way. This means that AI can't replace human relationships or social interactions, as these require a deep understanding of human emotions and behaviours. Therefore, while AI can be a powerful tool for many applications, it's important to remember that it's not a substitute for human intelligence, empathy, and creativity.

The Potential of AI Despite its limitations, AI has enormous potential to transform many industries and solve some of the world's biggest challenges. As Andrew Ng, co-founder of Google Brain and founder of deeplearning.ai, puts it

"It is difficult to think of a major industry that AI will not transform. This includes healthcare, education, transportation, retail, communications, and agriculture. There are surprisingly clear paths for AI to make a big difference in these industries."

AI can help us make more informed decisions by analysing vast amounts of data and identifying patterns and trends humans might miss. This can be especially useful in healthcare and finance, where making accurate predictions and diagnoses can have life-changing

implications.

But perhaps one of the most important use cases of AI is that it can help us automate repetitive and mundane tasks, freeing up time and energy for more creative and meaningful work. This can improve efficiency and productivity in many industries, from manufacturing to customer service.

Additionally, AI can enable us to create new products and services that were previously impossible by combining data and insights in new and innovative ways. Overall, the possibilities of AI are vast and exciting, and we have only scratched the surface of what this technology can do.

The Importance of Human Input

While AI has enormous potential, it's important to remember that it's not a silver bullet. AI systems require human input and oversight to perform appropriately and make decisions in ambiguous situations.

Ultimately, AI is not a replacement for human intelligence, it's a tool that can help us achieve our goals, but we need to ensure that we use it responsibly and ethically.

Furthermore, humans bring a wide range of experiences, creativity, and intuition to the decision-making process that AI cannot replicate. While AI can process vast amounts of data and identify patterns that humans may miss, it cannot replace the value of human intuition and creativity in decision-making.

It's important to understand that AI isn't a replacement for human intelligence. It's an extension of it. It can help us to make better decisions and to be more productive, but it can't replace the value of human intuition and creativity.

Want to kickstart your GenAI journey? Download our interactive - editable GenAI Business Case Template to win your board's approval!

Generative AI Business Case - Download

The Future of AI and Human Intelligence

So, what does the future hold for AI and human intelligence? AI will likely continue to advance and become more sophisticated, enabling it to perform an even wider range of tasks. However, there will always be tasks and problems that require human input and creativity. Human intelligence will always be a part of fields that require skills like research, design, strategic planning and more. Roles that require human relationships, decision-making, intuition and emotional intelligence, such as Physicians, Teachers, HR professionals and Business Leaders, can't be automated. Still, AI will make them more productive and effective.

In conclusion, while AI has enormous potential to transform many industries and improve our lives in many ways, it cannot replace human intelligence entirely. While AI may be able to perform specific tasks more quickly and accurately than humans, it lacks the same level of general intelligence, creativity, and social understanding that humans possess. Therefore, the most effective and responsible approach to AI is to view it as a tool to augment human intelligence rather than a replacement for it. By doing so, we can unlock AI's full potential while preserving the value of human input and creativity.

Getting Started with End-to-End AI Transformation

Partner with Calls9, a leading Generative AI agency, through our AI Fast Lane programme, designed to identify where AI will give you a strategic advantage and help you rapidly build AI solutions in your organisation. As an AI specialist, we are here to facilitate the development of your AI strategy and solutions within your organisation, guiding you every step of the way:

(Vijay GarG Retired
Principal Educational
columnist Malout)

Addl Director Jammu Zoo Mr Anil Atri undergo detailed Visit of Jammu Zoo



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: Today Addl Director Jammu Zoo Mr Anil Atri undergo detailed inspection of Jammu Zoo after taking over charge of Jammu Zoo. He Visit all the animal enclosures and animal kept in Zoo. He also visit ongoing works of repair and

upgradation including works of construction of new enclosures for coming animals in Jammu zoo. He also took stock of well being of different captive animal of Jammu Zoo and their feed supply. During visit he interacted with the visitors also to get their

agement.

Talking to media he stated that as Desired by the Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir, Dept of Wildlife Protection is making every possible effort to make Jammu Zoo a preferred tourist destination. Different activities/works are undergoing to upgrade the facilities for the visitors including addition of more animals to Zoo. so that number of visitors visiting Zoo could increase manifolds.

During the visit he was accompanied by Range officers Jammu Zoo Mr Noor Ul Amin and Mr Sanjeev Kumar, Different Contractors working in Zoo including other Staff of Zoo.

Mahila Congress President J&K urges Swift action from LG administration Amid ongoing snowfall

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Feb 4: Mahila Congress President J&K Shameema Raina has appealed to LG administration to prioritize the clearance of snow on roads and ensure uninterrupted electricity and water supply for the people. In light to the current weather condition, which have led to considerable disruption in, daily life. Shameema Raina underscores the paramount importance of swiftly challenges posed by ongoing snow-

fall. Recognizing the crucial role of accessible roads in facilitating emergency services, transportation and overall mobility of citizen. She emphasizes the urgent need for efficient snow clearance efforts. Moreover Shameema Raina emphasizes the significance of maintaining continuous access to essential utilities such as electricity and water during inclement weather. Ensure uninterrupted electricity and water supply is crucial for safeguarding the well-being of people,

particularly during harsh weather conditions when reliance on these utilities is heightened.

Shameema Raina urges the LG administration to mobilize all available resources and deploy them effectively to mitigate the impact of snowfall on the daily life of citizens. It is imperative that concerned efforts are made to clear snow from roads promptly and ensure the seamless provision of essential services, thereby minimizing inconvenience and ensure the safety and welfare of the people.

PM Vishwakarma scheme inaugurated in Kathua



Top News Report

KATHUA, Feb 4: G K Educational Trust, Training Partner NSDC, ministry of skill development started first batch of Tailoring Trade with 45 Trainees under PM Vishwakarma Scheme at

GKTR PMKK Kathua. Chief Guest Sandeep Majotra, DDC Chairman Nagri inaugurated the scheme and he interacted with the beneficiaries of PM Vishwakarma and motivated them by sharing his experiences.

G K Educational Trust is committed to create opportunities and improving the lives of people in the community by skilling them in particular field. Mr. Amar (Director G K Educational Trust) and other staff members were also present.

Tata Cancer hospital expert interacts with Aryans pharmacy and nursing students

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: With the aim to create awareness about the importance of preventive measures of Cancer, World Cancer Day was celebrated today at Aryans Institute of Nursing, Rajpura, Near Chandigarh. Virtually Dr Jayashree Deshmukh, MD Radiation Oncology, Dept of Radiation Oncology, Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital & Research Centre, Punjab interacted with the students of B. Sc. Nursing, GNM, ANM, B.

Pharmacy and D. Pharmacy.

While addressing students Dr. Deshmukh said that Cancer is becoming one of the fastest spreading non-communicable diseases not only among Indians but also among people across the world. According to an estimate, by the year 2030, cancer will overtake heart disease and diabetes to become the most common lifestyle disease. The initial symptoms of cancer should not be ignored, she asserted.

Mrs. Nidhi Chopra, Principal, Aryans Institute of Nursing said that on the occasion, various student activities including Quiz competition, Slogan writing were organized. Founded in 2000, World Cancer Day celebrated worldwide on 4th February aims to improve education, raise awareness and inspire personal, collective and government action to provide access to lifesaving cancer treatment and care for the millions of people worldwide with cancer.

People being looted in the Name of Government Schemes

Top News Report

DODA, Feb 4: An example of people being looted in the name of government schemes has come to the light in Doda district today when the authorities in the Poultry Hatchery Doda have illegally charged Rs 20 from the beneficiaries in the name of some vaccine.

On one hand the UT government has launched many schemes for the welfare of poor people in J&K whereas on the other hand, an example of how the poor people are being looted through these schemes was seen today in the government Poultry Hatchery Department of Doda, when people here came to take the chicks and they were being provided the vaccine along with the chicks. When people asked the employees of the department why these vaccines were being given, they told the people that these

vaccines are compulsory and demanded rupees twenty (Rs 20) per piece.

However, when the media tried to ask these the employees of poultry department, they ran away from the spot and kept the vaccine hidden.

The poultry department employees were then asked to produce orders regarding the same vaccine and they were seen making excuses after excuses.

In this regard, people have appealed to DC Doda and the LG administration to take strict action against the erring officers and officials of the concerned department at the earliest possible and they be asked to explain as to why poor people were looted in the name of a government scheme.

Later, Animal Husbandry Officer Doda Doctor Mayan Ud Din reached the spot and assured that action will be taken against whoever is found guilty.

Violation of agreement by Chenab Valley Power Projects Limited (CVPPL) not be tolerated: Ajeet Bhagat

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Feb 4: Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Sr. leader Ajeet Bhagat demanded investigation of violation of agreement of Chenab Valley Power Projects Limited (CVPPL) in respect of large scale bungling into substandard material used in Hydroelectric Power Projects and backdoor appointments.

Bhagat said that he would highlight the increasing unemployment being faced by the youths of Kishtwar, Doda, and Ramban Districts of Chenab Valley Zone. The National Conference leader said it will not be out of place to mention here that at one point i.e upto 2014 a large number of youths were engaged in Dul-Hasti and Baglihar Hydroelectric Power Proj-

ects. Now we have four major Hydroelectric Power Project Viz Pakal -Dool, Kiru, Kavar and Rattle where four reputed companies are executing these Projects but it is a matter of great concern that there is unrest among the unemployed youths because the companies involved have engaged less manpower in these Projects, he added.

Bhagat said that the reason behind this is the Companies Management Chenab Valley Power Projects Limited (CVPPL) want to get more and more profit by way of engaging less manpower. Similarly, the principal employer of these Projects i.e Chenab Valley Power Projects Limited (CVPPL) are getting huge commission from these Project managements in order to hide their misdeed.

Resilient Locals Defy Snow to Advocate for a 'Drug-Free Kashmir'

Top News Report

KUPWARA, Feb 4: Despite the relentless snowfall blanketing the Kashmir region, a resolute community gathered in impressive numbers at Tarich Village, near Kandi Khass to participate in an interactive forum dedicated to championing a 'Drug-Free Kashmir' organised by Chak Keegam Garrison of Indian Army. The event, held amidst the wintry landscape, served as a testament to the unwavering commitment of Kashmiri residents to combat the pervasive issue of substance abuse within their midst.

Against the backdrop of swirling snowflakes, attendees engaged in impassioned dialogue, sharing personal narra-

tives, apprehensions, and innovative strategies to tackle the menace of drug addiction. The robust turnout underscored a shared determination to protect the integrity and prospects of Kashmir's youth and broader societal fabric.

Gratitude was extended to all participants by Indian Army for their steadfast resolve and fortitude in confronting adverse weather conditions to prioritize the imperative task of eliminating drug dependency from the region. The locals appreciated the efforts of the Indian Army for conducting such a positive event. The forum epitomized a significant stride forward in nurturing a healthier, safer, and more prosperous Kashmir.

Budget 2024-25 is a progressive budget to develop India: Jugal Kishore Sharma

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: Budget 2024-25 is a progressive budget aimed to achieve "Viksit Bharat" with a vision for the next 25 years, stated Jugal Kishore Sharma, Member Parliament from Jammu-Poonch parliamentary constituency.

MP Jugal Kishore, accompanied by BJP Office Secretary Tilak Raj Gupta and Media Incharge Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, was addressing a press conference at party headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

While addressing the media persons, Jugal Kishore Sharma hailed the Union budget presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and pronounced it as very progressive. He said that this budget will help in fulfilling the Modi government's vision for "Viksit Bharat" and a "prosperous Bharat" which is in harmony with nature, with modern infrastructure, and providing opportunities for all citizens and all regions to reach their potential.

Jugal said that for the Modi government, there is always the policy of "Nation first" and this budget aims to strengthen the country with a whopping 6.2 lakh crore rupees for 2024-25 and added

that this is for the first time that the allocation for the defense will cross Rs 6 lakh crores.

Jugal said that Jammu and Kashmir has been allocated Rs 37,277.74 crore in the interim union budget for 2024-25. He said in this budget, states will be encouraged to undertake the development of iconic tourist centers to attract business and promote opportunities for local entrepreneurship.

In Jammu too, the development of the local tourist places and the tourist circuits with the development of a modern railway station with two gates is coming up along with other local projects. He counted on the development of a modernized Airport in Jammu with an improved facility for night flying. He also shared that the talks are going on for the Metro rail facility up to the AILMS.

Jugal said that the 40,000 modern rail coaches on the pattern of Vande Bharat are being deployed in other trains on different routes to enhance the travelling experience of the common population. He also emphasized on the improved road network around the nation and mentioned that now the travel experience of Jammu Poonch and Jammu-Srinagar Road

has improved in terms of quality and the reduction in travel time.

Sharing the focus on women empowerment, Jugal said that the Modi govt is committed to the upliftment of women folk, and financial assistance up to one lakh will be provided under the Lakhpati Didi scheme for women. In the health sector, he said that the focus is to encourage Cervical Cancer Vaccination for girls (9-14 years), Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0, Mission Indradhanush, Ayushman Bharat scheme.

Jugal Kishore further said that this budget lays emphasis on the empowerment of lower and middle classes and referred to the income tax remissions provided in this Budget. He also talked of improving the electricity with the promotion of Rooftop solarization and 'Muft Bijli'.

Jugal Kishore thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for heading a government that has kept its focus on improving the socio-economic status of the needy and the poor in the last about 10 years, Union Home Minister Amit Shah for strengthening the nation and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for presenting a progressive and visionary Budget 2024-25.

Bahujan Samaj Party will contest on all seats of Lok Sabha elections in Jammu



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: Amidst the preparations for the Lok Sabha elections as well as the assembly elections to be held in Jammu and Kashmir, a meeting was organized by the State Bahujan Samaj Party in Udhampur district on Saturday. Bahujan Samaj Party State President Darshan Rana attended the meeting as the chief guest. Apart from this, party's vice President Charanjit Chargotha, Harichand Thapa, Satpal Baboria and Kuldeep Chalotra and many other senior leaders and workers of the party were also present during the meeting. Addressing the meeting on this occasion, Bahujan Samaj Party State President Darshan Rana said that Bahujan Samaj Party will field its candidates on all the Lok Sabha seats of Jammu division in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, for which the

party workers should be fully prepared so that the Bahujan Samaj Party can capture the seats! He said that in the Lok Sabha as well as Assembly elections, the party will field its candidates in every assembly constituency. He said that in view of the upcoming elections, a public relations campaign is being run by Bahujan Samaj Party across the state and under the same, a meeting has been held with party workers in district Udhampur today. Appealing to the party workers, he said that they should take the policies of the party to the common people and work to connect as many people as possible with the party. Rana said that Bahujan Samaj Party is the only political party in the country which takes all the people along and especially fights for the rights of the backward and needy people of the society. He said that if the Bahujan Samaj

Party comes to power in Jammu and Kashmir, then the people living in the state of Jammu and Kashmir will be given full rights and decisions will be taken in their favour. On this occasion, he also targeted the Central Government and said that during the tenure of the BJP Government at the Centre, there is continuous inflation in the country and due to increasing unemployment, the country seems to be in despair. Before this, other party leaders also expressed their views and appealed to the party workers to work with full sincerity to strengthen the Bahujan Samaj Party and form new units of the party in every village. During the meeting, a large number of party workers including District President Mangal Das, S. Ranjit Singh, Advocate Mohinder Attri, Suresh Kumar, Sudesh Kumar, Manmohan Thapa, Vijay Bansal, Gopal Krishna and Rajender Bhardwaj were present.

Speed ball General secretary honour by Ghulam Nabi Azad



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: An

impressive annual day celebration was hosted by Shikha Nik-

etan school at general zorawar singh auditorium. On this celebration sh.ghulam nabi azad (ex-CM of j&k) was the chief guest. While distributing the awards in the sports category Mr. Sunny nanda (general secretary of jkssb) was being honoured with best sports coach award. Sh.ghulam nabi azad appreciated the efforts of mr.sunny nanda for his achievements in his discipline.

Resilient Locals Defy Snow to Advocate for a 'Drug-Free Kashmir'

Top News Report

HANDWARA, Feb 4: Despite the relentless snowfall blanketing the Kashmir region, a resolute community gathered in impressive numbers at Tarich Village, near Kandi Khass to participate in an interactive forum dedicated to championing a 'Drug-Free Kashmir' organised by Chak

Keegam Garrison of Indian Army. The event, held amidst the wintry landscape, served as a testament to the unwavering commitment of Kashmiri residents to combat the pervasive issue of substance abuse within their midst.

Against the backdrop of swirling snowflakes, attendees engaged in impassioned dialogue, sharing per-

sonal narratives, apprehensions, and innovative strategies to tackle the menace of drug addiction. The robust turnout underscored a shared determination to protect the integrity and prospects of Kashmir's youth and broader societal fabric.

Gratitude was extended to all participants by Indian Army for their steadfast resolve and fortitude in

confronting adverse weather conditions to prioritize the imperative task of eliminating drug dependency from the region. The locals appreciated the efforts of the Indian Army for conducting such a positive event. The forum epitomized a significant stride forward in nurturing a healthier, safer, and more prosperous Kashmir.

FIR should be filed against Poonam Pandey, no one in film industry stoops to such level for PR: Cine Workers Association

AICWA criticised Poonam Pandey saying that after her fake death stunt, 'people may hesitate to believe any death news in the Indian film industry'.

The All Indian Cine Workers Association (AICWA) has issued a statement demanding an FIR against model-actor Poonam Pandey. Taking to X (formerly Twitter), AICWA said that 'using the guise of cervical cancer for self-promotion is not acceptable'. Poonam's team on Friday shared a statement on Instagram saying that she had died from the disease.

AICWA slams Poonam

AICWA's statement read, "The fake PR stunt by model and actress Poonam Pandey is highly wrong. Using the guise of cervical cancer for self-promotion is not acceptable. After this news, people may hesitate to believe any death news in the Indian film industry. No one in the film industry stoops to such levels for PR."

AICWA demands FIR against Poonam

It also read, "Poonam Pandey's manager had confirmed the False News, so there should be an FIR against Poonam Pandey and her manager to prevent anyone exploiting their own death news for personal gains (PR). The entire Indian film industry, along with the entire nation, paid tribute."

Poonam clarified why she did the publicity stunt

On Saturday, Poonam shared a video in which she clarified that she is alive and 'cervical cancer didn't claim me'. The news of her



death was fake, a stunt pulled off by the actor and her team to spread "critical awareness" about cervical cancer. In a video, posted on her official Instagram page, she said, "I feel compelled to share something significant with you all - I am here, alive. Cervical cancer didn't claim me, but tragically, it has

claimed the lives of thousands of women who stemmed from a lack of knowledge on how to tackle this disease... Together, let's strive to put an end to the devastating impact of the disease and bring #DeathToCervicalCancer."

In a follow-up video, Poonam apologised for the stunt but said she wanted to spread awareness about the disease. "I am sorry I caused this tear and I am sorry to those I have hurt. My intention: to shock everyone into the conversation that we are not talking enough about cervical cancer," she said. The news of her death serve a "greater purpose", she added.

On Friday, the actor's team made the shock announcement on Instagram. As per news agency, when contacted for the confirmation of the death, the actor's publicist said she died in her hometown but was not forthcoming with details about her battle with the disease as well as when and where she passed away.

The post on her Instagram page on Friday read, "Deeply saddened to inform you that we have lost our beloved Poonam to cervical cancer. Every living form that ever came in contact with her was met with pure love and kindness." "In this time of grief, we would request for privacy while we remember her fondly for all that we shared," the statement read.

Jaya Bachchan says she doesn't mind being a 'meme-generator'



Veteran actress and politician Jaya Bachchan, who often gets into a playful tiff with the

paparazzi, has said she doesn't mind being the source for such entertainment and a 'meme-generator'.

The senior actress, along with her daughter Shweta Bachchan, appeared on the second season of her granddaughter Navya Naveeli's podcast, What the Hell, Navya.

The three discussed the term 'Jaya-ing'. Shweta and Navya explained the meaning of the term to Jaya. Shweta said when someone is being 'salty', it is said that the person is 'Jaya-ing'. Shweta told her mother: "You are an internet sensation, a meme-generator."

During the podcast, they also touched upon the subject of side-hustle, a concept where people indulge in other works as a source of additional income.

Jaya Bachchan said: "I do a side hustle. I provide meals for some of the people who do my memes. I don't mind people making fun of me, but people should do it properly."

Shilpa Shetty Kundra: I want people to look up to me for the stuff I can do beyond my work

Actor Shilpa Shetty Kundra talks about her experience of working in Indian Police Force and being honoured with the Change of Champions award.

Actor Shilpa Shetty Kundra was recently seen in her OTT debut in Rohit Shetty's Indian Police Force and the actor is glad about the adoration she has been receiving post the release. "I am just happy that people loved Tara Shetty as a character. I have received a lot of love. It's a huge compliment that it's the most watched show and has reached a lot of people. It was great to kick ass with a tough character like that and to make other women happy. They were so happy to see me in a character like that, a strong cop role. I feel extremely privileged and proud, and humbled at the same time," she shares.

Would we see more cop roles in the future? "I have literally kept my entire diary empty right now. I have to finish with KD - The Devil and now I will decide on what I want to take on next. I want it to be a clean slate," Shetty answers and continues, "For the last two years I have worked so hard, I now just need to balance it with my kids and make sure that I am also responsible enough as an artist to not let down my audience. I really want to vet the scripts that have come to me, some really interesting projects, but now I will zero in only in some-time."

She was also recently honoured with the Changed Of Champions award and she tells us that "it felt like a compliment". "It's very sweet to acknowledge somebody's journey and I feel championing a cause is a big thing. For me, it's health and wellness and I always champion that cause wholeheartedly. As an artist, your



job is not restricted to just cinema, you need to have an extension to your personality and I did that in wellness and health purely out of passion. To be recognised and receive an honour like that is very kind of them," the actor further adds.

Kundra feels that as a celebrity, there is an onus on your shoulders of being responsible. "It's about shouldering not just the glamour but also a certain sense of playing a catalyst in some good cause so that people can take a leaf from that. Why just be aspirational only in the aspect of being starry?" she says, adding, "I want people to look up to me for the stuff I can do beyond my work. I think that we are blessed as artists to be in that special position or be recognised and we must leverage that

means to good causes." Ask the 48-year-old if such accolades motivate you more to work in the same direction and she answers, "I don't work because I look for awards. I take it in my stride that people have acknowledged my work in a field. I will continue to do whatever I am doing with the same passion that I always put. When people acknowledge it, it just makes my heart very happy." "Whether I would have gotten this award or not, I would have still continued to try and motivate people to be healthy because for me, health is something that cannot be taken for granted. I do that as a mother for my children and I want more parents to be aware about how good health is important in our life. That's my job and I feel I became an actor to be a catalyst in this field," Kundra ends.

Rashmika Mandanna opens up on Animal: Always knew it would have mixed conversations, I'm really happy about it

Actor Rashmika Mandanna gets candid about the response to her 2023 film Animal, and the successful run at the box office.

Rashmika Mandanna is currently on a career high, with her film Animal becoming one of the highest Hindi grossers ever. And not just the box office numbers, the film's content also quickly became perhaps the most discussed in the recent times.

Addressing the hit tag first, she says, "I think nobody wants to do a bad film, and all of us want our films to work. Sometimes it's up to the audience for the film to succeed, and today's audience has loved Animal, giving it so much love, which I'm truly grateful for," says the actor, reacting to the love Animal received. It recently made it's way



to an OTT platform after a successful theatrical run.

Meanwhile, the treatment, the aggression of the protagonist (played by Ranbir Kapoor) and the violence- everything has been debated upon. Mandanna says the team was prepared for it. "We always knew that it would have mixed conversations, and honestly, I'm really happy about it because everyone's opinion and perspectives are different. You can't tell everyone to think the same thing or expect everyone to think something in a certain way. People have their own opinions. And I'm really glad that a film like Animal had different sorts of conversations happening. I was really happy about it, and I'm sure the team was also. You are not everyone's cup of tea as an actor,

but it's always interesting to know what kind of tea they prefer," she reasons.

The 27-year-old's character Geetanjali in the film is headstrong, but it also must have been emotionally draining. Mandanna however chooses to look at it another way, "I wouldn't call it emotionally draining, but it was very emotionally uplifting. It had a very interesting take on the character which I played, like a female character who has strong opinions and who's so real and true to herself. I don't think you get to play such characters quite often. I was super excited and grateful that Sandeep (Reddy Vanga, director) sir wrote the scenes.. he visualised, and I was able to pull it off the way I did."

Tina Datta: Its difficult to move on from the TV stereotype

After being a household name of Indian television, actor Tina Datta is looking to explore the OTT medium and break stereotypes. She tells us, "I am really looking to experiment with projects right now, I am extremely flexible," and continues, "I am in talks for two web projects from the same platform, one of which is a series. I am a workaholic and mujhe ghar par baithna acha nahi lagta."

The actor doesn't want to draw a line when it comes to bold scenes in OTT projects, but the script has to "demand" it. "One of the projects has bold scenes so I am currently thinking how creative it is or how bold, I don't want to go overboard with it, I have to know if it's required or not. As long as they are shot and portrayed well, it's fine, the character or

script should demand that scene, zabardasti or vulgar nahi lagna chahiye," expresses Datta.

Emphasising her experience as a television face for so many years, she shares her struggle in switching to a different medium and says, "It's very difficult to switch or portray another character when people have already seen you in a sati savitri bahu role for so long. For me also, it will be very difficult," further adding, "Nowadays also, people think that ki daily soap actors ko nahi lena hai, and I don't think that's going anytime soon. It's not easy for an actor to take breaks and move forward. You just need to have patience and just be at it. Lage raho, aaj nahi toh kal hona hi hona hai."

It is the TV actor's stereotype that becomes a



block in the road for her. "Because of the TV actor box, I did face difficulty in getting opportunities. Even after doing Uttaran for more than 5 years, people couldn't see me in another character, even in auditions. It was so difficult to even get another show. It's a blessing but it can backfire as well," shares Datta.

"On OTT, every character has its own importance. If there's a strong character with a great personality, I would love to do it. Right now, if the shoot is well planned, it is not difficult to do both the things together. However, sometimes the channel only does not want you to be a part of any other project. But yes, I want to do both (OTT and television) things together. It can get taxing, but I will try my best," she signs off.

PM Modi unveils projects worth Rs 11,600 crore in Assam

Projects unveiled at a function in Khanapara, Guwahati

GUWAHATI, Feb 4 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday rolled out development projects worth Rs 11,600 crore in Assam.

The infrastructure projects, some funded by the state government and some by the Centre, were unveiled at a function at the Veterinary College Playground in Khanapara in Guwahati. Some of the major projects for which foundation stones were laid were the Kamakhya temple corridor (Rs 498 crore), the six-lane road from the new airport terminal in Guwahati (Rs 358 crore), the upgradation of Nehru Stadium to



FIFA standards (Rs 831 crore) and a new sports complex in Chandrapur (Rs 300 crore).

The second edition of 'Asom Mala' roads was also kick-started by the PM. This phase will comprise upgrading and constructing 43 new roads with 38 concrete bridges, entailing a total

investment of Rs 3,444 crore.

Besides, Modi laid the foundation stone for an integrated new building of the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital, to be constructed at a cost of Rs 3,250 crore.

He also laid the foundation stones for the proposed Karimganj

Medical College and Hospital, which will be constructed at a cost of Rs 578 crore, and the Rs 297-crore Unity Mall in Guwahati.

Modi inaugurated the four-lane road from Biswanath Chariali to Gohpur, developed at a cost of Rs 1,451 crore, and another four-lane

road from Dolabari to Jamuguri, constructed at a cost of Rs 592 crore.

Modi arrived here on Saturday evening, and stayed the night at the Koinadhara State Guest House in the city.

He met the office-bearers of the BJP's state core committee at night and discussed party affairs, a senior official said.

"In the meeting, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, state minister Ranjeet Kumar Dass, state BJP President Bhabesh Kalita and other party leaders were present," he said.

After CM Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi Police at AAP minister Atishi's house to serve notice in 'poaching' allegation case



NEW DELHI, Feb 4 (Agencies): Crime Branch officials reached the residence of Delhi minister Atishi on Sunday to serve a notice in connection with allegations that the BJP was attempting to "poach" Aam Aadmi Party MLAs.

Sources said Atishi was not present at her residence. The minister, however, has given

directions to her office staff to receive the notice, sources in the AAP said.

"The team will go again to serve notice to Atishi. This morning she was not present at her residence," a senior officer of Delhi Police Crime Branch said.

This comes a day after Crime Branch officials served a notice to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind

Kejriwal, asking him to reply within three days in a probe into his claims that the BJP attempted to poach seven AAP MLAs.

Kejriwal and Atishi are scheduled to lay the foundation stones of two schools in Rohini later in the day.

On January 27, Kejriwal and Atishi had claimed that the BJP was trying to poach AAP MLAs by offering Rs 25 crore each and a ticket to contest next year's Assembly poll to topple the AAP Government.

The BJP had rubbished the allegations, terming them "false" and "baseless", and dared the chief minister to furnish evidence to back his claims.

Arvind Kejriwal claims he's being forced to join BJP: 'Not going to bend'

NEW DELHI, Feb 4 (Agencies): Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday made a huge claim, saying he is being forced to join the BJP. His statement came amid a probe into the Aam Aadmi Party's MLA poaching allegations.

"They can hatch whatever conspiracy against him, I am also firm. I am not going to bend. They are asking me to join BJP, then they are going to leave me alone. But I said that I will never go to BJP, I will never join BJP, not at all," the AAP supremo said after laying the foundation stone of a school in Rohini, Delhi.

In his speech at the event, Kejriwal also alleged that the BJP-headed Centre only spends 4 per cent of the national budget on schools and hospitals as opposed to the Delhi government spending 40 per cent of its budget every year on these. The Delhi Chief Minister also mentioned his jailed AAP



colleagues Manish Sisodia and Satyendra Jain.

"Today all agencies are after us. Manish Sisodia's fault is that he was building good schools. Satyendra Jain's fault is that he was getting good hospitals and mohalla clinics built. Had Manish Sisodia not been working for the betterment of school infrastructure, he would not have been arrested. They created all sorts of conspiracies, but couldn't deter us," Arvind Kejriwal said.

Congress stands for Jal-Jungle-Jamin of tribal people: Rahul Gandhi

DHANBAD, Feb 4 (Agencies): Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, on Sunday, said that his party stood for Jal-Jungle-Jamin (water, forest and land) of tribal people and employment of youths.

Gandhi was speaking during a roadshow in Jharkhand's Dhanbad district, as part of his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra. After a night halt in Tundi block of the district, on Saturday, the yatra resumed at Govindpur in Dhanbad, the third day of his yatra in Jharkhand.

The main objective of the yatra is to save



public sector units from being sold to private parties, and ensure justice to employed youth and tribal people of the country, Gandhi said. "Congress party stands for the Jal-Jungle-Jamin of the tribal people and works for education and employ-

ment of youth. Economic imbalance, demonetisation, GST and unemployment have ruined the future of youth in the country," he said.

Jharkhand Congress vice-president Brajendra Prasad Singh said the yatra which started from Govindpur, passed through Saraidhela, IIT-ISM gate, Randhir Verma Chowk, Shramik Chowk near the railway station and reached Bank More where Gandhi addressed a public rally.

Thereafter, it proceeded towards Bokaro district. Congress MP Jairam Ramesh said Bokaro is a steel city. "These are the monuments built by (former prime minister) Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. When people say what we did in 70 years... Bhilai, Rourkela, Durgapur, Bhakra Nangal, Bokaro, Dhanbad, Barauni, Sindi

- these are all monuments to India's economic development", Ramesh said.

After the lunch break in Bokaro, the yatra would again start from Jena More around 2 pm. Gandhi's night halt is scheduled in Ramgarh district on Sunday.

The yatra will travel 804 km, covering 13 districts of the state in over eight days in two phases.

In all, it will travel 6,713 km in 67 days, passing through 110 districts in 15 states before culminating in Mumbai on March 20.

'End of BJP has come': Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav renews PDA pitch

LUCKNOW, Feb 4 (Agencies): Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday said it has come to the fore in a survey that 91 per cent of the backward people, Dalits and minorities will vote unitedly for the PDA due to which the BJP's equation and previous formulas have failed this time.

Yadav also said that the BJP has lagged far behind in the selection of candidates and it was not getting the candidates at all as no one wants to fight to lose.

PDA is the term coined by Yadav for "Picchde, Dalit and Alpsankhyak" (backward, Dalit and minorities) for which the Samajwadi Party is batting for in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls.

"Survey of those who believe in PDA: Overall 90% say-- 49 per cent backward people have faith in PDA, 16 per cent Dalits have faith in PDA, 21 per cent minorities (Muslims+Sikhs+Buddhists+Christians+Jains and others+Tribals) believe in PDA, 4 per cent 'agde' (upper caste) have confidence in PDA. (All the above include 'aadhi abadi' (women). Most of these 90% will

vote unitedly for PDA this time," Yadav said in a post on X.

"Due to this (PDA factor), the BJP is neither able to do any mathematics nor make any equation. This is why all the previous formulas of the BJP have failed this time and the BJP has lagged far behind in the selection of candidates. The BJP is not getting candidates at all. No one wants to fight to lose by taking the BJP ticket," he added.

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister said even the women, who are among the main supporters of the BJP, will not vote for it this time.

"The women, who are among the main supporters of the BJP, are ashamed of because of the plight of the women wrestlers, the gruesome incident in Manipur, the incident of mother-daughter being burnt to death and countless other incidents of insult to women, they are not with BJP this time," he said.

Yadav said the youth, who were hopeful of getting a job or recruitment, are also disappointed under the BJP rule and they will vote this time only to defeat or remove it.



"At the same time, the youth who are hopeful of getting a job or recruitment and are disappointed under the BJP rule, will also vote this time only to defeat or remove the BJP. Those people in the society who consider themselves intellectuals, who used to look towards the BJP in the name of so-called morality and political honesty are not only upset with the incidents of unethical and corrupt behaviour due to greed for power in Maharashtra, Bihar, Chandigarh Mayor elections and Jharkhand but are also distressed," Yadav said.

"There are too many such people, their inaction will also drastically reduce the votes of the BJP. The BJP will lose due to its own people," he added.

The former Uttar Pradesh chief

minister said that there was an anti-BJP wave among the farmers due to false promises of doubling their income, false guarantees of getting rid of animals damaging crops and rising agriculture costs.

Yadav said the GST mismanagement has already alienated the BJP's traditional business voters—shopkeepers, traders and small factory owners.

"The BJP is hitting at the money of hard workers by bringing anti-labour rules and laws for their billionaire friends, that is why the workers and farmers have also turned completely against the BJP," Yadav said.

"In this environment of all-round opposition, the BJP has accepted defeat in Uttar Pradesh. Seeing the public anger, the BJP leaders are running away and the remaining selfish BJP supporters have gone underground following their old tradition," he said.

Yadav gave the slogan "Li ha PDA ne angdai, BJP ki shamat aayi" ('PDA' has taken a move, the end of BJP has come) to justify his assertion.

Uttar Pradesh ATS arrests Pakistan's ISI agent working at Indian Embassy in Moscow



LUCKNOW, Feb 4 (Agencies): The Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) of Uttar Pradesh Police has arrested an Indian national working at the country's embassy in Moscow for allegedly spying for Pakistan's ISI, an official statement issued here on Sunday said.

Satendra Siwal, a resident of Shahmahiuddinpur village, was arrested in the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) police station in Lucknow, it said. Siwal, who is working in the Ministry of External Affairs and present-

ly posted in the Indian Embassy in Moscow, Russia, was providing them important confidential information regarding the strategic activities of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian military establishments, the statement said.

The ATS in its probe through electronic and physical surveillance found that Siwal, who was working as the IBSA (India Based Security Assistant) in the Indian Embassy in Moscow, Russia, from

2021, was involved in anti-India activities with the network of the ISI handlers and providing important confidential information regarding the strategic activities of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian military establishments is being made available to them for money, the statement said.

Siwal, who was called by the ATS Meerut field unit and interrogated as per the rules, could not give satisfactory answers and confessed to his crime during the interrogation, it said.

An FIR has been registered against Siwal at ATS police station, Lucknow, under Section 121A of the IPC (waging war against the country) and the Official Secrets Act, 1923, the statement said.

5 Arrested For Duping Hyderabad Woman Of ₹ 3 Crore In Trading Fraud

The police seized 8 lakh in cash, one laptop and 12 mobile phones from them.

HYDERABAD, Feb 4 (Agencies): Hyderabad Cyber Crime Police arrested five accused persons who were associated with a trading fraud case and cheated the complainant in the guise of getting high returns by investing in the stock market.

The arrested accused have been identified as

Swayam Timaniya, Meet Timaniya, Brijesh Patel, Harsh Pandya and Shankar Lal. According to the Hyderabad police, "In November 2023 a complaint was received from victim, a resident of Hyderabad stating that accused person contacted her and insisted on investing in the stock market

with 100 per cent highest returns on a company named Unity Stocks and then asked her to deposit the amounts in the different stock market and gaming websites like Dafabet, Unity Exchange, T20 IPL etc. saying that if she invests maximum money and holds it for six months then she



can get minimum of 30 per cent returns of the invested amount."

The complainant invested an amount of ₹ 3,16,34,764 into the bank accounts which were provided by the accused. "Cyber Crime police, Hyderabad registered a case in Cr. No. 2495/2023 and investigated into," the police

said. "In this case, one accused, Ronak Tanna, who is an account supplier was arrested on December 31, 2023. Later it is found that the fraudulent money is again routed in the Indian accounts and then reaching the money in Angadia (Hawala). As such all the five accused persons who

were assisting the main accused person Arjun and Yug in converting the fraudulently gained money through Hawala were arrested in Ahmedabad and Gandhi Nagar of Gujarat state," the police added.

The police seized ₹ 8 lakh in cash, one laptop and 12 mobile phones from them.

US, UK and allies conduct joint strikes on 36 Houthi targets in Yemen

Precision strikes conducted in response to Houthis' continued attacks against commercial shipping as well as naval vessels transiting the Red Sea

WASHINGTON, Feb 4 (Agencies): The US and the UK have conducted joint strikes on 36 Houthi targets across 13 locations in Yemen, in another wave of assaults intended to degrade the capabilities of the Iran-backed militia that has targeted international shipping vessels in the Red Sea in response to the Israel-Hamas war.

The Pentagon said the UK, Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands and New Zealand were involved in Saturday's strikes against Houthi targets.

The latest strikes, executed with fighter jets and ships, come after the US launched strikes on 85 targets in Syria and Iraq on Friday in response to a deadly drone attack on a US military base in Jordan last Sunday that killed three of its service members.

"Militaries from the United States and the United Kingdom conducted additional strikes against the Houthi-controlled areas in Yemen," Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin said in a statement.

This collective action sends a clear message to the Houthis that they will continue to bear further consequences if they do not end their illegal attacks on international shipping and naval vessels, Austin said.

"We will not hesitate to defend lives and the free flow of commerce in one of the world's most critical waterways," Austin said. These strikes, he said, are intended to disrupt further and degrade the capabilities of the Iranian-backed Houthi militia to conduct their reckless and destabilising attacks against US and international vessels lawfully transiting the Red Sea.

Austin said that the coalition forces targeted 13 locations



associated with the Houthis' deeply buried weapons storage facilities, missile systems and launchers, air defence systems, and radars, Austin said.

A joint statement issued by the US, the UK and its other coalition partners said that the militaries of the United States and United Kingdom, with support from Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, and New Zealand conducted an additional round of proportionate and necessary strikes against 36 Houthi targets across 13 locations in Yemen.

This was in response to the Houthis' continued attacks against international and commercial shipping as well as naval vessels transiting the Red Sea.

These precision strikes are intended to disrupt and degrade the capabilities that the Houthis use to threaten global trade and the lives of innocent mariners.

The strikes are in response to a series of illegal, dangerous, and destabilising Houthi actions since previous coalition strikes on January 11 and 22, 2024, including the January 27 attack which struck and set ablaze the Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker M/V Marlin Luanda, the statement added.

"Today's strike specifically targeted sites associated with the Houthis' deeply buried weapons

storage facilities, missile systems and launchers, air defence systems, and radars," it said.

The Houthis' now more than 30 attacks on commercial vessels and naval vessels since mid-November constitute an international challenge.

"Recognising the broad consensus of the international community, our coalition of like-minded countries committed to upholding the rules-based order has continued to grow," the statement said.

"We remain committed to protecting freedom of navigation and international commerce and holding the Houthis accountable for their illegal and unjustifiable attacks on commercial shipping and naval vessels," it said.

"Our aim remains to de-escalate tensions and restore stability in the Red Sea but let us reiterate our warning to Houthi leadership: we will not hesitate to continue to defend lives and the free flow of commerce in one of the world's most critical waterways in the face of continued threats," said the statement issued by these countries.

Two US destroyers fired Tomahawk missiles as part of the strikes on Houthi targets in Yemen, a US official told agency.

The USS Gravelly and USS Arleigh Burke-class guided-mis-

sile destroyers, fired the land-attack cruise missiles during the operation.

F/A-18 fighter jets from the USS Dwight D Eisenhower aircraft carrier also took part in the strikes, officials said.

Earlier Saturday, the US struck six Houthi anti-ship cruise missiles before they were launched toward the Red Sea, US Central Command said.

US Central Command forces also conducted a strike in self-defence against a Houthi anti-ship cruise missile prepared to launch against ships in the Red Sea.

The strikes on consecutive days come as the Biden administration has adopted a "multi-tiered" response to a drone attack that killed three US service members and wounded scores more last weekend.

Saturday's strikes are the third time in recent weeks that the US and UK attacked Houthi targets as part of a joint operation. On January 11, the two militaries struck approximately 30 Houthi sites. Less than two weeks later, the US and UK struck another eight sites.

The previous strikes targeted Houthi weapons storage facilities and radar sites in an attempt to disrupt the ability of the Iran-backed rebel group to attack international shipping lanes in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, some of the world's most critical waterways.

But the Houthis have remained defiant, vowing after the last round of US-led strikes they are "more determined to confront" what they called the US and the UK "aggressors."

Iran-backed militias have mounted more than 165 drone, missile and rocket attacks on US troops in Iraq and Syria since the Israel-Hamas war

Namibian President Hage Geingob dies in a hospital where he was receiving treatment, his office says



CAIRO, Feb 4 (Agencies): Namibian President Hage Geingob died, on Sunday, while receiving medical treatment, his office announced.

In a post on the social media platform X, the Namibian presidency said Geingob's medical

team at Lady Pohamba Hospital did its best to help him, but Geingob died with his wife, Monica Geingos, and children by his side.

Geingob was undergoing treatment for cancer. The 82-year-old had a colonoscopy and a gastroscopy on January 8,

followed by a biopsy, his office said last month.

Angolo Mbumba, Namibia's acting president, called for calm, saying in the same post that the 'Cabinet will convene with immediate effect in order to make the necessary state arrangements in this regard.'

Geingob, who was president of the southern African nation since 2015, was set to finish his second and final term in office this year. In 2014, he said he had survived prostate cancer.

Namibia is set to hold elections to choose a new leader in November.

President Biden wins South Carolina's Democratic primary as he gears up for his re-election bid

COLUMBIA (SOUTH CAROLINA), Feb 4 (Agencies): President Joe Biden easily won South Carolina's Democratic primary, clinching a state he pushed to lead off his party's nominating process after it revived his then-struggling White House bid four years ago.

Biden on Saturday defeated the other long-shot Democrats on South Carolina's ballot, including Minnesota Rep. Dean Phillips and author Marianne Williamson. His re-election campaign invested heavily in driving up turnout in what it saw as a test drive of its efforts to mobilise Black voters, a key Democratic bloc central to Biden's chances in a likely November rematch against former President Donald Trump.

"In 2020, it was the voters of South Carolina who proved the pundits wrong, breathed new life into our campaign, and set us on the path to winning the presidency," Biden said in a statement.

"Now in 2024, the people of South Carolina have spoken again and I have no doubt that you have set us on the path to winning the Presidency again — and making Donald Trump a loser — again."

His win comes after he led a Democratic National Committee effort to have South Carolina go first in the party's primary, citing the state's more racially diverse population compared to the traditional first-in-the-nation states of Iowa and New Hampshire, which are overwhelmingly white.

South Carolina is reliably Republican, but 26% of its residents are Black. In the 2020 general election, Black voters made up 11% of the national electorate, and 9 in 10 of them supported Biden, according to AP VoteCast, an expansive survey of that election's voters.

Biden pushed for a revamped primary calendar that will see Nevada go second, holding its primary on Tuesday. The new order also moves the Democratic primary in Michigan, a large and diverse swing state, to Feb. 27, before the expansive field of states voting



on March 5, known as Super Tuesday.

New Hampshire rejected the DNC's plan and held a leadoff primary last month anyway. Biden didn't campaign and his name wasn't on the ballot, but still won by a sizable margin after supporters mounted a write-in campaign on his behalf.

South Carolina, where Biden has long held deep relationships with supporters and donors, also played a pivotal role in his 2020 campaign, where a big win helped revive a flagging effort in other early-voting states and propelled him to the nomination.

Biden was aided by South Carolina Rep. Jim Clyburn, whose 2020 endorsement served as a long-awaited signal to the state's Black voters that Biden would be the right candidate to advocate for their interests.

Clyburn said on Saturday night that he believed New Hampshire's delegates should be seated at the party's convention this summer and that Democrats should avoid any further infighting.

Both Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, the first Black woman and Asian-American to serve in the role, have consistently thanked the state's Democrats for their support. Biden a week ago told attendees at a state party fundraiser that "you're the reason I am president." He also argued to an audience of hundreds of party faithful that they were "the reason Donald Trump is a loser. And you're the reason we're going to win and beat him again," framing the likely General Election match-up with the GOP's current front-runner.

Earlier in the day, in South Carolina's capital of Columbia, Democratic National Committee Chairman Jaime Harrison said, "We all know that we, because of the colour of this, we, our

great grandparents, our grandparents, could not always vote here." Harrison is a South Carolina native who is Black.

"For this president to say, Jaime, for the entirety of your life, we have started this process in Iowa and New Hampshire, and now, we're going to start it in South Carolina — no other president before ever decided to touch that issue," he added. "But Joe Biden did, and I will always be grateful to the president for giving us a chance, for seeing us, and understanding how much we matter."

Black voters interviewed during the recent early voting period listed a range of reasons for supporting Biden, from his administration's defense of abortion rights to appointing Black jurists and other minorities to the federal courts. Some echoed Biden's warnings that Trump would threaten democracy as he continues to push lies that the 2020 vote was stolen.

"We can't live with a leader that will make this into a dictatorship. We can't live in a place that is not a democracy. That will be a fall for America," said LaJoia Broughton, a 42-year-old small business owner in Columbia. "So my vote is with Biden. It has been with Biden and will continue to be with Biden."

Some voters said they were concerned about the 81-year-old Biden's age, as many Americans have said they are in public polling. Trump is 77. Both men have had a series of public flubs that have fuelled skepticism about their readiness.

"They're as old as I am and to have these two guys be the only choices, that's kind of difficult," said Charles Trower, a 77-year-old from Blythewood, South Carolina. "But I would much rather have President Biden than even consider the other guy."

Pakistan election commission disqualifies Shah Mahmood Qureshi from contesting polls for five years

ISLAMABAD, Feb 4 (Agencies): Pakistan's election commission has disqualified Shah Mahmood Qureshi, a close aide of jailed ex-prime minister Imran Khan, from contesting elections for five years after the former foreign minister was sentenced to 10 years in prison for leaking state secrets.

The disqualification of Qureshi, 67, comes five days before the February 8 general elections, which Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party is contesting despite a state crackdown and without its famous election symbol, the bat.

The announcement comes days after a special court, established under the Official Secrets Act, awarded Qureshi 10 years imprisonment in the high-profile cypher case along with Khan.

Citing the special court's judgement dated

January 30, 2024, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) said that any convicted individual, in accordance with the Constitution and the law, cannot participate in elections, The Express Tribune reported.

"As a consequence, Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi has become disqualified under Article 63(1)(h) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan read with Section 232 of the Elections Act, 2017. Therefore, Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi is disqualified to contest General Elections-2024 and any subsequent elections for a period of five years," the ECP said.

The cipher case pertains to a piece of paper, purported to be a diplomatic cable—the cipher—that Khan had waved at a public rally on March 27, 2022, and naming the US, had claimed that it was "evidence" of



an "international conspiracy" to topple his government.

The case was filed against Khan, 71, and Qureshi on August 15 last year by the Federal Investigation Agency, which accused both of violating the secrecy laws while handling the cable sent by the Pakistan embassy in Washington in March 2022.

46 reported dead, 1,100 homes destroyed in Chile as forest fires move into densely populated central areas

VINA DEL MAR, Feb 4 (Agencies): Intense forest fires burning around a densely populated area of central Chile have caused at least 46 deaths, Chile's president said on Saturday evening, and officials said at least 1,100 homes had been destroyed.

In a nationally televised address, President Gabriel Boric warned that the death toll could worsen as four large fires burn in the region of Valparaíso, where firefighters have struggled to reach the most threatened neighbourhoods.

Boric urged Chileans to cooperate with rescue workers.

"If you are told to evacuate don't hesitate to do it," he said. "The fires are advancing fast and climatic conditions have made them difficult to control. There are high temperatures, strong winds and low humidity."

Interior Minister Carolina Tohá said earlier Saturday that 92 forest fires were burning in the center and south of the country, where temperatures have been unusually high this week.

The deadliest of the fires were in the Valparaíso region, where authorities urged thousands of people to evacuate their homes.

In areas farther away from the fires, meanwhile, residents were told to stay at home



so that fire engines, ambulances and other emergency vehicles can get about on the roads with greater ease.

Tohá said two fires near the towns of Quilpué and Villa Alemana had burned through at least 8,000 hectares (19,770 acres) since Friday. One of the fires was threatening the coastal resort town of Viña del Mar, where some neighbourhoods had already been hit hard.

In Villa Independencia, a hillside neighbourhood on the eastern edge of the town, several blocks of homes and businesses were destroyed. Burned cars with broken windows lined the streets, which were covered in ash. "I've been here 32 years, and never imagined this would happen," said Rolando

Fernández, one of the residents who lost his home.

He said he first saw the fire burning on a nearby hill Friday afternoon and within 15 minutes the area was engulfed in flames and smoke, forcing everyone to run for their lives. "I've worked my whole life, and now I'm left with nothing," Fernández said.

Three shelters were set up in the Valparaíso region, and 19 helicopters and more than 450 firefighters were brought into the area to help battle the blazes, Tohá said.

The fires were burning on mountains that are hard to reach, such as neighbourhoods built precariously on the edge of Viña del Mar.

Officials reported power blackouts as a result of the fire, and Tohá said that in the Valparaíso region, four hospitals and three nursing homes for the elderly had to be evacuated. The fire also destroyed two bus terminals, the interior minister said.

The El Niño weather pattern has caused droughts and hotter than usual temperatures along the west of South America this year, increasing the risk of forest fires. In January, more than 17,000 hectares (42,000 acres) of forests were destroyed in Colombia by fires that followed several weeks of dry weather.

DC, SSP Samba visit tribal hamlets of Vijaypur, listen to demands of locals

Top News Report

SAMBA, Feb 4: Deputy Commissioner Sharma Abhishek Sharma along with SSP Vinay Kumar undertook a comprehensive visit to the localities of Tribal Village Rakh Barotian, Vijaypur. The primary focus of the visit was on understanding and addressing the issues faced by residents, with a notable emphasis on combating drug addiction.

During the visit, Deputy Commissioner engaged with students and teach-

ers at the Govt. Middle School, Rakh Barotian. Interactions with parents and community leaders were aimed to motivate towards increased school attendance, steering youth away from the pitfalls of drug addiction. Recognizing the interconnected challenges, he prioritised immediate resolutions for children's education and health-related issues.

The Chief Education Officer was instructed to ensure the availability of necessary infrastructure for students, with a joint exercise to be carried

out by the Education Department and other officials of Block Vijaypur to ensure 100% enrollment of children in schools and bringing culture of sports among children & youths.

The Executive Engineer, PWD, Vijaypur, was tasked to ensure the timely construction of the government middle school building. The Department of Youth Services and Sports was directed to facilitate proper maintenance and sports infrastructure at Govt. Middle School, Rakh Barotian. Beyond education,

Deputy Commissioner addressed broader issues, including Animal Husbandry, road connectivity, and drinking water availability. Residents were assured of timely resolutions. Inspection of Milk collection centre was done, the DC instructed the Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Samba, to ensure the formation of SHGs, JLGs, FPOs, and streamline the collection of milk with community involvement. The Tehsildar, Vijaypur, was tasked to identify land for the construction of the Animal Husbandry

Hospital building. Block Development Officer, Vijaypur, was directed to ensure drainage facilities under MGNREGA in convergence with the Tribal Department. He also visited AIIMS Vijaypur and an upcoming Tribal Girls hostel site.

Present at the occasion were ASP Surinder Chaudhary, DMO Mohammad Sayeed, CMO Vidhi Bhatial, CAHO Dr. Rahul Dev, and CEO Kewal Krishan, other senior officers of District Administration Samba.

DDC Chairperson Ramban launches Link Road Construction in Sub-Division Gool



Top News Report

RAMBAN, Feb 4: Chairperson, District Development Council, Ramban, Dr. Shamsad Shan today launched the construction work on link road projects in Gool, with an allocated fund of Rs 1 crore under UT Capex.

Present at the event were Assistant Executive Engineer PWD sub division Gool, Vimal Kishan Sidha and prominent citizens and the general public.

Starting with the construction of the 1 km Lohar Mohalla to Ziyarat Sharief link road, Dr. Shamsad Shan emphasized the importance of ensuring both quality and timely completion. The project aims to benefit the local population.

She urged PWD Engineers and locals to actively oversee the construction process, ensuring adherence to high-quality standards and timely completion.

Additionally, the Chairperson highlighted

the need for implementing youth and beneficiary-oriented schemes.

Expressing optimism about the project, she stated that its completion would fulfill a long-pending demand, ultimately improving the lives of the local community. During the event, the Chairperson engaged with the people, attentively listening to their developmental concerns and issues. The initiative reflects a commitment to fostering development and addressing the needs of the community.

Commissioner SMC conducts whirlwind tours of Srinagar City

Reviews snow clearance & dewatering operations



Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Feb 4: Commissioner SMC, Dr. Owais Ahmed today conducted a whirlwind tour of Srinagar City to personally assess the ongoing snow clearance and dewatering operations in the wake of recent snowfall and precipitation.

The Commissioner's proactive initiative aimed to gauge the efficiency of the operations and ensure that the city's essential services continue to function optimally despite the challenging weather conditions.

During the tour, Dr. Owais visited key locations SMHS Hospital, CBD Lal Chowk, Habba Kadal-Shahar e Khaas, Imam Bargah Hassanabad, JLNH Hospital, Gurdawara Chatti Padshahi Saida Kadal, Dargah Hazratbal Shrine and their adjoining areas including permanent Dewater-

ing Stations.

The Commissioner engaged with on-site Officers and supervisory staff to gain firsthand insights into the progress of snow clearance and dewatering efforts.

Additionally, Commissioner, SMC interacted with residents and community representatives to gather feedback on the impact of the operations and to address any immediate concerns.

The tour underscored the SMC's unwavering commitment to maintaining the functionality and accessibility of Srinagar City, particularly during adverse weather events. The Commissioner emphasized the importance of swift and effective snow clearance and dewatering measures in safeguarding public safety, facilitating transportation, and mitigating potential disruptions to essential services.

Furthermore, Commissioner expressed appreciation for the dedicated

efforts of SMC frontline Warriors, local authorities, and emergency response teams who have been diligently working to ensure the timely clearance of snow and the efficient dewatering of waterlogged areas. He commended 24x7 Control Room for their resilience and professionalism in upholding the city's operational resilience during challenging circumstances.

As the whirlwind tour concluded, Commissioner SMC reaffirmed the SMC's commitment to upholding the highest standards of service delivery and reiterated the Corporation's readiness to swiftly address any emerging issues related to snow clearance and dewatering.

Dr. Owais also encouraged residents to remain vigilant and cooperative, emphasizing the collective responsibility in ensuring the city's preparedness and resilience during adverse weather conditions.

DC Srinagar visits Lal Ded Hospital and JVC SKIMS Bemina; takes stock of the patient care facilities post snowfall

Top News Report

SRINAGAR Feb 4: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat on today conducted a visit to City hospitals including Lal Ded Hospital And JVC, SKIMS Bemina to take stock of the patient care facilities available in wake of overnight snowfall.

At Lal Ded Hospital, the Deputy Commissioner

other line Departments to make sure periodical snow clearance is undertaken, besides stationing of mobile dewatering pumps to overcome water logging.

Later, the DC also visited JVC, SKIMS Bemina to take stock of the patient care facilities available post overnight snowfall.

On the occasion, the DC inspected various wards, orthopaedic units, labs etc and took on spot assessment of the facili-



took a round of various units of the Hospital and inspected the Emergency unit, ICU, OPD, IPD and enquired about the patient care facilities available at the hospital.

The DC also inspected the drug store of the hospital and enquired about the medicine available for the patients.

On the occasion, the DC asked the Medical Superintendent Lal Ded, Dr Muzafar Jan to ensure all healthcare facilities to ensure patient care services are not affected at all. He also directed the

ties being provided to the patients.

The DC also interacted with the patients and their attendants and enquired about the facilities available at the hospital.

On the occasion, the DC stressed on the Hospital Medical Superintendent Dr Shifa to ensure better healthcare facilities to the patients and also asked them to ensure proper heating and cleanliness in the hospital.

Besides, Chief Planning Officer, Superintending Engineer R&B, the DC was accompanied by Officers from other line Departments.

Mission Shakti DHEW, Jammu organises health talk on "World Cancer day"



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: Mission Shakti District Hub for Empowerment of Women Jammu in collaboration with Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspeciality Hospital, organised a health cum interactive talk at Govt. Industrial training institute, R.S. Pura to mark the observance of WORLD CANCER

DAY.

Dr. Deepak Bharti, a senior consultant in the department of medical Oncology at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspeciality Hospital Katra, with a wealth of experience, informed the students and staff of the college about the science, symptoms and precautions of various types of Cancers.

Dr. Deepak Bharti delivered a thought pro-

voicing lecture reflecting his vast experience of knowledge.

The interactive session was successfully conducted under the guidance of District Mission Coordinator Mission Shakti, (DHEW) Jammu, she also corresponded the message of WORLD CANCER DAY. "Close the Care Gap" which means the process of working together.

Principal of Govt. ITI R S Pura facilitated the whole event and thanked Dr. Deepak Bharti for sharing his valuable experience and DHEW Jammu for organising the talk. During the session Mammography Screening was also done free of cost by the hospital.

Fresh Snowfall: DC Bandipora tours villages, listens to public concerns

Top News Report

BANDIPORA, Feb 4: Amid fresh snowfall, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Shakeel Ur Rehman Sunday toured several villages across the district including Lankreshipora, Kulhama, Nadihal, Gurura, Chittybanday and other areas of Town Bandipora to take stock of the post-snowfall situation and overall well-being of the residents

during this challenging weather.

The DC interacted with the public, assessed the ground situation and snow clearance operations, and took stock of the availability of essential services like power, drinking water, ration and healthcare services, etc.

During his interactions with the villagers, the DC patiently listened to their concerns regarding the impact of the snowfall. He assured them

of prompt action and directed the concerned departments to address their grievances on priority.

Furthermore, the DC inspected the availability of essential services like electricity, water supply, healthcare, and transportation in the affected areas.

He instructed the officials to ensure uninterrupted services and immediate restoration wherever disruptions were identified.

FROM PAGE 1

Three Nationals of Myanmar charge-sheeted by NIA in Human Trafficking Case

With this charge sheet, the official said the NIA, which had started probing the case on November 7 last year, has taken a significant step towards uncovering and dismantling a major international human trafficking racket.

UP ATS arrests Pak ISI Agent working at Indian Embassy in Moscow from Meerut

resident of Shahmahiuddinpur village in police station area of Hapur district has been arrested by the ATS, the statement said.

Siwal is working in the Ministry of External Affairs and presently posted in the Indian Embassy in Moscow, Russia, it said.

The ATS was receiving intelligence from various confidential sources that the handlers of the Pakistani intelligence agency ISI, through some persons, were luring the employees of the Ministry of External Affairs with money to obtain strategically and strategically important information

related to the Indian Army that is likely to pose a huge threat to the internal and external security of India, the statement said.

The ATS in its probe through electronic and physical surveillance found that Siwal was involved in anti-India activities with the network of the ISI handlers and providing important confidential information regarding the strategic activities of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian military establishments is being made available to them for money, it added.

Siwal was called to the ATS field unit Meerut and interrogated as per rules, the statement said.

He could not give satisfactory answers and confessed to his crime during the interrogation, it added.

An FIR has been registered against Siwal, who is working as the IBSA (India Based Security Assistant) in the Indian Embassy in Moscow, Russia, from 2021, at ATS police station, Lucknow, under Section 121A of the IPC (waging war against the country) and official secrets Act 1923, the statement said.

Kashmir draped in white after widespread snowfall

time of the year.

Qazigund recorded a minimum of minus 2.2°C against minus 5.4°C on the previous night, he said. The minimum temperature was 0.1°C below normal for the gateway town of Kashmir, the MeT official said.

Pahalgam recorded a low of minus 3.5°C against minus 8.3°C on the previous night and it was 2.6°C above normal for the famous resort in south Kashmir.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, recorded a minimum of minus 3.0°C against minus 5.4°C on the previous night and the temperature was above normal by 0.6°C for the place, the official said.

Kupwara town in north Kashmir recorded a low of minus 1.9°C against minus 2.4°C on the previous night and it was 0.4°C above normal there, the official said.

Gulmarg, the official said, recorded a low of minus 7.0°C against minus 10.6°C on the previous night and the temperature was above normal by 0.6°C for the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir.

Jammu, he said, recorded a minimum of 9.6°C and it was above normal by 1.2°C for the winter capital of J&K.

Banihal recorded a low of minus 0.2°C, Batote minus 0.8°C and Baderwah 0.2°C, he said.

Regarding the forecast, the MeT official said that there is possibility of light to moderate snow to continue over many places till afternoon and late afternoon on Sunday and gradual improvement thereafter.

On Monday, he said, partly to generally

cloudy weather with possibility of light snow over isolated higher reaches is expected while weather is expected to be dry between February 6-13.

As 'Chillai-Kalan', the 40-day harsh period of winter ended on January 29, Kashmir is presently in the middle of 20-day-long winter period called 'Chillai-Khurd' that ends on February 19 and is followed by a 10-day-long period 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold) which starts from February 20 to March 1.

Police directed to enhance surveillance to thwart attempts to disturb peace in Jammu

checking points, the police spokesperson said, adding that Gupta underscored the importance of vigilance on suspicious persons to thwart the designs of anti-national elements to disturb the peaceful environment.

Instructions were issued to increase the installation of CCTV cameras with proper record-keeping to monitor the activities of miscreants, the spokesperson said.

The officers attending the meeting were encouraged to engage with local communities to facilitate the installation of CCTV cameras, which would improve surveillance capabilities and create safer environments.

Gupta also stressed the need for special efforts to expedite the resolution of under-investigation cases, including backlogs and inquest proceedings, and firm action against drug peddlers and other anti-social elements.

Additionally, emphasis was placed on tracing missing persons and timely disposal of complaints and online grievances, the spokesperson said.

Addressing the issue of drugs, Gupta urged the officers to adopt a mission-oriented approach to eliminate the menace. He called for intensified efforts to identify and dismantle the networks involved in the illicit drugs trade, emphasising the importance of eradicating this threat to society.

'Fake' Doctor Apprehended, Clinic Seized in Anantnag

Officers/Officials was deputed from this office, which sealed the clinic immediately and an investigation in this regard is going on", reads a circular, by Chief Medical Officer Anantnag Dr. Mohammad Yousuf Zagoo. "As such, in order to make the system transparent, all the Private Hospitals/Clinics of District Anantnag are hereby directed to furnish the information of all the doctors practicing in their respective Hospitals/Clinics as per the devised proforma within three days positively", reads the circular.

Salary, pension arrears eat into SBI Q3 profit, down 35% to Rs 9,164 crore

The quarter also sees the operating profit declining 19.36 per cent to Rs 20,336 crore from Rs 25,219 crore

MUMBAI, Feb 4 (Agencies): A steep Rs 7,100-crore one-time provision towards salaries and pensions ate into the profitability of State Bank of India to the tune of 35 per cent on-year at Rs 9,164 crore in the December quarter, the nation's largest lender said.

Had it not been for this one-time provision, which takes care of the entire additional provisions needed towards salaries and pensions arising out of the higher 17 per cent wage settlement reached with employee unions, net profit would have been Rs 16,264 crore, SBI chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara told reporters here.

On the back of a nearly 15 per cent growth in advances, the chairman guided towards better days ahead saying, "I am very confident of maintaining credit growth at this level or even bettering it as the fourth quarter is a busy season and given that the bank is sitting on a loan pipeline of Rs 4.5 lakh crore.

On the need to raise capital given the high-interest rate regime, he said, if need be we will look at an equity raising but with our profitability level, we can easily plough back Rs 40,000 crore to core capital for funding. Even without that we have the liquidity buffer to lend an additional Rs 7.5 lakh crore. "Don't worry, we have enough capacity to fund the economy as of now and if the demand rises, we will look at funding options," the chairman said.

Explaining the impact of the

wage settlement, Khara said, "Of the Rs 7,100 crore total payout, Rs 5,400 crore is towards pensions, due to some anomalies in the way our pensions since 2002. Some of the employees were getting 40 per cent and some were getting 50 per cent and the matter has been subjudice since 2002.

"Now that there is legal clarity, we thought of clearing this at a go with this Rs 5,400 crore allocation. Following the court order, we have decided to pay every one of the 1.8 lakh pensioners at 50 per cent of the last drawn wage. This allocation takes care of the entire backlog till December 2023," he said.

Khara further said in fact the bank has been setting aside 10 per cent towards salary and pension arrears so far and this totals up to Rs 13,400 crore till December 2023. We will have to set aside Rs 5,490 crore more in the March quarter. Also, Rs 1,700 crore of the total Rs 7,100 crore has been made towards clearing dearness allowance dues, again arising from the wage hike.

In the reporting quarter, net profit declined by 35 per cent to Rs 9,164 crore compared to Rs 14,205 crore in the year-ago period.

The wage hike impact was so high, even a massive improvement in the asset quality, and the resultant gains from lower provisions did not help.

Its gross bad loans came down by 72 bps to 2.42 per cent or at Rs 86,749 crore, and net bad loan pile declined to over

a 10-year low of 0.64 per cent, down 13 bps to Rs 22,408 crore, the chairman said and exuded confidence in further improving the same. Its provision coverage ratio stood at 91.59.

It can be noted that at 64 bps, State Bank's NPA level is better than the best private sector peers.

The quarter also saw the operating profit declining 19.36 per cent to Rs 20,336 crore from Rs 25,219 crore, due to an increase in the wage bills, he said.

Due to the increase in interest rate, and the resultant jump in deposit cost, the key net interest income in the quarter edged up by 4.59 per cent, Khara said, adding the cost of deposit for the bank jumped by 40 bps, led by an increase in higher priced term deposits and a 330 bps fall in the low-cost Casa deposits to 41.18 per cent.

While whole bank NIM inched down by 1 bp to 3.28 per cent while domestic NIM declined by 8 bps to 3.41 per cent and the management is confident of maintaining it at 3.25-30 per cent.

Gross advances rose 14.38 per cent to Rs 35.84 lakh crore, of which corporate advances rose 10.71 per cent to Rs 10.24 lakh crore, retail personal rose 15.28 per cent to Rs 12.96 lakh crore, of which home loans grew 13.16 per cent to Rs 6.94 lakh crore.

Overall deposits of the bank gained 13.02 per cent to Rs 47.62 lakh crore. Of this domestic Casa declined by 330 bps to Rs 18.86 lakh crore but term

deposits rose 19.54 domestic to Rs 26.86 lakh crore.

Of the overall credit growth domestic advances grew 14.47 per cent. Of this corporate and SME loans crossed Rs 10 lakh crore and Rs 4 lakh crore respectively, clipping at 10.71 per cent and 19.24 per cent respectively; agri loan jumped 18 per cent and retail personal advances grew 15.28 per cent. Loans from its overseas offices grew 13.90 per cent.

Whole bank deposits grew at 13.02 per cent, of which Casa deposits grew 4.48 per cent and Casa ratio stands at 41.18 down 330 bps from year ago.

And Khara was very vocal about the asset quality of the unsecured book saying "my unsecured loans are more secure than the secured book. As much as 90 per cent of the personal loans are given to those who have salary accounts with us."

Interest income for the quarter rose 23.23 per cent to Rs 1,06,734 crore, and interest expenses rose 37.84 per cent to Rs 66,918 crore, giving it the key profitability gauge of net interest income at 39,816 crore, which was only 4.59 per cent more than the year-ago period.

The bank has made a Rs 240 crore provision towards its Rs 1,000-crore exposure to alternate investment funds following the mid-December RBI circular towards the same and Khara said the bank may have to make some more incremental provisions towards this going forward.

Report discloses Zee's over Rs 700 Cr spend in merger fallout with Sony



NEW DELHI, Feb 4 (Agencies): Zee, in the midst of its ongoing tussle with Sony over the proposed merger, has incurred a hefty Rs 700 crore in costs to meet the agreements laid out by Sony, according to a report from Hindu Businessline.

The report mentions that Zee is set to make its case, asserting that the expenditure covered various aspects.

These include divestment of businesses, settling claims that Zee believes were baseless but required attention, honouring guarantees, obtaining insurance tailored to Sony's preferences, and ceasing operations in line with Sony's directives in the upcoming sessions at the National Company Law Tribunal.

Zee plans to challenge Sony's termination

notice, which alleges breaches by the Indian company and claims Rs 747 crores (\$90 million) in damages.

Zee firmly rejects any suggestion of a significant negative impact on the merger agreement, as stated in Sony's termination notice.

Legal insiders as mentioned in the report indicate that Zee will present evidence of extensive talks with Sony, including discussions on a joint business plan that included detailed monthly financial analyses provided to Sony.

The legal documents reveal that Zee was actively engaged with Sony over an extended period, following Sony's guidance on specific actions to expedite the merger.

Zee not only invested significant time and effort in following Sony's

instructions but also incurred considerable monetary costs to meet Sony's requirements.

Furthermore, Zee informed Sony that certain actions needed for fulfilling conditions, such as divestments, were irreversible steps taken exclusively for the merger.

As per the report, Sony went beyond the agreed terms by requesting actions outside the scope of the agreement, like accounting for losses related to Zee's deal with Disney Star, even before the formal agreement execution.

Sony was aware of this agreement through public disclosures, with detailed information provided. Sony also allegedly urged Zee to proceed with the agreement despite awaiting Star's waiver for the corporate guarantee from Sony's ultimate parent entity.

Legal experts predict that Zee's argument will centre on Sony's decision to terminate the deal at an advanced merger stage, not due to any lapse on Punit Goenka or the Zee group's part but rather coming from Sony's predetermined intention to call off the merger agreement.

Slow market notwithstanding, Manyavar to pursue expansion plans aggressively

NEW DELHI, Feb 4 (Agencies): The Indian wedding market is experiencing a slight slowdown this year, with lower overall celebrations compared to the post-Covid rebound seen in 2023. Combined with an overall aversion by Indian middle class consumers towards discretionary expenses, this has translated into a no-growth year so far for India's largest ethnic wear retailer Vedant Fashions.

However, the company has no plans to go slow on its aggressive expansion plans, including its new market in South India.

Visible Slowdown

Vedant Fashions, which sells occasion wear under brands such as Manyavar, Mohey and Mebaz and listed on the bourses in a Rs 3,100 crore IPO two years ago, has seen its revenue remain flat in the first nine months of the current financial year. Net profit slid 6.8%.

"It is a bumpy road in a long journey. What we kind of understand..that we are doing everything which is right for the business" said Vedant Modi, the company's Chief Revenue Officer after disclosing the company's quarterly results.

The company may be the victim of a unique trend seen in the Indian market in 2023: While the upper-middle class and the affluent have never had it so good, the lower middle class and the working class have found the going increasingly tough. This is also visible in a growing urban vs rural divide, with bigger cities remaining relatively cash rich, while smaller towns and rural areas are under pressure.

All this has meant that high-end designer brands, such as Ritu Kumar and Sabyasachi, continue to grow fast, but brands such as Manyavar and Mohey – which are aimed primarily at the middle class – have seen a deceleration in growth. Even within Vedant Fashions' portfolio, the company's newer categories – more of which target the value-conscious buyer – have been "more impacted" by the slowdown.

This trend is also visible in other consumer product categories such as automobiles – where high-end SUVs are selling like hotcakes, but compact cars have slowed, and in personal care, where premium cosmetics are flying off the shelves, mass-market brands selling body lotion and face wash are

finding the going rough.

Even for Vedant Fashions, said Modi, "the major impact has actually been in tier two and tier three [cities]. Even in cities where we have good presence.. we have still felt that the overall number of consumers walking in was slightly lower." Things, he added, continue to look "relatively soft" in January and not "as per overall expectations".

Full Steam Ahead

All this does not mean that the company is having second thoughts as to its aggressive growth plans, including in the relatively new South Indian market.

It has already added 172,000 square feet of retail space in the first nine months of the year, taking its total to 1.64 million. This is up from 1.1 million square feet in March 2021.

Similarly, the number of stores has increased to 673 by the end of December 2023 from 530 outlets as of March 2021.

Vedant Modi emphasized that the long-term growth story remains intact despite the current issues. As India's middle class expands, more lavish weddings and rising fashion consciousness continue to drive ethnic wear purchases.

This has been made easier by the company's asset-light, franchise-based, exclusive brand outlet (EBO) model.

By decentralizing production across a network of third-party vendors, Vedant Fashions has scaled rapidly across India. This growth strategy helped Manyavar to become a household name associated with groom wear, particularly in northern, western and eastern India.

To round out its presence, South India will remain a key area of focus for the company's future expansions, said Modi.

Over the last four months, the company unveiled its South-focused collections under names such as "vivaham", "panchakacham" and "veshti". It also launched new regional marketing campaigns targeted at the South Indian market featuring Telugu actor Ram Charan and actress Sobhita Dhulipala.

"This strategic move not only allows us to cater to region specific unique preferences but also reinforces our brand's dedication to diversity and inclusivity," Modi said.

Studies on infant mice offer a novel strategy to stop the flu from spreading to humans: Study

NEW YORK, Feb 4 (Agencies): It has long been known by scientists that many bacteria and viruses cause illnesses by first attaching themselves to sugar molecules on the cell surfaces lining mammals' sinuses and throats, including humans. For example, viral particles can cling to these molecules also known as sialic acids, or SAs in a manner similar to that of keys inserted into locks.

Now, a new study in infant mice shows that keeping virus particles from attaching to SAs limits more than just the entry of influenza A viral infections, but also hinders their exit (shedding) and transmission from mouse to mouse. Such infections are the main cause of the seasonal flu that kills more than 36,000 Americans annually. While vaccines to guard against infection and symptom treatments exist, they are not foolproof, scientists say, and more strategies are needed to prevent infection from spreading.

Led by researchers from NYU Grossman School of Medicine, the study team stripped away,

or desialylated, SA receptors by placing directly into mouse nasal cavities a neuraminidase enzyme known to loosen the acids' ability to remain attached to cell surfaces.

The infant mice were then infected with influenza A. Results showed treatment with the neuraminidase enzyme dramatically cut mouse-to-mouse transmission rates by more than half (from 51% to 100%) in a half-dozen influenza strains tested.

Publishing in the American Society for Microbiology journal mBio online January 11, the work was conducted in infant mice, which unlike those even a few months older or adult mice, were found by the research team to have many sialic acids in the upper portion of their respiratory tract.

Specifically, the team blocked two SAs, technically called alpha-2,3 SA and alpha-2,6 SA receptors (the locks). These are known to be widely present in the human respiratory tract, which researchers say makes

infant mice a strong comparable model for studying the spread of the infectious disease in children, who are also recognized as important "drivers" of flu transmission among people.

"If further experiments in humans prove successful, desialylating neuraminidase enzymes may prevent the flu from spreading," said Ortigoza, said lead study investigator and infectious disease specialist Mila Ortigoza, MD, PhD.

"While current approaches with vaccines and treatments target the virus, ours is the first study to demonstrate that treating the host, either infected mice or potentially infected humans, to prevent them from transmitting the virus to another host could be another effective strategy for combating pervasive infectious diseases," said Ortigoza, who is also an assistant professor in the Departments of Medicine and Microbiology at NYU Langone.

Ortigoza cautions that extensive clinical research is needed before neuraminidases can

be considered for approval as a treatment in humans. She says the team already has plans for more experiments to examine why infants are more susceptible to infection from respiratory viruses and whether blocking sialic acids in children can also prevent the spread of influenza. Funding support for this study was provided by National Institutes of Health grants P30CA016087, S10OD021747, K08AI141759, and R01AI150893. Ansun Biopharma of San Diego, California provided the experimental neuraminidase drug used in these experiments but was otherwise not involved in the study.

In addition to Ortigoza, other NYU Langone researchers involved in this study are Catharina Mobini; Hedy Rocha; Stacey Bartlett, PhD; Cynthia Loomis, MD, PhD; and Jeffrey Weiser, MD. Weiser is the Jan T. Vilcek Professor of Molecular Pathogenesis in the Department of Microbiology at NYU Langone Health and chair of the department.

Polycystic ovary syndrome linked to memory, thinking problems

NEW YORK, Feb 4 (Agencies): Women suffering from polycystic ovary syndrome may be more likely to have memory and thinking problems in middle age, according to new research.

The study, published in the online issue of Neurology, does not prove that polycystic ovary syndrome causes cognitive decline. It only shows an association.

Polycystic ovary syndrome is a hormonal disorder that is defined by irregular menstruation and elevated levels of a hormone called

Androgen.

Other symptoms may include excess hair growth, acne, infertility and poor metabolic health.

It is a common reproductive disorder that impacts up to 10 per cent of women. While it has been linked to metabolic diseases like obesity and diabetes that can lead to heart problems, less is known about how this condition affects brain health.

"Our results suggest that people with this condition have lower memory and thinking skills and subtle brain

changes at midlife. This could impact a person on many levels, including quality of life, career success and financial security," said Heather G. Huddleston, from the University of California, San Francisco.

The study involved 907 female participants who were 18 to 30 years old at the start of the study. They were followed for 30 years, at which time they completed tests to measure memory, verbal abilities, processing speed and attention.

At the time of testing, 66 participants had polycystic ovary syndrome.

The results showed that people with polycystic ovary syndrome had an average score that was approximately 11 per cent lower compared to people without the condition.

Further, they also had lower scores on three of the five tests that were given, specifically in areas of memory, attention and verbal abilities, when compared to those without this condition. At years 25 and 30 of the study, a smaller group of 291 participants had brain scans. Of those, 25 had polycystic ovary syndrome, and they had

lower white matter integrity, which may indicate early evidence of brain ageing.

"Additional research is needed to confirm these findings and to determine how this change occurs, including looking at changes that people can make to reduce their chances of thinking and memory problems," Huddleston said.

"Making changes like incorporating more cardiovascular exercise and improving mental health may serve to also improve brain ageing for this population."

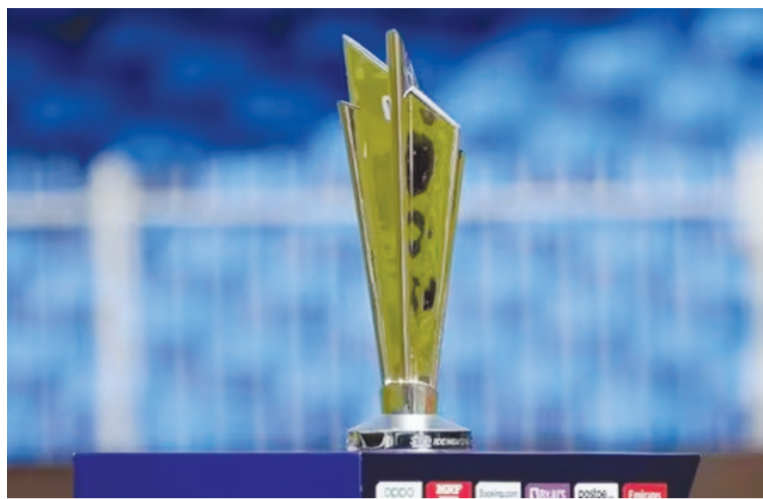
T20 World Cup 2024: 1.2 million ticket applications received in the first 48 hours of public ballot

NEW DELHI, Feb 4 (Agencies): The anticipation for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 is palpable, with over 1.2 million applications for tickets pouring in within just two days of the public ballot opening.

This overwhelming response has been global, with applications from 126 countries, yet it's the American continents that have shown the most fervour. An impressive 900,000-plus ticket requests have come from fans in the USA and the Caribbean alone.

This T20 World Cup is not only set to be an exhilarating display of cricket but also a testament to its growing popularity in new regions. The ticketing process has been designed to be fair and inclusive; it operates on a ballot system that does not favour the early birds but ensures all applicants have an equal shot at securing tickets if they enter before the deadline.

How does the public ballot for T20 World Cup 2024 tickets work?



Unlike traditional first-come-first-served models, the ballot system ensures that every application submitted within the seven-day window, which remains open until 11:59 PM Antigua Standard Time on February 7th, 2024, stands an equal chance of success. Fans are invited to apply for as many as six tickets per match, and there is no limit to the number of matches they can attend, allowing fans to fully immerse themselves in the excitement of the tournament.

The window for this opportunity will remain open until 23:59 Antigua Standard Time on February 7th, 2024, and fans are encouraged to throw their hats in the ring by visiting tickets.t20worldcup.com.

Following the ballot period, any tickets not claimed will be made available for general purchase on February 22nd via the official website, tickets.t20worldcup.com.

Successful applicants from the ballot will be notified via email regarding the matches for which they have secured tickets. They will then receive a link to complete their purchase. If payments are not finalized within the specified timeframe, it will result in the tickets being re-released into the general pool for sale, adhering to a first-come-first-served basis.

For those who miss out on the ballot or wish to secure additional seats, any tickets not allocated during this period will be released for general sale.

With affordability in mind, the organizers have set ticket prices to attract a wide audience, ensuring that the joy of cricket can be experienced by all. Starting at a mere US\$6, fans can witness the thrill of the game live, with over a quarter of a million tickets priced at US\$25 or less for the group stage, Super Eight, and semi-final matches.

The T20 World Cup will be from June 1 to 29.

India star batter Virat Kohli's return for England Tests in doubt; KL Rahul may get fit for Rajkot Test



NEW DELHI, Feb 4 (Agencies): The return of premier batter Virat Kohli to the Indian team for the remainder of the Test series against England still remains unclear even as the big-wigs are mulling to have a word with the former captain about his plans at the earliest.

Kohli is currently out of the country and it is understood that selection committee chairman Ajit Agarkar or the BCCI's top brass will speak to him to get a clearer picture to find out whether he is in a position to resume national duty.

Kohli had taken a sabbatical from the first two Tests against England, citing personal reasons.

"Family comes first as BCCI's press release stated and Virat will only play if he feels that he is in a position to play," a BCCI source in know of things told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

The personal reason for which Kohli opted out of the Tests is the impending arrival of his second child, as revealed by his close friend and former Royal Challengers Bangalore teammate AB de Villiers

on his YouTube channel. De Villiers said Kohli has done absolutely the right thing by taking a break.

"Yes, his second child is on the way. It's family time and things are important to him. If you are not true and genuine to yourself, you lose track of what you are here for.

I think most people's priority is family. You can't judge Virat for that. Yes, we miss him. But he has made absolutely the right decision," said De Villiers.

Shubman Gill and Shreyas Iyer, who have been struggling for big runs, will have to step up in the second innings of the ongoing Test against England in Visakhapatnam because KL Rahul could get fit in time for the third Test starting on February 14 in Rajkot.

The squad for the remaining three Tests against England will be named next week after the conclusion of the second Test.

Shreyas, Gill on notice as KL Rahul to return?

Shubman Gill and Shreyas Iyer, who have been struggling for big runs in red ball format, will have to buckle up

and score some runs when their turn to bat come in India's second innings at Vizag.

If they fail to do so, KL Rahul could walk in for one of them in the third Test. Rahul missed the second Test with a quadriceps injury but the word is that the Bengaluru man could be for the next match at Rajkot from February 15.

Both Iyer and Gill haven't scored a single fifty in their last nine Test innings and time is running out for both of them with the red hot Sarfaraz Khan is sitting in the dug-out and Rahul's quadricep problem getting better with each passing day.

Cloud over Shami, Jadeja

However, veteran pacer Mohammed Shami and all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja could not figure in the Test series against England.

Shami was not considered for the series while Jadeja suffered a hamstring strain during the first Test at Hyderabad and he was ruled out of the on-going second Test.

"As of now there is little or no chance that Mohammed Shami (who is in the UK for ankle treatment) and Ravindra Jadeja will be fit for the remainder of the series.

In the case of Rahul, he is getting better and a gap of a week between second and third Test will also help him getting match-ready," the source said.

U19 World Cup 2024: Pakistan edge past Bangladesh in low-scoring thriller to reach semi-finals

BENONI, Feb 4 (Agencies): In a nail-biting finish, the Pakistan U19 cricket team clinched a thrilling victory over Bangladesh to secure the last semi-final berth in the ICC U19 Men's Cricket World Cup 2024.

Pakistan edged past their opponents by a mere five runs.

The day began with Bangladesh opting to field first Pakistan's openers, Shamil Hussain and Shahzaib Khan, approached the innings cautiously, but Bangladesh's Md Rohanat Doullah Borson quickly disrupted their rhythm. Borson's inswinging delivery left Shamil stumped, and he soon claimed another wicket with a sharp bouncer that Azan Awais

could only edge to the keeper.

Pakistan's captain Saad Baig fell victim to a direct-hit run-out, leaving the team struggling at 66 for three.

The situation worsened as Sheikh Paevez Jibon and Borson took quick wickets, plunging Pakistan to 89 for six. However, Arafat Minhas and Ali Asfand formed a crucial partnership, adding 43 runs to stabilize the innings. Despite their efforts, Pakistan was eventually bowled out for a modest total of 155, setting a target of 156 for Bangladesh to chase within 38.1 overs.

The Pakistani bowlers, led by Ubaid Shah, came out firing. Shah dismissed both Bangla-

deshi openers early on, setting the tone for the rest of the innings.

Although Ariful Islam and Chowdhury Md Rizwan attempted to rebuild, Pakistan's bowlers kept the pressure on, with Ali Raza making significant breakthroughs.

Bangladesh's middle order crumbled under the relentless attack, with Ubaid Shah taking center stage.

He dropped a catch but redeemed himself by claiming a five-wicket haul, including the key wicket of Shihab James, who had been anchoring the innings for Bangladesh. With the dismissal of Bangladesh's captain Mahfuzur in the follow-

ing over, Pakistan tightened their grip on the match.

Despite the dire situation, Bangladesh's tail-enders Borson and Maruf Mridha showed resilience, bringing the team tantalizingly close to victory. A six from Borson off Arafat Minhas raised hopes, but Pakistan's Mohammad Zeeshan delivered the final blow, cleaning up Maruf and sealing the win for his team.

With this victory, Pakistan joins India, Australia, and South Africa in the semi-finals. The team is now set to face Australia on February 8th in what promises to be an exciting contest. The first semi-final will see India take on South Africa on February 6th, also in Benoni.

Indian Physical Disability Cricket Team Clinch T20 Series 3-1 with Thrilling Victory Over England

The Indian physical disability team won a T20I series against England 3-1 in Ahmedabad. The hosts will be playing the 5th T20I match on February 6.



AHMEDABAD, Feb 4 (Agencies): The Indian Physical Disability Cricket Team showcased their prowess, sealing a 3-1 series win against England in a captivating encounter at Ahmedabad on Saturday. Ravindra Sante, earned the Man of the Match award for his exceptional all-round performance. Sante contributed significantly with bat, ball, and in the field, securing India's triumph.

With the series now at 3-1, India looks to maintain their dominance in the fifth and final match scheduled for February 6 at the world's biggest cricket arena the Narendra Modi Stadium. Sante's consistent contributions have played a pivotal role in India's success throughout the series.

Facing an early setback with two quick wickets for just 21 runs in the initial four overs, India recovered through a crucial third-wicket partnership between skipper Vikrant Keni and Lokesh Marghade, contributing 50 runs. Marghade's 21 runs, combined with Keni's 28, set the stage for Sante's unbeaten 30, guiding India to a total of 150 runs for the loss of five wickets in 20 overs.

In response, England struggled to reach the challenging target of 131, getting all out with three balls to spare. Sante's early dismissal of opener Alex (run out) and his subsequent two wickets created significant hurdles for the visitors.

Sunny and Akhil Reddy's three-wicket hauls, along with Keni's

valuable contribution, ensured England fell short of the target.

Liam O'Brien emerged as England's top scorer with 58 runs in 44 balls, but the rest of the batting lineup faced difficulties in reaching double figures. Ben Sutton managed 11 runs, and Anthony was the last man standing with 25 runs.

The series victory reflects the resilience and collective effort of the Indian team, setting the stage for an exciting fifth match as they aim to conclude the series on a high note.

The series is organized by the Differently-abled Cricket Committee of India, which is supported by the BCCI. The DCCI is thankful to the Gujarat Cricket Association for all its support in organising

1st Time In Indian Cricket History! Jasprit Bumrah's Fiery Spell vs England Sees Him Enter Record Books

VISAKHAPATNAM, Feb 4 (Agencies): Jasprit Bumrah on Saturday wreaked havoc with the ball in hand. The right-arm pace spearhead rattled the England batting line-up by returning figures of 6 for 45 in 15.5 overs in the ongoing second Test match in Visakhapatnam. Bumrah was at his absolute best as the England batters had a tough day against him. Be it his swinging deliveries or toe-crushing yorkers, Bumrah hardly put any foot wrong in the innings. His sensational spell also saw him achieving a historic first in Indian cricket. Bumrah became the



fastest Indian pacer to claim 150 Test wickets, in terms of balls bowled and games played. He registered the record in what was the 34th game of his decorated Test cricket career. Bumrah

is the first pacer in Indian cricket history to take 150 Test wickets in less than 35 matches. By the end of play on Saturday, Bumrah had 152 Test wickets to his name.

Bumrah reached the remarkable feat after delivering 6781 balls in Test cricket. Meanwhile, Umesh Yadav stands in the second spot with 7661 balls. Mohammed Shami and Kapil Dev hold the second and fourth place with 7755 and 8378 balls respectively.

The 30-year-old made history after he dismissed the English skipper Ben Stokes on day two of the second Test match on Saturday. In the second ball of the 50th over, Bumrah delivered a yorker and bowled out Stokes for 47 runs.

In England's first inning, the vice-captain

delivered a magical spell. He picked up six wickets and gifted only 45 runs.

Bumrah reached another milestone on Saturday. He took Kapil Dev's place to dismiss the opposition's third, fourth, fifth and sixth batters in an innings in a Test in India. Earlier, Kapil Dev made the record in 1983 against West Indies in Ahmedabad, where the former India skipper made a stunning spell of 9/83.

Bumrah made his Test debut in 2018 against South Africa. Following that he has appeared in 64 Test innings across 34 Tests and scalped 152 wickets.

Mumbai Open 2024: India's Shrivalli Bhamidipaty and Zeel Desai cause major upsets in 1st qualifying round

MUMBAI, Feb 4 (Agencies): Indian challengers Shrivalli Bhamidipaty and Zeel Desai put on a fantastic show, causing major upsets in first round qualifying matches, as top-level tennis returned to Mumbai after a hiatus of six years.

The 22-year-old Indian Shrivalli making her debut on the WTA Tour showed remarkable poise and confidence as she came from behind to knockout second seed Valentini Grammatikopoulou from Greece, winning in straight sets in the L&T Mumbai Open WTA 125K match

on Centre Court at the Cricket Club of India.

The 26-year-old 117-ranked Greek player started powerfully and raced to a 3-1 lead. But Shrivalli, the Indian National champion in both singles and doubles, showed tremendous resilience and won the five games in succession to wrap up the first set.

That win further boosted her confidence as she started to serve stronger and dominated the rallies and went on to take the second for a satisfying 6-3, 6-2 win.

In another contest, Wild Card entrant Zeel

brushed aside the challenge of another Greece's Sapfo Sakelari, winning in straight sets 6-2, 6-1.

Playing in conditions that were familiar to her, Desai was out of the blocks fast, and didn't allow her Greek opponent, who was seeded seventh, any scope for a comeback.

"Honestly, since it was my debut game, I was just keen, going out there and having a good game. I just wanted to play my best tennis and use my strengths to the best of my ability.

The organisers (MSLTA and WTA) are

doing a great job and we now have a lot of women's tournaments, which is encouraging us to work harder.

And we have also been climbing up the ranks, and I think tournaments like the WTA L&T Mumbai Open 125K allows us to compete at a higher level, which is good for us," Shrivalli said, after winning her debut game on the WTA tour.

Unseeded Vaidehi Chaudhari of India also advanced to the second round as her opponent, fourth seed Dejana Radanovic after trailing 2-3 retired hurt.

However, two Indians who were awarded wild cards failed to raise the challenge and crashed out.

Madhurima Sawant lost to Korea's Sohyun Park 1-6, 1-6, while Sameeksha Shroff was outplayed by France's Amandine Hesse, who charged to a 6-1, 6-0 win.

Meanwhile, Lina Glushko of Israel produced a gallant fight against fifth seed En-Shuo Liang of Chinese Taipei, snatching a 5-7, 6-1, 7-6(5) win to advance to the second round.

Natrang presents Hindi play 'Mera Ghar Mera Sapna'

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: Natrang presented a new Hindi devised and improvised play 'Mera Ghar Mera Sapna' here today at Natrang Studio Theatre in its weekly Sunday Theatre series. The play was devised and directed by Neeraj Kant. Mera Ghar Mera Sapna is based on the plight of labourers who build houses for others but their dream of having their own roof is not fulfilled throughout their life.

The play dramatically opens at a scene where labourers are shown working on a housing project. A young couple, working together as labourers, transit from their love to married life



with a life-time dream of settling down and building their own home. Their struggle continues and conditions worsen when this homeless couple is blessed with a child. Whenever influential people have to be accommodated under new developmental projects in the name of modern urbanisation, the axe of the system

often falls on common poor inhabitants, to throw them away, they are termed to be thieves, illegal encroachers, criminals or sometimes even terrorists. A police party enters the houses to search and throws out all items lying in the house and abuses the woman as well. Whenever the law wants to save someone, it hap-

pens in such unauthorised settlements of the city.

Meanwhile, due to communal riots, many houses are destroyed and people are forced to live in relief camps. The woman keeps carving for leaving the relief camp and settling her house in her old colony where people of all religious and cultural backgrounds live. But the man does not accept her view saying that now people of his religion do not live in that colony and as such he will build a house only among the people of his own faith. Due to their living in an unauthorised colony, one day the police arrive with a bulldozer to push them

out of the colony. Here the couple firmly decide that they will not vacate their house and prompt all other residents of the colony to stand united against injustice and fight it out till justice is delivered. The play takes a new turn when the aggression of the deprived people flairs up and authorities agree to accommodate them.

Natrang young artists who performed in the play included Sanket Bhagat, Vishal Sharma, Chaitanaya Shekhar, Vandana Thakur, Kushal Bhat and Mehak Singh. The lights were designed and executed by Neeraj Kant and the music of the play was scored by Mehak Chib. The show was coordinated by Mohd. Yaseen.

PM Modi leading BJP juggernaut in J&K to victory: Tarun Chugh

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: BJP National General Secretary and In-charge J&K Tarun Chugh Sunday said the party will win Parliamentary and J&K Assembly elections with a huge majority.

Chugh claimed that ever since Prime Minister Narendra Modi led BJP government came into power at the Centre, people of the entire country have witnessed massive changes on the ground, and have decided to give another chance to this government so that India will become a developed nation in the world.

He said the BJP didn't shy away from taking action



against anti-nationals who owned patronage of a few vested interested politicians in the past. "Modi government took strong action against terrorism and anti-national ideology and wiped out terrorism and its ecosystem across the country. Further, those who were patronizing secessionist ideology and were involved in inciting youth against the sover-

eignty of the country have been banned. This happened only in PM Modi's government," Chugh said.

While lashing out at dynastic political parties, Chugh said that NC, PDP, and Congress had pushed J&K into uncertainty while making people of the territory fool for their political interests and destroying the future of thousands of youths.

He said BJP has gained huge ground in J&K and people especially youth have started to go with PM Modi's narrative in making the future of India bright. He added that the BJP will win the Parliamentary and J&K Assembly polls with a huge majority

Ms. Rudrika Kalsotra declared Qualified for the Award of Ph.D. of SMVDU



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: Ms. Rudrika Kalsotra D/o Dewakar Gupta has been declared qualified for the award of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the School of Computer Science and Engineering by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU). The candidate has worked on the topic, entitled "Moving Object Detection for Intelligent-Video Analytics using

Background Subtraction Technique" under Dr. Sakshi Arora, Assistant Professor, School of Computer Science and Engineering, SMVDU. Ms. Rudrika Kalsotra has published various research papers in SCI/SCIE-indexed journals, presented her research papers at international and national conferences and published various Book Chapters. The scholar expresses her gratitude to the School of Computer Science and Engineering, SMVDU, for providing all necessary facilities and support during her research. Prof. (Dr.) Pragati Kumar, Vice-Chancellor, SMVDU, and other committee members congratulated Ms. Rudrika Kalsotra and wished her a bright future.

AAP holds a protest demonstration against BJP & ECI over cheating in the Chandigarh Mayoral Election



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: Aam Aadmi Party J&K, Jammu unit held a protest demonstration against BJP & Election Commissioner of India over cheating in the Chandigarh Mayoral Election, in front of Election Commissioner office, Jammu, on 03-02-2024, with play cards and banners in their hands having slogans like "GALLI GALLI MEIN SHOR HAI-BJP VOTE CHOR HAI.", "BJP HATAO - DASH BACHAO", "BJP HATAO-LOK TANTAR AUR SANVIDHAAN BACHAO." "PALAY LARYAAN THAY GOROON SAY- AAB LARYAAN GAYA VOTE CHORUUN SAAY."

While addressing the media persons, Party spokes person Nirmal Mahna & other AAP leaders, said that the Chandigarh Municipal corporation, which has 35 elected councilors & one MP Kirron Kher,

total 36 votes & the INDIA alliance had 20 votes (13 AAP councilors and Seven Congress councilors) & BJP had 16 (14 councilors, one MP Kirron Kher and one SAD councilor) & INDIA alliance was anticipating a clean sweep. However, the presiding officer used his own pen to mark and invalidate eight votes, clearly visible in the video circulated in social media & showing Anil Masih engaging in fraudulent activity. The AAP leaders said that the BJP appointed an officer from its minority wing as the presiding officer & the election agent from Parties were not permitted to inspect the invalid votes and even the Deputy Commissioner was not called for oversight. They said that it was for the first time in the Mayoral election that eight votes, all from the opposition parties, were declared invalid, while not a single vote from the BJP faced such disqualification. They

termed the Chandigarh mayoral polls as unconstitutional & illegal and added that BJP completely exposed before the Nation & world in Chandigarh Mayoral polls. The AAP leader's urged the Chief Election Commissioner of India to take stern action against the concerned Presiding officer & conduct a fresh, impartial election without any delay.

Prominent AAP leaders who attended the protest demonstration include, S/Sh. Farooq Ahmed Banday, Dr. Ghulam Mustafa, Mudasir Sahib, Mehraj Malik, Nirmal Mahana, Kuldeep Kumar Rao, Amit Langer, Romesh Lal Bhagat, Safeer Chaudhary, Adv. Arvind Bandral, Agya Kour, S. Amrik Singh Sasan, Mehar Singh, Rajesh Pargotra, Dr. Rajinder Thapa, Sandeep Singh Parihar, Shadi Lal, Kandeel Gupta, Robin Singh, Dixit Gupta, Asif Gill, Sham Lal Thakur, Karan Atri, Chotay Lal, Virji Kachroo & others.

World is witnessing India leading as Vishva Guru: Mankotia



Top News Report

KATHUA/BASOHLI, Feb 4: Hundreds of people including men, women, and youth hailing from Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribe, OBC, and general caste joined BJP under the leadership of Senior party leader and former MLA Balwant Singh Mankotia.

The joining programs that were organized at various places in Kathua and Mahanpur in Pahari District Basholi were attended by former Deputy Mayor Baldev Singh Billawaria, BJP Minority Morcha President and Member joining Committee Ranjodh Singh Nalwa and BJP leader Zoravar Singh Jamwal.

While welcoming the new entrants into the party fold, Balwant Singh Mankotia highlighted the policies and programs of the Party as well as Govt at the center led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi which is benefitting the general public without any discrimination.

"Before 2014, the successive governments both at the center and in J&K did nothing for the public, especially the downtrodden

people, and always used them as their vote bank. But ever since Prime Minister Narendra Modi took over as Prime Minister, India has seen change in every sphere. And now the entire world is witnessing India all set to lead them as Vishva Guru," said Balwant Singh Mankotia.

Baldev Billawaria said the gates of BJP are open for all those who want to serve the people and strive hard to strengthen the nationalist forces and the country. Ranjodh Singh Nalwa said that the party is working with a vision for a new India which is evident in decisions taken by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government.

Zoravar Singh highlighted the BJP's inclusive approach, saying every new entrant is welcomed into its fold with love.

BJP leaders Neha Mahajan, BJP district Kathua President Gopal Mahajan, Pahari Zila Basohli President Thakur Darshan Singh, Jang Bir Singh Cheeku Prem Dogra, Vinod Kumar, Akshay Bharti, Ravinder Pathania, Gopal Krishan, Sham Lal Gupta, Moti Ram, and others were also present in the joining programmes.

GCOE NSS unit holds rally on road safety week



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: The NSS unit of Government College of Education, Canal Road organised a rally on the occasion of the Road safety week. The students spread awareness using slogans and pamphlets on the importance of using helmet, seatbelt, following traffic rules and use of footpaths

and zebra-crossing. A month-long activities will be conducted by the students under the guidance of officiating Principal, Prof Satish kumar Sharma, took the opportunity to share his words of wisdom with students on rash driving among youngsters. He encouraged students to actively engage in social and community work.

On the occasion of Celebration of World

Wetlands day on 02 February, a documentary was shown to students highlighting the importance of Wetlands for the conservation of Flora and fauna. The theme of the year is, 'Wetlands and human well-being.' It highlighted the urgent need for the restoration of wetlands. On the occasion were present Prof SaritaNSS P.O, Convener Nature Club, GCOE, Prof Shalini Sharma, Prof Rupa, Prof Kiran, Dr Shubhra Jamwal and Prof Ambica sharma.

These activities play a crucial role in promoting values of compassion and service among students. Social activities create active citizenry in the country and help in generating knowledge among them.

Special lecture on NEP-2020 organised by GDC Kathua

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: Special guest lecture was organised by Department of Education GDC Kathua on the theme- Responsibilities and Role of teachers in the implementation of NEP-2020 for the faculty members and students from different departments and streams of the college. The resource person of the programme was eminent and renowned educationist and researcher Prof Subhash Gakhar, former chairman and Head of Department of Education Punjab University Chandigarh. About 200 students and faculty members participated in the programme with full enthusiasm.

The programme began with lighting of traditional lamp by the resource person along with Vice-Principal and senior faculty members. The welcome address was given by Dr. Ram Singh Head Department of Education and Coordinator IGNOU. In his address, he presented a grand and gracious welcome to the resource person, Vice Principal, faculty members, students, organising team and the supporting staff of the college. The resource person



Prof Subhash Gakhar focuses on various interventions for implementation of NEP-2020 and role and responsibilities of teachers in executing the policy and raising the quality of school and higher education. He presented in detail the different aspects of NEP-2020 from foundational stage to higher education. After the lecture, question session was also conducted and number of students raised the queries regarding the policy which were satisfactorily answered by the resource person.

In her message, the Principal of the college Prof Seema Mir applauded the efforts of the Department of Education for organising such a lecture based on National importance. She impressed upon all the faculty members of the college to organise such

programmes and activities to update the students regarding different policies and programmes of Ministry of Education, Govt of India.

The concluding remarks were presented by Vice-Principal Prof Roop Krishan Pandita. In his remarks, he appreciated the resource person for giving the in depth knowledge of various terms and interventions of NEP-2020 and desired role of teachers at all levels of education for its smooth execution. He appealed all the faculty members to go through and prepare themselves accordingly. Later on an interactive session of faculty members with the resource person was also conducted. The formal vote of thanks was presented by Prof Anil Kumar Verma, Assistant professor Department of Education. The programme was compered by Ragini Devi and Aliesha Mahotra.

Sadhguru Madhuparamhans delivers lecture to sangat in Jammu



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 4: Sadhguru Shri Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj of Sahib Bandagi, while enthralling the Sangat with the nectar of his sermons in Rakhabandhu, Jammu today, said that when the power of Naam comes within a person, his heart becomes illuminated. Then there is no need to tell him what is right and wrong. The power of the name automatically tells him from within.

Eating tamasic food and stale food dulls the intellect. Non-vegetarian food is tamoguni food. Stale food is also tamoguni. As per the food we eat, so will be our intellect. Diet has great importance. The more you think about Tamoguni, the more your conscience will

become impure. That's why it should be named Chintan. When the name comes to the mind, it will continue to tell.

All the deeds are binding. If you have to do any work then do it selflessly. The soul is beyond karma. Sin and virtue both are chains. All actions are done through the mind. Remembrance is the essence. The senses will not help in remembrance. These are engaged in the outside world. Whatever thinking is without name, it is all a trap of time.

In meditation you just see whether you are concentrated or not. Don't have a desire to see the sun, moon, stars, don't have a desire to hear tunes. Everything is illusion. You hold your mind and concentrate. Controlling the imaginations of the mind. Apart from the

name, whatever thought is coming inside you, that is the mind. Always maintain this condition. The mind keeps entangling it in the world. You keep remembering useless things, which have no meaning. There is no news of the moment, but man keeps hope of change.

Remembering the name in every breath. Your son is sitting across the seven seas and you are both seeing and hearing him. When man has created such machines then the Almighty has a lot of power. Whatever you pray to the Lord, it goes there. There is this strength in your soul. When Muslims also offer Namaz, they have faith that God is listening to their prayers. Christians are also believing that their prayers are reaching the Lord. We all Hindus also perform Aarti. Aarti is called a victim. This is a collective prayer for the distressed. You can take your problem to D.C. When you go near him, he listens. But when everyone gathers and goes, one has to listen to it. In this way, when many people come together and pray to the Lord, there is a power. That prayer reaches there. You pray every day. Your prayer reaches there.