TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper

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Vidya Balan files FIR against unknown person for creating fake **Instagram account in her name**



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Vol.-15 Issue-52 Pages-12 Rs.-2/-

BRIEFLY

Murder of democracy: **Congress** slams Govt over X's **Statement**

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (Agencies): The Congress alleged on Thursday that democracy is being "murdered" in the country, after microblogging platform X voiced disagreement with the BJP-led Centre's order to block accounts and posts related to ongoing farmers' protests.

X also called for extending freedom of expression to the affected posts.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has ordered social media platforms to temporarily block 177 accounts linked to the farmers' protests on the request of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), according to sources.

Tagging a statement issued by X's Global Government Affairs team, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "Murder Of Democracy in India." In its statement, the microblogging platform said: "The Indian government has issued executive orders requiring X to act on specific accounts and posts, subject to potential penalties, including significant fines and imprisonment. In compliance with the orders, we will withhold these accounts and posts in India alone; however, we disagree with these actions and maintain that freedom of expression should extend to these posts." It said a writ appeal challenging the government's blocking orders remains pending and called for making the order public to enhance transparency.

"Due to legal restrictions, we are unable to publish the executive orders, but we believe that making them public is essential for transparency. This lack of disclosure can lead to a lack of accountability and arbitrary decision-making," X said.

The microblogging platform has provided the impacted users with a notice of the government's actions in accordance with the

company's policies. Farmers from across the country have been protesting to press the Centre for their demands, including a legal guarantee on the

LG Sinha conducts on-site inspection and reviews ongoing construction work of transit accommodation

SRINAGAR, Feb 22 (Agencies): Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha conducted on-site inspection and reviewed ongoing construction work of the transit accommodation for PM Package employees at Zewan, today.

The Lt Governor directed the officials to complete 10 Blocks comprising 240 residential units by March 20, 2024.

He further directed the officials for installation of CCTV cameras, and to complete the work on the approach road to



the Transit Accommodation and boundary wall, simultaneously.

It was informed that over 70 percent target under the project has been achieved with the completion of civil works on 26 blocks comprising 624 flats.

Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Vidhi Kumar Birdi, IGP Kashmir, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar and other senior officials

Kiru Hydropower Corruption Case | CBI searches at premises of Former Governor Satya Pal Malik

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (Agencies): The CBI on Thursday searches the premises of former Jammu and Kashmir governor Satya Pal Malik and 29 other locations in connection with alleged corruption in the Kiru Hydropower project, officials said.

The agency started its operation in the morning with around 100 officers mobilised to swoop down at 30 locations in multiple cities, they said.

The case relates to alleged corruption in awarding civil works of the Kiru Hydro Electric



Power Project (HEP) worth Rs 2,200 crore, they said.

Malik, who was the governor of Jammu and Kashmir between August 23, 2018 and October 30, 2019 had claimed he was offered a Rs 300-crore bribe for clearing two files, including the one pertaining to the project.

"The case was registered on allegations of malpractices in award of the contract worth approximately Rs 2,200 crore of civil works of Kiru Hydro Electric Power Project(HEP) to a private company in 2019," the CBI had had earlier said.

The agency has booked former chairman of the Chenab Valley Power Projects (P) Ltd Navin Kumar Chaudhary and other former

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Drone-Dropped IED found near international border in Kathua

KATHUA/JAMMU, Feb 22 (Agencies): The Border Security Force (BSF) found a dronedropped improvised explosive device (IED) near the International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district on Thursday, an official said.

The IED was found in the Manyari post area. near the zero line, during a search operation that was launched after the BSF troops noticed the movement of a Pakistani drone in the morning hours and opened fire to bring it down, the official said.

He said the search operation was going on when last reports were received. The drone is believed

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X Disagrees with govt action to block accounts, posts linked to farmers' protest

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (Agencies): Social media platform X on Thursday expressed disagreement with the Indian government's order to block accounts and posts related to the ongoing farmers' protests and called for extending freedom of ed posts.

The Ministry of Electronics and IT has ordered social media platforms to temporarily block 177 accounts that were linked to farmers' protests on request of the Ministry of Home Affairs, according to sources.

"The Indian government has issued executive orders requiring X to act on specific accounts and posts, subject to potential penalties including significant



fines and imprisonment. In compliance with the orders, we will withhold these accounts and posts in India alone; however, we disagree with these actions and maintain that freedom of expression should extend to these posts," X said in a post.

The social media platform said that a writ appeal challenging the

Indian government's blocking orders remains pending and called for making the order public to enhance transparencv.

"Due to legal restrictions, we are unable to publish the executive orders, but we believe that making them public is essential for transparency. This lack of disclosure can lead to a lack of

Kaun Hai Tumhara Bowler? Tendulkar plays gully cricket in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, Feb 22 (Agencies): He aptly called it a "match made in heaven" as Sachin Tendulkar pleasantly surprised a bunch of youngsters playing gully cricket in Uri, turning his bat upside down at one point just to give the boys a shot at dismissing him.

On his maiden trip to Jammu and Kashmir, Tendulkar got down from his SUV when he saw



some young boys playing cricket on the road with a cardboard carton and an empty oil can as

"Cricket and Kashmir: Match made in heaven," posted Tendulkar on X along with a short

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Construction worker killed in landslide along Jammu-Srinagar National Highway

BANIHAL/JAMMU, Feb 22 (Agencies): A worker of a construction company was killed in a landslide along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway which remained closed for the fourth consecutive day on Thursday, officials said.

The construction

Trunks

Paging

Hotel Fn

4Ports - 64 Ports

4 - 10 Trunk's

Tri-Color

Small, ABS Body

Plugable Add on

Plugable Add on

worker identified as Deshpaul (31), a resident of Uttar Pradesh, was hit by the landslide outside his company headquarters near Seri in Ramban district around 8.30 am, police officials said.

They said the deceased was moving towards the mess of the company for breakfast when the incident occurred. His body was retrieved and shifted to hospital for postmortem.

An official of the traffic department said the 270-km long highway, the only all weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, remained closed for

Night temp drops in Kashmir, Gulmarg At -10.4°C

SRINAGAR, Feb 22 (Agencies): Night temperatures plummet in Kashmir Valley, indicating cold weather conditions, as the ski resort of Gulmarg recorded a temperature of -10.4°C on Thursday, officials said.

The crucial Srinagar-Jammu national highway continues to remain closed for vehicular traffic due to landslides that occurred at a few places after it was partially restored on Wednesday.

"Restoration work is in progress at Kishtwari Pather on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway; it will take some time," a traffic official said on X. Srinagar Leh Road also remained closed for vehicular traffic due to the accumulation of recent snowfall. The roads connecting Keran and Machil roads in Kupwara district, Anantnag Sinthan, and Mughal roads were also closed for vehicular traffic due to snowfall on Tuesday, they said.

The weather is likely to remain dry over most parts of Jammu and Kashmir till February 25, and sunny days are expected from February 23 to 25, independent weather forecaster Kashmir Weather said.

He said another Western disturbance is likely to hit on February 26 that may trigger rain and snow over Jammu and Kashmir.

The Meteorological Centre Srinagar said the minimum temperature during the intervening nights of Wednesday and Thursday in Srinagar was recorded at -1.0°C against 0.0°C. It was 1.9°C below normal for the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir.

The day temperature was also recorded at 3.6°C, below the normal of 10.3°C on the previous day in Srinagar. Gulmarg remained

the coldest place, with a low of -10.4°C against the -9.4°C recorded the previous night. It was 3.7°C below normal for the famous ski resort of North Kashmir. It also received 1.0cm of snowfall and 1.8mm of

■Turn to page 9

Foreigner dies, Five Rescued, one Missing in Gulmarg **Avalanche**

SRINAGAR, Feb 22 (Agencies): One foreigner died and five other rescued while another is still missing after an avalanche struck Gulmarg, destination in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, officials said here

The avalanche struck the Kongdoori slopes, trapping several skiers. The foreigners had gone to the ski slopes without local residents, they said.

Army and a patrolling team of the Jammu and Kashmir administration are carrying out Turn to page 9

Contact Person Mr. Sanjeev Kumar



CADNICA ELECTRONIC SOLUTIONS

9419143503

OBITUARY

With profound grief and sorrow, it is to inform the sad demise Mr Samir Ji Bhat S/o Late Vesh Nath Bhat originally resident of Hugam-Anantnag at present 42-A Lane No. 6 Vaski Vihar opp Vaski Nag Temple Bantalab Jammu on 14th Feb 2024.

Tenth Day Kriya shall be performed at Akhnoor Ghat on 23-Feb 2024 followed by Assembly at Home 11:00

Grief Stricken: Jyoti Bhat (Wife) - 9596109709 Vishal Bhat, Vivek Bhat-Sons **Brothers and Bhabhis** Kamal Ji Bhat & Rita Bhat

Shuban Ji Bhat & Basanti Bhat Sisters and Brothers- in law Sharika Raina W/o Mohan Lal Raina Princy Reshi W/o Pintoo Jee Reshi

14.02.2024 at 10:40 PM



7006135572, 9419242828, 7051454144

Sh. Triloki Nath Mirza



TENTH DAY KRIYA

"A light has gone out of our lives
but the love you gave will shine forever"

With profound grief & sorrow, we regret to inform about the sad demise of our beloved Sh. Trilok Nath Mirza S/o Lt. Sh. Syam Sunder Mirza originally resident of 397 Jawahar Nagar Srinagar (Kmr) at present 2/35 Pamposh Colony Janipur Jammu on

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be held at Akhnoor Ghat on 23.02.2024 (Friday).

ASSEMBLY will be held at our residence 2/35

Pamposh Colony Janipur Jammu on 23.02.2024 at 11:30 AM GRIEF STRICKEN Smt. Makhni Mirza - Wife

Smt. Makhni Mirza - Wife
Smt. Santosh Mirza - Sister-in-law
Daughters & Son-in-law
Smt. Asha Nagri Mirza & Sh. Vijay Nagri
Smt. Shikha Raina & Sh. S.K. Raina
Sisters & Brothers-in-law
Smt. Phoola Raina & Sh. C.L. Raina
Smt. Girja Raina & Sh. Sattish Raina
Mirzao Chironia Kole Negris & Bainae

Mirzas, Chiragis, Kaks, Nagris & Rainas Deeply Missed by Beloved Ones Ankit & Divya, Arnav & Nupur, Sharang & Arun Ph.: 9419181142, 9906332605, 9784437739, 8377911624



With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved Sh. Ved Parkash Thappa, S/o Lt. Sh. Govind Ram Thappa, R/o 261/A, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu.

TENTH DAY will be performed at 11 AM -12 Noon on 20 February, 2024 (Tuesday) at our residence. KRIYA will be performed at 12 Noon on 21 February, 2024 (Wednesday) at our residence. UTHALA will be performed at 4 PM - 5 PM, on 23 February, 2024 (Friday) at Shiv Mandir, Near Govt Flats, Gandhi Nagar

GRIEF STRICKEN Smt. Surendri Thappa - Wife

Sh. Ved Parkash Thappa Sister & Brother-in-Law Smt. Kanta Goswami W/o Lt. Sh. Madan Gopal Goswami

Brothers-in-Law & Sisters-in-Law Sh. YL Sharma & Smt. Rama Sharma Sh. MM Magotra and Smt. Suman Magotra

Sh. RP Magotra & Smt. Rakesh Magotra

Sanjay Thappa and Ritu Thappa- Son & Daughter-in-Law Ajay Thappa and Seema Thappa- Son & Daughter-in-Law

Grand Sons and Grand Daughters

Samarth Thappa Ashmika Thappa Suryanshi Thappa Adhvik Thappa

Mobile No.: 9419185069, 7051363939

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform that our revered mother Smt Asha Braroo W/o Lt Sh. Piyarey Lal Braroo R/o Malyar Habbakadal Srinagar at present H. No 233-C, Lane No 4, Sec 1 Durga Nagar Jammu left for her heavenly abode on 16th Feb 2024. 10TH DAY KRIYA will take place a

Akhnoor Ghat on 25-02-2024. Additionally public Assembly will be held at Muthi Ghat on 25-02-2024 at



Smt Asha Braroo

SMT. INDIRA DEVI

BHUSHAN LAL GAROO

11.00 AM. **GRIEF STRICKEN**

Sh. Ramesh Kumar & Jyoti Raina - Son & Daughter in Law

Sh. Anil Bedi & Smt Indoo Bedi - Son in Law & Daughter

Sh. Ravi Raman and Suneeta Raman- Son in Law and Daughter

Sh. Sanjeev Raina & Jyoti Raina- Son in Law and Daughter GRAND CHILDREN: Rahul, Abesheik, Shashank, Mahak

MOBILE NO: 8082315128, 7006222018, 7889824041

UTHALA

With Profound Grief and Sorrow we regret to inform the sad Demise of our Beloved Mother Smt. Indira Devi W/o Late Sh. Makhan Lal R/o Poonch on 11/02/2024.

Rasam Pagri/ Tehrwan/ UTHALA will be Performed On Friday 23rd Feb 2024 At 12:00 Noon at our Residence at Poonch GRIEF STRICKEN

Sons and Daughters In Law Smt. Savita and Sh. Baldev Raj Sharma (SE PDD Retired) Smt. Madhu W/o Lt Sh. Shambhu Nath Sharm Smt. Suman and Sh. Yogesh Sharma (Health Deptt) Smt. Vipin and Sh. Kuldeep Raj Sharma (PDD)

Daughters and Sons In Law Smt. Kanta Devi W/o Late Sh. Durga Dutt Raina

Sh. Bharat Bhushan Vaid **(Vice President Municipality Rajouri)** Husband of Lt. Smt. Asha Devi Sh Krishan Lal Sharma- Brother In Law

Grand Children and Great Grand Children

Akshay and Dr Garima, Mohit and Akanksha, Deepak and Pratibha, Priya and Karan,

Pratiksha and Pawandeep, Abhishek, Pallavi, Gannu, Anava, Aavan

10TH DAY KRIYA & PRAYER MEET

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचिन्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भुय:। अजो नित्य शाश्वतोयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥

THE SOUL IS NEVER BORN, NEVER DIES ONCE IT COMES INTO BEING, IT NEVER CEASES TO BE. UNBORN, ETERNAL, ABIDING AND PRIMEVAL, IT DOES NOT PERISH WHEN THE BODY IS SLAIN.

IN FOND AND LOVING MEMORY OF BHUSHAN LAL GAROO, **10TH DAY KRIYA** WILL BE HELD AT ALANDI GHAT, PUNE, ON 26TH FEB. 2024, AT

FOLLOWED BY PRAYER MEET AT CLUB HOUSE, CLOUD 9, NIBM ROAD, PUNE, FROM 2 PM ONWARDS. GREATLY MISSED BY:

SHEELA GAROO -WIFE SHIBAN LAL AND INDIRA GAROO -BROTHER & SISTER-IN-LAW
ASHISH AND JYOTI GAROO -SON & DAUGHTER-IN-LAW
AMIT AND SHONIMA GAROO -SON & DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

UMASHORI LIDOO -SISTER

SMT AND SH J.L KACHROO -SISTER & BROTHER-IN-LAW SMT & SH C.L.LIDOO -SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW
SMT AND SH C.L PANDITA -SISTER & BROTHER-IN-LAW
SMT AND SH S.K TICKOO -SISTER & BROTHER-IN-LAW
SMT AND SH S.K TICKOO -SISTER & BROTHER-IN-LAW
SMT & SH M.K GURTOO -SISTER-IN-LAW & BROTHER-IN-LAW

KANAN, KENEESHA, VIHAAN, ADHRIT AND SVANIK -GRAND CHILDREN CONT: 9552543210/70066 45177 वासान्सि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय, नवानि गृहान्ति नरोपराणि । तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा, न्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥



With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved Mrs Sushma Koul W/o Sh. Ashok Kumar Koul originally resident of Wanigam Tangmarg Dist. Baramulla on 17th Feb 2024 A/p Block NO 2 Quarter No 16 Lane No 1 Jagti Township Nagrota Jammu.

10TH DAY KRIYA will be performed at Akhnoor Ghat on 26th Feb 2024 at 9.00 AM ASSEMBLY will be held at our residence at House No 17 lane No 11 Ghura

DEEPLY REMEMBERED BY :-Sh. Ashok Kumar Koul -Husband

Barnai Bantalab after 12.00 Noon.

Miss Shiksha Koul -Daughter Sahil Koul - Son

7006551816, 9469219480

Sh. Bharat Bushan Koul & Smt Sushma - Brother in Law & Sister in Law Sh. Piaray Lal Pandita & Smt Sanju - Brother in Law & Sister in Law Miss Radhika & Miss Maisa - Daughters

TENTH DAY/UTHALA

Tenth Day will be performed for the sad demise of our beloved Smt. Shanti Sharma W/o Sh. Om Parkash Sharma on 21/2/2024 at our residence at 11.00 am.

Uthala will take place at Shiv Temple Rodyian Di Chapri, New Plot on 23/2/2024 at 2.00 pm to 3.00 pm.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Sh. Om Parkash (Husband) Dheeraj and Pooja (Son & Bahu) Late Jyoti & Sanjay Mahey (Beti & Jamai Ji)

Neetu & Kuldeep Sharma

DEEP SORROW BY Nanands, Dever, Devrani and Jetani

KRIYA / UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, this is to inform for the sad demise of Sh. Vaishno Dass Abrol (Rani) S/o Late Sh. Rikhi Ram Abrol R/o 180-P, Sec - 1, Ext Khoo Wali Gali Trikuta Nagar, Jammu. Kriya will be performed on Thursday 22-02-2024 at our resi dence 180-P, Sec, 1 Khoo Wali Gali Ext Trikuta Nagar Jammu at 12.00 Noon

Uthala will be performed on Friday 23-02-2024 at Shiv Mandi Sec 3, Trikuta Nagar from 2 pm to 3 pm. Grief Stricken

Brothers & Bhabhi's

Smt. Sneh Lata & Sh. Darshan Lal Abrol Smt. Pooja & Sh. Parshotam Lal Abrol

Smt. Sushma & Sh. Inder Abrol Sister & Brother-in-law

Smt. Krishna & Late Sh. Ramesh Kumar Son & Daughter-in-law

Smt. Seema & Sh. Ajay Abrol (Gopi) Smt. Palak & Sh. Amit Abrol (Atul)

Daughter & Son-in-law's Smt. Anju & Sh. Rajiv Panjali Smt. Anupama & Sh. Himanshu Kohli

Smt. Monika & Sh. Navneet Verma Smt. Rupma & Ashish Wadhera



Smt. Shanti

Sharma

MRS SUSHMA KOUL

SH. VAISHNO DASS **ABROL (RANI)**

Grand Children's

Aditya, Vikhyati, Akshita, Rohan, Dhurav, Krishna, Harshit, Vaibhav, Aryaveer, Arshveer, Reyansh, Anadi, Adhyansh

Contact Nos: 9419110781, 9419141942 **Abrol Construction Company Abrol Infrastructures**

Sh. Surinder Raina

10TH DAY KRIYA

We profound grief & sorrow, we regret to inform you the sad and untimely demise of our beloved Sh. Surinder Raina S/o Jagar Nath Raina R/o Rainawari, Sirnagar A/p H.No. 25, Lane 3, Bharat Nagar Bantalab on 15-02-2024

10TH DAY KRIYA will be performed at Akhnoor Ghat on 24th February (Saturday) 2024 followed by Assembly at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education Jammu at 11 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Son & Daughter-in-law

Sh. Rahul Raina & Smt. Komal Raina

Brother & Sister-in-law

Sh. Ravinder Raina & Smt. Reenu Raina

Smt. Neemi Maldhar & Sh. Taj Krishen Maldhar - Sister & Brother-in-law Smt. Anjali Matoo & Sh. Deepak Matoo - Sister & Brother-in-law

Smt. Dulari Peer (Wd of Late Sh. P.N. Peer) - Mother-in-law

Smt. Shoba Peer - Aunty Shri Rohit Peer & Preeti Peer - Brother-in-law & Sister-in-law

Smt. Ratni Bhat & Dr. T.K. Bhat - Sister-in-law & Brother-in-law

Smt. Paritosh Choudhary & Sh. Sunil Choudhary - Sister-in-law & Brother-in-law

Smt. Surekha Bhat & Sh. Vinod Bhat - Sister-in-law & Brother-in-law

9419131404, 9816132838, 6005637895

10TH DAY/ KRIYA/ UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow it is to inform the demise of Smt. Krishna Khajuria wife of Sh. K.K Khajuria, (Govt Contractor & Social Activist). **10TH DAY** ceremony will be held at our residence Pakki Dhakki on 22nd February from 11 am to 12 pm. KRIYA will be held at our residence Pakki Dhakki on 23rd February at 12pm.

UTHALA on 23rd February from 4 pm to 5 pm at Trikuta Bhawan, near Home for Aged a Infirm (Amphalla)

GRIEF STRICKEN:

Sh. K.K Khajuria (Husband) Sh. O.P Sharma (Journalist) (Brother) Daughters and Sons-in-Law

Mrs. Rachna Mandotra & Brig. Prem Mandotra Mrs. Ritu Goswami & Shyam Goswami

Mrs. Rashmi Agarwal & Mr. Atul Agarwal **Sons and Daughters-in-Law** Mrs. Kamal Prabha wife of Late Sh. Vijay Sharma

Mr. Arun Sharma & Anuradha Sharma Mr. Raveesh Khajuria & Deepi Khajuria

Mr. Rajesh Khajuria & Kavita Sharma **Grand Children:** Shallu, Anshuman, Shilpa, Nannu,

Maj. Varun, Pritha, Pragati, Shourya Prathna, Radhika, Rachit, Raghav, Aadriti Great Grand Children: Dau, Aanya Ph. No. 9419186615, 9797301686

TENTH DAY/KRIA/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved Smt. Darshna Devi W/o Lt. Sh. Mohan Lal Sharma R/O 177-Old Janipur, Jammu on 15th February, 2024 (Thursday).

TENTH DAY will be performed at our residence on 23rd February 2024 (Friday) at 11:00 AM. KRIYA will be performed at our Residence on

24th February 2024 (Saturday). UTHALA will be performed at our residence on 26th February 2024 (Monday) at 04:00 PM -05:00 PM

GRIEF STRICKEN

Son & Daugher-In-Law Sh. Sukhdev Sharma & Smt. Meena Sharma Sh. Rajesh Kumar & Smt. Rita Sharma Daughter & Son-In-Law

Smt. Jyoti Sharma & Raman Bali



Smt. Krishna Khajuria

Smt. Darshna Devi

Grand Sons Sunandan, Vishesh, Abhishek, Apoorav & Aarav Contact: 9469087740 9797359062

SATSANG

In the memory of our dear brother Manjit Singh Bali S/o Late S. Balwant Singh Bal (Kanli Bagh Baramulla) who breathed his last on 15th February at Elora Guelgh Ontario Canada.

Satsang will be held at Gurdwara Digian Jammu Ashram to pay homage to the departed soul on Friday 23rd February 2024 from 3pm to 5pm.

Grief Stricken Brother and Bhabhi Jagjit Singh Bali and Ranjit Kour Bali (Kanli Bagh Baramulla) 9419027783, 8825078376



Manjit Singh Bali

Sh. Charan Dass Gupta (Malguria)

10TH DAY/KIRYA/UTHALA

ith profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of or loved **Sh. Charan Dass Gupta (Malguria)** S/o Sh. Achru Ram R/o Shak Vagar, Jammu who left us for heavenly abode on 11-02-2024. IOth Day will be performed on 20th February, 2024 (Tuesday) from 11:00 am o 12:00 noon at Samriti Bhawan Ram Mandir, Gurha Bakshi Nagar Jammi Girva will be performed on 23th February, 2024 (Friday) at 12:00 noon at ou Anya win be periorited on 23th February, 2024 (Finday) at 120 Historia Anya residence H.No. 193, Lane No. 7, Shakit Nagar, Jammu, Uthala will be performed on 23th February, 2024 (Friday) from 4:00 pm It 5:00 pm at Samiti Bhawan Ram Mandir, Gurha Bakshi Nagar Jammu. GRIEF STRICKEN:

Sons and Daughter-in-laws Sh. Sanjeev Kr. Gupta and Smt. Anu Radha Mahajan Sh. Chetan Gupta and Smt. Vandana Mahajan

Sh. Validaria Wariagari Brothers and Bhabhis Sh. Jia Lal Gupta and Smt. Tripta Gupta Sh. Bishan Dass Gupta and Smt. Sushma Gupta Sister and Brother-in-law mt. Jagmohini Gupta and Lt. Sh. Gajanand Gupta rother-in-laws and Sister-in-laws

h. Jagmohan Gupta and Lt. Smt. Sushila Rani r. C.D Gupta and Dr. Chanchal Gupta h. Vijay Gupta and Smt. Veena Gupta h.Surinder Gupta and Smt. Vijay Gupta Grand Children : Divam , Dhwani , Jaksh , Nivaan . Contact details: 7006240491 , 9037363853 , 9796496326 , 8979258929



10TH DAY KRIYA With profound grief and sorrow, inform the sad demise of our below Shri Kuldeep Singh Manhas (Retd Head Master) S/o Late Romal Sing Manhas of Paloura who left heavenly abode on 14-02-2024. 10th Day Kriya will be performed or 22-02-2024 at 11.00 am at their resi

13th Day/Uthala will be performed or 25-02-2024 at 12.00 Noon at their resi

Grief Stricken Smt. Kamla Devi- Wife Sh. Sooram Singh and Darshna Devi- Brother-in-Law & Sister Sh. Gurcharan Singh and Lt. Nirmala Devi- Brother-in-Law & Sister

Sh. Rajesh Jasrotia and Kusum Jasrotia- Son-in-Law & Daughter Sh. Chiketan Singh and Raj Lakshmi- Son-in-Law & Daughter Sh. Balbir Singh and Antima- Son-in-Law & Daughter Sh. Sachin Dev and Neha Manhas- Son & Daughter-in-Law And All Manhas Family Mob. No.: 9796653531, 7780984057, 7006066968

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved Sh. Dharam Pal (Employee of Education Department GHSS Shastri Nagar Jammu) S/o Late Sh. Chuni Lal. R/o H. No 460. Narwal Pain Satwari Airport Road, Jammu Cantt. Tenth day will be performed at our residence

on February 23rd 2024 at 11a.m. **GRIEF STRICKEN** Nisha (Wife) Bipasha Sanotra & Siya Sanotra (Daughters) & Sanotra Family

9797561337, 6005711011



Sh. Dharam Pal (Employee of Education Department GHSS Shastri Nagar

Chander Hans Sharma

UTHALA

We are deeply saddened to inform you of the passing of our beloved father Chander Hans Sharma on 12-02-2024. Uthala will be held on Friday, 23 February

2024. 4:00 - 5:00PM at Durga Mandir Lane No. 1, Lakkar Mandi Janipur, Jammu IN GRIEF:

Shakuntala Devi - Wife Gautam Sharma - Son Daughter & Son-in-law Shallu Sharma & Nitin Sharma Neha & Sumit - Daughter & Son-in-law

Satyaban Sharma - Brother +91 9596868550, +91 7051961534, +91 9596805905, +91 9797594657

TENTH DAY With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved Mother Smt. Pushpa Devi W/o Late Des Raj of village Mahal Shahan who left us for heavenly abod on 14-02-2024.

10th Day will be performed on 23-02-2024 (Friday) at 11.00 am at our residence at Village Mahal Shahan, Ramgarh Samba. GRIEF STRICKEN (Sons and Daughter in laws) Tilak Raj Basotra and Rita Devi Raj Kumar Basotra and Rani Dev Rattan Lal Basotra and Chanchala Devi Ravi Kumar Basotra and Sonia

(Daughter and Son in law) Rekha and Saniay

And all Basotra Family
Mob. 9469680011

Brother & Bhabhi



Sh. Rama Kant Gupta

(Advocate)

ADH-BARKHI

Adh-Barkhi of our beloved Sh. Rama Kant Gupta (Advocate) S/o Late Sh. Bal Krishan Mehta R/o Seri Bazar Bhadarwah will be performed on 23-02-2024 (Friday) at 12:00 PM at our residence Seri Bazar Bhaderwah.

DEEPLY MISSED BY: Shoba Gupta (Wife) Son & Daughter in Law Rakesh Mehta & Shipra Daughter's & Son in Law Annu Gupta Pooia & Arvind Gunta

C.K Gupta & Amita Gupta Grand Children: Suvaini, Aanya, Aarav, Rudransh Mob. No: 7006600876 / 9858006354 / 9419964342 / 9906068930

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Bal** Krishan S/o Late Sh. Laxman Dass R/o House No. 8, Panjtirthi, Jammu on 14-02-2024. TENTH DAY will be held at Rani Park Mandir or Friday 23-02-2024 from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM. GRIÉF STRICKEN



Sh. Bal Krishan

DISCLAIMER

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AC approves development of 7 New Industrial Estates

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22: Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, accorded administrative approval for the development of seven new Industrial Estates in the UT of J&K spread over 5290 kanals of land for an amount of Rs. 304.51

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor; Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor attended the meeting.

The estimated invest-

ment in these seven new Industrial Estates is Rs. 8700.16 Crores with employment potential of 28376 persons. These 7 new Industrial Estates are situated at Banderpora Budgam, Sempora Medicity, Srinagar, Bhagthali, Kathua, Samba, Karandi, Trenz, Shopian, Hariparigam Tral Pulwama and Khunmoh, Pantha Chowk Srinagar.

New Industrial Estate Banderpora Budgam involving 64 kanals of State Land shall be developed at an estimated cost of Rs. 22.74 crore by IRCON. The Project would attract investment to the extent of Rs. 78.12 Crore and generate 735 employments.

New Industrial Estate at Sempora Medicity, Srinagar involving 517 kanals of State land shall be developed at an estimated cost of Rs. 22.60 crore by IRCON. The Project would attract an investment of Rs.1825.45 Crore and has employment generation potential of around 11643 (approx.)

New Industrial Estate at Bhagthali, Kathua involving 2949 kanals of State Land shall be developed at an estimated cost of Rs 83.13 Crore by NBCC. The Project will attract investment of Rs.4599.89 crore and has employment potential of around 8278 (approx.) New Industrial Estate

at Karandi, Samba involving 460 kanals of State/Private land shall be developed at an estimated cost of Rs. 34.45 Crores by NBCC. The Project will attract investment of Rs.756.89 crore has employment potential of around 3965 (approx.).

The new Industrial Estate at Trenz, Shopian involving 500 kanals of State land shall be developed at an estimated cost of Rs. 68.06 crores by NBCC. The Project will attract investment of Rs.850 crore has employment potential of around 900

New Industrial Estate at Hariparigam Tral Pulwama involving of 200 kanals of land shall be developed at an estimated cost of Rs. 28.17 Crores by NBCC. The Project will attract investment of Rs.124.81 crore and has employment potential of around 2500 (approx.).

New Industrial Estate at Khunmoh, Pantha Chowk Srinagar involving 600 kanals of land shall be developed at an estimated cost of Rs. 45.36 Crores by IRCON. The Project will attract investment of Rs.465 crore and has employment potential of around 355 (approx.)

AC approves Start-up Policy 2024-27 for J&K

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22:: Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, approved J&K start-up policy 2024-27 in supersession to the Start-up Policy notified in the year 2018. The policy has the objective of setting up 2000 new Start-ups in Jammu & Kashmir in the next 5

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor; Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor attended the meeting.

The Government of Jammu &Kashmir will setup a Venture Capital Fund of Rs. 250 Crores and will infuse maximum of Rs. 25 Crores as an initial fund to this venture capital fund.

The venture capital fund so created shall invest primarily in recognized start-ups of Jammu & Kashmir. The Department shall work out detailed modalities for creation of venture fund and its usage in consultation with Finance Depart-

for the below mentioned work:

The department may also work out a mechanism to facilitate allotment of land to start-ups having good potential for growth. There is also a provision of one-time assistance as Seed Funding up to Rs.20 lakhs (4 equal instalments) to be provided to start-ups recognized by JKEDI which is nodal agency for start -ups. For seed funding there is capping of 25 start-ups per year which is a decision based upon available budget and desire to support a manageable number of start-ups effectively.

committed to establish 2000 start-ups in three years but by providing seed funding to a smaller number of carefully selected start-ups, the Government can prioritize quantity over quality for long term economic growth. This will also ensure that the resources are utilized efficiently. The budgetary support for implementation of Start-up Policy for a period of three years will be Rs. 39.60 Crores.

The Government is

In order to nurture and inspire entrepreneurial

Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir

Office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Mech. Division North Jammu

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No. 263 of 2023-24

For and on behalf of Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Jammu, Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Mech.

Estimated

19,10,000/

Cost of

document/

tender fee

(in ₹)

500/

Earnest

in the

shape of

Division North Jammu, invites tenders by e-tendering mode from the reputed/registered firms/Sole Prop

ing a vibrant and robust start-up eco-system in the UT. The Government felt that there is a need to re-furbish the existing start-up policy issued in the year 2018 and bring new policy suited to meet model challenges in this sector in the UT of J&K.

The feedback received from various stakeholder consultations by Industries and Commerce Department, need was felt to strengthen the incubation and acceleration eco-system for start-ups which has been addressed in the current policy.

The implementation of this scheme in UT shall be monitored by a High Powered Committee headed by Chief Secretary and implemented by a Task Force Committee headed by Administrative Secretary, Industries & Commerce.

The policy provides for providing entrepreneurship facilities to students, women and support to the entrepreneurs through Government/ Private/ High Net worth individuals for setting up of start-ups.

e-mail: xennorth@gmail.com

of Rates

validity

180

Modi government failed to empower **OBCs**, Dalits: Rajesh Gupta

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22: Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) J&K UT general secretary Rajesh Gupta and media head said that the class and caste divide in India was such that the Dalits and the backward have no one to represent them in the media or big industries, nor in the bureaucracy.

The Narendra Modi government's UGC is now issuing a notification that reservation for SC, ST and OBC posts in universities should end.

The BJP is only busy in snatching the jobs of the youth, said Rajesh Gupta.

The BSP on Thursday alleged that there is a "conspiracy" to end res-

Top News Report

JAMMU. Feb 22:

Rakesh Mahajan,

Incharge of BJP All Cells

in Jammu & Kashmir, on

Thursday unveiled the

spiritual album titled

"Bani Guraa Di" in com-

memoration of Guru

The official release of

the album took place

during a grand event

Sahil Mahajan, co

The album, "Bani

Guraa Di," is a soul-stir-

ring compilation of reli-

gious Bhajans, brought

to life by the talented

With their exceptional

Athwal Brothers.

convenor BJP leader,

graced the occasion.

held in Jammu today.

Ravi Dass Jayanti.



ervation given to SCs, STs and OBCs for posts in higher education institutions, and claimed that the Modi government is only doing "politics of symbolism" with regard to Dalits, backward classes and

tribals BSP leader accused the BJP-led Centre of not creating enough jobs for the Dalits and other backward classes, which constitute "90% of the population," and

Rakesh Mahajan unveils Atwal Brothers'

singing and composing

skills, the Athwal Broth-

ers have infused the

essence of devotion

into each track, creating

a spiritually enriching

experience for listeners.

The music for "Bani

Guraa Di" has been

masterfully crafted

by Chandan Jassu,

lyrics penned by Rajan

Athwal, evoke a sense

of divine connection

and admiration for Guru

The album features

captivating visuals

directed by KK Mal-

hotra, ingeniously

enhancing the visual

storytelling experience

The release of "Bani

Guraa Di" under the

for the audience.

Ravi Dass Ji.

religious Bhajan 'Bani Guraa Di'

discriminating against them in his second term.'

"What kind of government is this where ... Backward classes, Dalits, tribals and minorities, who constitute about 90% of the total population, cannot get jobs," Gupta said.

"Fifty per cent of the population in the country belongs to backward classes, 15% are Dalits, 8% are tribals and 15% are minorities. Shout as much as you want but you can't get employment in this country. If you belong to backward, Dalit, tribal or poor general category then you cannot get a job. Modi govt does not want you people to get

jobs," Gupta said.

label of Athwal Broth-

ers Music presented a

milestone in the spiritual

music genre, represent-

ing a harmonious blend

of music, lyrics, and

visuals, all dedicated to

paving homage to the

teachings of Guru Ravi

Rakesh Mahajan con-

gratulated the whole

team for producing this

Rakesh provided an

in-depth exploration of

the life history of Guru

Ravi Dass ji, delving into

his early years, upbring-

ing, spiritual journey,

teachings, contributions

to society, and lasting

He appealed to them

to seize the advan-

tages provided by the

schemes initiated by

the Modi Government.

Encouraging self-

sufficiency and entre-

preneurship, he called

upon young individu-

als to chart their own

path by establishing

their startups instead

of solely relying on gov-

ernment jobs.

impact on followers.

marvelous album.

Dass Ji.

Manjit Singh condoles demise of Vipul Bali's father-in-law

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22: Apni Party Provincial President, and Former Minister, Manjit Singh has grieved over the passing away of Ravi Sharma, father-in-law of Party's Provincial President of Youth Wing, Vipul Bali.

"I express my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members, especially Vipul

Bali, whose father-inlaw passed away," said Manjit Singh in his condolence message.

He prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul and courage to the bereaved family members to bear this irreparable loss.

Meanwhile, other leaders in the Party have expressed their solidarity with Vipul Bali while condoling the demise of his father-inlaw's untimely demise.

Maroof Khan urges action in response to Snow Avalanche in Gulmarg

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Feb 22:

As news of this dev-

urgency of the situation. Maroof Khan urges the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF). National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), and the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) military and security personnel to mobilize all available resources for the swift and efficient rescue

Furthermore, Maroof Khan appeals to the Lieutenant Governor



of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoi Sinha, and the local administration to provide necessary assistance and aid to those affected by the avalanche. It is imperative that comprehensive support is extended to both the trapped tourists and the surrounding community during this challenging time.

Maroof Khan extended heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of the deceased and stands in solidarity with all those impacted by this natural disaster. Our thoughts are with the affected individuals, and we remain committed to supporting efforts to mitigate the aftermath of this tragic event.

Maroof Khan, Prominent Political Figure. expresses deep sorrow and concern over the recent snow avalanche incident in Gulmarg, Kashmir, which has tragically resulted in the trapping of tourists and reports of a fatal-

astating event unfolds, Maroof Khan calls for immediate action to ensure the safety and rescue of the victims, as well as the local community.

Recognizing the

operation.

Position of AAA: Accorded Position of TS: Sanctioned

Date of Publishing: 19-02-2024 (05.00 pm).

Design, fab., instt., testing & commissioning of LT control panels for unit no. 07, unit no. 02 and providing,

installation, testing and commissioning 500 KVA manua

voltage stabilizer of CPS Roop Nagar Stage-II. Design, fab.

instt., testing & commissioning of LT control panel of unit

03 of CPS Roop Nagar Stage-III for augmentation

nent of water supply to water deficit areas of

- 1. Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website http://jktenders.gov.in from 19-02-2024 (05.00 pm).
- 2. The Bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website http://iktenders.gov.in from 19-02-2024 (05.00 pm) to 26-02-2024 (02.00 pm).
- 3. The complete bidding process will be online http://jktenders.gov.in.
- 4. The Technical bids received shall be opened online on 27-02-2024 (02.00 pm) or any other subsequent date in the office of Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Division North Jammu.
- 5. The Financial bid of the bidders shall be opened online after scrutinizing the technical bid in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Mech. Division North Jammu in presence of the bidders who wish to attend. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
- 6. The bidder should make payment for cost of bidding document in shape of single window challan of JMC / online payment through the JMC website link http://www.jmcjammu.org/onlinepayment.html in the name of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Mech. Division North Jammu.
- 7. The original instruments in respect of cost of document, EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR and other relevant document of L1 bidder will be required to be submitted to the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Mech. Division North Jammu after opening of financial bids on line. No separate intimation about opening of financial bids will be sent by this office / by the tender opening authority. In case the original documents are not submitted by the L₁ bidder opening of financial bid, the tender will be cancelled and the bidder will not be allowed to participate in any further / future tendering process in the division for a period of one year.
- 8. The date and time of opening of financial bids will be notified on website http://jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address.
- 9. The original documents when submitted by L₁ bidder for the cost of tender documents, specified in the tender document should be same as uploaded on line (Scanned copies) otherwise allotment will not be issued, the tenders will be cancelled and the bidder will not be allowed to participate in any further / future tendering process in the division for a period of one year.
- 10. Bid security of successful tenderer will have to be in form of CDR/FDR of any scheduled bank and shall have to be valid for 180 days from last date of receipt of Bid. No exemption of any kind shall be
- 11. Only such firms should submit tender, who have requisite infrastructure and workshop facility for carrying out similar type of job which may be inspected by the competent authority before awarding the job contract so as to access the working capacity of the tenderer. The workmanship and material used should be of high quality and as per the specifications of the job order / tender.
- 12. The bid for the execution of work shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 180 days from the date of opening of 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
- 13. The tenderers are advised to visit the site of work / inspect the parts to be fabricated before uploading their tenders so as to acquaint themselves with exact measurement and site conditions.

14. Special conditions as per Finance Department order No. OM A/24 (2017)-651 dated 07-06-2018.

- Furnishing of hard copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained o nly from the bidder who is declared as L-1 after opening of The cost of tenders should be collected by introducing e-challan or simply uploading a copy of
- necessary challan / receipt.
- Similarly, instead of insisting on actual call deposit receipt, a copy of same duly pledged to the concerned department should be uploaded by the tenderers. However, before allotting the work or issuing the supply order, the original CDR/FDR should be obtained and kept on record.
- 15. Other details, instructions and terms and conditions can be seen / downloaded from the bidding

JSMDNJ/5181-83 Dated: 19-02-2024 DIP/J-15261/23

Sd/-**Executive Engineer** Jal Shakti Mech. Division North

Successful Rescue Operation in Gulmarg after Avalanche Strikes Army Ridge avalanche site is located far from

Top News Report

GULMARG, Feb 22: A collaborative effort between the Gulmarg Ski Patrol of Tourism Department, J&K and J&K Police resulted in the successful rescue of a group comprising six Russian skiers and one local guide following an avalanche at

the higher reaches of Gulmarg, known as Army Ridge.

Despite the valiant efforts of the rescue team, one Russian skier tragically lost his life due to the avalanche. Our thoughts and condolences are with the family and friends of the deceased

during this difficult time. It is important to note that the the Kongdoori area, where the 4th Khelo India Winter Games are currently underway. The ongoing sporting events remain unaffected by the incident.

The rescued individuals are currently under the care of the district administration, receiving basic medical treatment.

One skier sustained minor injuries but is in stable condition and is receiving treatment at a local hospital. The response and coordinated efforts of the rescue team, ski patrol, and police played a vital role in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of those affected by this unfortunate incident.

EDITORIAL

LISTEN TO FOOD PROVIDER

elpless is exposing the helplessness of the food provider who feeds the entire world and plays an important role in maintaining human life but sometimes due to weather and sometimes due to lack of finance, he dies under the burden of debt. Irrespective of the scorching sun and bitter cold, the farmer is engaged day and night in growing gold from the soil, but this gold is sometimes looted by the middleman of some market and sometimes by some contractor and ultimately the political parties use them to their vote bank with weapons like farm loan waiver. Become a part of.

At first glance, farm loan waiver appears to be beneficial to the farmers, but it is like alms given to a beggar which may provide relief for some time but after some time, he has to helplessly extend his hands to the people. Farm loan waiver comes into limelight as the general elections approach. Politicians make their living under the guise of this and collect votes in their favor by holding the promise of loan waiver in the hands of farmers.

This loan waiver system, which started during the time of Honorable V.P. Singh, has today become a scourge for the farmers and India itself. Since agriculture is essentially a state subject and states are already short of finances, the resulting loan waiver devastates the economy of the states. Loan waiver not only weakens the states but also hollows out the entire country's economy from within. Many welfare schemes are not completed with the money spent on farm loan waiver; Construction related expenses are reduced; The country's fiscal deficit increases; The condition of banks immersed in NPA worsens due to which banks are unable to give loans to new entrepreneurs and as a result of reduction in production activities, the economic pace of the entire country slows down.

The far-reaching consequences of the economic recession lead to distrust in India's economy at the global level and a reduction in foreign investment, which leads to a situation of poverty in our economy. India is also given a poor credit rating by various credit rating agencies.

However, some positive results of agricultural loan waiver are also achieved, such as some farmers get freedom from debt and achieve a strong economic position by increasing the yield. Farmers can use the money left from this loan waiver to buy new technology for agriculture, strengthen their position by increasing production through the availability of high quality expensive grains, fertilizers, pesticides, etc. and can also ensure food security in the country. But this benefit is mainly limited to big farmers only.

Apart from the farmers, the government is also equally responsible for this situation. There is a lack of agriculture related infrastructure in the country. In India, which ranks second in the Hunger Index, a lot of food grains lie outside and rot due to lack of storage facilities. Due to lack of means of transportation, farmers are not able to deliver their produce from their fields to the market on time, due to which they do not get fair prices.

There are immense possibilities hidden in the agriculture sector, for this the cooperation of the government is needed. Kisan Credit Card, Soil Health Card, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Sampada Yojana are being run by the government but due to their not being implemented properly, the benefits received from them are negligible. Various studies show that only 6 farmers are able to avail the benefit of minimum support price.

Punjab's farmers the real Opposition to Modi, BJP

By: Parsa Venkateshwar Rao Jr

Tt is an embarrassing fact that there is no credible Opposi-**⊥**tion to the Narendra Modi government and the ruling BJP-NDA even after it has been in power for 10 years. There is no serious challenge from the political Opposition even after Mr Modi has been in office for a decade. The farmers from Punjab, who had protested in 2020-21 and forced the government to withdraw three controversial laws after a year-long agitation, are once again challenging the government in the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections. The farmers stand on their own, and no party is able to take up their cause. They have refused to be co-opted by the Opposition parties. Yet, they are no dummy Opposition.

The BJP-NDA government is in an embarrassing situation at a time when Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already declared victory even before the election dates are announced, and he is backed to the hilt by his Bharatiya Janata Party. But the farmers from Punjab have shown that it possible to put the undisputed leader of the country in the dock. There is the possibility of cynics saying that the farmers are putting up a weak opposition to the Modi government because when it comes to voting, they are not willing to vote against Mr Modi and the BJP. This could be clearly seen in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections of 2022, when the discontented farmers of western Uttar Pradesh meekly voted for the BJP. The government, in a tactical retreat, had withdrawn the three farm bills in November 2021,

in the run-up to the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections. In Punjab, the vote went for the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), but the BJP was not a player to reckon with in the state.

How will the "Delhi Chalo" agitation of the farmers play out this time? Will the Modi government strike a compromise with the agitating farmers to ensure victory in the elections? The farmers' protest is now confined to Punjab. The Haryana and western UP farmers said they are watching the situation, and they would take a decision on joining the protests. That will make the situation embarrassing for the Prime Minister and the BJP. The much-vaunted Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana, which guarantees Rs 6,000 per year, the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, the two major schemes for the farming sector, have failed to protect the government from the farmers' protests. It only shows that the cosmetic welfare measures have not helped the

farmers much. The other question that crops up is whether the demands of the Punjab farmers, who are considered to be the agricultural elite of the country because of their record foodgrain output, are born out of a pressing grievance or is it a political show of farmers' power. Farmers from other parts of the country are comparatively poor, and they have enough reasons to demand things from the government, but they remain quiet, and they even vote for Mr Modi and the BJP. The government's claim that it has done more than enough for farmers through various welfare measures, apart from the Minimum Support Price (MSP) it offers, is as questionable as everything else that it claims to have done. It is not that the Punjab farmers are not beneficiaries of the Modi government's welfare measures. And it is not the case that they are so greedy that they want more of the goodies that the government is offering.

There is some logic to their demands, though it is not necessary to concede that government should accept all of them because there are limitations even for a party with a huge majority that the BJP has in the outgoing Lok Sabha. The negotiations between the farmers' leader and the government's ministerial team is on a collision course, with the farmers refusing the government's offer of ensuring MSP for five crops, including the three dals, tuwar or toor, urad, moong, maize and cotton. The farmers' representative bodies, the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KSM), are not willing to compromise on their demand for a legally guaranteed MSP for 23 crops.

Both the experts and the government have argued that MSP cannot be guaranteed for all the 23 crops because it would mean the government would have to allocate Rs 11 lakh crores for MSP alone. The SKM has argued that legally guaranteed MSP does not mean that the government will have to procure them, but that this ensure that private sector players who buy the foodgrains in the market cannot buy it at a cheaper price than the prescribed MSP. It is a reasonable claim, but the private sector buyers of foodgrains do not find it attractive to pay the MSP.

How will the Narendra Modi government wriggle its way out this time? In 2021, all that needed to be done was to withdraw the three farm bills. This time around there is no buffer. The government will have to accept the farmers' demands or persuade them to back off. The farmers are not willing to step back. The farmers can spoil the party for the Prime Minister and the BJP because they have already proclaimed their victory even before the elections date is announced.

The farmers have managed to keep all political parties out of the protests. The BJP cannot claim that the Opposition is playing with the lives and livelihoods of the farmers for political gain. There is no political factor in the collision between the farmers and the government. Will the farmers vote against the BJP in the Lok Sabha elections if there is no resolution of the issues that have been raised. The government is indeed in a tight corner. They cannot agree to the farmers' demands, nor can they turn their back on them.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is acutely aware of the threat the protests pose to his image. Will he manage to come up with a magic formula that would satisfy the farmers and without the government giving away too much? This is a classical political tussle between two clearly-defined groups: the ruling party on one side and the farmers on another. If the farmers consolidate as a bloc that is arrayed against the government, it should indirectly help the Opposition parties. When there has been a general lament that that there is no real opposition to the government, the farmers have now walked into that vacant space.

Rail officers are preferred for CVO roles in public sector

By: Dilip Cherian

ased on recent trends and data, it appears Let that when it comes to appointing chief vigilance officers (CVOs) in Central PSUs, ministries, and departments, the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has a clear preference for officers from the Indian Railways Service cadre. Recently, the Centre gave the green light to the appointment of more than a dozen officers to these positions, and notably, a significant portion of them hail from the Indian Railways Service. Sources informed DKB that four CVOs belong to the ITS, IRS, IT, IP&TA&FS, and IoFS, and the rest are from the Indian Railway Service. This trend isn't surprising, as

insiders have often suggested that railway officers possess a unique advantage due to their extensive experience in managing complex, capital-intensive projects across diverse terrains and climatic zones. While certainly officers from various other cadres, including the IPS, IFoS, ITS, and IRS, play equally important roles as CVOs, it is quite evident that those from the Indian Railways Service cadre hold a distinct edge. Interestingly, the data suggests that IAS officers are less preferred for CVO posts, or vice versa.

Meanwhile, A.S. Rajeev,

managing director of the Bank of Maharashtra, was selected for the post of Vigilance Commissioner (VC) by a committee led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Consumer watchdog aims IAS coaching ads

The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), the regulatory authority of the consumer affairs ministry, just put a stop sign in front of IAS coaching centres' runaway hype trains! The consumer watchdog has issued notices to several IAS coaching institutes for misleading advertisements. These institutes for civil services examinations will not be allowed to use the personal details of toppers in their advertisements without their consent. The CCPA has introduced draft guidelines to rein in the advertising tactics of coaching institutes.

Sources have informed DKB that CCPA chief commissioner Nidhi Khare explained that guidelines have been issued following the constitution of a committee to oversee the misleading advertisements by IAS coaching institutes in December 2023 and a stakeholder consultation by CCPA on misleading advertisements last month.

We've often seen ads boasting about 100 per cent selection rates or showcasing only the most exceptional success stories. The magnitude of inflated claims by institutes is huge considering that while 933 candidates were selected in UPSC 2022, ads from just 10 coaching centres claimed that more than 3,300 of their "alumni" were selected!

These rules will require coaching centres to be transparent about their students' achievements, including providing details like their names, ranks, and course durations. By holding coaching institutes accountable, the CCPA is slapping a reality check on those flashy, misleading ads, giving future IAS aspirants a fair shot without all the smoke and mirrors.

Prodded by SC, MHA pushes states on DGP appointments
The ministry of home affairs (MHA) has directed states to adhere to the directives set out by the Supreme Court on the appointment of officiating directors general of police (DGPs), despite the availability of eligible officers.

Recently, Union home secretary Ajay K. Bhalla wrote to the chief secretaries of seven states — Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Odisha, and West Bengal — underscoring the imperative to align with the Supreme Court's directives, particularly in light of the prevalent practice of installing interim state police chiefs. Punjab received

MHA's notice regarding this matter earlier, concerning Gaurav Yadav, while Uttar Pradesh saw its fourth successive officiating DGP within a mere 20 months, Prashant Kumar, appointed last month. Mr Bhalla has urged the "defaulting" states to follow the apex court's orders to ensure that DGPs get a tenure of a minimum of two years in the post. These directives apply solely to states, exempting union territories such as Jammu & Kashmir.

This trend of temporary DGPs in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, UP, and Punjab, some serving for more than a year, was frowned upon by the Supreme Court in the Prakash Singh case. It not only undermines the stability and effectiveness of law enforcement agencies but also raises questions regarding transparency and accountability in governance.

Last year, the Bhagwant Mann government in Punjab moved to amend the Punjab Police Act to empower it to appoint a DGP of its choice. According to Supreme Court guidelines, state governments are supposed to send a panel of eligible officers to the UPSC, which will shortlist three officers from the panel, and the state government will then choose one from the panel.

45 Students from HSS Sananghat, HS Jankhar, HS Plakh embark on Educational Study Visit

Top News Report

BASOHLI, Feb 22: A total of 45 students from Higher Secondary Schools (HSS) Sananghat, HS Jankhar, and HS Plakh participated in an educational study visit organized by the Zonal Education Office, Basohli, under the Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan (RAK) initiative of SAMAGRA. The visit aimed to broaden the students' perspectives and expose them to diverse learning experiences beyond the classroom.

Warm Welcome and Insights into RAK:

Upon arrival, the students were warmly welcomed by Zonal Education Officer, Basohli, Lalit Sharma, and his



staff members.

Sharma briefed the students about the significance of RAK and its role in fostering scientific temperament and innovation among young minds.

Engaging Interaction at DIET Basohli:

The first stop on the itinerary was DIET Basohli, the premier institution for training government teachers in the district. The stu-

dents had an enriching interaction with Principal Roshan Lal and senior faculty members, gaining valuable insights into the teacher training process and the crucial role of DIETs in shaping the

Next, the students embarked on a fascinating journey to Mini Goa Purthu and Atal Setu Basohli. At Mini Goa Purthu, they marveled at the breathtaking natu-

future of education.

ral beauty, while Atal Setu, a magnificent bridge, provided a

glimpse into the marvels

of modern engineering.
These visits sparked the students' curiosity about science, technology, and their applications in real-world sce-

Immersion in the Artistic Heritage of Basohli.
The study visit concluded with a visit to the Vishawsthali Paint-

ing Centre, Basohli, renowned for its traditional miniature paintings. The students interacted with artists, learned about the

rich artistic heritage of the region, and witnessed the intricate techniques involved in creating these exquisite masterpieces.

The study visit proved

to be a highly enriching experience for the students, igniting their curiosity, broadening their knowledge base, and fostering a deeper appreciation for various fields of learning. The Zonal Education Office, Basohli, remains committed to organizing such initiatives that empower students and nurture their holistic development.

Raj Sharma demands revamp of developmental activities in Bajalta

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22: Apni Party Provincial President, Trade Union, Raj Sharma has demanded revamp of the developmental activities in Bajalta following a public meeting.

As per the press release, the meeting was held to discuss developmental issues, and review the present situation of the colonies of the Schedule Caste community.

During the interaction with the people, Raj Sharma held detailed deliberation with the people, and interacted with the people for four hours in which they informed him about the worsening condition of development.

Speaking on the occasion, Raj Sharma



expressed his concern over the poor pace of development in the rural area even as the Central Govt has provided ample funds for the same.

He criticized the concerned department for ignoring the developmental works at the village level.

He demanded that revamp of the developmental works in Bajalta especially where the lanes, drain, and roads are yet to be developed and made motorable. He however assured all possible support to the people.

Punjabi actors Prince, Yograj to perform in Aryans Campus on Feb 26



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22: The starcast of upcoming Punjabi Movie "Boo Main Dargi" will visit Aryans Group of Colleges, Rajpura on 26th February (Monday) over a meet and greet session and will also perfom.

The movie is directed by Manjeet Singh Tony. and will feature Roshan Prince, Isha Rikhi, Karamjit Anmol and Yograj Singh as lead characters. It is a horror comedy movie in which there is a ghost in the mansion on one side and the whole village on the other side and in that village Pali and Shinda who love each other very much. How the villagers eventually drive away the ghosts and how Shinda and Pali become one is well portrayed in the film.

Dogri Sanstha Jammu celebrates International Mother Tongue Day



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22: In connection with International Mother Tongue Day, a Dogri song competition was organized at Shakti Shiksha Kendra Higher Secondary School, Marh by Dogri Sanstha Jammu in collaboration with Dogri Sahitya Sabha, Marh.

The students of the school participated enthusiastically in this competition in which

Krishna Kumar bagged first, Bharti Moton second and Geetika Sharma third prize. The winners were presented cash and Dogri books and the remaining participants were also presented Dogri books.

The program was presided over by Prof. Lalit Magotra, President, Dogri Sanstha Jammu whereas Dr. Rakesh Kaul, Principal, Government Degree College, Marh was the Chief

Guest and Inderjit Kesar, Vice President, Dogri Sanstha Jammu was the special guest on the ocassion.

The function was attended by galaxy of literature lovers including Puran Chandra Sharma, President Dogri Sahitya Sabha Madh, Lalchand Gandotra, Sushil Begana, Dr. Sheetal Sharma, Karuneshwar Gandotra, Principal, Shakti Shiksha Kendra Higher Second-

ary School, Madh and others.

Dr. Rakesh Kaul while addressing the gathering elaborated about the importance of mother tongue and Prof. Lalit Magotra, who presided over the function inspired the children to speak in Dogri language and read as much Dogri literature as possible.

The program was conducted by Pawan Verma and vote of thanks was presented by Puran Chandra Sharma.

Stroke helpline number launched



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22: Ivy Hospital, Amritsar launched a stroke helpline number 9988749494 today.

Speaking during the occasion, Dr. Yanish Bhanot senior neurosurgeon said that stroke is emerging as the new epidemic worldwide with 1.5 to 2.0 million new stroke cases being reported across the globe every year.

The actual numbers are bound to be higher, as many of these patients never reach health care facilities. Everyday around 3000-4000 stroke happen in India and not more than 2-3% are treated, he pointed out.

Dr. Sarabjit Singh neurologist said," Worldwide incidence rate of stroke in 60-100 cases per 100,000 population per year, whereas in India it is close to 145-145 cases per 100,000/year. India accounts for 60 % of all stroke patients globally."

The reason for increased incidence in India is lack of awareness about the disease per se and the methods of prevention, asserted another neurologist Dr. Jagbir Singh.

GDC Udhampur celebrates International Mother language Day



Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Feb 22: To promote the greater use of mother tongue, Department of Dogri in collaboration with Department of Urdu observed February 21st as International Mother Language Day also known as Matribhasha Diwas under the patronage of Principal Prof. (Dr.) Romesh Kumar Gupta. Dr. Anju Rani, HOD Dogri and Prof. Sanjeev Kumar, HOD Urdu organized the event under the theme "Multilingual Education- A Pillar of Learning and Intergenerational Learning".

Multilingualism is a significant aspect of education in India and plays a role in preserving and promoting regional languages and cultures. With the implementation of the National Educa-

tion Policy (NEP) and recent initiatives like the three language policy highlight the value of employing the mother tongue in the teaching-learning process and developing educational resources.

While addressing the students and faculty members, Principal Prof. (Dr.) Romesh Kumar Gupta stressed on the need for making collective efforts to preserve and promote our mother tongue.

He highlighted the need for Multilingualism in education to provide students with an inclusive and effective learning environment.

Dr. Anju Rani, HOD Dogri emphasized the need to promote Dogri language because it is not just the means of communication but it is also the repository of Dogra culture and heritage. She further

highlighted the efforts of promotion and preservation of Dogri language.

Dr. Rafia Akhter, faculty in department of Urdu exhorted the significance of Urdu language as a symbol of unity and its role in fostering national integration and harmony in India.

Around 50 students attended the event and 10 students expressed their opinions on relevance of Dogri and Urdu language. The entire proceedings of the event was conducted by Prof. Anoksha Sharma, HOD Sociology.

The programme conveyed the message of My Language, My Pride. The event was graced by Prof. Rajni Kumari, Prof. Shivi Mehra, Dr. Sumit Rana, Dr. Pinky Rakwal, Dr. Kuljeet Singh, Dr. Nishi Slathia and Pratibha Heer.

Ganesh Sharma awarded "International Michael Angelo Award"

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22: Ganesh Kumar Sharma, Senior Internationally recognized Sculptor of Jammu and Kashmir UT, has been awarded "International Michael Angelo Award" by Art and Literature



International Diamond Academy, Hungary.

Ganesh Sharma received this International award for his creation "Ganesha Sculpture" made in green textured granite stone.

Ganesh Sharma's sculpture selected amongst the worldwide received entries from the eminent senior contemporary artists.

The Art and Literature International Diamond Academy, Hungary, organized International competition and invited entries of all kinds of art from eminent senior artists across the globe.

The prestigious "Michael Angelo International Award" contains Citation, International Certificate, Gold - Medal, and Trophy, presented virtually by President of the Academy, Maria Lipták, Ambassador Dr. Issam Qarni Kamel, on 20th February 2024.

It is mentioned here that the prestigious International art and literature Diamond Academy is officially Internationally Accredited, is organizing regularly International events of art, culture and literature.

Ganesh Kumar Sharma, presently residing at Hiranagar has been dedicated to art and culture from more than forty five years, and his many creations are in permanent collections in galleries of government as well as private galleries in India and abroad.

Five days crash course on new criminal law commences at PTTI Vijaypur



Top News Report

VIJAYPUR, Feb 22: A five days Crash Course on new Criminal Laws-2023 commenced at PTTI Vijaypur in which 50 Police personnel including SHOs, Incharge Police Posts and Investigating Officers of various units of Jammu-Kathua-Samba Range are participating. The course is being organized on the directions of J&K Police Headquarters with an objective to familiarize the Police personnel with the key provisions of new Criminal Laws-2023 recently promulgated by the Central Govt. so that these Laws are implemented on ground in letter and spirit.

The course was formally inaugurated by Shri Dushyant Sharma, SSP who in his inaugural address, briefed the participating officers/officials and emphasized upon them to gain knowledge of all the three new Criminal Laws viz. Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita-2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita-2023 and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam-2023 for their proper use on ground after implementation of these Laws

Pawan Khajuria, Retd. Joint Director Prosecution was also invited as guest speaker on the occasion who delivered an impressive lecture to the trainees focusing on understanding the New Criminal Laws to address the contemporary challenges in law enforcement.

Among others, Khushwant Singh Dy.SP (Admn.), Surrinder Paul, Dy.SP (Indoor/Tech.), Ch. Asif Iqbal, Sr.PO and Course Coordinator of the Course, Ram Lal (CLI), Inspr. Surinder Singh (CDI), Inspr. Mulkh Raj were present on the occasion.

The 71st Miss World pageant gets rolling

The Indian Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) and the Ministry of Tourism collaborated to organise a grand inaugural dinner, marking the commencement of the 71st edition of the esteemed Miss World pageant, 'Beauty With A Purpose', in India.

The event unfolded at The Ashok, New Delhi, on the evening of Tuesday, welcoming the Miss World Organisation and its distinguished entourage. A total of 117 contestants, representing nations worldwide, graced the occasion in their traditional attire, showcasing a vibrant tapestry of cultures and



customs.

The evening radiated with positivity, beauty,

and empowerment, as

distinguished personalities from various sectors joined in extending a warm Indian welcome to

the global ambassadors of grace and charm. Julia Morley, chairman and CEO of the Miss World Organisation, expressed profound gratitude for the gracious reception in India, emphasising the organisation's commitment to empowering women globally.

She said, "We feel incredibly honoured by the enthusiastic and warm welcome extended to us in India. As we embark on this journey, we are deeply touched by the hospitality and spirit of camaraderie displayed by the Indian people. We are looking forward to joining in the festivities and contributing to the meaningful initiatives aimed at empowering women across the globe.'

Vidya Balan files FIR against unknown person for creating fake Instagram account in her name



Vidya Balan had lodged an FIR against an unknown person with the Mumbai police for creating a fake Instagram account in her name and asking for money from people. According to Mumbai police, an unknown person who created an identical Instagram ID asked people for money by assuring them of jobs. Khar Police has registered an FIR under Section 66 (C) of IT.

The police further said that he was asking people for money by assuring them of jobs.

Shah Rukh Khan, Nayanthara win Best Actor' and Best Actress award at Dadasaheb Phalke Awards 2024

It's a special night for superstar Shah Rukh Khan as he won an award in the Best Actor category at Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards (DPIFF) 2024. SRK was honoured for his performance in Atlee's directorial Jawan.

In an acceptance speech, he quipped, "Shukriya sari jury member ka jinhone mujhko best actor ke liye layak samjha aur bhaut saal ho gaye mujhe best actor ka award nahin mila toh aisa lagne laga tha ki ab milega hi nahin.

Mujhe bhaut khushi hai. Mujhe awards bhaut ache lagte hai ...main thoda laalchi hu, greedy hu. (I thank jury who considered me worthy of the Best Actor award. I have not received the Best Actor Award in a long time.

It seemed as if I would not get it again...So I am extremely happy. I like awards. I am a bit greedy). Nayanthara bagged the Best Actress award for her performance in Jawan."



My father is an extreme, neither drinks nor smokes: Sonam Kapoor

Actor Sonam Kapoor describes her father and actor Anil Kapoor as an "extreme one" who doesn't smoke and drink, and her mother a "health conscious" woman who keeps him in check — especially when he feels like indulging himself.

Attributing her father's youth to his "Peshawari genes", Sonam, speaking here at the launch of Dr Shiv K Sarin's book, "Own Your Body: A Doctor's Life-saving Tips" by Bloomsbury India, explained the lifestyle of the three Kapoor brothers — Anil, Boney, and Sanjay.

"My father is an



extreme, he doesn't drink, smoke or do anything.

Boney chachu loves the good life, he loves to eat, occasionally he likes to drink, and Sanjay chachu is a moderate one, in between. But they all are goodlooking healthy men," said Sonam.

Here, the 38-year-old also gave the example of film producer and her grandfather Surinder Kapoor, who "besides his white hair", looked the same till the time he passed away in 2011.

However, Kapoor credited her mother, who has been "very health conscious" from the

very beginning, for her father's youthfulness in his 60s.

"Honestly, since I remember my mom started the first personal training gym in Mumbai. This was many many years ago.."

"So it is my mother who has been very very healthy from the very beginning..very health conscious..my dad would love to indulge sometimes but my mother kind of controls him like a very good Indian wife," she added.

The book launch was also attended by Sonam's husband Anand Ahuja and fatherin-law Harish Ahuja.

Mumbai influencer Sakshi Shivdasani trolled for calling vada pav 'trash'



An unfiltered opinion of Mumbai influencer Sakshi Shivdasani on

vada pav during a show 'Having Said That', initiated a heated debate

among netizens. The video is doing the rounds on the internet wherein Shivdasani can be heard saying, "I think Vada Pav is trash. Like I hate Vada Pav from the bottom of my heart! It's just nostalgia. There's no way you think boiled potatoes and bread make sense."

While a segment of viewers agreed with her, the other trolled her for her South Bombay accent.

Among the mixed responses received from viewers, one was, "Some people physically live in India but in their mind they think they're living in the US and they act like this too." Another user said, "I so agree with her last point. Chutney is bae."

The beloved street food of Mumbai and an 'iconic snack' probably deserved a little more respect from a Mumbai-kar.

Rakul Preet Singh, Jackky Bhagnani tie the knot in intimate Sikh wedding ceremony



Rakul Preet Singh and Jackky Bhagnani, who have been dating each other for a long time, tied the knot on Wednesday in a traditional Sikh wedding ceremony called the anand karaj.

The wedding was attended by the couple's family members and close friends in Goa. From Shilpa Shetty to Arjun Kapoor, Varun Dhawan and Esha Deol, who's who of Bollywood marked their presence at the ceremony to bless the couple on embarking on their new journey.

Sushant Singh Rajput death case: Bombay High Court quashes LOCs issued against Rhea Chakraborty

The Bombay High Court on Thursday quashed the Look Out Circulars (LOCs) issued against Rhea Chakraborty, her brother and father by the CBI in connection with its probe into the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

A division bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Manjusha Deshpande allowed the petitions filed by Rhea Chakraborty, her brother Showik and their father Indrajit against the LOCs issued against them in 2020.

CBI's advocate Shreeram Shirsat requested the bench to stay the operation of its order for a period of four weeks so that the agency could file an appeal in the Supreme Court.

The HC bench, however, refused to stay its order.

Rajput was found dead in his apartment in suburban Bandra on June 14, 2020.



While the Mumbai police registered an Accidental Death Report and started a probe into the case, Rajput's father in July 2020 lodged a complaint with the Bihar police, alleging that the actor's girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty and her family members had

abetted his suicide.

The case was later transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) which has since then been carrying out a probe into it.

The LOCs were issued in August 2020 against Rhea Chakraborty, her brother and their father.

Nimrat Kaur on learning Kathak: Love the feeling of being a student

Nimrat Kaur will share screen space with Amitabh Bachchan in her next film Sec-

According to actor Nimrat Kaur, an actor can never orchestrate a perfect timing for anything in their career, "because everything depends on where the tide and the winds take you," she said.

In a candid chat, Kaur looked back at her trajectory, asserting how she loves dabbling across genres, be it in India or abroad. "Homeland (2014) happened right after The Lunchbox (2013). That's what came my way and there was no question about doing or not doing it. When you're ready for something, it falls in your lap," the 41-year-old said upon being asked about going international with Homeland.

Kaur is currently on a different route all together. She's honing her Kathak talent. She feels while an Indian art form gives you dedication and discipline, Kathak is something she always wanted to learn since her childhood. "I did a little bit of it in school. I made a resolution this year. So why wait? I'm now learning it under the guidance of Pt Rajendra Chaturvedi. I love the feeling of being a student, of wearing Indian clothes. It's a lovely routine, so feminine and rich," Kaur shared.

And what about the hashtag "Bharat ki Nimrat" in her Instagram post? "I am a daughter of the soil but I have a life all over the world. When I go abroad for work, I feel there's a great amount of love and pride in representing our country. So sentimentally,



I find this hashtag very congruent with my sentiments," she explained.

With films like Sajini Shinde Ka Viral Video (2023), Dasvi (2022) and Airlift (2016), web series including The Test Case (2017) and School of Lies (2013) and international shows Wayward Pines (2016) and Foundation (2013) under her kitty, Kaur believes such variety opens up her exposure as an

"Nowadays with OTT and the expansion of content there, one gets to play with different roles. Even the next one that I am about to embark on is going to be something I've never attempted before, and I'm equally scared and excited for it."

But she refrained from divulging much details about her next film Section 84, also

starring Amitabh Bachchan. She did accept that "it's one of my most exciting and thrilling projects. Working with Mr. Bachchan is like a bucket list thing. I feel very fortunate to have been in close proximity working with him. Just saying that is surreal."

Lastly, we also reminded her that her fan favourite music video Tera Mera Pyar will clock 20 years in 2025. "I love that everybody still calls me the Tera Mera Pyar girl. It's absolutely charming and adorable even after almost two decades. People tag me in reels and different renditions of the song on Instagram. I would love to recreate it some time," she said with excitement.

She also added, "With Valentine's Day coming up, I feel like it's really the song that can totally be brought back."

Sugarcane price hike shows govt committed to fulfilling its pledge for farmers' welfare: PM Modi

The Cabinet meeting headed by Modi hiked the minimum price that mills have to pay to sugarcane growers by Rs 25 to Rs 340 per quintal for the 2024-25 season starting October.

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday underlined his government's commitment to fulfilling its pledge for the welfare of farmers, asserting that a "historic" hike in sugarcane's price is part of such efforts.

This will benefit crores of sugarcane farmers, he said in a series of posts on X, highlighting several decisions taken by the Union Cabinet on Wednesday.

The Cabinet meeting headed by Modi hiked the minimum price that mills have to pay to sugarcane growers by Rs 25 to Rs 340 per guintal for the 2024-25 season starting October.

An official statement had said after the decision, "The new FRP will ensure prosperity of



sugarcane farmers. It is noteworthy that India is already paying the highest price of sugarcane in the world and despite that the government is ensuring the world's cheapest sugar to domestic consumers.'

Reacting to other Cabinet decisions, he said the step taken by it relating to the National Livestock Mission will bring exciting opportunities for entrepreneurs alongside major boosts in fodder production and breed conservation.

The government on Wednesday modified the National Livestock Mission by including various activities and providing 50 per cent capital subsidy to individuals and organisations for establishing horse, donkey, mule, and camel entrepreneur-

The government on Wednesday also eased Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) norms in the space sector by allowing 100 per cent overseas investment in making components for satellites, as part of efforts to attract overseas players and private companies into the segment.

Lauding this, Modi said, "Charting new orbits for growth and innovation! Our government has updated the FDI policy in the space sector, paving the way for a galaxy of opportuni-

Make 'Amul' producer Gujarat **Cooperative Milk Marketing** Federation world's biggest dairy company, PM Modi tells stakeholders



AHMEDABAD. Feb 22 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday gave the target of making GCMMF, which owns Amul brand, the number one dairy company in the world from its current eighth position.

The PM was speaking at the golden jubilee celebration of the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), which markets its products under the brand 'Amul', at the Narendra Modi stadium

"While the global dairy sector is developing at 2 per cent per annum, India's dairy sector is developing at 6 per cent," Modi said.

"Today, Amul (GCMMF) is the eight largest dairy company in the world, your target

is to make it number one, the government will give all its support. This is Modi's guarantee," he

Addressing thousands of members of the cooperative dairy union who had come from all over the state. Modi said after India's independence many brands were created, but none of them is like 'Amul'.

Modi said the contribution of women is paramount in the development of the country's dairy cooperative move-

"India's dairy sector has seen women-led development...women are the backbone of the dairy sector," he said.

Enforcement Directorate issues fresh summons to Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal in excise policy case

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (Agencies): The **Enforcement Director**ate has issued fresh summons to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, asking him to appear before it on February 26 for questioning in the excise policy-linked money-laundering case, official sources said on Thursday.

The central agency, while issuing the seventh summons under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), has rejected his contention that a fresh notice for his attendance was wrong as the matter is sub judice before a local court.

Kejriwal has been asked to depose on February 26 and record his statement in the



excise policy-linked money-laundering case, sources said.

The ED had recently filed a fresh complaint against the 55-year-old national convenor of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for disobeving its summons in the case.

The court listed the matter for further hearing on March 16 as it exempted him from personal appearance last week.

The court also said that from the contents of the

complaint and the material placed on record (by the ED), prima facie offence under Section 174 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) is made out and there are sufficient grounds for proceeding against the accused (Kejriwal).

> The ED believes the local court has prima facie held Kejriwal guilty of "disobeying" the earlier notices issued to him in this case, warranting the seventh summons, official sources said.

Police will listen to each complaint in West Bengal's Sandeshkhali; strict action to follow if someone is found guilty: DGP

KOLKATA, Feb 22 (Agencies): West Bengal DGP Rajeev Kumar on Thursday said police would listen to the complaints of every individual in Sandeshkhali and strict action would be taken against those found guilty.

Kumar, who went to Sandeshkhali on Wednesday and stayed there overnight to assess the situation in the troubled areas in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, assured of strict action against those found involved in torturing women.

"I came here to talk to my officers. It's our responsibility to see the well-being of the people. We will listen to the complaints of every individual. If there is any incident



regarding land grabbing or anything else, we will take strict action against those found guilty. If people are found involved in torture, we will take appropriate action against them," Kumar told reporters at Dhamakhali on Thursday morning.

Kumar, in his first visit to the area since the protests began, held meetings with ADG

South Bengal Supratim Sarkar, Basirhat Police District SP Hasan Mehedi Rehman and other police officers and also visited adjoining islands of Situlia, Sardarpara and Manipur on Wednesday evening to understand the situation there.

A special team of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) constituted to investigate allegations of sexual violence and land grabbing will visit Sandeshkhali.

The NHRC has issued notices to West Bengal chief secretary BP Gopalika and DGP and sought reports regarding the incidents of violence in Sandeshkhali and details about the action taken against the perpetrators of crimes there within four weeks.

On Wednesday, police registered the second gang-rape case against the three of the prime accused -- Shajahan Sheikh, Uttam Sardar and Sibaprasad Hazra after a woman recorded her statement under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure before a magistrate, an official said.

The trio has been booked under Sections 376-D (gangrape), 342 (wrongfully confine any person) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC.

Sandeshkhali grabbed media attention after a mob attack on Enforcement Directorate officials on January 5. The officials went there to search the premises of TMC leader Shajahan Sheikh in connection with an alleged ration distribution scam.

The protesting women in Sandeshkhali alleged that Shajahan and his "gang", including Hazra and Sardar, captured swathes of land by force, besides sexually harassing them.

Normalisation of scores likely to be done away with for CUET-UG, exam rejig underway: UGC chief

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (Agencies): Normalisation of scores for the Common University Entrance Test (CUET)-UG is likely to be done away with this year with the National Testing Agency (NTA) planning a rejig of the crucial exam for its third edition, according to top officials.

The exam, which is spread over a month, is likely to be conducted in a shorter duration as the agency is contemplating a hybrid mode, including OMR sheets and a computer-based test. The move will also ensure that most of the

students get a chance to take the exam in a city of their choice.

"The NTA is working on the possibility of conducting papers with a large registration in the OMR mode. This will help us choose a large number of schools as test centres. This will ensure that the students will get a centre within their town or city and do not have to travel to faraway places," University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman M Jagadesh Kumar told agency.

"Adopting the pen-andpaper mode for subjects



with a large registration and a computer-based test for papers with a smaller registration will ensure that the CUET-UG can be conducted in a shorter duration unlike in the last two years. The hybrid mode promotes equal opportunities for all, ensuring that geo-

graphical constraints do not hinder the students' educational aspirations in rural and remote areas," Kumar said.

He said conducting the exam for a subject on a single day will eliminate the need for normalisation of scores

"For the last two years,

we had to conduct the test for the same paper over a period of two or three days in our endeavour to provide the first-choice centre to the students as much as possible.

But this year, by adopting the OMR mode, a large number of centres will be available at schools and colleges, enabling us to conduct the test across the countrv on the same day. If the test is conducted on multiple days for the same paper, normalisation is required and it is a scientific method," the UGC chairman said.

Russian national booked by Goa police for sexually assaulting minor girl from his country

PANAJI, Feb 22 (Agencies): A case has been registered against a Russian national for allegedly sexually assaulting a six-year-old girl, who also belongs to his country, in North Goa district, police said on Thursday.

The incident took place on the intervening night of February 4-5 when the victim, who is currently on a vacation in Goa with her parents, attended an overnight study camp organised by the accused at Arambol in North Goa.

She informed about it to her parents on Monday, as per a complaint filed by them with the Women and Child Protection Unit of Goa police.

The accused, identified as Ilia Vasulev, has been conducting such study camps in Goa, mostly for the children of foreign nationals, according to police. Superintendent of Police (Women and

Child Protection Unit) Bousette Silva told PTI that the accused "inappropriately touched the victim, which she narrated to her parents on Monday, much after the incident took place."

Following the complaint filed by the girl's parents on Monday, an FIR was registered against the accused under Indian Penal Code section 376 (rape). and provisions pertaining to sexual assault under the Goa Children's Act and the Protection Of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. he said.

"The police are on the lookout for the accused. We have written a letter to the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) to check his whereabouts and ascertain whether he is still in the country or has left for Russia," the official said. Silva said both the parents of the victim are Russians.

Driver suffers heart attack, rams Bolero into religious procession, 2 dead

JAIPUR, Feb 22 (Agencies): Two people were killed in Rajasthan's Nagaur district after a driver suffered a heart attack, during which he lost control of the vehicle and rammed into people who were undertaking a religious procession on a road.

The incident took place in Degana when a religious procession was being taken out by the people on the occasion of Vishwakarma Jayanti, which is being celebrated today.

In the CCTV, several people are seen walking on a road and some vehicles are plying on the stretch. The Bolero appears in the picture. One door of the Bolero is open, according to the CCTV.



As the driver suffers a heart attack, he loses control of the Bolero and rams into people participating in the religious procession before it stops, injuring several people.

Two people died while three others were referred to a hospital in Ajmer.

exam, fails 'salute test' AKOLA, Feb 22 (Agencies): In a surprising twist that could well fit the plot of a thriller, a

man in Maharashtra's Akola district resorted to an audacious method to help his sister cheat in her 12th standard examination.

The man, Anupam Madan Khandare (24), wore a real police uniform and pretended to be a cop to maintain security at the examination centre.

The incident occurred during the first test of the 12th standard examination at the Shahbabu Urdu High School in Patur town. Khandare, hailing from Pangra Bandi, morphed into a 'fake' policeman to smuggle in answer copies to help his sister

However, his ruse didn't continue for long. Police Inspector Kishore Shelke and his team arrived at the



examination centre to maintain security. Upon seeing his 'senior officers', Khandare saluted them

Man wears cop uniform to help sister cheat in

But his act raised suspicion among his 'seniors' as his salute did not conform to the protocol and the nameplate on his uniform was incorrect.

After a thorough investigation, the man's fraudulent act came to light when the police discovered a copy of an English test paper in his pocket.

Following this, the police arrested Khandare and filed a case against him under sections 417, 419, 170, 171 and Section 7 of the 1982 Act. He was then taken into custody.

Israel strikes Gaza's Rafah as truce talks underway

The Hamas-run health ministry said early Thursday that 99 people had been killed around Gaza during the night, most of them women, children and elderly people

PALESTINIAN TERRORI-TIES, Feb 22 (Agencies): Israel launched air strikes Thursday on southern Gaza's Rafah after threatening to send troops into the city, where around 1.4 million Palestinians have sought shelter from around the territory.

Global powers trying to navigate a way to end the Israel-Hamas war have so far come up short, but a US envoy was expected in Israel on Thursday to try to secure a truce deal.

International concern has spiralled over the high civilian death toll and dire humanitarian crisis in the war sparked by Hamas's October 7 attack against Israel.

More than four months of relentless fighting and air strikes have flattened much of the Hamas-run coastal territory, pushing its population of around 2.4 million to the brink of famine, according to the UN.

International concern has in recent weeks centred on Gaza's southernmost city of Rafah, where more than 1.4 million people forced to flee their homes elsewhere in the territory are now living in crowded shelters and makeshift tents.

The last city untouched by Israeli ground troops, Rafah also serves as the main entry point via neighbouring Egypt for desperately needed relief sup-

Israel has warned it will expand its ground operations into Rafah if Hamas does not free the remaining hostages held in Gaza by next month's start of the Muslim holy month Ramadan.

'My daughter

The war started when Hamas launched its attack on October 7, which resulted in the deaths of about 1,160 people in Israel, mostly civilians, according to an agency tally of official Israeli



'Possibility of progress'

Brett McGurk, the White House

coordinator for the Middle East

and North Africa, was expected

to arrive in Israel Thursday -- his

second stop in the region after

Egypt as part of US efforts to

advance a hostage deal and

Hamas's chief Ismail Haniyeh

Israel's Gantz said there were

efforts to "promote a new plan

for the return of the hostages".

"We are seeing the first signs

that indicate the possibility of

Matthew Miller, US State

Department spokesman, said

Washington was hoping for

an "agreement that secures a

temporary ceasefire where we

can get the hostages out and

get humanitarian assistance",

but declined to give details on

Israeli Prime Minister Benja-

min Netanyahu has insisted the

army will keep fighting until it

has destroyed Hamas and freed

Israel's parliament on Wednes-

day overwhelmingly backed

a proposal by Netanyahu to

oppose any unilateral recogni-

The vote came days after

the Washington Post reported

that US President Joe Biden's

administration and a small group

tion of a Palestinian state.

ongoing negotiations.

the remaining hostages.

progress in this direction.

was in Cairo for talks as well,

according to the group.

broker a truce

figures.

Hamas militants also took about 250 hostages -- 130 of whom remain in Gaza, including 30 presumed dead, according to Israel.

Israel's retaliatory campaign has killed at least 29,313 people, mostly women and children, according to the latest count by the Hamas-run health ministry in the territory.

War cabinet member Benny Gantz said Israel's operation in Rafah would begin "after the evacuation of the population", although his government has not offered any details on where civilians would be evacuated to.

In the early hours of Thursday, agency reporters heard multiple air strikes on Rafah, particularly in the Al-Shaboura neighbourhood.

The Hamas-run health ministry in Gaza said early Thursday that 99 people had been killed around Gaza during the night, most of them women, children and elderly people.

Rahman Mohamed Jumaa said he lost his family in recent strikes on Rafah.

"I found my wife lying in the street," he told AFP. "Then I saw a man carrying a girl and I ran towards him and.... picked her up, realising she was really my daughter."

He was holding a small shrouded corpse in his arms.

of Arab nations were working out a comprehensive plan for long-term peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

It included a firm timeline for the establishment of a Palestinian state, the report said.

Separately, a report by an Israeli group that fights sexual violence said Hamas's October 7 attack also involved systematic sexual assaults on civilians, based on witness testimonies, public and classified information, and interviews.

The report came the same week UN rights experts called for an independent probe into alleged Israeli abuses against Palestinian women and girls -which Israel rejected as "despicable and unfounded claims".

Israeli officials have repeatedly alleged the militants committed violent sexual assaults during the attack -- something Hamas has denied.

'Waiting for death'

Combat and chaos have stalled sporadic aid deliveries for civilians in Gaza, while in Khan Yunis -- a city just north of Rafah -- medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said an Israeli tank had fired on a house sheltering their employees and families.

Two relatives of MSF staff were killed and six others injured, it said, condemning the strike in the "strongest possible terms".

When contacted by AFP about the incident, the Israeli army said its forces had "fired at a building that was identified as a building where terror activity is occurring", adding that it "regrets" harm to civilians.

In the same town, the Palestinian Red Crescent said another hospital was also hit by "artillery shelling".

Israel has repeatedly said Hamas militants use civilian infrastructure including hospitals as operational bases -- claims that Hamas has denied.

Israel intercepts apparent Houthi attack near port city of Eilat



DUBAI, Feb 22 (Agencies): Israel intercepted what appeared to be an attack launched by Yemen's Houthi rebels on Thursday near the port city of Eilat as the group escalates its assaults over Israel's war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip, authorities said.

Sirens sounded early Thursday morning over Eilat, followed by videos posted online of what appeared to be an interception in the sky overhead.

The Israeli military later described the interception as being carried out by its Arrow missile defence system.

Israel did not identify what the fire was, nor where it came from. However, the Arrow system intercepts longrange ballistic missiles with a warhead designed to destroy targets while they are in space.

The system "successfully intercepted a launch which was identified in the area of the Red Sea and was en route to Israel," the Israeli military said.

"The target did not cross into Israeli territory and did not pose a threat to civilians." The Houthis did not immediately claim the attack. They typically acknowledge assaults they conduct hours afterward.

Eilat, on the Red Sea, is a key port city of Israel.

On October 31, the Houthis first claimed a missile-and-drone barrage targeting the city. The rebels have claimed other attacks targeting Eilat, which have caused no damage in the city

Since November, the rebels have repeatedly targeted ships in the Red Sea and surrounding waters over Israel's war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

They have frequently targeted vessels with tenuous or no clear links to Israel, imperilling shipping in a key route for trade among Asia, the Mideast and Europe. Those vessels have included at least one with cargo for Iran, the Houthis' main bene-

Despite a month of US-led airstrikes, the Houthi rebels remain capable of launching significant attacks. This week, they seriously damaged a ship in a crucial strait and downed an American drone worth tens of millions of dollars.

The Houthis insist their attacks will continue until Israel stops

its combat operations in the Gaza Strip, which have enraged the wider Arab world and seen the Houthis gain international recognition.

On Wednesday, ships in the Red Sea off the Houthi-held port city of Hodeida in Yemen reported seeing an explosion, though all vessels in the area were said to be safe, according to the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations centres. The UKMTO earlier reported heavy drone activity in the area.

The US military's Central Command acknowledged shooting down a Houthi bomb-carrying drone during that time. US airstrikes separately targeted seven mobile anti-ship cruise missiles and one mobile antiship ballistic missile prepared to target ships in the Red Sea, Central Command said.

The US State Department criticised "the reckless and indiscriminate attacks on civilian cargo ships by the Houthis" that have delayed humanitarian aid including food and medicine bound for Ethiopia, Sudan and Yemen. That includes the Sea Champion, a ship carrying corn and other aid to both Aden and Hodeida.

"Contrary to what the Houthis may attempt to claim, their attacks do nothing to help the Palestinians," State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said in a statement. "Their actions are not bringing a single morsel of assistance or food to the Palestinian people."

Two dead after cargo ship hits bridge in southern China

BEIJING, Feb 22 (Agencies): Two people were killed and three ing after an empty cargo ship struck a bridge in southern China on Thursday, causing part of it to collapse, authorities and state media reported.

The Guangzhou maritime affairs bureau said the collision sent five vehicles, including a motorbike, tumbling off the bridge and either into the water or onto the ship below.

The container vessel was travelling between the cities of Foshan and Guangzhou when it rammed the Lixinsha Bridge at around 5:30 am (2130 GMT), state broadcaster CCTV said.

The boat "came into



contact with... the bridge pillars, causing the roadway above to collapse", CCTV reported. As of 10 am, "two

people have been rescued, two have died. one crew member has been lightly injured, and three people remain missing", the Guangzhou bureau said in an online statement.

Footage broadcast by

CCTV showed rescue personnel in orange jumpsuits racing in dinghies across a murky waterway towards a high bridge with a yawning gap in its middle.

Other patrol boats flashed their lights as they circled the area where the collapse took place, though the cargo ship appeared to have been towed away.

Photos published by CCTV showed the red and white vessel lodged at a diagonal angle between two of the bridge's pillars as water cascaded out of severed pipes onto its deck, where some debris was visible.

The maritime bureau said the cause of the incident was "under investigation, and rescue work is proceeding at full strength and in

good order". CCTV reported that dozens of rescuers had been dispatched to the scene, including reinforcements from the nearby tech hub of Shenzhen.

The ship's owner has been brought under "control", the broadcaster said.

Pakistan to probe trolling of officials over 'rigging' in February 8 polls

ISLAMABAD, Feb 22 (Agencies): Pakistan's caretaker government has constituted a joint investigation team, including from the ISI, following a massive social media campaign against officials and functionaries of the top poll body alleging their involvement in the reported rigging of elections, according to media reports on Thursday.

The report is to be submitted in 15 days. The joint investigation team (JIT) will look into the relevant people who have trolled government officials and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) functionaries and "identify and prosecute the culprits" under the relevant laws.

comes in the wake of the consistent allegations by the jailed former prime minister Imran Khanled Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf (PTI) party that the government officials and also those from the ECP were involved in what Khan described as "Mother of All Rigging," which he claimed enabled his arch rivals to steal his party's mandate.

Two weeks after the voting day, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) struck a powersharing deal to form a coalition government led by ex-prime minister Shehbaz Sharif, a move that could effectively keep Khan out of power.

Both the PML-N and the PPP won fewer seats in Parliament than candidates backed by Khan's PTI in an election mired in controversies, including vote rigging, PTI has alleged and unleashed a substantial campaign on social media claiming that the powerful establishment was hand in gloves with the perpetrators of rigging.

"As per a notification issued by the interior ministry, the JIT was formed under Section 30 of the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) 2016 and an additional director general of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) will be its convener," Dawn. com reported.

Other members will be

from the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the Intelligence Bureau (IB), the National Database & Registration Authority (Nadra), and the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA). It could also hire IT experts if required to probe the "malicious" social media campaign.

According to the terms of reference of the JIT, it will identify and prosecute individuals involved in social media campaigns against government officials for their alleged role in irregularities on the day of polling. It will also propose measures to counter such campaigns in the future.

The JIT has 15 days to submit its report to the relevant office.

Thousands Of People Ordered To Evacuate As Bushfire Burns In Australia

SYDNEY, Feb 22 (Agencies): More than two thousand people have been ordered to evacuate from towns in the west of Australia's Victoria state due to a bushfire burning out of control on Thursday.

The state emergency service urged residents in the towns of Raglan and Beaufort, home to around two thousand people, and those in surrounding areas to leave while it was still safe and head east to

the nearby regional hub of Ballarat, 95 kms (59 miles) west of Melbourne.

Roughly 50 square kms (12,355 acres) is ablaze northwest of Ballarat. A similar area is also burning out of control further to the west.

"We expect the fire size to rapidly grow over the next hour or two, residents in the area need to put their bushfire survival plan into action now," Jason Hefferman, chief officer of the Country Fire Authority told ABC News.

Large swathes of the state are on high alert for fires and the Bureau of Meteorology on Thursday issued extreme fire danger warnings for several districts due to hot, dry winds and the potential for thunderstorms.

Temperatures were above 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) in the north west of the state at 3.00pm (0400 GMT).

Iran begins first election campaign since 2022 mass protests over Mahsa Amini's death in custody TEHRAN, Feb 22 (Agencies): ity police for allegedly violating The candidates include 1,713 Incumbent assembly member

Candidates for Iran's parliament began campaigning Thursday in the country's first election since the bloody crackdown on the 2022 nationwide protests that followed the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in police custody.

State television said 15,200 candidates will compete for a four-year term in the 290-seat chamber that hardliners have controlled for two decades.

That is a record number and more than twice the candidates who contested the 2020 election, when voter turnout was just over 42%, the lowest since

Amini died on Sept. 16, 2022, after her arrest by Iran's moralthe country's strict headscarf law that forced women to cover their hair and entire bodies. The protests quickly escalated into calls to overthrow Iran's clerical rulers. In the severe crackdown that followed, over 500 people were killed and nearly 20,000 arrested, according to human rights activists in Iran.

On Wednesday, the Guardian Council election watchdog sent the names of the 15,200 qualified candidates to the interior ministry, which holds the election. Any candidate for elections in Iran must be approved by the Council, a 12-member clerical body, half of whom are directly appointed by the supreme

women, which is more than double the 819 who competed in 2020.

The election will be held March 1, and the new parliament will convene in late May.

Current parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf will run for election from his hometown, a constituency in the remote northeast, after winning a seat in the capital Tehran four years ago. Such a change in districts usually indicates shrinking popularity. In recent years, his fellow hardline critics occasionally accused him of ignoring the rights of other parliament members and disregarding reports of corruption while he was Tehran mayor.

President Ebrahim Raisi will seek reelection to the assembly in a remote constituency in South Khorasan province, competing against a low-profile cleric.

In a simultaneous election, 144 clerics will compete for the all-cleric 88-seat Assembly of Experts that functions as an advisory body to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has final say on all state matters. Their term of service is eight years. Under Iran's constitution, the assembly monitors the country's supreme leader and chooses his successor. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei will be 85 in April. He has been supreme leader for 34 years.

Pension reforms introduced with sensitive concern for elder citizens, women: Dr Jitendra

Top News Report

NEW DELHI, Feb 22: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today said, ever since Prime Minister Narendra Modi took charge in May 2014, a series of pension reforms had been introduced, one after the other, with a sensitive concern for elder citizens and women in particular.

Latest technology tools were employed to seek ease of living for these sections of society, he said.

Chairing the 33rd meeting of the Standing Committee of Voluntary Agencies (SCOVA) and 10th Nation-wide Pension Adalat in New Delhi, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Department of Pension is constantly engaged in formulating policies for achieving the goal of women empowerment thereby ensuring a dignified life and ease of living for women.

Dwelling on the Women-Centric reforms in the Department of Pensions and Pensioners' Welfare, Dr Jitendra

Singh said, orders were issued wherein a divorced daughter, in whose case a decree of divorce was issued after the death of her parents, will be eligible for family pension if the divorce petition was filed before death of the parents.

Similarly, the Minis-

ter said, the families of missing employees covered under NPS can now get a family pension within 6 months of lodging FIR and not wait for 7 years after which the employee considered deemed dead. Even in cases where the Government servant dies before completing a service of 7 years, family pension shall be payable to the family at an enhanced rate of 50% of last pay for the first 10 years and thereafter @ 30% of last pay. P

Even the pension for Divyangs were resolved to bring ease of living for all, the Minister added.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that the Department of Pension under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has become the Department of Reforms with huge social implications. He asked the SCOVA body which consists of 15 non-

resenting Pensioner Welfare Associations and Official Members to come out with suggestions and new ideas for the benefit of the department. The Minister informed that it was on his suggestion that a single pension form was introduced instead of the earlier practice of

three forms Referring to Jeevan Praman (Digital Life Certificate) launched by the Prime Minister in November, 2014, Dr Jitendra Singh underlined that it provides an option to pensioner for submission of Digital Life Certificate online, anytime and from anywhere.

Dr Jitendra Singh also took pride in informing the SCOVA members that to enhance 'Ease of Living' for Pensioners/Family Pensioners, DoPPW in collaboration with MeiTy and UIDAI has developed a "Face-Authentication Technology" based system to submit Life Certificate from any Android smartphone which was launched by in 2021, the first by any government depart-

ment.. The Minister also underlined that DoPPW coordinated with

Banks, India Posts and Government and for speedy resolution of Payment Bank (IPPB) for providing the door-Pensioners Grievancstep facility of DLC subes Pension Adalats mission from home for are being organized incapacitated Pensionby Department of Peners/Family Pensioners. sion and Pensioners Similarly, BHAVISHYA Welfare in which mulplatform, is an intetiple stakeholders are grated online pension brought on one platsanction processing form for on-the-spot system made mandaredressal. tory for all Central Gov-In 2023, Department

ernment Departments of Pension & Penw.e.f 01.01.2017. sioners' Welfare had Dr Jitendra Singh organized two Penalso presided over the sion Adalats on 17th Nation-wide Pension May, 2023 and 23rd Adalat, which cov-October, 2023. During ered pensioner grievthese Adalats, 603 ances of 12 Ministries/ cases were taken up, Departments includout of which 440 cases were resolved on the ing Ministry of Home Affairs, Department spot. of Defence Finance, Pensioner Welfare CBDT, Department of Economic Affairs,

Department of Ex-

Servicemen's Welfare,

Ministry of Housing &

Urban Affairs, Ministry

of Railways and Min-

istry of Culture. 105

Pensioner Grievances

have been listed for

discussion compris-

ing of Superannuation

cases, Family Pension

Cases and Voluntary

Retirement Cases. 60

percent of the cases

were resolved on the

Dr. Jitendra Singh

said, redressal of Pen-

sioners Grievances is

a high priority of Modi

Associations from Gujarat, Odisha, Maharashtra, New Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka and Puducherry would be participating in the 33rd SCOVA deliberations. DOPT, Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Telecom, Department of Expenditure, CPAO, Department of Financial Services, CGDA and State Bank of India will also be participat-

ing in the deliberations.

Congress seeks early assembly elections with statehood



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22: Demanding immediate announcement of restoration of statehood before assembly polls, JKPCC demanded holding of lok sabha and assembly elections in Jammu & Kashmir at the earliest.

JKPCC has asked the party cadres to be fully ready for the Lok Sabha & Assembly elections & demanded immediate restoration of statehood before assembly polls, besides urging the government to ensure level playing field for all political parties for election campaign in vulnerable areas and provide adequate security to the prominent leaders of opposition including Congress, as per their political status & standing like BJP leaders and its like minded parties.

A meeting of PCC Campaign Committee was held under the chairmanship of Former Dy CM Tara Chand while JKPCC president Vikar Rasool Wani was the chief guest which was attended by most of the members & all district presidents of Jammu province to discuss the preparations and strategy for elections.

The senior leaders and members held threadbare discussions on various aspects of the elections to lok sabha and assembly elections. The meeting expressed full readiness for both the elections and asked the government to ensure proper security to all prominent leaders of opposition parties especially non BJP parties, as there is huge discrimination with non BJP parties in the matter of security. It is the duty of the government to ensure safety and security of all citizens especially minorities and all political workers irrespective of party affialion of promi-

nence in a fair manner.

The Meeting held threadbare discussions the current political scenario and hit back at the BJP for claiming credit of the Prime Minister's rally for which the government & LG administration mobilized the entire government machinery and employees for the success of the official rally which is being claimed as BJP rally. It was for the first time that mobilization of the Govt machinery of such levels were done as there was low public response in view of the failures of the Govt. on various fronts and to deliver its last promises to various sections of people and

youth. The meeting tioned the Prime Minister for not uttering a word for the promises made to the people of J&K, especially Jammu region in the last elections. The Prime Minister deliberately avoided to mention the most popular demands of people for restoration of statehood and democracy as well as

promises made to the unemployed youths, farmers, refugees daily wagers contractual and other categories of temporary employees .

The meeting viewed that the people are fed up with the BJP Govt. for the wrong policies with regards to youth, farmers, employees, pensioners and the common man who are facing the brunt of wrong policies, especially on the economic front pushing the common and poor people to great economic distress and state of joblessness.

The meeting condoled the death of an agitating farmer yesterday and hit out at BJP Govt. for crushing the voice of peacefully agitating farmers for their genuine demands including MSP legal guarantee as promised by the Prime Minister Modi ten years ago and reiterated by him three years ago.

PCC hailed the announcement of Congress party to grant MSP to the farmers on coming to power and asked the Modi Govt. to immediately concede the genuine demands of farmers.

The meeting was attended by Secretary AICC Shahnawaz Choudhary, Senior Vice President & Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Sharma, Vice Presidents Yogesh Sawhney (Ex-Minister)

, Tralok Singh Bajwa (Ex-MP), Former Minister Shabir Ahmed Khan, S.S. Channi, General Secretaries Narinder Gupta(Org), Ashok Dogra (Ex-Rather (DDC), T.S. Tony (DDC), Th. Balbir Singh, Nadeem Sharief Niaz (DDC), Dist. Presidents Th. Manmohan Singh, Th. Shamsher Singh Chib, Pankaj Dogra, Sheikh Mujeeb, Pervez Ahmed Wani, Asif Nageeb, Vinod Khajuria & Chairman Social Media Dept. Jatin K Raina.

Windsor Batteries organise Distributors-Dealers meet in Jammu

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22: The Windsor Battery organisation organised a maiden meet in Jammu. While addressing media, Rakesh Arora, National Sales Head of Windsor Batteries along with Sarabjit Singh Wazir BM said, " The maiden meet of the Windsor 5 distributors and 70 dealers is being organised in the

The dealers and distributors of the windsor across from the Jammu especially from Udhampur, Ramnagar, Samba, R S Pura and Kathua have participated in the meet.

Windsor is all set to



become the number 1 company of Battery, Arora said.

best batteries across the India with best price option. The diverse varieties of the Windsor including Electric Scooty batteries, Inverter batteries, E Rickshaw batteries and tractor batteries we provide, Arora added.

While briefing about the plant of the Windsor, Arora said, "Company

have two manufacturing

Company have good We are providing the market share across India where in North India company have 150 plus distributors and 1500 dealers.

Susheel Electrical Jammu said," I have been working with the Windsor company for the last six month and it is good to inform the Windsor company is very caring with comparably best products.

Secretary reviews progress on establishment of grain stores under "World's Largest Grain Storage Project"

Top News Report

JAMMU, FEBRUARY22: Secretary Cooperative Department, Babila Rakwal, today convened a meeting to review progress on land identification for establishment of grain stores under Centre Government's ambitious initiative "World Largest Grain Storage Project" in all districts of Jammu and Kashmir here at Civil Secretariat.

The meeting was informed that a total of 56 land locations have been identified in sixteen districts, so far, including 3 in Jammu, 1 in Samba, 5 each in Kishtwar, Kathua, Shopian, Poonch Kulgam and Doda, 2 in Udhampur, 4 in Budgam, 3 in Pulwama, 1 each in Srinagar, Reasi, Ganderbal, Anantnag and Rajouri.

Regarding the remaining locations to be identified for raising these grain stores, the Secretary exhorted upon the concerned officers to ensure that the same is done within a week's. She said that no delay would be tolerated in execution of such prestigious projects as this badly affects the development process.

The Secretary asked the concerned officers to personally visit the locations for finalizing the same for the store keeping in view all the parameters set under the guidelines for the project implementation. She further instructed all the Deputy Registrars to ensure identification of minimum of seven locations in their jurisdictions with emphasis on selection of far flung areas for maximum benefit to the common masses.

Among others the meeting was attended by Registrar Cooperative Societies, Special Secretary Cooperative, Director Finance Cooperative, Additional Secretary Cooperative, Joint Registrar Banking and Finance, Deputy Registrars and other concerned officials in person and virtually.

FROM PAGE 1

daughter Sara in this trip. He visited a cricket bat manufacturing unit at Chursoo on Srinagar-Jammu national highway and also went to Pahalgam in south Kashmir.

Drone-Dropped IED found near international border in Kathua

to have returned to the Pakistani side, the official said, adding that the IED that was dropped in a forward village is being examined by experts.

X Disagrees with govt action to block accounts. nosts linked to farmers' protest

accountability and arbitrary decisionmaking," X said.

The social media firm has provided the impacted users with notice of the government actions in accordance with the company's policies.

Farmers from across the country have been protesting to press for their demands, including a legal guarantee for minimum support price (MSP) for crops and farm

Meanwhile, farmer leaders on Wednesday put their march to the national capital

killed and about 12 police personnel were injured in clashes at one of protest sites on the Punjab-Haryana border. **Construction worker**

on hold for two days after a protester was

killed in landslide along **Jammu-Srinagar National** Highway

the fourth day following a fresh landslide at Kishtwari Pather near Banihal.

"The restoration work is in progress and will take some time," he said.

The traffic on the strategic highway was suspended on Monday following multiple landslides triggered by heavy rains at over a dozen places between Ramban

The highway was cleared for partial oneway traffic on Wednesday but the fresh landslide at Kishtwari Pather blocked the road again, the officials said.

Night temp drops in **Kashmir. Gulmarg At** -10.4°C

rain during the past 24 hours until 0830 hours on Thursday.

Qazigund on Srinagar-Jammu National had a low of -4.4°C against the 0.0°C recorded a day ago, while Picnic Spot in south Kashmir's Kokernag recorded a low

of -5.4°C against the -3.4°C recorded the

previous night. The tourist hot spot of Pahalgam settled at -8.6°C against -1.6°C the previous night, and it was 4.6°C below normal for the valley of shepherds in south Kashmir.

Kupwara recorded a low of -3.1°C against -0.3°C, and it was 2.8°C below normal for the frontier north Kashmir district on Thursday, the MeT office said.

Foreigner dies, Five Rescued, one Missing in Gulmarg Avalanche

rescue-cum-search operations, officials added. Another avalanche, on Wednesday, struck a hung area of Sonamarg on the Srinagar-Leh Road, blocking the flow of water in the Sindh stream.

Kashmir has been witnessing moderate to heavy snowfall over the past three days, increasing the possibility of avalanches in hilly and mountainous areas of the valley.

Murder of democracy: Congress slams Govt over X's Statement

(MSP) for crops and farm loan waiver.

The protesting farmer leaders put their march to Delhi on hold for two days on Wednesday after a protester was killed and about 12 police personnel were injured in clashes at one of the protest sites on the Punjab-Haryana border.

Kiru Hydropower **Corruption Case | CBI** searches at premises of **Former Governor Satya Pal Malik**

officials M S Babu, M K Mittal and Arun Kumar Mishra and Patel Engineering Ltd. "Though a decision was taken in 47th Board meeting of CVPPPL (Chenab Valley Power Projects (P) Ltd) for re-tender through e-tendering with reverse auction after cancellation of ongoing tendering process, same was not implemented (as per decision taken in 48th board meeting) and tender was finally awarded to Patel Engineering Ltd," the FIR has alleged. The agency had conducted searches at the premises of five people in January in connection with the case.

Kaun Hai Tumhara Bowler? Tendulkar plays gully cricket in Kashmir

video in which he can be seen facing nine

His wife Anjali can also be seen smiling in the clip which starts with Tendulkar asking the boys, "Hum Khelein? (Shall we play?)." "Kaun hai tumhara bowler (Who is your

balls, watched in awe by the locals.

bowler)?" he probed further as he gripped a bat.

Dressed in a brown jacket Tendulkar, who retired from cricket in 2013, played nine deliveries, hitting straight drives and also a scoop shot.

There was also an attempted paddle sweep before he turned the bat upside down and jokingly stated, "Ye out karna padega (you will have to dismiss me)."

But even with an upside down bat, Tendulkar was not to be dismissed as he signed off with a smooth drive, fetching a round of applause and several smiles.

He wasn't done enthralling the gathered crowd with just his cricket. The iconic former captain, who played six World Cups, took selfies with the fans, giving them a memorable few minutes to cherish.

"Mera dhyan aapke upar hai (I am focussed on you)," he told the group.

Tendulkar arrived here last week and visited a cricket bat manufacturer in the Sangam area in South Kashmir before heading to Pahalgham where he stayed at the Pine and Peak hotel.

Floored by the hospitality at the hotel, Tendulkar left a signed note for the staff thanking them.

"I would love to come back and spend more time over here," he wrote. On Wednesday, he visited the Aman Setu bridge — the last point on the Line of Con-

trol in Uri sector of Jammu and Kashmir. Tendulkar interacted with soldiers at the Kaman Post, near Aman Setu, during his visit that lasted around one hour, officials

Tendulkar is also accompanied by his

SpiceJet raises additional Rs 316 crore, total funds reach Rs 1,060 crore

SpiceJet has been facing headwinds for the last couple of quarters for want of funds

NEW DELHI. Feb 22 (Agencies): SpiceJet on Thursday said it has secured an additional Rs 316 crore, taking its total funds raised to Rs 1,060 crore through a preferential share issue.

The fresh capital infusion in the struggling airline comes amid its recent announcement of slashing its workforce by 10-15 per cent.

In January SpiceJet had received Rs 744 crore as the first tranche of funds through the allotment of securities on a preferential basis.

On December 12, the airline had said it would raise fresh capital of Rs 2,250 crore through issuance of securities. "SpiceJet has raised an additional Rs 316 crore, bringing the total invest-



crore under its preferential issue," the airline said in a statement.

It added, "The Preferential Allotment Committee of SpiceJet's Board Directors convened on February 21, 2024, approved the allotment of 4.01 crore equity shares on a preferential basis to two investors, including Aries Opportunities Fund Limited.'

The committee also sanctioned the allotment of 2.31 crore warrants, offering the option to apply for an equivalent number of equity shares, to four investors, including Elara India Opportunities Fund Limited, according

to pursue its expansion plans and enhance its operational capabilities, he added.

The additional fund-

ing will help SpiceJet

SpiceJet has been facing headwinds for the last couple of quarters for want of funds, leading to the grounding of a number of aircraft and returning some of the leased planes to the lessors

Some of its lessors have dragged the airline even to court for non-payment of lease rentals.

As on February 21, the airline had nearly half of its 65 aircraft fleet on the ground with 35 planes in service and remaining parked, as per the aircraft fleet tracking website Planespotter.

Saudi Arabia wraps pp Guest of Honor participation at 2024 New Delhi Book Fair

NEW DELHI, Feb 22: Saudi Arabia wrapped up its role as the quest of honor at the New Delhi World Book Fair 2024 (NDWBF 2024) last night. The nine-day event, held at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi from February 10 to 18, saw the Saudi pavilion draw a significant crowd, becoming a standout attraction at the fair.

The pavilion attracted numerous visitors eager to delve into Saudi culture, arts, and heritage in a comprehensive cultural experience led by the Literature, Publishing, and Translation Commission. Several cultural entities, including the Heritage Commission, the Music Commission, the Film Commission, the Culinary Arts Commission, the Fashion Commission, and the King Abdulaziz Foundation for Research and Archives, were involved in creating this rich cultural experience.

The Saudi pavilion played a crucial role in promoting intercultural dialogue and showcasing Saudi cultural and intellectual aspects to the Indian audience. The cultural program included 13 dialogical seminars exploring the influence of Saudi culture on Indian culture and collaboration in publishing, cinema, and translation fields.

Two celebrations were also held during the Kingdom's participation: a Saudi dinner night featuring national



dishes and a music night showcasing Saudi music and performance arts. These events were attended by ministers, officials from the Republic of India, diplomats, academics, media professionals, and enthusiasts.

The Saudi pavilion represented various cultural sectors, featuring mini-exhibitions of Saudi fashion and musical instruments, a heritage session offering Saudi coffee hospitality, displays of books about the Kingdom's nature, heritage, and traditions, and an exhibition showcasing replicas of artifacts discovered in Saudi Arabia dating back thousands of years, highlighting the Kingdom's ancient civilizational heritage. Saudi Arabia's participation in the fair reflects the Ministry of Culture's commitment to enhancing international cultural exchange, aligning with the national cultural strategy's goals under Vision 2030.

Renault Nissan continues upward trajectory in green energy usage

CHANDIGARH, Feb 22: Taking ahead its commitment to achieve carbon-neutral operations by 2045, Renault Nissan Automotive India Pvt Ltd (RNAIPL) has announced that it has predominantly used green power for its operations during the second half of 2023. On an average, the plant utilized more than 85% green energy every month between July and December 2023, with 100% green energy utilization in September 2023. RNAIPL uses a combination of in-house and externally sourced green energy to produce cars.

Keerthi Prakash, MD RNAIPL, said: "Our latest green energy milestone, with an average use of 85% green energy in the second half of 2023, demonstrates our unwavering dedication to sustainability. We are committed to further enhancing our environmental stewardship and contributing to



a more sustainable future."

RNAIPL uses a three-pillared approach as part of its roadmap to carbon neutrality. These pillars are increasing the share of green energy in the overall mix, aggressively improving efficiencies in energy usage and continuous adoption of energy efficient technology at its Oragadam plant.

Nisith Pramanik flags off women's mountain ski event

Top News Report

to the statement.

"The company has

raised a total investment

of Rs 1,060 crore. This

significant capital infu-

sion reaffirms investor

confidence in Spice-

Jet's growth prospects

and strengthens our

financial position for the

future," said Ajay Singh,

Chairman and Manag-

ing Director at SpiceJet.

GULMARG, FEB 22: Union Minister of State for Home Affairs and Youth Affairs & Sports, Nisith Pramanik today flagged off women's mountain ski event at Kongdoori Phase 1 here during the ongoing 4th edition of Khelo India Winter Games.

After flagging off the event, the Union Minister appreciated the enthusiasm and talent of participating female skiers and encouraged them to pursue their passion for winter sports.

The Minister also interacted with the



players and officials on the occasion. He expressed satisfaction over the successful organisation of this national event and praised the efforts of the Jammu and Kashmir administration. Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports as well as the J&K Sports Council. Nisith Pramanik remarked that the Khelo India Winter Games is a major event that showcases the potential of Gulmarg as the capital of winter sports in the country. He said that next edition of event

would be even bigger

with all the international standards. He also thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Minister Anurag Thakur and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha for their support and guidance in developing sports infrastructure in J&K and promoting winter sports among the youth.

Minister further said that the Khelo India Winter Games is not only a sports event, but a snow festival that celebrates beauty and culture of Gulmarg and J&K. He added that the event has boosted tourism and economy of the region and attracted visitors from across the country and abroad.

He remarked that J&K has transitioned into a new era of prosperity and peace under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi and Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha.

The Minister expressed hope that Khelo India Winter Games would inspire more youngsters to take up winter sports and excel in them. He said that the government is committed to provide all the necessary facilities and support to the budding sportspersons and make India a global leader in winter sports.

Indian encephalitis cases raise concerns over misdiagnosis and fatal outcomes

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (Agencies): A recent survey revealed that encephalitis is being "barely touched" in doctors' training, putting many at risk of misdiagnosis of the deadly brain inflammation disease. The survey, conducted by Encephalitis International, found that more than half of the surveyed Indian emergency medical professionals missed encephalitis as a potential diagnosis even when presented with common symptoms.

February 22 is observed as World **Encephalitis Day every** year. However, only 45 percent of emergency

medical professionals felt confident in recognizing encephalitis, says Dr. Ava Easton, Chief Executive of Encephalitis International.

those surveyed underestimated the severity of encephalitis, with 62 per cent not ranking death as a possible patient outcome following delayed recognition and treatment of encephalitis. "This shows that there is lack of training and awareness on a disease that affects one person every minute globally and has a higher incidence rate than Motor Neuron Disease (MND) and Multiple Sclerosis

(MS) combined."

Moreover, many of

Easton admits that the situation is more or less the same across the globe as revealed in their survey conducted in six countries - the UK, the US, Germany, India. Australia and Philippines. "In the wake of these alarming survey findings, it is clear that much more must be done to bridge the gap in encephalitis awareness and expertise,"

says Easton. "Encephalitis International is determined to increase this awareness among medical professionals through the development of globally accessible training programmes which will pro-

vide the tools for them to better recognize and treat Encephalitis." "We are working with organisations such as World Health Organisation to elevate encephalitis as a global health priority. WHO came up with a document titled Why **Encephalitis Matters** last year."

In India, Japanese Encephalitis had reportedly claimed eleven lives in Assam in 2023 while affecting more than 254 across the state. The same year a door-to-door survey was conducted in Nuh, Haryana after four children died from encephalitis symptoms in the

Marengo Asia Hospitals, Intermed Hospital Mongolia join hands with agreement to establish Center of Excellence

NEW DELHI, Feb 22: Marengo Asia Hospital, India has entered into a multi-year agreement with Intermed Hospital, Mongolia under the concept of 'Clinical Corridors' to establish the first-ever comprehensive Cardiac Sciences Center of Excel-

lence in Mongolia. The ground-breaking initiative is aimed at offering advanced treatments for cardiac health to the population of Mongolia, leveraging the pivotal role and expertise of the Marengo CIMS Cardiac Sciences team across various aspects of CoE collaboration. This pioneering endeavor is a significant milestone for Marengo Asia Hospitals and will be spearheaded by Dr Raajiv Singhal, Managing Director & Group CEO, Marengo Asia Hospitals. Maren-

go CIMS Hospital.

three times JCI accred-

ited and the distinction

of endorsement by the

American College of

Cardiology, will develop

the blueprint for the

Center of Excellence

led by Dr Anish Chanda-

rana, Chief Cardiologist,

and Dr Dhiren Shah,

Chief Cardiac & Heart

Transplant Surgeon

from Marengo CIMS

Hospital. This collabo-

ration was mediated by

GlobalCare Consulting.

annually.

transplant surgeries.

Intermed Hospital was established as a part of a social responsibility approach by the larg-



est national business groups MCS Group, Shunkhlai Group, and Energy Resources LLC, and serves as a modern hospital facility and the only hospital with JCI accreditation in the country. The hospital has planned an expanlaboration" sion project to increase hospital capacity to be completed by 2024 enabling them to serve over 15,000 inpatient admissions and over

half a million outpatients Dr Raajiv Singhal, Managing Director & Group CEO, Marengo Asia Hospitals says, "Every life matters, every minute counts. Marengo Asia Hospitals is committed to elevating Intermed Hospital into a premier Cardiac Sciences Comprehensive Center of Excellence in Mongolia. This aims to provide the Mongolian population access to a wide range of surgeries including Angioplasties, Valve surgeries, EP Procedures, Triple Vessel to CABG surgeries, TAVI, and heart

Marengo Asia Hospitals prioritizes the three Ts: Teach, Train, and Treat aligning its commitment with partner hospitals to enhance cardiac care proficiency through training initiatives and interdisciplinary col-

Under this collaboration, Marengo Asia Hospitals will conduct comprehensive assessments and gap analysis at Intermed Hospital, facilitating training initiatives, manpower allocation, equipment procurement, and dissemination of protocols covering various cardiac conditions such as chest pain, STEMI, and quality matrix adherence. Ongoing support will be provided for performing complex cardiac cases, with specialized training facilitated at Marengo CIMS Hospital and joint workshops conducted at Intermed Hospital. Intermed Hospital will receive guidance on improving its commitment to quality enhancement and patient care. Marengo CIMS will also support COE blueprinting, training of the various clinical excellence teams, monitoring and adherence to the quality matrix, Chest Pain Pathways, and protocols meeting international benchmarks to bolster the super-specialization of the Department of Cardiac Sciences.

Nyamtogtokh Ya, Chief Executive Officer - Intermed Hospital, Mongolia said, "As Mongolia's leading private hospital, Intermed Hospital is committed to addressing the most recognized health challenges, cardiovascular diseases, faced by our nation. We aim to develop a state-of-theart Cardiology Center of Excellence as part of our mission to save lives and improve the health and well-being of the people of Mongolia. This Center will offer advanced treatments currently not widely available in our country. The partnership with Marengo Asia Hospital is a significant step towards realizing the vision of better healthcare. With their expertise in cardiac sciences, we will bring international standards of cardiac care to Mongolia, reducing the need for our citizens to seek treatment abroad. We are deeply committed to this cause and believe that our efforts will have a lasting impact on the health of our nation."

Advanced state-of-the-art cath lab launched

BATHINDA, Feb 22: An advanced state-of-the-art cath lab facility was launched at Max Super Speciality Hospital, Bathinda on Thursday.

Speaking at the launch, Dr. Ishtiyaq Masood, cardiology head said that our department is equipped with cutting edge diagnostic systems like echo doppler, treadmill system, and holter monitoring system.

Coronary interventions including primary angioplasty for heart attacks are available 24×7 in the department, he informed.

In addition to this, complex coronary and non-coronary interventions including pacemaker implantation, ICD/combo device insertion

are being done routinely, he said. This latest cath lab that has been installed is a revolutionary imag-



ing system that offers exceptional technology with excellent contrast resolution, he maintained.

Dr. Satwinder Singh Sabharwal, unit head said, "The newly launched Cath Lab is backed up by 8 bedded CCU and IABP support. The department is run by a team of skilled doctors, nurses,

and technical staff who have been trained in the best cardiac centers around the country, thus presenting a fine blend of technology and manpower. This facility will provide people of the region with enhanced care as we strongly believe in the right to quality and affordable healthcare for all.

Confident India face selection dilemma; England aim for redemption in potential series-decider

Jasprit Bumrah has been given a break, making Mohammed Siraj the sole experienced pacer in the line-up

RANCHI, Feb 22 (Agencies): Pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah's absence is a concern but an assertive and adaptive India will have the edge against England's seemingly depth-less 'Bazball' approach when the two sides clash in the potentially series-deciding fourth Test beginning here on Friday.

From the dry heat of Raikot to the much cooler confines of Ranchi, the temperature shift would be the only soothing factor for the Englishmen who have let it slip against the resilient hosts and are trailing 1-2.

Eyeing a 17th series win on the trot at home, India have been near invincible since the shock defeat to Alastair Cook's England in 2012. After that, India have won a staggering 38 out of 47 Tests, and have lost just thrice (two each versus Australia and England) when challenges on home turf.

Captaining a depleted batting line-up in the absence of Virat Kohli, KL Rahul and an out-of-form Shreyas Iyer, Rohit Sharma has found answers from the young guns, whose performance has been the biggest takeaway from the series

Whether it is Yashasvi Jaiswal, who has maintained an impressive average of 109 with a total of 545 runs, or Sarfaraz Khan, who ended his prolonged wait for a Test debut with a blazing 66-ball 62 in Rajkot, or Shubman Gill, gradually settling in at No.3, India's next generation of batters are showcasing how a seamless transition happens.

As for replacing Bumrah, who has been the top wicket-taker (17) of the series which was expected to be dominated by spinners, it could well be India's

Bumrah has been rested after bowling a little more than 80 overs in the three gone-by Tests.



has been that four spinners

and one seamer attack would

"It's an interesting pitch...There

are a few cracks, very platey

and looked a bit crusty, the top

layer, One half is good, and the

other has a lot of platey cracks,"

England vice-captain Ollie Pope

had said after the team checked

That may bring Shoaib Bashir

into the picture to go alongside

Tom Hartley, Rehan Ahmed and

part-timer Joe Root. Root has

more overs (107) under his belt

India, on the other hand, have

preferred the conventional two-

pacer-three-spinner combina-

tion and it's unlikely that Axar

Patel would be recalled. The

team is expected to stick to

Ravichandran Ashwin, Kuldeep

Historically, the Ranchi pitch

In the last Test here in 2019,

South Africa were blown away

by the duo of Mohammed Shami

and Umesh Yaday, who shared

ful for batting for first two days

has proven deceptive for the

Yadav and Ravindra Jadeja.

visiting teams.

than runs (77) in this series.

in here on Thursday.

be ideal.

His reverse-swing mastery on day two of the Vizag Test during a six-wicket burst, was the biggest contributing factor in the 106-run win that levelled the series 1-1.

On a docile Rajkot wicket too, Bumrah made in-roads giving India crucial breakthroughs.

Keeping in mind the seaming conditions in Dharamsala for the fifth Test and the hectic IPL season ahead, Bumrah has been given a break, making Mohammed Siraj the sole experienced pacer in the line-up.

It will be a toss-up between Bengal duo of Mukesh Kumar and an uncapped Akash Deep for the second pacer's slot in Ranchi

Fresh from his career-best 10-wicket haul in Ranji Trophy, Mukesh is not only more experienced but also partnered Bumrah in the Vizag Test. He, however, bowled just 12 overs taking one wicket across both

innings. It remains to be seen whether the Indian think-tank will take the gamble of giving another debut cap or persist with Mukesh, who

three spinners. But England's assessment of the conditions itself," the local groundsman told agency.

and would assist spin from day

three. History should repeat

For the 'Bazball' inspired England, the win in Hyderabad has become a distant memory and a repeat of 2021 looks likely when India bounced back to win the four-Test series 3-1.

The record 434-run thrashing in Rajkot has triggered criticism of England's so-called aggressive 'Bazball' approach. It seems to have found a match in India after tasting success against New Zealand, South Africa and Pakistan and Australia to an extent.

The go-for-strokes style might have helped the likes of Zak Crawley and Ben Duckett, who swung his bat around for a stunning 153 in Raikot, but it has also doomed the likes of Joe Root and Jonny Bairstow.

Root was seen as their main batter to cope with the spin challenge but the way he reverse scooped to Bumrah at Rajkot summed up the disarray he is in.

The desperation to find a way out can be judged from skipper Ben Stokes expediting his rehab from a knee injury by opting to bowl at the nets ahead of the fourth Test.

Squads:

India: Rohit Sharma (C), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Rajat Patidar, Sarfaraz Khan, Dhruv Jurel (WK), KS Bharat (WK), Devdutt Padikkal, R Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohd. Siraj, Mukesh Kumar, Akash Deep.

England: Ben Stokes (C), Rehan Ahmed, James Anderson, Gus Atkinson, Jonny Robinson, Joe Root, Mark Wood.

6 Sixes In 1 Over: Andhra **Pradesh Youngster Makes** History, BCCI Issues 'Alert'

Six sixes in an over is a feat in cricket that is universally celebrated



NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (Agencies): In cricket, there are several feats which are widely celebrated. Hitting six sixes in an over is one of the them. Who can forget the six sixes hit by Yuvraj Singh at the 2007 T20 World Cup off England's Stuart Broad. West Indies legend Sir Gary Sobers was the first person to achieve the feat in a major match. Playing in a County Championship for Nottinghamshire in 1968, Garfield Sobers hit Glamorgan's Malcolm Nash for six sixes in an over. Then Ravi Shastri became the first Indian to hit six sixes in an over in 1985

for Bombay against Baroda.

Herschelle Gibbs was the first batter to hit six sixes in an over in international cricket. Now. Vamshhi Krrishna of Andhra Pradesh is the latest addition to that list. He achieved the feat in a Col CK Nayudu Trophy match. The Col CK Nayudu Trophy is a national tournament for U-23 cricketers.

"6 sixes in an over alert! Vamshhi Krrishna of Andhra hit 6 sixes in an over off Railways spinner Damandeep Singh on his way to a blistering 64-ball 110 in the Col C K Nayudu Trophy in Kadapa," the BCCI wrote in a post

Never seen something like that before:

England skipper Ben Stokes on Ranchi

pitch ahead of 4th Test against India

Recently, after the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced that R Ashwin, who had left to be at his mother's side, who had fallen ill, rejoined the team on Day 4 of the third Test

against England, former

head coach Ravi Shastri

along with the video.

revealed that the board arranged a chartered plane for the player. Shastri lauded BCCI and secretary Jay Shah for showing empathy towards Ashwin, adding that the ges-

ture would've made the

player feel "special". "The BCCI secretary Jay Shah organised a charter to take him home and bring him back. I think that's the kind of empathy that's needed from the BCCI as well. There are the guardians of Indian cricket and with this kind of empathy, they will go a long, long way. It also makes the players feel they belong and are special," Ravi Shastri said during his commentary stint on Day 4 of the

10 wickets between them, as Bairstow, Shoaib Bashir, Harry RANCHI, Feb 22 (Agencies): England has been average at best. against the eight by the spin trio History suggests that the Brook, Zak Crawley, Ben Duckcaptain Ben Stokes added spice to the of Ashwin, Jadeja and Shahbaz Achilles' heel in Ranchi. JSCA Stadium pitch will suit a ett, Ben Foakes, Tom Hartley, talks on Ranchi pitch for the fourth Test Jack Leach, Ollie Pope, Ollie plan featuring two seamers and "It has never been a rank-turnagainst India, saying he has not seen er. The pitch would be beautianything remotely like the 22-yard strip

here in the past. India are leading the five-match series 2-1 and the penultimate Test will start here on Friday.

However, discussion about the "platey cracks" on the pitch as described by England batter Ollie Pope has domi-

nated the build-up to this Test. Stokes added a touch of intrigue as well. "It looked interesting, didn't it? I don't know. I can't say much. I don't know, I've never seen something like that before so I have no idea. I don't know what could happen," Stokes was

quoted as saying by ESPNCricinfo. It indeed was an ominous reading of the playing surface, if you are from the England camp. But then Stokes had a reason for it as well.

"If you looked down one side of opposite ends it just looked different to what I am used to seeing, especially out in

It looked green and grassy up in the changing-rooms, but then you go out there, it looked different. Very dark and crumbly and quite a few cracks in it," Stokes offered.

The nature of the pitch also delayed England making a decision on their playing 11.



Rajkot Test.

Pacer Ollie Robinson will come in for Mark Wood but the call to add fourth spinner in Shoaib Bashir or an extra batter in Dan Lawrence will have to wait for now. Lawrence can also double up as a handy off-spinner.

"He's (Robinson) got unbelievable skills to be a successful bowler anywhere in the world. What we've seen in England is he's very skillful, but we've seen more than that in Pakistan.

"It's similar but different here, but the skill he possesses, he can find any movement, and his release point is always going to be dangerous," said Stokes.

So, will Stokes finally wear his bowling cloak? The Durham man remained a bit secretive.

"My knee itself was absolutely fine today bowling. It was just good to push past that 20-minute barrier, which is what I've been working around at the moment. It might be a bit stiff but we'll wait and see," he noted.

following Porto loss LONDON, Feb 22 class on Thursday. Ferdinand. He went on Speaking to TNT (Agencies): Former to say that Porto were

Arsenal looked a shadow of themselves, says Rio Ferdinand

Manchester United defender Rio Ferdinand said Arsenal looked a shadow of themselves during their loss against Porto in the first leg of their round of 16 tie in the UEFA Champions League. Porto beat Arsenal 1-0 at the Estadio do Dragao on Thursday, February 22.

A late goal from Brazilian winger Galeno sealed the win for Porto in the first leg of their round of 16 tie against Arsenal. The Gunners were not allowed a single shot on target as the Portuguese side put on a defensive master-

Sport after the match, Ferdinand said Arsenal looked a shadow of themselves. Arsenal came into the game against Porto, having scored 11 goals in their last two matches in the

"In open play Arsenal looked a shadow of themselves in the last couple of games we've seen of them and that shows you. That was against respectively West Ham out of form and Burnley, this is Porto, this is the Champions League knockout stages, a very different setting altogether," said

Premier League.

spot on tactically, insisting that the Gunners were not clinical. Arsenal had most of the possession in the first leg but failed to break down Porto's defence. "But tactically Porto got

it spot on. They were saying to Arsenal you're not going to go through the middle, you're going to have to go around and set-pieces are going to be your only route to goal and they weren't clinical in any capacity," Ferdinand added.

The former England centre-back said Arsenal would have been happy with a goalless draw in



the first leg. The second leg between Arsenal and Porto will be played at the Emirates Stadium in London on March 14.

"I think they would have been happy with a 0-0 after the way the game panned out but this is the level we're at. When you get to knockout football in the Champions League, this is the

top level. You have to approach these games right and if you make mistakes and give the ball away cheaply at this level you get punished," said Ferdinand.

Following their loss against Porto, Arsenal will take on Newcastle United in the Premier League on Sunday, February 25.

Fast bowlers have done a world of good: Gill

RANCHI, Feb 22 (Agencies): The pitches might not have been entirely in their favour, but the Indian pacers' ability to strike at vital situations has made a sea of difference, batter Shubman Gill reckoned.

The four spinners — R Ashwin (11), Ravindra Jadeja (12), Kuldeep Yadav (8) and Axar Patel (5) — together have taken 36 wickets across three matches as compared to 22 by pacers so far.

So, the numbers might be favouring the tweakers, but Gill said the pacemen bowled well according to the conditions to keep their side ahead.

"Wherever we play in India, wickets help spinners a bit. Ash bhai (R Ashwin) and Jaddu bhai (Ravindra Jadeja) will take wickets anyway, but the way our fast bowlers have bowled, it has made the difference in this series," said Gill.

However, India will be without Jasprit Bumrah as the premier pacer has been given rest. He has so far taken



17 wickets from three Tests to lead the chart for India.

But Gill said the other Indian pacers have enough experience in these conditions to make an impact, citing the example of Mohammed Siraj's fourwicket haul at Rajkot.

"If a player in the class of Boom bhai is not playing, any team will miss him, especially since he leads our fast-bowling attack. But, Siraj also took four wickets in crucial times in the last match," he said

Massive T20 Record ISLAMABAD. Feb 22 During the first three (Agencies): Pakistan games of the series,

Babar Azam Surpasses Virat Kohli, Chris Gayle To Register

star Babar Azam on Wednesday surpassed the likes of Chris Gayle and Virat Kohli to become the fastest batter to reach the milestone of 10.000 T20 runs. He is the fastest to achieve the feat in terms of all - innings, matches and time taken. Babar raced to the landmark during his 72-run knock in his team Peshawar Zalmi's seven-wicket defeat to Karachi Kings in Pakistan Super League. Ahead of the game in Lahore, Babar was only six short of the 10,000-run mark. Babar got there in 271 innings, 281 matches, and 11

years and 82 days



West Indies legend Gayle reached the milestone in 285 innings, 290 matches, and 11 years and 215 days. Meanwhile, star India batter Kohli achieved it in 299 innings, 314 matches, and 14 years and 176 days

Former Pakistan team director Mohammad Hafeez recently disclosed details about the conversation he had with star batters Babar and Mohammad Rizwan during the recently concluded T20I series against New Zealand.

Pakistan avoided a whitewash during the five-match T20I series by registering a 42-run victory in the final game to end their tour on 4-1.

Babar showed glimpses of returning to his peak after going through a barren run in last year's World Cup and the Test series against Australia.

Against the Kiwis, the experienced batter registered scores of 57, 66 and 58. Overall in the series, he amassed 213 runs at an average of 42.6.

Hafeez opened up about the conversation he had with Babar during which he stressed the importance of contribution from each player which plays a major role in the

team's achievements. "You are a great player, you are a wonderful player, and you are playing great cricket; however, you have to develop the Pakistan team," Hafeez said in an interview, as quoted from Geo News.

The former team director suggested Rizwan and Babar embrace positional changes. He went on to reveal that he appreciated Babar's talent and potential but urged him to play at the number three spot rather than opening for the team.

"We need to develop a team, and for that, I want you to come at number three because you have been playing this role in the ODI cricket for the last six years," Hafeez added.



Grand Shobha Yatra taking out on the eve of Guru Ravidass Jayanti in Jammu on Thursday.

Pic by AMAN SHARMA

Principal of GGM Science College releases books authored by College faculty

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22: In a simple yet impressive ceremony, Dr. Rajesh Gupta, Principal of GGM Science College Jammu in presence of faculty of Chemistry department, today released three books authored by a group of faculty members of the Department of Chemistry comprising of Dr. Ashaq Hussain, Dr. Mukhtyar Singh Saini, and Dr. Sukhdeep Singh Sasan

While divulging the details Dr. Ashaq Hussain, the primary author of the books, shared insights into the books, emphasizing their significance in light of the changes

brought about by the implementation of NEP 2020. He highlighted Dr. Ashaq further the challenges faced by students and teach-

new skill courses. The books aim to address these challenges by providing updated and comprehensive study material, serving as valuable references

for both teachers and

ers in adapting to the

revised curriculum and

students, facilitating efficient and successful academic journeys.

added that the content of the books is meticulously crafted to align with the syllabi prescribed by various universities, ensuring relevance and applicability to the needs of the students.

Dr. M. S. Saini, anoth-

expressed gratitude to the Principal for recognizing the work of

He emphasized the potential benefits of these books to students, stating that they will significantly aid in their studies and contribute to their academic suc-

authors.

He further underscored the role of these books in supporting students and educators to navigate the educational landscape in line with the evolving academic requirements.

While congratulating the authors of the books, Dr. Rajesh Gupta, Principal GGM Science College said that these books mark commendable efforts by the authors to enhance the educational experience for both faculty and students, aligning with the goals set by the National Education Policy 2020.

Dr. Gupta further emphasized that this contribution will not only enhance the authors' profiles but also positively impact the col-

BADC demands Additional **Hostels for ST students**

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 22: Jammu and Kashmir Border Area Development Conference (JK-BADC), a registered organization working for the welfare of border residents of J&K has urged the J&K administration to establish additional hostels for Schedule Tribe Students in J&K as the number of tribal students has increased after the inclusion of Gadda Brahmin, Pahari Ethnic tribe, Koli and Paddari community in the schedule list of tribal communities.

The organization in its appeal has stated that after the gazette notifi-



tion (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 2024, now the tribal population of J&K has increased manifold thus it is imperative that the number of Tribal hostels for ST students be increased proportion-

Dr Shazad Ahmed Malik, Chairman of the BADC and former Vice Chancellor said that as the new academic sesto begin within a few week's time thus the Jammu and Kashmir government must take initiative and set up new hostels for the students belonging to tribal community.

Dr Shazad also urged Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor and Atal Dulloo, the Chief Secretary of J&K to ensure that the students of the recently included tribal communities are provided all the benefits available to STs under the constitution of India.

The former VC emphasized that the necessary directions by the respective departments be issued without any delay so that innocent ST students do not

GDC Kathua felicitates NSS volunteer Keshav Sambyal

Top News Report

KATHUA, Feb 22: Principal GDC, Kathua Prof Seema Mir felicitated NSS Volunteer Keshav Sambyal who

and Sports Govt of India took the mega initiative of hosting the National Youth Convention at National Youth Festival 2024.

The volunteers from

The participating volunteer today met with Principal GDC, Kathua and shared his experience. Principal Prof. Seema Mir congratulated him for being a part of this



participated in National Youth Convention at 27th National Youth Festival 2024 held at Nasik Maharashtra w.e.f 12th- 16 January 2024.

In an effort to spread the message of Unity in Diversity among the youth of the country, Ministry of Youth Affairs different States and Union Territories of India participated in the National youth Festival. Keshav Sambyal represented Gdc Kathua

in the 27th National Youth Festival 2024. During this convention, he got a chance to visit historical places in Nashik Maharashtra.

National Youth Convention and representing this prestigious institute at National level. She also appreciated the efforts of NSS program officers Prof Dr Kulbir Singh, Dr Pinkey and Prof. Arvind Kumar for preparing volunteers for selection in these camps.

National Workshop on Curriculum Planning and Course design held at SMVDU

Top News Report

KATRA, Feb 22: In a bid to provide courses in line with changing industry needs and NEP 2020, a National Workshop on Curriculum Planning and Course Design was hosted by the School of Mechanical Engineering at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University under the chairmanship of Prof. Pragati Kumar (Vice Chancellor,

SMVDU). The workshop focused on refining course curricula to reflect industry evolution, integrating innovation and technology in educational frameworks, embracing the principles of NEP 2020 in curriculum development.

The workshop featured insights from distinguished academic and industry leaders with varied expertise. With the rapidly evolving landscape of technology and industry demands, the workshop



porary industry needs. Experts engaged in robust discussions, sharing insights, best practices, and experiences in curriculum development and pedagogical approaches. The academic experts who deliberated during the workshop include Prof. Deepak Kumar, Head, Centre for Automotive Research, IIT Delhi, Prof. Niraj Sinha, Mechanical Engineering Department, IIT Kanpur,

Prof. Harpreet Singh, Mechanical Engineering Department, IIT Ropar, Prof. Subash Chander, Mechanical Engineering Department, NIT Jalandhar and Dr. Durai Prabhakaran, Mechanical Engineering Department, IIT Jammu.

The industry experts included Amrendra Kumar, Country General Manager and Whole Time Director, Winoa Abrasives India Private Limited and Ashwani Koul, Maruti Suzuki Pvt. Ltd who provided their inputs to revamp the course curriculum in line with the changing needs of the industry and NEP 2020.

Prof. Pragati Kumar, Vice Chancellor, SMVDU spoke about the NEP2020 implementation at SMVDU and the flexibility being offered to the students. Prof. Balbir Singh, Dean of Academic Affairs, SMVDU spoke about the need for the minor and honors degrees being offered by the School of Mechanical Engineering. Prof. M. Eswaramoorthy, Head SME also spoke at the occasion. During the

day long discussions included proposals to offer minor and honors degrees at UG level in areas of 3D printing, Robotics, Automation, and Biomechanical.

Also, discussion on the proposal to offer M.Tech in Smart Manufacturing by the School of Mechanical Engineering was also held. Dr. Ankush Raina (Assistant Professor, SME) carried out the proceedings of the event and Prof. Ankush Anand delivered the formal vote of thanks.

The workshop was organized jointly by Dr. Ankush Raina (Assistant Professor, SME), Dr. Mir Irfan UI Haq (Assistant Professor, SME), Prof. Ankush Anand, SME, Dr. Sanjay Mohan (Assistant Professor, SME). B.K. Bhatia (TPO, SMVDU), Er. Deepak Byotra (Superintendent Workshop) and all faculty members of SoME also attended the day-long workshop.

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