

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, SATURDAY, MARCH 02, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



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BRIEFLY

Editor-in-Chief Subah Kashmir passes away

SRINAGAR, Mar 2 (Agencies): Senior journalist and Editor-in-Chief daily Subah Kashmir Nazir Ahmad Wani passed away after prolonged illness on Saturday.

He was suffering from kidney ailment from past several years and breathed his last at SKIMS Soura today.

A resident of Peerbagh Srinagar, Wani was known for his philanthropic outlook in public circles of Jammu and Kashmir.

People from several walks of life expressed solidarity with the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul.

Labourer found dead in Kulgam

SRINAGAR, Mar 2 (Agencies): A 25-year-old labourer was found dead under suspicious circumstances in south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Saturday morning.

The deceased, identified as Suheel Ahmad Guroo resident of Redwani Payeen, was found hanging in his residential house.

He was rushed to a nearby hospital where doctors pronounced him dead on arrival.

A police officer said a case has been registered and an investigation is currently underway.

Heavy rains damage four houses in Kishtwar

SRINAGAR, Mar 2 (Agencies): Four residential houses sustained partial damage due to heavy rains in Kishtwar district on Saturday morning.

Three residential houses were partially damaged in Mughal-aidan, while one house was also affected in the Pathimhall area of Kishtwar district, sources said.

However, no loss of life or injuries were reported in the incident.

A police officer said that upon receiving information about the incident, a team promptly rushed to the site to assess the damages. "All residents of the affected houses are being relocated to safer locations amid the ongoing rainy weather."

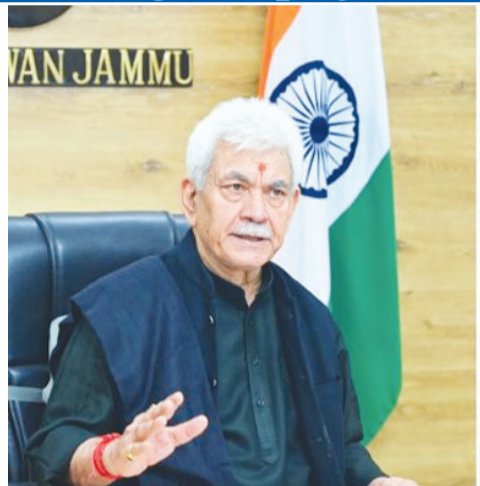
LG Sinha addresses closing ceremony of Rotary Club's week-long mega health camp in Poonch and Rajouri

More than 600 surgeries performed during the week-long health camp

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today virtually addressed the closing ceremony of the Mega Health Camp organized by Rotary Club in Poonch and Rajouri.

The Lt Governor lauded the significant contribution of the highly-trained specialists from different parts of the country in providing a full range of surgical



treatment options and performing more than 600 surgeries during the week-long health camp in the border districts and benefitting the people of the far-flung areas.

"I salute our Doctors and Rotary Club members for their dedicated and selfless service to the people," the Lt Governor said.

He also appreciated the Health department

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Article 21 Soul of Constitution, Liberty of Citizen Paramount, says SC

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (Agencies): The Supreme Court has said that Article 21 is the soul of the Constitution as the liberty of a citizen is of paramount importance and the High Court not expeditiously adjudicating matters related to it would deprive a person of this precious right.

A bench of Justice B R Gavai and Justice Sandeep Mehta made the observation after noting that the Bombay

High Court has granted bail to one Amol Vithal Vahile, a prime accused in the murder of a corporator in Maharashtra, after a nudge from the apex court on January 29.

The bench, in its recent order, said it is thus clear that before the order was passed by this court on January 29, 2024, the high court instead of deciding the application for bail on merits shunted it on one or the other

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LG Manoj Sinha attends 'Herath Milan Samaroh' in Jammu



Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha attended the 'Herath Milan Samaroh' organised by 'Youth All India Kashmiri Samaj', in Jammu today.

The Lt Governor extend-

ed his felicitations to the people on the occasion. He appreciated the 'Youth All India Kashmiri Samaj' for working towards the welfare of the people of J&K for over two decades and reconnecting future generations of the community with their roots.

He said the UT Administration, under the guidance of Hon'ble Prime Minister, is working with the resolve of 'Vikas Bhi Virasat Bhi'.

Mahashivratri, which is celebrated as 'Herath' by Kashmiri Pandit community is an integral part of our rich cultural and spiritual heritage. May the festival usher in happiness, prosperity and well-being of all, he said.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor felicitated Dr B N Thusoo and Advocate Sunil Sethi with Gash Taruk Award 2024.

R K Bhat, President

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Man dies of suffocation, several others fall unconscious in Ramban

BANIHAL, Mar 2 (Agencies): One person died while several others reportedly got unconscious due to suffocation in Dachan area of Gool sub-division in Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday.

The unconscious persons have been shifted to SDH Gool and DH Ramban.

A police official said the incident took place at a marriage function in

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Jammu-Srinagar National Highway blocked by multiple landslides

JAMMU, Mar 2 (Agencies): Multiple landslides triggered by incessant rains blocked the strategic Jammu-Srinagar national highway on Saturday.

Officials said that multiple landslides triggered by incessant rains between Banihal and Ramban sectors have blocked the Srinagar-Jammu highway.

"No traffic will be allowed on the highway on Saturday. Landslide

clearance operation will start once the rain stops in the area," officials said.

He said that due to bad patches in some places, only one-way traffic was allowed on this highway for the last one week.

Meanwhile, heavy snowfall continues to block the Srinagar-Leh, Mughal Road, Sinthan-Kishtwar, Bandipora-Gurez and Kupwara-Tangdhar roads.

J&K Govt orders minor reshuffle in Administration

JAMMU, Mar 2 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Saturday ordered transfers and postings in the administration

According to an order by the GAD in this regard, Surbhi Raina, Jr. Scale JKAS, Under Secretary in the J&K Services Selection Board, is transferred and posted as Under Secretary in the office of Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, J&K.

Ashiq Rafiq Malik, Jr. Scale JKAS, under orders of posting in the Auqaf Islamia, J&K, is transferred and his services are placed at the disposal of Information Department, for further posting.

Anil Charak, Tehsildar, awaiting orders of adjustment in the office of Financial Commissioner Revenue, J&K, is transferred and his services are placed at the disposal of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, on deputation basis, for further posting.

Incessant Rains Drench Plains In J&K, 1.3-Ft Fresh Snowfall In Gulmarg

SRINAGAR, Mar 2 (Agencies): Incessant spell of rains drenched plains while higher reaches including Gulmarg recorded fresh snowfall, officials said on Saturday.

A meteorological department official said that in 24 hours till 0830 hours today, Srinagar received 20.5mm of rain, Qazigund 45.4mm, Pahalgam 27.5mm (0.8cms), Kupwara 16.6mm (2 cms of snowfall), Kokernag 30.4mm,

Jammu 6.7mm, Banihal 74.4.2mm, Batote 41.9mm, Katra 9.0mm and Bhandarwah 55.4.0mm while Gulmarg recorded 38.1 cms (around 1.3-ft) of snowfall.

He said Srinagar recorded a minimum of 2.0°C against previous night's 4.5°C. It was below normal by 0.2°C for the summer capital of J&K for this time of the year, the MeT official said.

Qazigund recorded

a minimum of 1.8°C against 2.4°C on the previous night and it was 0.9°C above normal for the gateway town of Kashmir, he said.

Pahalgam recorded a low of 0.5°C against 1.3°C on the previous night and it was 2.8°C above normal for the famous resort in south Kashmir.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, recorded a minimum of 1.6°C against 2.3°C on the previous night and it was

0.7°C above normal, the official said.

Kupwara town recorded a low of minus 0.3°C against 2.3°C on the previous night and it was 0.3°C below normal there, the official said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 2.0°C and minus 3.6°C on the previous night. The temperature was above normal by 3.0°C for the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir.

Jammu, he said,

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One killed after tanker collides with hillside in Udhampur

JAMMU, Mar 2 (Agencies): One person was killed after a tanker collided with the hillside on Jammu Srinagar National Highway in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur, police said on Saturday.

According to the police, the accident happened near Moud Passi

on Jammu Srinagar National Highway

"The dead body of the deceased has been shifted to mortuary of associated hospital, Government Medical College Udhampur for autopsy. Further investigation is under way," the Udhampur police said.

Rooftops damaged as gusty winds wreak havoc in Ramban, south Kashmir

SRINAGAR, Mar 2 (Agencies): The rooftops of several residential houses and schools buildings have been blown up as gusty winds wreaked havoc in Ramban and Anantnag districts of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday.

Reports said that gusty winds wreaked havoc in many areas of Banihal and Ramsoo sub-divisions in Ramban district since last night.

They said that rooftop of High School Kumla Trigam in Khari tehsil was torn off by strong



winds, while in Chaka Sarbagni in Ramsoo, rooftop of several houses have been damaged due to strong winds.

They also said that res-

idential houses of Nazir Ahmad Zargar and Nasrullah Katoch have been severely damaged due to the storm.

Many vehicles parked on roads in Khari tehsil

were hit by falling trees, causing damages.

As per images shared on social media, rooftops of several residential houses were damaged due to windstorm in Verinag area of Anantnag district.

Pertinently, the Meteorological Department in its fresh weather advisory had said that few places in Jammu and Kashmir may experience thunder, lightning, hailstorm accompanied by gusty winds with 30-40 KMPH speed during 1st and 2nd March.

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9419143503

TENTH DAY KRIYA

"THE LIGHT HAS GONE OUT OF OUR LIVES BUT THE AFFECTION & CARE YOU SHOWERED UPON US SHALL BRIGHTEN OUR HEARTS FOREVER."

KARAMYOGI SH. TRILOKI NATH DHAR (PAPA JI), S/O LATE SHRI SONA JOO DHAR (RESIDENT OF THAJIWARA, BIJBHARA, KASHMIR, AT PRESENT G-18, GALI NO.11, PREM NAGAR, NAJAFGARH, NEW DELHI-43) AFTER FULFILLING HIS EARTHLY RESPONSIBILITIES LEFT TO SERVE THE LOTUS FEET OF SHRI HARI VISHNU ON 24TH FEBRUARY 2024.

TENTH DAY KRIYA WILL BE HELD ON 4TH MARCH 2024 (MONDAY) AT ROHINI GHAT, SECTOR 16, NEAR MTNL OFFICE, BADLI ROAD AT 9:30 AM.

DEEPLY GRIEF STRICKEN:

SMT. MOHINI DHAR (WIFE)

DAUGHTERS & SONS- IN-LAW

1. RAJNI PANDITA, ASHOK PANDITA

2. JAYA KOUL, AVTAR KRISHAN KOUL

3. JEETA PANDITA, VEER JI PANDITA

MOTI LAL DHAR, JYOTI DHAR, SACHIN DHAR, MADHU RAINA



KARAMYOGI SH. TRILOKI NATH DHAR (PAPA JI)

SAMAST DHAR, PANDITA, KOUL & TIKOO PARIVAR
PH.NO. 8178181868, 9868630627

10TH DAY KRIYA

Venue : Haridwar

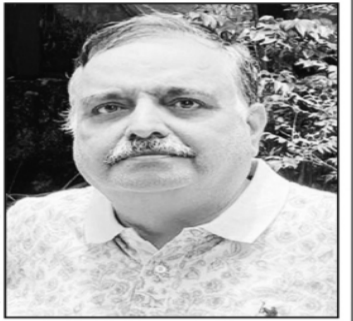
With profound grief & sorrow, we regret to inform the unfortunate and sad demise of respected **Shri. Romi Ganju** Son of Smt. Kaushalya Ganju and Late Sh. Jawahar Lal Ganju original resident of Ganjoo House Lane, Raghunath Mandir, 2/3 Bridge Habba Kadal, Sgr. Kashmir & permanently residing at Dehradun on 24th February 2024 in Delhi.

10TH DAY KRIYA will take place on 4th March 2024 at Haridwar, followed by 11th & 12th day in Bhatt Sabha Haridwar.

GRIEF STRICKEN :

GANJU'S : 8130155461, 9149423011

KOUL'S : 9419795107, 9419181954



Shri. Romi Ganju

AKHAND PATH

In the loving memory of our beloved **Late Dr. Deedar Singh** who left for heavenly abode on 09-04-2023, Akhand Path will be held on 1st Mar at Gurudwara Pritam Bala Trikuta Nagar as per following program

ARAMBH SRI AKHAND PATH on 01-03-24 at 10.30 AM.

Bhog Sri Akhand Path 03-03-24 at 10 AM

KIRTAN 10.30 AM to 12 Noon followed by **Guru Ka Langer.**

Ranjeet Kour - **Wife**

Daughter In Law and Son 9419190497

Bhupinderjit Kour and Dr Inderpal Singh (BAWA)

Daughter and Son In Law

Dr. Hardeep Kour and Mehnaz Singh

Brothers and Bhabhis



LATE DR. DEEDAR SINGH

TENTH DAY/SHANTI PATH

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of **Shri Piaray Lal Raina** S/o Dwarka Nath Raina originally from Jawahar Nagar Srinagar presently H.No. 59-A, Sector-2, Pamposh Colony, Janipur.

Tenth Day will be performed at Akhnoor Ghat on 3-3-2024 (Sunday). **Assembly and Shanti Path** will be held at Shiv Shakti Mandir Pamposh Colony Sector-1, Janipur from 3 PM to 4 PM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Jaya Raina - **Wife**

Rakesh Raina - **Son**

Reeta Raina - **Daughter**

Sushant Upadhyay - **Son-in-law**

Satva Upadhyay - **Grand Son**

Raina & Chaloo

9867756789, 9810506575



SHRI PIARAY LAL RAINA

10TH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief we regret to inform the sad demise of **Smt. Uma Shori Lidoo**, W/o Late Pushkar Nath Lidoo presently living in Panchkula, Haryana. The **10TH DAY KRIYA** will be held at Gaggar Gath, Panchkula on 05.03.24 between 9:30-10:30 AM

GRIEF STRICKEN

Chaman Lal Lidoo (**Brother in Law**)

Ratna Lidoo (**Sister in Law**)

7973542737, 7009319949



SMT. UMA SHORI LIDOO

ॐ नमः शिवाय

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved father, grandfather and loving husband **Shri Ashwani Kumar Gupta Ji (Retd. Executive Engineer)** resident of 114/9, Chowk Chabutra, Udhampur. He departed peacefully for his heavenly abode on 23/2/2024.

The **10th Day** will be performed on 3rd March 2024 (Sunday) at Mahajan hall, Sheeta Mata Mandir Road, Chowk Chabutra, Udhampur between 11:00 AM and 12:00 PM.

GRIEF STRICKEN:

Smt. Swarna Gupta - **Wife**

Smt. Tara Vaid, W/o. Lt. Sh. Bhagwan Das Vaid - **Sister**

Smt. Kanta & Sh. Amrit Lal Gupta - **Sister & Brother-in-Law**

Smt. Sunita Bucha, W/o. Lt. Sh. Vijay Bucha - **Sister-in-Law**

Dr. Aman Kalra & Dr. Aarti Kalra - **Son-in-Law & Daughter**

Mrs. Nitu & Mr. Amit Gupta - **Daughter-in-Law & Son**

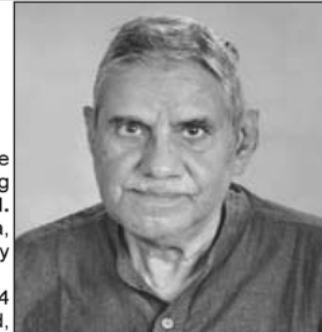
Mrs. Isha & Mr. Ashish Rishi - **Daughter-in-Law & Son**

Mrs. Nidhi & Mr. Vineet Bucha - **Daughter-in-Law & Son**

Mrs. Pragati & Mr. Vivek Bucha - **Daughter-in-Law & Son**

Grand Children:

Riti, Vatsal, Ananya, Aadiya, Aarav, Ishaan, Vania and Mira



Shri Ashwani Kumar Gupta Ji (Retd Executive Engineer)

Mobile : 9819272763, 9916138010

BHOG & ANTIM ARDAS

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and peaceful demise of our beloved **Sdn. Updesh Kour** W/o S. Kirpal Singh Wazir R/o H.No 45 Sec.2 near Gurdwara Singh Shaba Nanak Nagar Jammu, who left for her heavenly abode on 24 February 2024.

"BHOG & ANTIM ARDAS: shall be performed as per the following scheduled programme:

ARAMBH SHRI AKHAND PATH SAHIB at our residence on Saturday (02-03-2024) at 9:00 AM.

BHOG SHRI AKHAND PATH SAHIB: at our residence on Monday (04-03-2024) at 9:00 AM.

KIRTAN & ANTIM ARDAS: at Gurudwara Fateh Singh Gandhi Nagar JAMMU on Monday (04-03-2024) from 11:00AM to 12:30 Pm.

FOLLOWED BY 'GURU KA LANGAR'.

Deeply mourned by family, and relatives

S. Kirpal Singh Wazir (**Husband**)

SON & DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

DR SARTAJ SINGH WAZIR & SDR. TARANJEET KOUR WAZIR

DAUGHTER AND SON IN LAWS

MANMEET KOUR (NEW FASHION HUT) & DAVINDER PAL SINGH (SHUNTY)

MANINDER KOUR & DR.SARTAJ SINGH

MOBILE NO: 9419190920 © 9797605798



SDN. UPDESH KOUR

ONE YEAR REMEMBRANCE

ਮਰਨ ਲਿਖਾਇ ਮੰਡਲ ਮਹਿ ਆਏ
ਕਿਉ ਰੀਐ ਚਲਣਾ ਪਰਖਾਇ

"With their death already preordained, mortals come into this world. How can they remain here? They have to go to the world beyond"

Shri Akhand Path Sahib IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR BELOVED S. AMARDEEP SINGH

Arambh Shri Akhand Path

Friday, 1st March 2024 at 10:00 am

Bhog Shri Akhand Path

Sunday 3rd March 2024 at 10:00 am

Shabad Kirtan - 10:00 am- 12:00 pm

Followed by Guru Ka Langar

at His residence

Dashmesh Nagar Digiana, Jammu



S. AMARDEEP SINGH

Bereaved Family (9906067825)

MASWAR & VAHARWAR

One year has passed since you left us for your journey to heavenly abode. Our heart still can't accept that you are not with us anymore. You lived a noble, honest and graceful life and you continue to be remembered for your love compassion, care and kindness for all. The void you left can never be filled. We know that your love and blessings will always shower on us. We pray to God to grant eternal peace to your noble soul.

Maswar & Vaharwar of our beloved **Smt. Shanta Raina** W/o Sh. S.N. Raina R/o 40-A, Patoli, Jammu is being performed on 03.03.2024 and 04.03.2024 respectively at our residence.

YOU ARE DEEPLY MISSED & REMEMBERED BY ALL OF US

Raina's and all near and dear one's.

Contact No.: 6005955367, 9596628642



Smt. Shanta Raina (Pyari Ji)

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW, WE INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED **SH. SANDEEP KUMAR** S/O LATE SH MOHAN LAL SHARMA R/O WARD NO 5, HOUSE NO 55, NEAR RAGHUNATH MANDIR, KATRA LEFT FOR HIS HEAVENLY ABODE ON 23/02/2024

10TH DAY WILL BE PERFORMED ON 03/03/2024 (SUNDAY) AT RAGHUNATH MANDIR, KATRA AT 11:00 AM.

KRIYA WILL BE PERFORMED ON 04/03/2024 (MONDAY) AT RAGHUNATH MANDIR, KATRA AT 12 NOON.

GRIEF STRICKEN

SMT. SHAKUNTALA DEVI (MOTHER)

SMT. GEETA DEVI & SH. VIJAY KUMAR (SISTER-IN-LAW & BROTHER)

SMT. RAJNI DEVI & SH. RAJEEV KUMAR (SISTER-IN-LAW & BROTHER)

SMT. MANJU DEVI W/O SH. AJAY KUMAR PADHA JI (SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW)

SMT. SEEMA DEVI W/O SH. SURESH KUMAR JI (SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW)

HARI ARYA, SANAT SHARMA, RIDHI, SHERAY, SANA, RUDRA, NAVYA, NITYA (CHILDREN)

CONTACT: 09797331155, 06005036012



SH. SANDEEP KUMAR

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

With grief agony & sorrow, we inform that **Smt. Roopkali Magotra** W/o Lt. Sh. Rameshwar Magotra (Munnu Shah) departed for the heavenly abode on 22nd Feb. 2024.

Tenth Day shall be performed at 11.30 AM on 2nd March, 2024 (Saturday) at Shiv Mandir Housing Colony Udhampur.

Kriya shall be performed on 3rd March 2024 (Sunday) at Devika Ghat Udhampur.

GRIEF STRICKEN :

Smt. Shakti Devi & Sh. Ashwani Magotra

(**Daughter-in-law & Son**)

Smt. Anu magotra & Sh. Rakesh Magotra (**Daughter-in-law & Son**)

Smt. Pooja Sharma & Surinder Magotra (**Daughter-in-law & Son**)

Smt. Bhawana Sharma & Pramod Sharma (**Daughter & Son-in-law**)

Grand Children: Aditya, Akarshit, Rakshit, Divyansh, Kavish, Krushna, Swastika & Amolika

Mobile : 7006389589, 9682525922



Smt. Roopkali Magotra

REMEMBRANCE**6TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY**

NOT A DAY GOES BY WITHOUT FEELING THE VOID YOUR ABSENCE CREATED IN OUR LIFE. WE MISS YOUR LOVE AND GUIDANCE IMMENSELY. BUT WE CARRY YOUR MEMORIES IN OUR HEARTS. WE CHERISH ALL THE MOMENTS WE SHARED AND PERPETUALLY STRIVE TO LIVE BY THE LESSONS YOU TAUGHT US. ALL OF US MISS YOU PROFOUNDLY.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF S. HARMINDER SINGH (MANGU)

DEEPLY REMEMBERED BY:

JASMEET KOUR

MAJOR GAGAN JYOT SINGH

SANCHAN KOUR

MANPREET KOUR

SANKALP KAMAL

(WIFE)

(SON)

(DAUGHTER-IN-LAW)

(DAUGHTER)

(SON-IN-LAW)



S. Harminder Singh (Mangu)

10TH DAY/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **Sh. Ravi Kumar Sharma (Retd B.S.N.L)** S/o Lt. Sh. Ram Saran R/o 251 Sarwal Last Morh Jammu left for heavenly abode on 22-02-2024.

TENTH DAY will be performed at 11 AM on 2nd March 2024 Saturday at our residence H. No 251 Sarwal Last Morh Jammu

UTHALA/RASAM PAGRI will be performed from 4 PM to 5 PM on 4 March 2024 Monday at Shiv Mandir Last Morh Sarwal.

GRIEF STRICKEN

BROTHERS AND BHABHIS

Sh. Harjot Sharma & Smt. Birma Devi

Sh. Li Subash Sharma & Smt. Rajni Sharma

SISTER AND BROTHER IN LAW

Smt. Pushpa Devi & Late Sh. Gopal Sharma

Daughter & Son-in-law

Sh. Sandeep Sharma

Smt. Richa Sharma & Sh. Vipul Ball

SONS & DAUGHTER IN LAWS

Sh. Bij Mohan Sharma & Rajni Sharma

Sh. Chandar Mohan Sharma & Smt. Supriya Sharma

Sh. Shiv Kumar & Shikha Sharma

Sh. Mohit Sharma & Smt. Shobha Sharma

Sharma Family

MOBILE NO: 9419177796, 9419290816



Sh. Ravi Kumar Sharma (Retd B.S.N.L)

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Prof. Sukhdev Singh Sambyal** S/o Late Col. Bilas Dev Singh Sambyal R/o Indira Nagar, opposite SBI, Udhampur.

TENTH DAY will be performed at 11:30 am on Saturday the 2nd of March 2024 at Bhatiya Vidya Mandir School, Indira Nagar, Opposite SBI, Udhampur (adjacent to their residence).

KRIYA will be performed on Tuesday the 5th of March 2024 at Devika Ghat, Udhampur.

Grief Stricken:

Smt. Sudesh Sambyal (Wife)

Smt. Santhosh Rathour (Sister)

Sons and Daughter-in-law:

Rajeev Rathour & Viveka Rathour

Shashank Sambyal & Shaluu

Shishir Sambyal & Kukilla

Daughter & Son in Law:

Nestuu Sain & Ashok Sain

Grand Children: Sukanya, Akshita, Samaira, Shreenika & Samar

MOBILE NO: 8334056787/9999386131



PROF. SUKHDEV SINGH SAMBYAL

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

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Kriya shall be performed on 3rd March 2024 (Sunday) at Devika Ghat Udhampur.

GRIEF STRICKEN :

Smt. Shakti Devi & Sh. Ashwani Magotra

(**Daughter-in-law & Son**)

Smt. Anu magotra & Sh.

Gaurav calls on LG Sinha, advocates for development of Jammu region's growth & prosperity

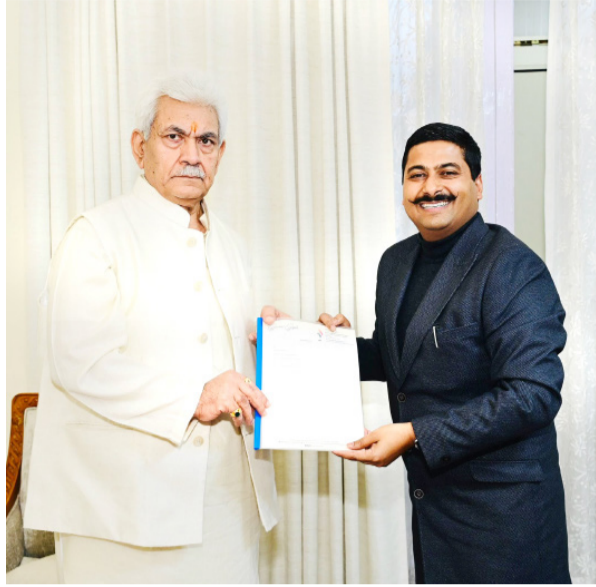
Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: Gaurav Gupta, Secretary of Jammu Club and former General Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, held a significant meeting with the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha and discussed various critical issues pertinent to the Jammu region's growth and prosperity.

In a memorandum submitted to the Lieutenant Governor, Gaurav Gupta conveyed his sincere appreciation for the remarkable progress witnessed in the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory under his visionary leadership. Highlighting the transformative initiatives undertaken by the administration, including the establishment of new industrial estates, prestigious institutions such as IIT and AIIMS, and the expansion of vital infrastructure projects, he commended the Lieutenant Governor's unwavering commitment to the betterment of the region.

Raising concern over some serious issues during the meeting, Gaurav Gupta emphasized the need to address hurdles faced by entrepreneurs in tourism development projects due to unwarranted imposition of Change of Land Use (CLU) charges.

He apprised the Lt Governor that the Jammu and Kashmir Tourism



Department has strategically identified regions such as Jammu, Reasi, Katra, Pancheri, and several others for tourism development initiatives. The recent tendering process initiated by the government to engage private entities, both local and outside from J&K, in the development of these tourism-centric regions.

However, despite these positive strides, they are faced with a concerning issue hindering the progress of these projects. Specifically, some authorities are impeding the smooth execution of initiatives by imposing unwarranted hurdles under the guise of Change of Land Use (CLU) regulations which was not earlier mentioned in Notice Inviting Tender (NIT). He emphasized that the land allocated to the bidders is on a lease

basis. Consequently, the imposition of CLU charges, typically applicable in cases involving ownership rights of land, is unwarranted and unjustifiable or may be the issue of oversight, he added.

To ensure the seamless implementation of these vital tourism projects and to foster a conducive environment for entrepreneurial growth, he sought intervention of Lt Governor to the authorities concerned to adhere to the principles of 'Ease of Doing Business'.

Gaurav Gupta raised concerns regarding the disparity in promoting tourism potential sites between the Jammu and Kashmir regions on official social media handles of the J&K Tourism Department. He said that the main objective of official social media handle of Jammu & Kashmir

Tourism Department is to promote the tourism potential sites of Jammu and Kashmir regions equally with a sole aim to increase the footfall of tourists in the Union Territory. But it predominantly promoting the Kashmir province only and deliberately neglecting the tourism potential sites of Jammu region.

"If the social media handle of J&K Tourism Department remains solely focused on Kashmir, then the inclusion of 'J' in the social media handle loses its purpose," he questioned.

To address this disparity, the government should instruct the authorities managing the official J&K Tourism official social media handle in Srinagar to share the credentials (rights of handling the page that is User name and Password) with the Jammu tourism authorities so that they can have equal opportunities to promote the tourism sites of the Jammu region on J&K Tourism social media platforms as well, he sought.

Gaurav Gupta lauded the government for hosting annually winter sports competitions in Gulmarg but simultaneously it's crucial to acknowledge the untapped potential of several areas in the Jammu region, including Doda, Bhadarwah, and Kishtwar, which experience heavy snowfall comparable to Gulmarg.

Despite their ideal conditions for winter sports and recreation, these areas remain underdeveloped in terms of infrastructure and promotion.

He urged the Lt Governor to take proactive measures in promoting winter tourism in the Jammu region, including organizing competitions, establishing ski resorts, and marketing these destinations.

He also proposed hosting international-level summits in picturesque areas of Jammu Province, such as Patnitop, to boost tourism and leverage its natural beauty.

Gupta stressed the importance of showcasing Jammu's rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, and economic potential on an international platform to attract investments, tourists, and collaborations.

Gupta also commended the ongoing Artificial Lake project on River Tawi, recognizing its potential in enhancing the aesthetic appeal and recreational opportunities in the region.

Gaurav Gupta expressed his optimism about the bright future of Jammu and Kashmir under the esteemed leadership of the Honorable Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha. He noted with appreciation that the Lieutenant Governor gave a patient hearing to the issues raised by him and assured to diligently address them.

ABVP CUJ announces new unit; Manoj elected as President, Abhishek as Secretary



Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) Central University of Jammu (CUJ) announced new executive council for the session 2024-25 in the presence of State Universities Incharge Mukesh Manhas and SHoDH State Convener Kuljeet Shan.

Manoj Kumar Verma, Student of MBA, Marketing and Supply Chain Management Department elected as Unit President and Abhishek Choudhary, Student of Integrated B.Sc-M.Sc course of Zoology Department elected as Unit Secretary.

Sneh Devi, Devraj Singh, Ujjwal Kumawat, Sawant Srivastava, Neeraj Bagal, Abhinandan Kotwal are elected as Vice-President and Akshit Banyal, Ritik Rajput, Mrityunjay Kumar, Anmol Rasgotra, Shivangi Sharma and Nandani Sharma are elected as Joint Secretaries. Media Convener is Rishi and Co-Convener is Akshay. Social Media Convener is Gorav Singh.

Girls Working Incharge is Simran Sharma and Co-Incharge are Ritika Sharma, Shreya Rai and Palak Singh.

Students For Development (SFD) Convener is Sanchit Sharma and Co-Convener are Parul, Neena and Sheetal. Student For Seva (SFS) Convener is Srishthi Sudershan and Co-Convener are Mahendar Choudhary, Tanu Tripathi and Riya Singh.

Rashtriya Kala Manch Convener is Arshiya and Co-Convener are Gorav Dogra, Sneha Randhawa and Namrata.

Student for Holistic Development of Humanity (SHoDH) Convener is Meenakshi Devi and Co-Convener are Akriti Uppal, Yashasvi Sharma and Rohit Sharma.

Think India Convener is Samarth and Co-Convener are Ansh Sharma, Ayush Modi, Harsh and Dhruv Ghai. Study Circle Incharge is Sidharth Mahajan and Co-Incharge are Rashi, Vivek Kumar and Pallavi Sharma.

Khelo Bharat Convener

is Rahul Singh and Co-Convener are Rupashi, Raj and Rahul Khajuria.

Vishal Sharma is elected as Business School Incharge and Sudhanshu as Community College Incharge.

Department Incharge's are Nirvil Choudhary - Chemistry, Aryan Yadav & Rupali are Incharge & Co-Incharge of Physics, Vikas - Mathematics, Arjun Singh & Ubaid are Incharge & Co-Incharge of MSCM, Saurabh - HRM, Ajay - TTM, Devraj - Molecular Biology, Sujeet Kumar - Economics, Alok and Manish are Incharge & Co-Incharge of Education department respectively.

Piyush Yadav is Boys Hostel - 1 Incharge, Kunal Singh is SPM Boys Hostel Incharge and Hemakshi Singh is Girls Hostel - 1 Incharge.

Executive Members are Diksha Bagal, Abhishek, Rubina, Vansh, Vishal, Shilpa, Anika Verma, Abhishek Singh, Arun Rajwal, Manisha, Sumit Gangwar, Atul Sharma, Kritika, Lohita and Aditya Singh.

2nd Aerosol Winter School MANTHAN-2024 concluded at CUJ



Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: LG Jammu & Kashmir Manoj Sinha inaugurated the 2nd Aerosol Winter School MANTHAN (Minds on Air quality human health & climate Nexus) - 2024 in Central University of Jammu (CUJ) on 26th February 2024.

The 5 days intensive programme was organized by CU Jammu in collaboration with Sindhu Central University, UT of Ladakh and Indian National Young Academy of Science (IN-YAS-INSAS).

In his inaugural speech, the LG stressed upon the participation of all the stakeholders for better air quality in the UT and he congratulated the Vice Chancellor Prof. Sanjeev Jain and the Aerosol Research Group at the Department of Environmental Sciences, CUJ for imparting technical knowledge, intensive training, awareness and an opportunity for capacity building, multi-institutional as well as cross-sectoral collaboration coordination by organizing 2nd Aerosol Winter School.

Inaugural function was graced by Dheeraj Gupta, Addl. Chief Secretary, UT of J&K, Prof. A. P. Dimri, Director Indian Institute of Geomagnetism, Prof. Sachin S Gunthe from IIT Madras and member Academic Council Sindhu Central University and other dignitaries.

Apart from students & scholars from different institutions in Jammu region, participants from around 10 different institutes and universities

(viz. IIT Delhi, IITM, Pune, BHU, PRL Ahmedabad, Central University of Allahabad, Central University of Punjab, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, Kashmir University, Pune University and Jammu University etc.) and scientists from Pollution Control Committees participated and completed this winter school successfully.

Atmospheric Aerosols are complex and have diverse (natural/anthropogenic, primary/secondary and mobile/stationary) sources and multifarious implications on human health, climate and overall ecosystem. Good understanding of the Himalayan climate dynamics is further important to understand the sources and implications of atmospheric aerosols.

Accurate and correct measurements are essential for creating a good database of atmospheric aerosols and for that purpose, fundamental knowledge of aerosol terminologies (PM10, PM2.5 etc.), steps of sample collection, chemical analysis and application of statistical methods is required.

In all, fourteen subject experts namely Prof. A.P. Dimri (IIG, Mumbai), Prof. Sachin Gunthe (IIT Madras), Dr. Manish Joshi (BARC, Mumbai) Prof. Shubha Verma (IIT Kharagpur), Dr. Ashwini Kumar (NIO, Goa), Dr. Narendra Singh (ARIES, Nainital), Prof. Sagnik Dey (IIT Delhi), Dr. G. Pandithurai (IITM, Pune), Prof. Vinoy V. (IIT Bhubaneswar), Dr. Sumit Mishra (NPL, New Delhi), Prof. Kiranmayi (IIT Bhu-

baneswar), Prof. Gufran-Beig (NIAS, Bengaluru), Dr. Ankit Tandon (CU Jammu), and Dr. Shweta Yadav working in various domains of Atmospheric Sciences viz. field measurements, laboratory analysis, and statistical/climate modelling etc. delivered expert lectures on the fundamentals of atmospheric aerosols and their implications on Air Quality, Human Health and Climate.

They also shared recent research findings developed by their respective groups and institutions. Expert lectures were followed by extensive discussions on contemporary topics viz. "Fundamentals of Characteristic Aerosol Properties; Measurement, techniques and Uncertainties", "Basics of the Atmosphere, Air Pollution, Observations and Climate Change in the Himalayas", "Source Apportionment and Emission Inventories studies", "Air Pollution from a Meteorological Perspective", "Measurement Techniques for Atmospheric Aerosols", "Radiative Transfer Modelling and Global Climate Modelling", "Health implications of Air pollution and Understanding of Epidemiological studies", "Role of meteorology in determining Air Pollution", "Effect of Tropical Intra-seasonal Oscillations on Aerosol Distribution Over Indian Region", "Aerosol science & engineering: Laboratory scale to societal applications" and the "Application of advanced AI based Drone Technology to achieve clean air goals".

DIG CRPF Rajesh Dhakerwal visits Exhibition Gatisheel

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: On the second day, DIG CRPF Rajesh Dhakerwal on Saturday visited Gatisheel exhibition and meticulously toured each stall, engaging with officials and expressing their appreciation for initiatives that educate the masses about government policies and schemes.

Addressing the media, he conveyed his admiration for organizing exhibitions that enable youth to comprehend the operations of various government departments.

He expressed his desire for similar exhibitions to take place not only in Jammu but also



across India.

During her media address, Meetu Paul, Director of Prayags Events and Exhibitions, reiterated the organization's dedication to raising awareness among the people of Jammu about the myriad opportunities provided by government departments for societal enhancement. She emphasized the organization's ongoing nationwide efforts to foster public awareness through exhibitions.

The exhibitions will showcase different government department such as Defence Research Development Organization (DRDO), New Space India Limited (NSIL), Indian council of agricultural research (ICAR), Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Geological Survey of India

(GSI), Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Ministry of Earth Sciences (MOES), AMUL, Bharat Petroleum Corporation limited (BPCL), Department of agricultural research and education (DARE), Soil and land use survey of India (SLUSI), Protection of plant varieties and farmers right authority (PPVFRA), Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF), Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), India tourism, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA), Inland Waterways authority of India, Cochin shipyard corporation limited, Ministry of Jal Shakti Pradhan mantra Krishi Sinchayee Yojana

(PMKSY), Ministry of Jal Shakti, Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), Maharashtra Bamboo Development Board, Sakoli Bamboo Cluster (MBDB), National Atlas and thematic mapping organization (NATMO), National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), Himalayan Forest research Institute (HFRI), Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Agriculture and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Indian Railway Construction International Limited (IRCON), Marine Products Export Development Authority (MAPEDA), Department of Agriculture Research and Education (DARE), Aakash Institute and Development Commissioner for Handicrafts.

Department of Wildlife Protection
Office of the Additional Director Jammu Zoo
Manda Hills Jammu Near Hotel Ashok
Email: wlvjambuzoo@gmail.com

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE E-TENDERING Tender Notice : e-NIT No.: - 63/WLW/JZ of 2023-24 dated: 29-02-2024

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Jammu & Kashmir UT, e-tenders are invited from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K UT Govt. /Central Govt. Organizations for the following works:

Name of work	Adv. Cost (₹. in lacs)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Class of Contract or	Cost of Tender Document (in Rs.)	Time of completion	Receiving /Opening Authority
Laying of 80mm thick cement concrete paver blocks at different locations of Jammu Zoo.	48.94	97,880	A & B	1500	02 months	Tender opening committee

The e-NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities, (B.O.Q), set of Terms & Conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental Website:- <http://jktenders.gov.in>

Position of funds: CAPEX 2023-24

Position of AA :Accorded.

Position of TS :Accorded.

Publishing Date	29-02-2024
Download Start Date	29-02-2024
Bid Submission Start Date	29-02-2024
Bid submission End Date	09-03-2024 up to 04:00 PM
Date of opening of Technical Bid	11-03-2024 at 12:00 PM (In the office of Regional Wildlife Warden, Jammu, Manda Hills, Jammu)
Date of opening of Financial (online)	11-03-2024 at 03:00 PM (In the office of Regional Wildlife Warden, Jammu, Manda Hills, Jammu)

Bid documents can be seen at and download from the website: - <https://jktenders.gov.in>. Bid documents contain qualifying criteria for bidder, specifications, bill of quantities, conditions and other details.

Terms & Conditions:

- Bids uploaded must accompany Govt. Treasury Receipt (cost of tender document) in shape of Treasury Challan for the amount shown against the work above to be deposited in Govt. Treasury under Account Head0406- Forest and earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Additional Wildlife Warden Jammu Zoo. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of bids.
- The Bid Security/Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) has to be uploaded at the time of bidding.
- The price bids uploaded on the website in time will be opened after the evaluation of the Technical Bids by the Tender Opening Committee of the Department. The dates of opening of price bids as per NIT. The price bids will also be opened in the office of Conservator of Forest/Wildlife (Regional Wildlife Warden, Jammu), Manda Hills, Jammu.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 90 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, then the earnest money shall stand forfeited.

Anil Kumar Atri (SFS)
DIP/J-15559/23
Additional Director/
Wildlife Warden, Jammu
Jammu Zoo.

NO.: WLW/JZ/

Dt:

EDITORIAL

CONSERVE
WILDLIFE

Wildlife conservation is a process of conservation and management of wildlife facing the threat of extinction. Wildlife is an important part of our ecology. It is those animals or plants that are the support system of our ecosystem. They live in forested environments, either in forests or in forests. They are helping in maintaining our ecological balance. Inhuman activities are playing the biggest role in the disappearance or extinction of wildlife animals. India is rich in biodiversity, but there are many factors leading to its loss also. Factors leading to destruction of wildlife are excessive use of resources, habitat loss, pollution, dividing the habitat into fragments, hunting and poaching, climate change.

Wildlife can be conserved in many ways such as:-

- In-situ conservation – In this type of conservation, plants and animal species and their genetic material is protected or conserved within their habitat. These types of areas are called protected areas. They are national parks, sanctuaries, biosphere reserves, etc.

- Ex-situ conservation – In this technique, conservation of plants and animal species as well as their genetic material is done outside their habitat. This is done in the form of gene banks, cryopreservation, tissue culture, captive breeding and botanical gardens.

Wildlife conservation is very important as it maintains ecological balance, aesthetic and entertainment value, promote the preservation of biodiversity. Some wildlife conservation efforts in India are:-

- Project Tiger: This project was started by the Government of India in 1973. It was started by India with an initiative to conserve and manage the declining population of tigers. Bengal tigers were rapidly decreasing in their numbers and habitats as a result of increasing human activities and progress. So a project was initiated to save their habitat and their numbers. The project is administered by the National Tiger Conservation Authority. The main objective of the project was to save the tiger habitat from destruction. Secondly, to ensure increase in the number of tigers.

The project to save our Royal Bengal Tigers had a positive outlook as their numbers increased to around 1000-5000 after this effort. At the initial level, there were 9 protected areas which increased to 50 by 2015. It was indeed a successful effort towards the conservation of the national animal tiger.

- Project Elephant: Developmental activities like construction of roads, railways, resorts, buildings, etc. are responsible for clearing many forests and grazing places, resulting in destruction of habitat of various wild animals. Something similar was seen with elephants also. Project Elephant was launched by the Government of India in the year 1992 to conserve the elephant population, maintain their habitat, reduce man-animal conflict as well as reduce hunting and poaching. This project was started at the central level but its initiative was taken by the states, under this project funds were also provided to different states as per the requirements. 16 states were mainly implementing this act.

- Crocodile Conservation Project: This project was started at the state levels in 1975. The aim of this project was to stop the ongoing destruction of crocodiles' habitat and thus help increase their numbers. Hunting and killing of crocodiles should be monitored. As a result of this initiative, their number was increased from 100 to 1000 by the year 2012.

- UNDP Sea Turtle Conservation Project: This project launched by UNDP was aimed at properly managing and conserving the declining turtle population.

The result of population explosion and urbanization is that there has been an increase in the activities of cutting forests and converting them into buildings, hotels, or human settlements. This has resulted in reduction of habitat for various species living in the forest. They had to leave those places and look for new accommodation which is not easy. Exploration of new habitats, coupled with lots of competition for food, drives many species to the brink of extinction. Wildlife Animals and plants are important aspects of nature. Any loss at any level may lead to unnatural consequences. They are responsible for the ecological balance and for the subsistence of mankind, this balance must be maintained. So with conservation efforts by the government, it is also our social responsibility to personally contribute to the conservation of wildlife.

Shamima Begum a terrorist threat or victim of ISIS? Britain is divided

By: Farrukh Dhondy

Shamima Begum is now 24 years old. She lives in a camp in Syria, rows of tents inhabited by refugees -- enemies of Syria, very many of them remnants of the Islamic State, or ISIS. In previous years she used to wear the hijab and full niqab but now, when we see her on TV, she is dressed in Western clothes with flowing hair, addressing the camera in an East London English accent.

Last week the Court of Appeal rejected her plea to have her UK citizenship, of which she was deprived in 2019 by the then home secretary Sajid Javid, restored. Shamima was born in England of Bangladeshi parents who settled in East London in Tower Hamlets borough, which has a substantial Bangladeshi population and more mosques than there are in Mecca. Varieties of Islam claim the allegiance of this Bangladeshi population and play a decisive part in its electoral politics.

Passing judgment on the appeal, Lady Chief Justice Baroness Carr said: "It could be argued that the decision in Ms Begum's case was harsh. It could also be argued that Ms Begum is the author of her own misfortune. But it is not for this court to agree or disagree with either point of view. Our only task is to assess whether the depriva-

tion decision was unlawful. We have concluded it was not, and the appeal is dismissed."

In 2015 Shamima and two other girls, Amira Abase and Kadira Sultana, left London and travelled via Turkey to Syria to join the ISIS. Each of them married an ISIS operative, all the three husbands were Islamic converts from Europe, Australia and the United States. Shamima and Amira were 15 years old and Kadira was barely 16.

They left their parents, school and community, somehow convinced that ISIS was the mission they felt compelled to join? Did their families and community make them religious bigots who would want to participate in ISIS -- a virtual Islamicist death cult? Was it a longing for adventure? Or escape from a possible future of arranged marriages and female subservience?

Were they looking forward to being the niqabi-jihadi brides of white men converts?

There must have been religious-ideological discussions between them. But with who else?

At the end of 2018, ISIS was defeated. The husbands of all three were dead. Shamima had lost three babies in their infancy. She was moved into a virtual POW camp.

When applying to return to Britain, she renounced all ISIS belief but Mr Javid cancelled her citizenship on the grounds that she

would be a terrorist threat if she returned.

Allow me then, gentle reader, some recollections of my own convictions at that age. I was brought up in a moderately religious environment in a Parsi Zoroastrian family.

Zoroastrianism is an easy-going religion with prayers in the ancient language of Avesta which one learns by heart and mutters regularly -- by some of them every night before sleep -- without understanding a word of what it means or to whom it is addressed -- presumably to the single God, Ahura Mazda. (The light bulbs were named after him, not vice versa!)

In that era, I was surrounded, or felt I was, as a certain sort of rationality took hold, by superstition, irrational belief in religious mumbo-jumbo and abject poverty. And it certainly occurred -- or more than occurred, was persistently evident -- to me that there was a connection between the two. There had to, ought to, be a different world order.

In our neighbourhood in a rather smaller, even dingy house, lived a poor Parsi lady and her son Aspi Khambatta, six years older than myself, the offspring of her adulterous relationship with a British Army sergeant in the days of the Raj. Her Parsi husband had aban-

doned her at his birth as the newborn had blue eyes, fair skin and blonde hair. This Aspi became a friend and a sort of guru. He dedicatedly read Communist pamphlets and preached Marxism to us teenagers of the neighbourhood. A few of us took his observations seriously.

Were Shamima and friends in touch with someone on the Internet or in person who groomed them into embracing ISIS? My "grooming" by Aspi and my own observations and rejections of religious or shameful and pagan rites and my dedicated and active embracing of socialism as I grew up didn't lead me into any war zone.

Shamima's conviction, and almost certain grooming at that age, did.

I texted her lawyer to ask if Shamima now married a British passport holder, could she then claim fresh citizenship? He texted back to say it was a novel idea but probably futile. Her only recourse to overturn what I (and millions of others), regard as an unjust decision would have to be a political one.

A faint hope as Sir Keir Starmer, the probable next PM, is unlikely to favour the case of an ex-jihadi bride even though it's clear that this teenager was groomed into virtual slavery and to consider her now as a potential terrorist threat is patently absurd.

The politics behind India's rural and urban spending

By: Sanjeev Ahluwalia

Household consumption expenditure (HCE) estimates are based on a national survey of 0.1 per cent of the 194.9 million rural and 89.5 million urban households/families. It offers insights into the economic well-being of families across the rural-urban divide, with disaggregated data to assess the performance of income distribution policies and the efficacy of social investments made to enhance wellbeing and incomes.

The Union government, which conducts this large survey, has chosen to release a short factsheet of the HCE survey for 2022-23 on the eve of the Lok Sabha elections, thereby inviting a comparison with the income distribution policies of previous governments. The survey was overdue. The 2017-18 survey results were never disclosed. The brevity of this factsheet also inhibits analysis beyond the tabled headline messages.

This survey includes, for the first time, the "imputed value" of consumption goods provided free by the Union and state governments, which have been on the rise recently -- food, laptops, mobiles, bicycles, motorcycles, school uniforms, shoes, etc.

The average increase in non-food consumption is muted at 0.2 per cent and 0.6 per cent in rural and urban areas respectively, but more so in food at 4.7 per cent in rural areas and 2.3 per cent in urban areas. The corresponding share of expenditure on food increases from 46.4 per cent in rural areas to 47 per cent and from 39.2 per cent in urban areas to 40 per cent. Non-comparability across previous survey results inhibits time-trend analysis, though the long-term trend of a declining share for food, in both the rural and urban consumption basket, is not disrupted.

India had five governments since 1998-99 -- Atal Behari Vajpayee's NDA for a single term, Dr Manmohan Singh's UPA over two consecutive terms from 2004-05 and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's NDA since 2014-15, dominated by the BJP since 2019-20. The HCE survey outcomes of 1999-2000, 2004-05, 2009-10, 2011-12 and 2022-23 broadly span the working life of all five governments. Increase in family spending power on daily necessities (food, clothing, education, medical, travel and entertainment expenses) relative to GDP growth becomes the obvious performance metric to assess how much of the growth dividend was passed on to families.

Comparing the consumption expenditure of rural and urban families shows whether governments are putting their money where their votes come from. Over two-thirds of India is rural. The urban population was just 31.2 per cent per according to the last available 2011 census. The Vajpayee government grew the economy at 9.9 per cent annually in current terms. But income distribution was skewed in favour of cities. Rural consumption expenditure declined as a proportion of urban consumption expenditure from 57 to 52 per cent (1999-2000 to 2004-05). India's cities shone bright, but the government was ousted in the 2004 elections, punished for ignoring redistribution whilst focusing on growth-oriented infrastructure investments.

Under Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (2004-2014), the UPA -- an economist's government -- had similar instincts as the Vajpayee government to spur growth, which increased to an eye-watering annual average of 15.5 per cent (current terms). But it also had income distributional genes which, wisely, ensured that increases in rural and urban consumption expen-

diture reflect the fiscal space created by higher economic growth. Rural consumption, as a proportion of urban consumption, increased from 52 to 54 per cent -- an improved sharing of the growth dividend versus the Vajpayee government. The strategy of distributional equity bought the government a second term in office in 2009, but loose management of government resources cost them the 2014 elections.

Mr Modi's decade in power began with him demonstrating his election smarts by promising to deliver an annual report card to the public. He has walked the talk on distributional policies. Against an annual economic growth in current terms of 10.9 per cent 2014 to 2023 (despite the horrific economic impact of Covid-19 in 2020-21), rural consumption, as a proportion of urban consumption, increased from 54 to 58 per cent -- thereby emulating the UPA strategy of ensuring income distributional benefits for rural households.

This should serve the Modi government well in the coming elections. But serious thought must also be given to changing trends in the composition of consumption.

The share spent on food is a metric of income resilience. At lower income levels, about one-half is spent on food. As income increases this share reduces. The good news is that there was a near secular decline (1999-2000 to 2022-23) in the proportion spent on food, from 59.4 to 46.4 per cent in rural areas and from 48.1 to 39.2 per cent in urban areas. The only exception is a temporary spike in 2009-10 at the end of the UPA government's first term due to high double-digit food inflation driven by high edible oil prices and weather stress.

A happy trend is the diversification of diets away from cereals. Their share within the food

basket declined from a high 37 per cent in rural and 26 per cent in urban areas to 11 and nine per cent respectively by 2022-23. Sadly, beverages and packaged food are now the largest, single expenditure component with larger shares within the food basket of 21 and 27 per cent in rural and urban areas respectively -- good for corporate top lines but not for sustainability proponents of mission LiFE.

Family expenditure on medical care (in and outside hospital) in 2022-23 at 7.13 per cent in rural areas was the fourth highest family expenditure outlay and at 5.91 per cent in urban areas, the seventh highest family expenditure outlay, which points to urgent policy action to tackle both the source (poor quality air, water and overuse of fertiliser/pesticides) and the efficacy of preventive and palliative care beyond Ayushman Bharat.

A segmented analysis reveals that families in the lowest five per cent are closer in consumption behaviour across the rural-urban divide. Here, rural consumption equals 69 per cent of urban consumption versus the average of 58 per cent. The reverse is true in the highest five per cent consumption segment, where rural elites consume just one half of urban elites -- an illustration of inequity.

This illustrates the potential for substantial political capital in mobilising support around poverty and inequity -- the continuing farmers' agitation is a good example.

The Aam Aadmi Party has consciously and successfully focused on such political mobilisation, but has yet to scale up. The BJP faces the risk of having reached the end of the happiness ladder -- pleasing all and displeasing few. It must now shoulder the political risk of putting growth and economic resilience ahead of debt-funded distributional equity. How well it pivots will determine India's future.

Lt Governor addresses National Commission for Women's event 'Tu Bol' dedicated to Inspirational Women

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: The Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today addressed the National Commission for Women's event themed on 'Celebrating Inspirational Women' titled 'Tu Bol', at Convention Centre.

The Lt Governor commended the endeavour of the National Commission for Women to bring together women achievers to share their inspirational journey ahead of International Women's Day on 8th March.

"Today Nari Shakti is at the forefront of our developmental journey and taking lead in the nation building. J&K Administration is focusing on women-led development with unwavering dedication and determination to support gender parity and gender equity," the Lt Governor said.

He said, under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the socio-economic empowerment and equal opportunities to women has elim-



inated the barriers created under the guise of Article 370.

The Lt Governor lauded the remarkable achievements and invaluable contributions of women across diverse domains.

"I am proud of our Nari Shakti. From Education to Entrepreneurship, from IT to Agriculture sector, from Sports to Science, they are scripting their own suc-

cess stories," the Lt Governor said.

Ms Rekha Sharma, Chairperson, National Commission for Women, in her address, emphasized the importance of encouraging young women to speak fearlessly and to promote empowerment and equality.

On the occasion, women achievers shared their stories

of struggle and journey towards success and motivated others to pursue their dreams.

Sh Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Sh Anand Jain, ADGP Jammu; officials of National Commission for Women and Social Welfare Department J&K, women achievers and people in large number were present.

GDC R S Pura organizes Voter Awareness campaign

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: The NSS and NCC unit of GDC R. S. Pura organised a comprehensive Voter Awareness campaign - Mera Pehla Vote Desh Ke Liye in the college premises on Saturday under the banner of Viksit Bharat and to ensure universal enlightened participation of youth in elections.

The main objective of the campaign is to engage and encourage young voters to come out and vote and to convey the importance of voting for the larger good of the nation.

The event was held under the guidance and patronship of Dr. Rajni Bhagat, Principal of the College.

The highlight of the day was the solemn pledge taken by students to exercise their voting rights responsibly in the upcoming elections, reaffirming their commitment to democracy and nation-building.



Dr. Rajni Bhagat, Principal of the college delivered an inspiring address emphasising the importance of youth involvement in shaping the nation's future.

She exhorted that it is a method for citizens to express what they want from their leaders by raising awareness about voting.

This will lead to better governance and what everyone wants - a democracy that is free, fair and representative. She further added that

voting helps citizens become more involved in their government and keep it accountable.

The event was coordinated by Dr. Sunil Kumar Mangoch and co-ordinated by Dr. Hari Singh.

The students enthusiastically participated in the initiative aimed at promoting social awareness and active citizenship.

Among the distinguished whose support and mentorship have been invaluable in organizing today's events were Prof. Shifali Abrol, Prof Sankait Gupta and Prof Shelly Kalsi.

GDC Khour dominates Inter-Collegiate Judo Women Championships 2023-24

Top News Report

KHOUR, Mar 2: Government Degree College (GDC) Khour emerged triumphant as they clinch victory in the Inter-Collegiate Judo Women Championships 2023-24 held at University of Jammu.

The team showcased unparalleled skill, determination, and sportsmanship throughout the competition, securing one gold, three silver, and two bronze medals.

The championship, which brought together top judo talents from various colleges across

the region, witnessed Government Degree College Khour's remarkable display of athleticism and strategic prowess.

The team's stellar performance not only reflects their dedication to the sport but also underscores the institution's commitment to fostering excellence in both academics and extracurricular activities.

The individual achievements of the college's talented judo athletes include

Aditika Sharma, who demonstrated exceptional technique and

unwavering resolve, secured the gold medal in a fiercely contested match, showcasing mastery over her opponents.

Arti Bhau, Preeti Devi and Samriti Gouria displayed remarkable agility and tactical acumen, captured silver medal, contributing significantly to the team's success in the championship.

Ruchi Devi and Sakshi Devi, with their exceptional technique and spirited performance, clinched bronze medal, adding to the college's medal tally and earning admiration from spectators.

Workshop cum Board of Studies (BoS) meeting organized at SMVDU

Top News Report

KATRA, Mar 2: A workshop cum Board of Studies (BoS) meeting was organized in the School of Mathematics at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University to design the course structure and course curriculum according to NEP-2020.

The School of Mathematics is going to open a new programme B. Tech. in Mathematics and Computing in collaboration with School of Computer Science from the academic session 2024-25.

In today's digital world, this course has vast demand in public sector, corporate sector, industrial sector, manufacturing sector etc. After com-



pleting their degree in the said programme, students can be absorbed in these sectors.

Further, the four year under graduate (FYUG) programme as per NEP-2020 was also discussed in the workshop. Prof. Ghauri Shanker, Head, Department of Mathematics, Central University of Jammu, Prof Ramesh Kumar, Head, Department of Mathematics, University of Jammu attended the workshop.

All the faculty members of School of Mathematics, Central University of Kashmir, Prof S. Peerzada, University of Kashmir, Professor Ajay. K. Sharma, Head, Department of Mathematics, Central University of Jammu, Prof Ramesh Kumar, Head, Department of Mathematics, University of Jammu attended the workshop.

ematically were also present in the workshop.

During the inaugural of the workshop, Dr. Kuldeep Raj, Head, School of Mathematics, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Katra welcome all the external experts in the workshop. During the proceeding of the workshop, detailed discussion and brain storming were done on the said programmes.

Valuable suggestions and fruitful thoughts given by the experts were incorporated in the different programmes. Prof. Pragati Kumar, Vice Chancellor, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University also attended the workshop and received feedback from the experts about the programmes.

Vice Chancellor also admired all the experts for their valuable suggestions and active participation in the workshop. Dr. Sandeep Bhogal, Coordinator of the workshop gave the vote of thanks to all the experts and faculty members for successful completion of the workshop cum BoS.

3-day workshop of DLL on personality development concludes



Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: Three days workshop on personality development which was organised by Department of Lifelong Learning (DLL), University of Jammu for the students of Govt. Degree College, Kunjwani concluded on Saturday.

The workshop was organised under the guidance of Dr. Jeevan Jyoti, Director DLL. More than 100 students of the college enthusiastically participated in the workshop.

During these three days from 29th February to 2nd March, 2024, the resource person Neetu Dhar,

Chief coordinator and Master Trainer, Jammu Kashmir Dairy producers processors and Marketing cooperatives Ltd. conducted theoretical and practical sessions on different themes like self discovery and self development, time management, emotional intelligence and empathy.

Swati Basotra, Motivational speaker and entrepreneur spoke

on Effective Communication Skills, Aspects of personality-relation with career development and stress Management

In the valedictory function, Dr. Manisha Sarup Kohli, principal of the college thanked the resource person and congratulated all the participants for the successful completion of this workshop. The workshop was coordinated by Dr. Rewa Khajuria, Counsellor, Employment Information cum Advisory Bureau, Department of Lifelong Learning.

GDC Paloura organises Pulse Polio Awareness rally

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: NCC Units of GDC Paloura organized Pulse Polio Immunization awareness rally in Mishriwala Market.

The event was the part of 3 day long Pulse Polio awareness programme being carried out by the college from March 1 to 3, 2024.

The purpose of the event was to make the masses aware about the pulse polio immunization drive to be conducted by Department of Health, Government of India, on

March 3.

Under this programme N Bn. NCC, GDC Paloura carried out a rally in the Mishriwala market shouting slogans like "Haam Hain Polio K Sipah abh Na Hoge Polio Say Tabahie", "Desh ko Bachna Hai Polio Ko Baghana Hai". The local people of the panchayat also participated under the leadership of Ex Sarpach Happy Singh.

The whole programme was organized by ANO Prof. (Lt.) Arun Sharma under the able guidance of Prof. Dr. Ashu Vashisht Principal GDC Paloura.

Ajeet expresses gratitude to INDI Alliance for nominating Kichloo as LS candidate

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Mar 2: Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Senior Leader Ajeet Bhagat said it's noteworthy that Late Bashir Ahmed Kichloo as Deputy Power Minister, Minister for Forest, Minister for Food and Supplies, and Transport, contributed significantly to Jammu and Kashmir development, providing Jobs and fostering overall progress.

His son, former Home Minister Sajjad Ahmed Kichloo, has continued this legacy, earning appreciation for his services to the people.

Bhagat said that the people of Chenab Valley Zone and Pir Panchal extended their thanks to the INDI Alliance for nominating Sajjad Ahmed Kichloo as the National Conference candidate for the Kathua-Udhampur parliamentary elections.

Un-identified Male dead body found

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: An unidentified dead body of a man, age about 35-40 years, was runover by train 14662 Shalimar Express (DN) at Railway track Km 74.33.

On the directions of SSP Railways Jammu, the dead body of the said deceased has been shifted to District Hospital Samba for postmortem/identification.

Anybody having any clue about the identity/residential particulars of the said deceased may contact GRP Jammu on Telephone Nos.0191-2474946 and/or Mobile No. 7006690851/8899700250 and PCR GRP Jammu Helpline No. 1512.

Voter Literacy Club of GDC Marheen organizes Pledge Ceremony

Top News Report

MARHEEN, Mar 2: Voter Literacy Club of GDC, Marheen, organized a Pledge Ceremony to encourage the students towards their right to cast their vote under the campaign organized by Govt. of India, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports on the theme "Mera Pehla Vote Desh ki Aur".

All the students as well as the faculty members participated whole heartedly in the pledge ceremony and they assured that they will definitely cast their vote without any fail as it is their fun-

damental right.

The programme was organized under the patronage of the worthy Principal of the college Prof. (Dr.) Anupama Gupta, who also took pledge and encourage the students to follow the instructions and the guidelines mentioned in the pledge by participating in the upcoming Lok Sabha Election with full enthusiasm by casting their vote to the suitable candidate who is capable of making our country more powerful and to make our motherland, the real epitome of Democracy.

Auto-driver found dead in Kulgam village

Top News Report

KULGAM, Mar 2: An Auto-driver was found dead under mysterious circumstances at Redwani area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Saturday morning, sources said.

They said that a youth identified Suheel Ahmad Guroo son of Nazir Ahmad Guroo resident of Redwani Payeen an Auto-driver by profession was found dead at his residential house.

Station House Officer (SHO) Qaimoh, Rayees Ahmad also confirmed the incident and said he is on spot to ascertain the cause of death, adding that they have taken cognizance of the incident.

Ajeet requests Chairperson KVIB to release subsidy for PMEGP loan cases

Top News Report

KULGAM, Mar 2: An AKISHTWAR, Mar 2: Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Senior Leader, Ajeet Bhagat requested Dr. Hina Shafi Bhat Chairperson Jammu and Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board (J&K KVIB) to release subsidy for PMEGP cases which has been stopped for the past one year.

The NC leader said that businessmen of Kishtwar, Doda and Ramban Districts of Chenab Valley zone have been badly affected by the crazy behavior of Jammu and Kashmir Bank.

Gusty winds damage Qazigund school's roof

Top News Report

QAZIGUND, Mar 2: Gusty winds coupled with rainfall damaged the rooftop of a government school building at Panzath village of Qazigund in Anantnag on Saturday afternoon.

An official said that the rooftop of Govt Middle School Panzath collapsed due to heavy rainfall and strong winds.

Fortunately, there was no loss of life. All the staff are safe," he said.



Indian diaspora be given voting facilities: Syed Hashmi

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: The prominent Sociopolitical activist Syed Karar Hashmi wrote a letter to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on behalf of the Indian diaspora, demanding voting facilities.

He said that lakhs of Indian students and business people hold Indian passports, and not those holding citizen-

ship of other countries, would be able to vote in the parliamentary and Assembly elections in India, and it is only possible under PM Narendra Modi's vibrant and strong leadership to put voting facilities for Indians in foreign countries.

He observed that online voting, postal balloting or other transparent voting options will help lakhs of Indian students studying in the US, Britain, Australia, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Iran, Bangladesh and other countries to vote and would be an example for other countries to emulate.

He further reiterated that the privilege of studying abroad should not come at the cost of our democratic voice and rights. Let the Indian student diaspora vote.

With Anushka Sharma's Chakda Xpress and Kriti Sanon's Do Patti lined-up, proven stars of the big screen are set to ignite the OTT space. Here's a look at some of the others who are debuting on digital

Entertainment is an ever-evolving industry and every actor wants to stay relevant. The ones we are talking about here are success stories on the big screen, be it in Hindi cinema or South Indian arena. Now, these stunning beauties are ready to bring their A-game on to the digital platform. While these women are in their pursuit to explore new stories on OTT, we can gear up for some great shows and movies from the comfort of our homes.

High pitch
Anushka Sharma
Anushka Sharma is eyeing her movie comeback with Chakda Xpress, a biographical film set to premiere on Netflix. Although Anushka made a special appearance in a song for her 2022 production, Qala, this can be called her real OTT debut. Directed by Prosit Roy,

Chakda Xpress delves into the life of Jhulan Goswami, the former Indian cricketer holding the record for the most wickets in One Day International matches. The film promises to not only highlight Jhulan's cricketing achievements, but also provide insight into her personal journey on how she overcame challenges to secure a place in the Indian cricket team.

New-age star
Ananya Panday
Ananya Panday began her acting career with Student of the Year in 2019. In these four years, with films such as Pati Patni Aur Woh, Kho Gaye Hum Kahan and Dream Girl, Ananya has carved a niche for herself as the new-age star. Now, she is ready to make her OTT debut with the upcoming show Call Me Bae. Backed by Karan Johar, she plays a billionaire fashionista in



the show, who gets disowned by her family due to a scandal. A thrilled Ananya recently shared pictures from the wrap of the first season's shoot. The show also stars Vir Das and Gurfateh Pirzada.
Period drama
Sharmin Sehgal

Sharmin made her Hindi film debut with Malaal (2019). Sanjay Leela Bhansali's niece Sharmin Sehgal is now turning to the digital space with Netflix series Heeramandi. A period drama, Sanjay Leela Bhansali brings his majestic signature

flair to stories of love and betrayal in the lives of courtesans in pre-Independence India.
Love and betrayal
Richa Chadha
Heeramandi also marks Richa Chadha's OTT debut. The series, which also stars Manisha Koirala, Sonakshi

Sinha, Aditi Rao Hydari and Sanjeeda Sheikh, is the second collaboration between Richa and Sanjay Leela Bhansali. They previously worked on 2013 hit Goliyon Ki Raseela Ram-Leela. Richa says she loves to work with the filmmaker, as he is relentless.

Turning producer
Kriti Sanon
Kriti Sanon is not just venturing into the digital world with Do Patti, but is also turning into a producer with this one. The movie reunites Kriti and Kajol after eight years. They first shared screen space in Rohit Shetty's Dilwale. With this film, writer Kanika Dhillon also turns to production. Do Patti, to be streamed on Netflix, is mystery thriller set in the hills of north India.

Crime zone
Vaani Kapoor
Vaani Kapoor has joined hands with Gopi Puthran of Mardaani 2 fame for her OTT debut with crime thriller Mandala Murders. The gritty series has been produced by YRF. About her digital debut, the actress stated in an official statement, "I was looking for something really clutter-breaking

for my foray into OTT. I'm thrilled to be working with a mind like Gopi Puthran for Mandala Murders, a gritty crime thriller series that has pushed me to work my hardest in a genre I've never attempted before."

Fresh turf
Urmila Matondkar
She ruled the big screen during the 90s. Urmila Matondkar is ready to take on the OTT platform with her debut film Tiwari. Directed by Saurabh Varma, the show will see the 49-year-old actress doing some action. An emotional mother-daughter story, the first-look poster of Tiwari is doing the rounds on social media. The upcoming thriller drama is about Kalki Tiwari, a woman who spent 14 years in prison for a crime she hadn't committed.

Madness Machayenge to release on March 9

Sony Entertainment Television is all set to tickle your funny bone with its new and refreshing comedy show Madness Machayenge – India Ko Hasayenge, starting March 9, at 9:30 pm. Redefining the genre by breaking the conventional norms of comedy, this show will effortlessly deliver varied styles of comedy with an impressive line-up of seasoned comedians — Paritosh Tripathi, Snehil Dixit Mehra, Gaurav Dubey, Kettan Singh, Ankita Shrivastav, Kushal Badrike, Inder Sahani and Hemangi Kavi.

Week after week, each comedian will be given fun challenges and tasks by the show's Madness Ki



Malkin, Huma Qureshi. Acclaimed stand-up comedian Harsh Gujral turns host for this hilari-

ous show that promises to give you the much-needed dose of weekend entertainment.

'Loved it here, can't wait to come back': Rihanna leaves Jamnagar after Anant Ambani's pre-wedding bash

After an electrifying show at Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant's extravagant pre-wedding celebration, pop sensation Rihanna expressed her pleasure at having attended the grand event and said that she could not wait to return to the country soon.

Donning pink paired with jade, the pop queen paired the look with a matching neckpiece and minimalist makeup as she made her way from the Jamnagar airport.

When asked about the concert and the pre-wedding celebration, Rihanna replied, "It was the best, can't wait to come back to India, baby."

Asked if she liked the stay here, she said, "I loved it." The city of Jamnagar witnessed an exhilarating spectacle as global music sensation Rihanna took centre stage at the pre-wedding festivities of billionaire Mukesh



Ambani's youngest son.

The Barbadian singer made a dazzling entrance at Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant's pre-wedding festivities and intoxicated the gathering with her thrilling performances.

Eric Boots Greene, drummer in Rihanna's team, also spoke to ANI about the pre-wedding event and said, "The concert was amazing. My favourite part was the drones. The drones in

the sky showed the history of what happened here."

"The elephant part was amazing. We shout out to the family, 'We love you'. The crowd was amazing. The energy was great. They received us well. They loved us. We love them, and we will be back one day in life. I enjoyed my time here. My favourite thing was the food served here," said the team member.

Rihanna arrived in Gujarat's Jamnagar on Thursday to perform at the pre-wedding festivities of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant.

Reliance Chairman Mukesh Ambani's youngest son, Anant, is set to tie the knot with industrialist Viren Merchant's daughter, Radhika Merchant, later this year.

The pre-wedding functions, as expected, turned out to be traditional and grand as the guests experienced the beauty and taste of Indian culture.

The guest list included former Prime Minister of Sweden Carl Bildt, former Prime Minister of Canada Stephen Harper, President of Google Donald Harrison, former President of Bolivia, Jorge Quiroga, former Prime Minister of Australia Kevin Rudd and Chairperson of the World Economic Forum Klaus Schwab among others.

Naqiyah Haji talks about her show Shaitani Rasmein



Actress Naqiyah Haji, who is a part of the show Shaitani Rasmein, believes her role symbolises the collective strength of woman-kind. She says, "Shaitani Rasmein marks my debut show, offering me the chance to explore diverse characters and emotions on screen. Delving into my upcoming role, I'm drawn to the profound strength inherent in portraying a persona that embodies the depths of human struggle and the eventual triumph of inner resilience. It's akin to navigating through a dark abyss of challenges, only to emerge with a newfound recognition of our inherent Divya Shakti, our divine energy, empowering us to overcome adversity."

She adds, "This portrayal reflects the diverse roles we fulfill — as mothers, sisters, wives, daughters — each infused with our unique expression of shakti. It embodies the indomitable spirit that defines us and the unbreakable bonds that unite families."

Nehha set for OTT debut



Actress Nehha Pendse, who is well known for her roles in May I Come in Madam? and Bhabhi Ji Ghar Par Hai, seems all set to venture into the OTT space soon. Nehha has earned laurels in the Marathi film industry, and has also made a mark in Bollywood and television with her stellar performances. Now, her fans are eagerly waiting for her OTT debut. While details of the project are yet to be unveiled, it is believed she will be seen on one of the biggest OTT platforms.

Deepika Singh gets her nose pierced for Mangal Lakshmi

While getting into the skin of her character in Colors' Mangal Lakshmi, Deepika Singh went the extra mile and got her nose pierced to look more authentic as Mangal, her character.

About her preparations for the role of Mangal, Deepika Singh says, "As a kid, I always wanted to get my nose pierced but I couldn't. I would always use stick-on bindis or accessories. However, for this character, I got a nose piercing, and I am thrilled that it suits me. The experience of getting the piercing was quite memorable and scary. It took a lot of courage because the first attempt didn't go well, and I remember my nose bleeding a little bit. I had to go back and get it done again! It was a bit painful, but in the end was worth it. As an actor, I am all in for bending over backward to ensure authenticity. Mangal is a character that resonates with all the household women out there and the nose piercing is a striking



aspect of her identity. I wanted to honour that

by piercing my nose for real touch."

PM Modi Sets Big Poll Target For Bengal BJP - Win All 42 Lok Sabha Seats

"Seeing you all gathered here in such huge numbers is giving me the confidence to say 'NDA sarkar, 400 paar'," he told the crowd at the 'Bijoy Sankalpa Sabha' in Krishnanagar.

KRISHNANAGAR, Mar 2 (Agencies): Launching a scathing attack on the ruling TMC over corruption, Prime Minister Narendra Modi today set a target for the state BJP to win all the 42 Lok Sabha seats in West Bengal.

Addressing a public rally in Krishnanagar in Nadia district, he alleged the TMC means 'Tu, Main aur Corruption'.

"Seeing you all gathered here in such huge numbers is giving me the confidence to say 'NDA sarkar, 400 paar'," he told the crowd at the 'Bijoy Sankalpa



Sabha' in Krishnanagar.

"The TMC is synonymous with atrocities, dynasty politics and betrayal. People of West Bengal

are disappointed by the way the state government is functioning," he said. Referring to the incidents in

Sandeshkhali, where women have accused TMC leaders of sexual abuse, PM Modi claimed that instead of supporting the "distressed mothers and sisters" of the area, the state government sided with the accused.

"The mothers and sisters kept pleading for justice, but the TMC government did not listen to them. They took votes in the name of 'Maa Mati Manush' but now the mothers and sisters are weeping in West Bengal. The situation in the state is such that here, the criminals decide when to get arrested," he said.

Four people detained, being interrogated in Bengaluru blast case

BENGALURU, Mar 2 (Agencies): Four people have been detained for questioning in connection with the low-intensity bomb blast at a Bengaluru eatery, police sources said on Saturday.

Sleuths of the Central Crime Branch probing the case are interrogating the four, picked up from Dharwad, Hubballi and Bengaluru "at length", the sources said.

Bengaluru City Commissioner B Dayananda said investigation into

The Rameshwaram Cafe incident, caused by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) on Friday afternoon in which ten people were injured, is in full swing.

"Several teams are working on different leads obtained so far," he said.

"Keeping in mind the sensitivity of the case and the security concerns, media is appealed not to indulge in speculation and cooperate," Dayananda said.

Meanwhile, security has been tightened across the state, especially at Kempegowda International Airport, following the incident in Brookefield area in Information Technology corridor in east Bengaluru.

The Bengaluru Police has registered a case under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Explosives Substances Act in connection with the explosion at the popular quick-service eatery.

Set to be dropped, BJP MP Gautam Gambhir opts out of Lok Sabha race

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (Agencies): East Delhi Lok Sabha MP Gautam Gambhir on Saturday opted out of the upcoming Lok Sabha contest amid indications that the BJP would drop most of its seven sitting parliamentarians in New Delhi.

"I have requested Hon'ble Party President @JPNadda ji to relieve me of my political duties so that I can focus on my upcoming cricket commitments. I sincerely thank Hon'ble PM @narendramodi ji and Hon'ble HM @Amit-Shah ji for giving me the



opportunity to serve the people. Jai Hind!" he posted on X.

Celebrities have more often than not proved to be weak representatives of the people.

In Gurdaspur too, the BJP is hunting for a new candidate after actor Sunny Deol's dismal performance and persistent absence from the segment.

App delisting cannot be permitted, says Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Google-Indian startups row

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (Agencies): Taking a strong view of Google pulling off some apps from its Play Store, the government on Saturday said delisting of Indian apps cannot be permitted and that the tech company and the startups concerned have been called for a meeting next week.

In an interview to agency, IT and Telecom Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the startup ecosystem is key to the Indian economy and their fate cannot be left to any big tech to decide.

The minister's comments assume significance as Google on Friday began removing some apps, including popular matrimony apps, from its Play Store in India over a dispute on service fee payments, even as apps and well-known startup founders cried foul.

Taking a serious view of the issue, Vaishnaw said: "India is very clear, our policy is very clear... our startups will get the protection that they need."

The minister said the government will be meeting Google and app developers who have been delisted, next week, to resolve the dispute.

"I have already called Google...I have already called the app developers who have been delisted, we will be meeting them next week. This cannot be permitted.. This kind of delisting cannot be permitted," Vaishnaw asserted.

Stating that India has built a strong startup



ecosystem of over one lakh startups, and more than 100 unicorns from scratch in a matter of 10 years, the minister said the energy of youth and entrepreneurs must be channelised fully and "cannot be left to the policies of any big tech." "I will be telling Google...Our entrepreneurial energy... startups, look at the whole startup India programme, 10 years back we had practically nothing and today we have more than 1,00,000 startups, more than 100 unicorns...this is something...the energy of our youth, the energy of our entrepreneurs, energy of our talented people that has to be channelised fully well, it cannot be left to the policies of any big tech," Vaishnaw said.

On Friday, Google said 10 companies in the country, including "many well-established" ones had avoided paying fees despite benefiting from the platform and Play Store, and proceeded to delist some apps.

It did not name the firms but a search of Play Store on android phones did not give results for

matrimonial apps such as Shaadi, Matrimony.com and Bharat Matrimony. Balaji Telefilms' Alt (formerly ALTBalaji), audio platform Kuku FM, dating service Quack Quack, Truly Madly also disappeared from the Play Store. The raging dispute is over Google imposing a fee of 11 to 26 per cent on in-app payments after anti-competition body CCI ordered scrapping of an earlier system of charging 15 to 30 per cent.

Google went ahead to remove the apps not paying the fee after the Supreme Court did not provide interim relief to companies behind these apps in their battle against the search giant's app marketplace fee.

While Bharat Matrimony founder Murugavel Janakiraman described the move as "dark day" for the Internet in India, Kuku FM Co-founder Vinod Kumar Meena in a statement had said that Google was behaving like a 'monopoly'.

Quack Quack Founder Ravi Mittal said the company would comply with rules to get back on the

marketplace.

Google previously sent notices of Play Store violations to Matrimony.com, which runs app BharatMatrimony, and Info Edge, which runs a similar app, Jeevansathi.

Info Edge (India) Ltd on Saturday said its mobile apps, including naukri.com, 99 acres.com, and shiksha.com have been removed from Google Play Store.

"Indian companies will comply - for now. But what India needs is an App Store/ Play Store that is a part of Digital Public Infrastructure - like UPI and ONDC. The response needs to be strategic," Info Edge founder Sanjeev Bikhchandani had said in a post on Friday on X (formerly Twitter) tagging Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and his office.

IAMA - an industry association that represents some of the largest Indian startups as well as international firms - condemned the removal of apps and had urged Google to reinstate delisted apps.

In its blogpost, Google had said 10 Indian companies had chosen for an extended period of time not to pay for the "immense value they receive on Google Play". "For years, no court or regulator has denied Google Play's right to charge," it said, adding that the Supreme Court on February 9 also "refused to interfere" with its right to do so.

Google asserted that allowing a small group of developers to get differential treatment from the

vast majority of developers who are paying their fair share creates an uneven playing field putting all other apps and games at a competitive disadvantage.

"After giving these developers more than three years to prepare, including three weeks after the Supreme Court's order, we are taking necessary steps to ensure our policies are applied consistently across the ecosystem, as we do for any form of policy violation globally," Google said.

In the blogpost, Google had said that enforcement of the policy, when necessary, can include removal of non-compliant apps from Google Play. Google, however, added that existing users will be able to continue to access the apps without interruption and that it continues "to offer our support to help developers get into compliance".

Developers, it said, are welcome to resubmit their apps to be listed on Play by selecting one of the three billing options as part of its payment policy.

"Today, we have over 2,00,000 Indian developers using Google Play who adhere to our policies, helping us ensure we have a safe platform; however, for an extended period of time, 10 companies, including many well-established ones, have chosen to not pay for the immense value they receive on Google Play by securing interim protections from the court," Google had said.

Spanish tourist, on bike tour with husband, gangraped in Jharkhand



DUMKA, Mar 2 (Agencies): A Spanish woman was allegedly gangraped in Jharkhand's Dumka on late Friday night. The incident happened in Kurumahat of Hansdih police station area.

According to the information, the woman and her husband are bikers, and they were camping in tents in the Kunji vil-

lage of Dumka. At the time of the incident, the couple had set out to Bihar's Bhagalpur on a bike.

Around 8 to 10 men are believed to have committed the crime and the police have detained three individuals in the matter.

A Special Investigation Team (SIT) team has been constituted to

probe into the matter. Forensic experts have also been roped in.

The woman and her husband came to India on a tourist visa. They were on a mega trip around Asia. The couple first went to Pakistan from where they had gone to Bangladesh, before arriving in Dumka. They were planning to go to Nepal from Jharkhand.

The Spanish woman is currently undergoing treatment at a hospital in Saraiyahat Community Health Centre (CHC).

Dumka Superintendent of Police went to the crime scene on Friday night and has been camping there since.

An investigation into the case is currently underway and the detained people are being questioned.

Ship from China suspected to contain consignment for Pakistan's nuclear programme stopped at Mumbai port

MUMBAI, Mar 2 (Agencies): A Karachi-bound ship from China was stopped by Indian security agencies at Mumbai's Nhava Sheva port on suspicion that it contained a dual-use consignment that could be used for Pakistan's nuclear and ballistic missile programme, officials here said on Saturday.

The customs officials, based on an intelligence input, halted a Malta-flagged merchant ship -- CMA CGM Attila -- at the port en route to Karachi on January 23 and inspected the consignment, which included a Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machine, originally manufactured by an Italian company.

CNC machines are basically controlled by a computer and produce a scale of efficiency, consistency and accuracy not possible manually.

A team of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) also inspected the consignment and certified that it could be used by the neighbouring country for its nuclear programme.

According to the experts, the equipment would be useful in manufacturing critical parts for Pakistan's missile development programme.

Since 1996, CNC machines have been included in the Wassenaar Arrangement -- an international arms control regime aimed at stopping the proliferation of equipment with both civilian and military uses. India is among the 42 member countries that exchange information on transfers of conventional weapons and dual-use goods and technologies.

The CNC machine was used by North Korea in its nuclear programme.

The port officials, with specific intelligence, had alerted the Indian defence authorities who inspected the heavy cargo and reported their suspicions, after which the consignment was seized, the officials said, adding that the seizure falls under the prevention of possible proliferation by Pakistan and China.

According to documents such as bills of lading and other details of the consignment, the consigner was mentioned as "Shanghai JXE Global Logistics Co Ltd" and consignee was "Pakistan Wings Pvt Ltd" of Sialkot.

However, a deeper investigation by the security agencies indicated that the consignment, weighing 22,180 kilograms, was shipped by Taiyuan Mining Import and Export Co Ltd and was meant for Cosmos Engineering in Pakistan, the officials said.

This is not the first instance when Indian port officials have seized such dual-use military-grade items being shipped from China to Pakistan.

Cosmos Engineering, a Pakistani defence supplier, has been on a watchlist since March 12, 2022, when Indian authorities intercepted a shipment of Italian-made thermo-electric instruments, once again at the Nhava Sheva port.

The officials said there have been concerns that Pakistan might be utilising China as a conduit to acquire restricted items from Europe and the US, masking identities to evade detection.

Concerns have intensified over Chinese support for Pakistan's nuclear and missile programmes, exemplified by a 2020 case where an industrial autoclave, crucial for missile production, was concealed

as industrial equipment on a Chinese vessel bound for Pakistan.

The ongoing investigation aims to determine if the suspected Pakistani entities receiving these dual-use items are supplying these to the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DESTO), responsible for much of Pakistan's defence research and development.

Despite assertions of commitment to international conventions by both Pakistan and China, the interception of such covert shipments underscores a persistent cooperation in potential proliferation activities, contravening global agreements and regulations, the officials said.

In February 2020, China was supplying autoclave to Pakistan under the cover of "industrial dryer".

The autoclave was seized from

a Chinese ship -- Dai Cui Yun -- carried a Hong Kong flag and had left Jiangyin port on the Yangtze river in Jiangsu province of China, bound for Pakistan's Port Qasim.

The seizure of the autoclave, possibly meant to be used in the missile programme of Pakistan, strengthens apprehensions that Pakistan is unabashedly indulging in illegal trade of missiles and violating the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

In June 2023, the US Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) sanctioned three Chinese companies -- General Technology Limited (autoclave supplier to Pakistan), Beijing Luo Luo Technology Development, and Changzhou Utek Composite Company for its involvement in supplying missile-applicable items to Pakistan's ballistic missile programme.

Rishi Sunak makes impassioned plea to protect British democracy

LONDON, Mar 2 (Agencies): Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has issued an impassioned plea for Britain to protect its democracy as he warned that extremist forces were out to tear the country apart and undermine its multi-faith identity.

Referencing his own Hindu beliefs, the British-Indian leader stressed that the enduring values of the UK are about embracing migrants of all faiths and ethnicities and urged protesters to ensure peaceful demonstrations are not hijacked by extremist forces.

"Immigrants who have come here have integrated and contributed. They have helped write the latest chapter in our island story. They have done this without being required to give up their identity," said Sunak in a speech outside 10 Downing Street.

"You can be a practising Hindu and a proud Briton as I am, or a devout Muslim and a patriotic citizen as so many are, or a committed Jewish person and the heart of your local community, and all underpinned by the tolerance of our established, Christian church," he said.



"But I fear that our great achievement in building the world's most successful multi-ethnic, multi faith democracy is being deliberately undermined. There are forces here at home trying to tear us apart," he added.

He was speaking soon after what he characterised as the "beyond alarming" win in a by-election on Thursday of a controversial politician, George Galloway, in Greater Manchester following a campaign dominated by the divisions of the Israel-Hamas conflict.

He said on too many occasions recently, the streets of Britain had been hijacked by small groups who are hostile

to British values and have no respect for its democratic traditions.

"Islamist extremists and the far right feed off and embolden each other. They are equally desperate to pretend that their violence is somehow justified when actually these groups are two sides of the same extremist coin... both loathe the pluralist, modern country we are," he said.

The British Prime Minister stressed that both these groups of extremists were spreading the poison of extremism with the aim of draining Britain's confidence.

He added: "No country is perfect, but I am enormously

proud of the good that our country has done."

"I stand here as our country's first non-white Prime Minister, leading the most diverse government in our country's history to tell people of all races, all faiths and all backgrounds it is not the colour of your skin, the God you believe in or where you were born, that will determine your success but just your own hard work and endeavour." Sunak reiterated his support for a new protocol agreed with the police forces of the country earlier this week to take action against violent activities that threaten the personal security of members of Parliament and also any violence during serial protests taking place in response to the Israel-Hamas conflict. He said threats of violence and intimidation are alien to the British way of doing things and must be resisted at all times.

"I love this country. My family and I owe it so much. The time has now come for us all to stand together to combat the forces of division and beat this poison. We must face down the extremists who would tear us apart," he urged.

Heavy Snowfall Kills 15, Injures Dozens In Afghanistan

KABUL, Mar 2 (Agencies): Widespread heavy snowfall across several provinces in Afghanistan over the past three days has resulted in the tragic loss of 15 lives and injuries to nearly 30 individuals, news agency reported.

Additionally, statistics obtained from Balkh and Faryab provinces by agency indicate a devastating impact on livestock, with nearly ten thousand animals perishing due to the recent snowfalls.

Abdul Qadir, a resident of Sar-e-Pul, expressed the prevailing anxiety among the population, stating, "The snow is ongoing and very heavy, and people are anxious as their livestock have suffered losses, many roads are blocked, and there is hardly any movement."

Another resident, Amanullah, emphasised the urgent need for government assistance, especially for those affected by road

blockages and the plight of hungry livestock.

In response to the crisis, Afghanistan has announced the formation of a committee comprising various ministries to address the damages, particularly to livestock owners. The authorities have allocated fifty million Afghanis to support livestock owners in the provinces of Balkh, Jawzjan, Badghis, Faryab, and Herat.

Misbahuddin Mustaeen, the Taliban-appointed spokesperson for the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock, highlighted the swift response of committees formed in all provinces. These committees are actively working to open blocked roads, distribute food and fodder to affected communities, and rescue those stranded in the aftermath of the heavy snowfall.

Erfanullah Sharafzoi, spokesperson for the Afghan Red Crescent Society, said that winter service workers

have already provided assistance in provinces such as Badghis, Ghor, Farah, Kandahar, Helmand, Jawzjan, and Nuristan, reaching individuals affected by the recent snowfalls.

The severe snowfall has resulted in the closure of key transportation routes, including the Salang Pass and access to various provinces such as Ghor, Badghis, Ghazni, Herat, and Bamyan. Mohammad Ashraf Haqshenas, spokesperson for the Ministry of Public Works, confirmed the temporary blockage of these routes due to the heavy snowfall over the past two days.

Esmatullah Muradi, spokesperson for the provincial governor of Faryab, reported that heavy snowfall in the province led to road closures in most districts, leaving residents in remote areas stranded. Tragically, one person in the Chahar Sada district on the Turkmenistan border lost their life, agency reported.

Pakistan court confirms interim bail of Imran Khan in four cases related to May 9 violence and others

LAHORE, Mar 2 (Agencies): A Pakistani court has confirmed the interim bail of jailed former prime minister Imran Khan in four cases related to the May 9 violence and others, according to a media report on Saturday.

The 71-year-old Pakistan-Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party founder is currently incarcerated at Rawalpindi's high-security Adiala jail in multiple cases.

On May 9 last year, Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party workers vandalised a dozen military installations, including the Jinnah House (Lahore Corps Commander house), Mianwali air base, the ISI building in Faisalabad, and the Army headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

During the hearing of the bail petitions of the PTI founder on Friday, Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Judge Arshad

Javed confirmed Khan's interim bail in four cases related to the May 9 violence and others, The News International newspaper reported on Saturday.

The court confirmed the interim bail of Khan in cases of attack on police outside Zaman Park, murder of PTI activist Zille Shah, torching of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) office in Model Town and a container at Kalma Chowk, subject to furnishing of surety bonds of PKR 500,000, the report said.

Another ATC Judge Naveed Iqbal extended the interim bail of the former premier in three cases of May 9 violence till March 7.

The court extended the interim bail in cases of attacking the Jinnah House, Askari Tower and the torching of Shadman police station, the report said.

'They wanted to humiliate us': Palestinian women detained by Israel allege abuse in custody

In northern Gaza and southern city of Khan Younis, troops rounded up dozens at a time from UN schools and hospitals

JERUSALEM, Mar 2 (Agencies): Nabela thought the United Nations school in Gaza City was a safe haven. Then, the Israeli army arrived.

Soldiers stormed the place, ordering men to undress and hauling women to a mosque for strip searches, she said. So began six weeks in Israeli custody that she says included repeated beatings and interrogations.

"The soldiers were very harsh, they beat us and screamed at us in Hebrew," said the 39-year-old from Gaza City, who spoke on condition that her last name not be used for fear of being arrested again. "If we raised our heads or uttered any words, they beat us on the head."

Palestinians detained by Israeli forces in Gaza during the Israel-Hamas war have alleged widespread physical abuse and neglect. It's not known how many women or minors have been detained.

Nabela said she was shuttled between facilities inside Israel in a coed group before arriving at Damon Prison in the north, where she estimated there were at least 100 women.

Rights groups say Israel is "disappearing" Gaza Palestinians — detaining them without charge or trial and not disclosing to family or lawyers where they're held. Israel's prison service says all "basic rights required are fully applied by professionally trained prison guards".

Israel declared war after Hamas-led militants killed about 1,200 people and took roughly 250 others hostage on October 7.

Since then, ground troops have arrested hundreds of Palestinians to search for suspected militants and gather intelligence. Images of blindfolded men kneeling, heads bowed and hands bound, have sparked worldwide outrage.

In northern Gaza and

the southern city of Khan Younis, troops rounded up dozens at a time from UN schools and hospitals, including medical personnel.

The military said it makes detainees undress to search for explosives, bringing detainees into Israel before releasing them back into Gaza if they're deemed innocent.

For Nabela, that process took 47 harrowing days. Despite Israeli evacuation orders, Nabela and her family had decided not to leave Gaza City, believing nowhere in Gaza was safe. Troops entered the school where they sheltered on December 24.

"I was terrified, imagining they wanted to execute us and bury us there," she said.

Forces separated Nabela from her 13-year-old daughter and 4-year-old son and loaded her onto a truck bound for a facility in southern Israel. According to the Israeli group Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, or PHRI, all detainees in Gaza are first brought to the Sde Teiman military base.

"We were freezing and forced to remain on our knees on the ground," Nabela told The Associated Press from a school-turned-shelter in Rafah where she's staying with other recently released female detainees.

"Loud music, shouting and intimidation — they wanted to humiliate us. We were handcuffed, blindfolded, and our feet were tied in chains."

Moved between several prisons, Nabela said she was subjected to repeated strip searches and interrogations at gunpoint.

Asked about her connection to Hamas and knowledge of the militants' extensive underground tunnel network, she maintained her innocence, telling interrogators she was a housewife and her husband worked for Hamas' rival, the Palestinian

Authority.

An apparatus of retribution and revenge

One woman detained from Gaza, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of another arrest, told the AP that during a medical check before she was moved to Damon Prison, Israeli forces ordered her to kiss an Israeli flag.

When she refused, a soldier grabbed her by the hair, smashing her face into a wall, she said. In a report by PHRI, former detainees from Gaza alleged similar mistreatment.

One, whose name was redacted, said he was urinated on by guards at Ketziot Prison in southern Israel, and witnessed strip searches where guards forced naked detainees to stand close to each other and inserted search devices into their buttocks.

PHRI described Israel's prisons, also housing Palestinians from the West Bank and east Jerusalem held on security-related charges, as "an apparatus of retribution and revenge." It alleged the prison service and military "have been granted free rein to act however they see fit".

At the beginning of the war, prisons entered "lockdown mode", confining detainees to their cells for two weeks, the report said. Under wartime emergency measures, Israel's parliament in October suspended normal cell capacity requirements. Since then, inmates have slept on mattresses in overcrowded cells.

Phone privileges have been completely suspended, the report said. At some facilities, security wings were disconnected from electricity and water, plunging detainees into darkness for most of the day and rendering showers and sinks unusable.

During eight days at an unknown facility in southern Israel, Nabela said she did not shower

and had no access to menstrual pads or toiletries. Food was scarce. Once, Nabela said, guards threw down the detainees' meals and told them to eat from the floor.

The military said each detainee receives clothing, blankets and a mattress. It denied that cells were overcrowded, saying detainees had sufficient access to toilets, food, water and medical care.

"The violent and antagonistic treatment of detainees described in the allegations is prohibited," the military said in response to an AP request for comment. "Cases of inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with."

It referred questions about Ketziot and Damon prisons to the Israeli Prison Service, which did not comment on the allegations beyond saying it was uninvolved in the arrests and interrogation of Palestinians from Gaza.

Unlawful combatants' Nabela said she never spoke with a lawyer or a judge. Under a wartime revision to Israeli law, all detainees from Gaza can be held for 45 days without charge or trial.

Designated "unlawful combatants", they aren't granted the same protections under international law as prisoners of war. Their appearance before a court can be delayed and access to an attorney withdrawn, according to PHRI.

The Israeli rights group HaMoked said there are 600 people from Gaza held as unlawful combatants in Israeli prisons, and more could be held in military facilities.

Palestinian detainees told PHRI that adequate medical care was rare, even for those needing insulin or chemotherapy treatments.

An official document obtained by the AP, laying out operations at the Sde Teiman military medical facility, specified that unlawful combatants be treated hand-

cuffed and blindfolded.

Medical staff's names were kept anonymous "to maintain the safety, well-being and lives of the caregivers", it said.

It did not require patient consent for medical procedures and said confidential medical information could be passed to detention center staff.

The military said the handcuffing of detainees was "done in accordance with their assessed level of danger and medical state". Israel's Ministry of Health did not respond to requests for comment.

Eleven Palestinian detainees have died in Israeli custody since October 7, according to the advocacy group the Palestinian Prisoners' Club, and the most recent was just this week. At least five had chronic health conditions, which PHRI says raises concerns that they died because of medical neglect. The Israeli military said it would examine the deaths.

Better than Gaza' Nabela's fortunes improved when she arrived at Damon. There, she met Palestinian women detained from the West Bank. She said the women were kind. She had electricity and warm showers. Her interrogator wondered aloud why Nabela was detained.

A month and a half after her arrest, a prison administrator announced Nabela would be released with about 20 other women. Israeli buses brought them to a Gaza crossing, where they made their way to UN shelters in the southern city of Rafah, full of displaced Palestinians. She cannot travel to Gaza City, where her family remains.

Nabela, her face bruised, recalled one of her final interrogations. She had begun to weep, and her interrogator told her: "Don't cry about it. You're better living here than Gaza."

US designer, 'geriatric starlet' Iris Apfel dies age 102

NEW YORK, Mar 2 (Agencies): Iris Apfel, centenarian style icon from the New York borough of Queens immediately recognizable by her oversized owlsh glasses, has died at age 102, according to her Instagram account.

The self-described "geriatric starlet," best known as a textile designer and fashion celebrity, reached peak fame only in her 80s and 90s.

A flamboyant interior designer, she was a fixture on front rows of Paris fashion shows for more than half a century.

Her cropped white hair, massive glasses, bright lipstick, large-bead necklaces and bangles earned her kooky distinction among New York's glitterati.

Apfel filled two floors of her Park Avenue apartment with work by the great designers of the 20th century, amassed over her multiple decades of life.

And designers and fashion notables from Alexander Wang to Isaac Mizrahi declared themselves fans of the world's most chic centenarian, well-known for her love of baubles.

"Find your own bliss"

New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art staged the first major retrospective of her wardrobe in 2005, with Apfel admitting she was as likely to pick up interesting jewelry in a Harlem junk shop as in Tiffany's.

Helping Apfel's fame spread beyond the style pages was Albert Maysles's successful 2014 documentary about her, "Iris."

Four years later her autobiography "Iris Apfel: Accidental Icon" hit bookstore shelves.

Always the entrepreneur, Apfel was known for her collaborations with a variety of brands: a Barbie was made in her image, she had a Home Shopping Network collection and even produced a makeup line with MAC Cosmetics.



The key to enjoying life, she said, was to never stop working. "I haven't," she once told guests at a reception in her honor at the American Embassy in Paris.

"Try new things. Don't let age and numbers frighten you. You have to find your own bliss, be as individual as you can, and don't go with the herd," she added.

Apfel and her husband, Carl Apfel, who lived to be 100, co-owned Old World Weavers from 1950 to 1992, restoring and selling textiles including to the White House.

Born Iris Barrel on August 29, 1921 in Queens, Apfel went on to graduate from the University of Wisconsin's art school and worked as a copywriter for Women's Wear Daily.

Never one to shy away from color or unconventional silhouettes, Apfel urged young women at one gathering to abandon the modern "uniform of black tights or jeans with a sweater, boots and a leather bomber jacket."

Instead, she told them to "dare to be different. Be yourselves, be individual. "If you wear something and it doesn't work, don't worry," she quipped, "the style police are not going to arrest you."

Tributes poured in from across the internet following Apfel's death, reflecting her wide following.

Musician Lenny Kravitz described Apfel on Instagram as someone who had "mastered the art of living," while clothing store Old Navy remembered her as a "forever icon."

World Wildlife Day seminar held at GDC Kishtwar

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Mar 2: The Department of Zoology, Botany, and Eco-Club at Government Degree College (GDC) Kishtwar organized a seminar in commemoration of World Wildlife Day. The event, held under the guidance of Principal Dr. Jyoti Parihar, focused on the theme 'Connecting People and Planet: Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation.'

Thirty students actively participated in the seminar, marking a keen interest in wildlife conservation among the academic community.

Dr. Seehris Gazal initiated the proceedings with opening remarks, providing insights into the



historical and contemporary significance of World Wildlife Day.

Prof. Jaideep emphasized the crucial role of wildlife in maintaining a balanced ecosystem.

Principal Dr. Jyoti Parihar commended the efforts of both faculty and

students for organizing a meaningful event and encouraged students to play an active role in wildlife conservation.

Dr. Kulbushan, from the Department of Zoology, delved into the importance of species and highlighted the adverse

effects of pollution on wildlife populations. Prof. Asma, from the Department of Botany, discussed the intricate relationship between biodiversity and its components.

In the seminar, Anmol Koul, Salma Liyaqat, and

Mamta Kumari secured the first, second, and third positions, respectively, showcasing their understanding and commitment to wildlife conservation. Uzma Tabasum received a special prize for her outstanding contribution to the poster competition.

Prof. Uzma concluded the event by expressing gratitude to all participants and contributors, emphasizing the collective responsibility to preserve our wildlife and promote environmental sustainability. The seminar provided a platform for academic discourse and awareness on critical issues concerning wildlife and the environment.

OBC Adhikar Tiranga rally concludes, reiterates demand for 27% reservation

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: The Eighth OBC Adhikar Tiranga Yatra led by Kasturi Lal Basotra (D.S.P-Retd) Chairman Jammu & Kashmir O.B.C.Mahasabha along with Mohan Lal Pawar, Gen.Secretary, O.B.C Mahasabha, Faquir Chand Satia, President All India Backward Classes Federation, Darshan Kumar Mehra, Chairman, Kashyap Mahasabha, Kewal Fotra, General Secretary All J&K Sain Samaj, Bushan Kumar Verma, Vice-Chairman OBC Mahasabha, All J&K O.B.C.Welfare Forum, Srinagar, Abdul Qadir, General Secretary, Dhobi Welfare Central Committee, Ashok Kumar of Deblherh, Manohar Lal Tidyai, Chief Advisor, Amit Kumar Mehra, Leader Youth wing, Ravi Dogra - Secretary Kashyap Rajput Sabha, Sonu Kashyap-Secretary OBC-Mahasabha, Balwant Katria, Vice-Chairman Vishwakarma Library



and Bansi Lal started from Hari Singh Park Jammu on last day.

The leaders demanded implementation of fundamental constitutional rights of 27% reservation as per Article 15(4), 15(5), 16(4), 16(5), and 340 guaranteed by the Supreme Court of India verdict dt.16.11.1992 on Mandal commission report.

They said that the 11-12% reservation for JK-UT OBC Masses is not acceptable to JK-UT OBC's as their population is 42% at present keeping in view 32% as per census-1931. Implementation 27% reservation in JK-UT Govt. services like in central Govt. Sec-

only 27% in Panchayats and in Municipal Corporations /Municipalities committees and 10% is not acceptable.

Others who also accompanied the yatra were Rahul Mehra, Ajay Kumar Tirpathi,

Romesh Kumar Kashyap, Varinder Kumar Mehra, Kulwant Verma, Som Raj Verma, Abdul Rashid, Mohd Yunis, Abdul Hameed, Abdul Latif, Mohd Shrif, Mohd Saleem, Yash Pal Verma, Garoo Ram Verma Urf. Baba Jee, Mohan Lal Verma, Sham Lal of Manwal, Vijay Kumar Kashyap, Sushil Verma, Garoo Ram Kashyap and Vijay Kumar Prajapati.

Army organises Medical Patrol for Gujjar, Bakarwals at Rajouri



Top News Report

RAJOURI, Mar 2: Health care infrastructure is poor in remote areas of south of Pir Panjal. It particularly affects the women, who have to rush to nearest medical centres to get proper medical treatment.

The nomad community of Gujjar & Bakarwals are mostly affected due to the difficult terrain and weather condition. Indian Army at Pangai, Rajouri district conducted a medical patrol to reach out

to the people staying in remote areas to provide awareness regarding various diseases and their symptoms along with proactive measures to stem the tide of the same.

Indian Army patrol consisted of army doctors who provided assistance with free health check up and medicines to the needy. A total of 130 (37 Women, 65 Men and 28 Children) were interacted with and were distributed medicines during the medical patrol.

A lecture was also organised during this medical patrol to emphasize on the importance of good eating habits, balanced diet plan and maintaining personal hygiene and sanitation to increase happiness quotient amongst the populace in the area. This event evoked great enthusiasm amongst the resident population. This gesture and effort by the Indian Army was highly appreciated by the AWAM.

TNWS seeks to check unscheduled power cuts



Top News Report

Trikuta Nagar Welfare Society members on Saturday held a meeting at its office main and the residents observed that there should be proactive measures by PDD to prevent the frequency of power supply cuts in Trikuta Nagar colony Jammu. The specialists of team TNWS for dealing with power supply matters submitted the enclosed details for urgent action on merits by concerned

PDD authorities.

The meeting was attended by Amarjeet Singh, Upender Zadoo, Ashok Gupta, Narinder Kumar Bali, Er. S. J. B. S. Johar, Vijay Gupta & Er. Varinder Kumar Suri. The meeting headed by President TNWS Jammu also demanded to Secretary of J&K UT for PDD department to take it seriously and issue directions so that this practice should be stopped.

Ajaz Jan attends Urs Mubarak, prays for People of J&K

Top News Report

POONCH, Mar 2: Ajaz Jan, Provincial President of JKNC Youth, Jammu and former MLA Poonch, today participated in the First Day Urs Mubarak of Hazrat Darvesh Ghulam Qader Saheb (RA) at Takiya Shareif, Bandi Chiechian, Poonch.

The Urs Mubarak was attended by several religious leaders and people from all walks of life. The annual Urs Mubarak, in particular, is a special, Urs Mubarak to commemorate the death anniversary of a beloved Sufi saint.

During the auspicious occasion, Ajaz Jan offered prayers for the peace and prosperity of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Following the religious event, Ajaz Jan visited the Poonch hospital to meet with patients and inquire about their well-being. Recognizing the importance of quality healthcare, he urged



the authorities of District Hospital Poonch to provide enhanced medical facilities for the patients admitted there.

Ajaz Jan also visited the Khari Karmara area of Poonch to express his condolences for the untimely demise of a young boy who passed away due to cardiac arrest. He extended his deepest sympathies to the bereaved families

and prayed for solace and eternal peace for the departed soul.

The former Legislator was accompanied by Baghussain Rathoor, Sheikh Mohd Afsal, Abdul Razak, Ch shabir, Abdul Jabar Tantary, Parvinder Singh, Shamim Ahmed, Mukhtar Rathoor, Rashid Ahmed, Ch Gani, Rashid Mire, Munshi Khan, Gulzar Ahmed and others.

Army provides winter relief

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Mar 2: Amid several cold conditional at upper reaches of South of Pir Panjal, Indian Army distributed winter essentials to the resident population in the Somwali Village.

The event has created

a ripple of positivity in the residents which has enabled the cultivation of strong relationship and gaining the trust of the populace. The residents expressed their appreciation for the consistent dedication and efforts taken by the Army to foster good relations.



FROM PAGE 1

LG Sinha addresses closing ceremony of Rotary Club's week-long mega health camp in Poonch and Rajouri

for providing logistics and district administrations for extending all the support and co-operation. The collaborative efforts have ensured that the people of Rajouri and Poonch can avail the benefits of special surgeries without any financial burden, he said.

He urged the Rotary Club for organizing a similar special health camp for the people of Doda and Kishtwar.

Addressing the team of doctors, nursing staff, members of Rotary Club and health department officials, the Lt Governor reiterated the commitment of J&K Administration to provide quality, affordable and accessible healthcare services to all.

Under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, we have achieved greater success in bridging the health gap in the UT, the Lt Governor observed.

State-of-the-art Health infrastructure, digital interventions, reforms introduced in the field of medical education and critical care have strengthened the healthcare ecosystem of J&K UT, he said.

We have laid special focus on four important aspects - Doctors, Drugs, Diagnostics and Delivery Mechanism. Under Sehat Scheme, the administration has spent a total amount of Rs 1735 crore on the treatment of the citizens till the first week of January 2024, the Lt Governor further said. The Lt Governor directed the Secre-

tary Health and senior officials to spread mass awareness on the facilities like Tele-MANAS and availability of doctors in hospitals and health centres. Institutionalised mechanism should be put in place to ensure quick response of the ambulance service, especially in far flung areas.

On the occasion, the family members of the beneficiaries of the health camp also shared their experiences and expressed gratitude to the Doctors, Rotary Club and the Administration.

Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Secretary, Health and Medical Education; Om Prakash Bhagat, Deputy Commissioner Rajouri; Ch. Mohd. Yasin, Deputy Commissioner Poonch; members of Rotary Club; Principal GMC Rajouri, HoDs, doctors, nursing staff and senior officials were present.

Article 21 Soul of Constitution, Liberty of Citizen Paramount, says SC

ground. "Needless to state that Article 21 of the Constitution of India is the soul of the Constitution as the liberty of a citizen is of paramount importance. Not deciding the matter pertaining to liberty of a citizen expeditiously and shunting away the matter on one or the other ground would deprive the party of their precious right guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India," it said.

The bench said that it has come across various matters from the Bombay High Court where the bail and anticipatory bail applications were not being decided expeditiously.

Referring to one such case, the bench said in the matter the application for anticipatory bail was not decided for more than four years.

"We have also come across numerous matters wherein the judges are not deciding the matter on merits but find an excuse to shunt the case on different grounds. We, therefore, request the chief justice of the High Court of Bombay to convey our request to all judges exercising the criminal jurisdiction to decide the matter pertaining to bail/anticipatory bail as expeditiously as possible," the bench said.

It asked the Registrar (Judicial) of the apex court to communicate this order to the Registrar (Judicial) of the high court, who shall place the same before the chief justice of the Bombay High Court.

On January 29, the bench noted that on March 30, 2023, the high court had asked Vahile to approach the trial court for regular bail even though it had noted that he was languishing in jail for more than seven years.

The top court had said, "When the petitioner applied for bail on merits and also on the ground that he had been incarcerated in jail for seven and a half years, the approach of the high court in only permitting him to file an application for bail before the trial court/sessions court and not deciding the prayer for bail on merits, in our view, would amount to non-exercise of jurisdiction vested in it."

The bench had said Vahile had been languishing in prison for seven and a half years at the time on which the order was passed by the single judge and by now he has suffered custody of more than eight years. The high court rather than asking the petitioner to take another round of litigation

ought to have decided the matter on merits, it had said.

The top court had said that the approach of the high court was not in accordance with the sanctity that has been given to personal liberty in the catena of judgments.

It had then asked the high court to decide Vahile's bail afresh in view of the fact that he had served around eight years in jail.

Vahile is a prime accused in the murder of one Avinash Tekawade, a corporator of Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation in Maharashtra.

Police had claimed that Vahile had harboured a grudge against Tekawade due to professional rivalry and committed the murder along with others on September 3, 2015. He was arrested on September 4.

Man dies of suffocation, several others fall unconscious in Ramban

the Deeda area of Gool, apparently due to a generator.

He said that all the five unconscious persons were immediately rushed to SDH Gool, where one of them was declared dead on arrival, while others were shifted to DH Ramban.

Police identified the deceased as Mohammad Tariq (18) son of Mohammad Abdullah Hajam resident of Deeda Gool.

A case in this connection has been registered at Police Station Gool and further investigations taken up.

Incessant Rains Drench Plains In J&K, 1.3-Ft Fresh

Snowfall In Gulmarg

recorded a minimum of 13.4°C and it was above normal by 1.1°C for the winter capital of J&K.

Banihal recorded a low of 4.2°C, Batote 4.8°C and Bhaderwah 4.4°C, he said.

MeT has also issued an advisory cautioning about the disruption of surface and air transport in the valley.

It said widespread moderate to heavy rain/snow is expected in Jammu and Kashmir till the afternoon of March 3 with its peak activity today.

"The above system is most likely to cause heavy to very heavy rain/snow over Pirpanjal Range of Jammu division and middle & higher reaches of Kashmir Division (Anantnag-Pahalgam, Kulgam, Sinthan Pass, Shupian-Pir Ki Gali, Sonamarg-Zojila, Bandipora-Razdan Pass, Gulmarg and Kupwara-Sachna Pass)," read the advisory. The weather activity may lead to disruption of surface and air transport including Jammu-Srinagar highway and other major roads of middle and higher reaches of J&K. It urged the people in snow bound areas to avoid venturing into sloppy and Avalanche prone areas. "Chances of landslides, mudslides & shooting stones most likely over the vulnerable areas," it said, adding, "Farmers are advised to withhold all farm operations during 1st week of March."

LG Manoj Sinha attends 'Herath Milan Samaroh' in Jammu

Youth All India Kashmiri Samaj, members of the organization and prominent citizens from different walks of life were present.

Paytm shares slump over 2.5% after Payments Bank slapped with Rs 5.49 crore penalty

The Financial Intelligence Unit imposed the penalty over money laundering violations

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (Agencies): Shares of One97 Communications Ltd, which owns and operates Paytm, declined more than 2.50 per cent in Saturday's special trading session, after the Financial Intelligence Unit slapped a penalty of Rs 5.49 crore on Paytm Payments Bank.

Leading stock exchanges BSE and NSE conducted a special trading session in the equity and equity derivative segments on Saturday to check their preparedness to handle major disruption or failure at the primary site.



The company's stock fell by 2.56 per cent to settle at Rs 414.55 apiece on the BSE. During the day, it went lower by 3.61 per cent to Rs 410.05. On the NSE, it

declined by 2.13 per cent to Rs 414.40 per share.

Shares of One97 Communications on Friday jumped 5 per cent after the company said the board has approved the discontinuation of

inter-company pacts with Paytm Payments Bank to reduce dependencies.

In fresh trouble for Paytm Payments Bank, the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) has slapped a penalty of Rs 5.49 crore on the payments bank for violating anti-money laundering law, the finance ministry said on Friday.

Paytm Payments Bank Ltd (PPBL) has been in trouble after the Reserve Bank directed it to stop accepting fresh deposits from customers with effect from February 29 -- a dead-

line which was later extended to March 15.

Earlier this week, Vijay Shekhar Sharma stepped down as part-time non-executive Chairman of PPBL and the board of the bank was reconstituted.

The finance ministry said FIU-India had initiated a review of Paytm Payments Bank on receipt of specific information from law enforcement agencies in respect of a few entities and their network of businesses engaged in illegal acts, including organising and facilitating online gambling.

Study links exercise to improved sleep quality

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (Agencies): A new study from the University of South Australia has revealed a direct correlation between the quality of one's sleep and the structure of their daily activities, with exercise emerging as a key factor.

Involving 1168 children and 1360 adults, the study found that individuals who engaged in higher levels of moderate to vigorous physical activity experienced less troubled sleep, reduced tiredness, and overall improved sleep quality. Dr. Lisa Matricciani, a researcher at UniSA, emphasized the significance of understanding the factors influencing sleep quality for overall health and well-being.

"When people think about sleep quality, they tend to focus on adjustments immediately before bedtime -- for example, avoiding screens, not eating too much, and avoiding alcohol -- but our research looks beyond this to the range of activities we undertake during the day," said Dr. Matricciani.

The study's findings suggest that increasing moderate to vigorous physical activity can lead to reduced tiredness, improved sleep quality, and less



troubled sleep. Dr. Matricciani also noted that simply making more time for sleep predicted more restless sleep, highlighting the complexity of the relationship between daily activities and sleep patterns.

The implications of this research are significant, as Dr. Matricciani pointed out, "Everyone wants a good night's sleep. If it's simply a matter of being more active during the day, then it may be a relatively achievable goal for most of us."

Army organises Pir Panjal Volleyball League

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Mar 2: Indian Army conducted Pir Panjal Volleyball League for boys of Budhal-Kandi area in district Rajouri.

Aim of this event was to involve boys of various villages of Rajouri District and motivate them to pursue healthy lifestyle.

This event was a landmark step in empowering resident young boys to build a career in sports. Pir Panjal Volleyball League for boys started on 27 Feb 2024 and was organized for three days at Samote and witnessed participation of 14 teams of boys from Kandi-Budhal areas.

All participating teams displayed great enthusiasm & sportsmanship during the volleyball tournament.

The volleyball tournament has always been a crowd puller, where villagers cheered for their respective players.

The final match of Pir Panjal Volleyball League for boys was played between Kandi Warriors Vs 7 Star Samote. After a nail biting finish, 7 Star Samote team won the tournament.

At the end of the competition, the



players of winner and runner up team were felicitated.

The event was a huge success and a total number of 348 (including 200 locals, 148 students/ participants) witnessed the said event.

Such positive engagement weans away curious young minds from getting involved in issues related to drug abuse, unlawful activities and channelizes the energy of the youth

in a positive direction, boosts competitive skills and resists them from falling into the traps of anti-national and anti-social elements. Youth and residents of areas expressed their sincere thanks and gratitude towards Army for conducting Pir Panjal Volleyball League for boys at Samote & taking this noble initiative towards effective youth engagement.

India 3rd most obese country in world: Dr Arunanshu Behera

Top News Report

CHANDIGARH, Mar 2: "A recent Lancet study puts an alarming 70 percent of India's urban population in the obese or overweight bracket while marking the country right in the middle of an obesity explosion."

Talking to the media here on Saturday, Dr Amit Garg, senior bariatric & metabolic surgeon at Ivy Hospital, Mohali said that according to Lancet study, India is just behind US and China in this global hazard list of top 10 countries with highest number of obese people.

He further said that the 30 million of India's adult population is either overweight or obese and 62 million diabetic Indians exhibit unique features of obesity like excess



body fat, abdominal adiposity, increased subcutaneous (under skin) and intra-abdominal fat, and deposition of fat in ectopic sites such as liver, muscle and others, he informed.

He said that those patients who undergo diabetes or metabolic surgery within five years

of the onset of diabetes, there is a 90 to 95 percent chance of them getting cured of type 2 diabetes.

Dr Arunanshu Behera, director GI surgery said that obesity is rising in India and so are weight-loss surgeries.

About 20000 weight-loss surgeries were con-

ducted in India in 2019, up from 800 just ten years ago. India's government now covers the cost of weight-loss surgeries for its 3 million government employees, making the procedure available for the not-so-rich as well. Also, nowadays almost all Insurance companies are also covering Bariatric Surgeries. As such, a lot of patients from Punjab, Haryana, J&K, Uttaranchal and abroad from Canada, Australia and Middle East are coming to Tricity to get bariatric surgery done, maintained Dr Arunanshu Behera.

Meanwhile Ivy Group of Hospitals also launched an obesity helpline number 80788- 80788, where patients can book a free consultation for weight loss till March 31.

What next for Indian startup apps after being delisted from Google Play Store

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (Agencies): With Google delisting apps over billing policy, Indian startups are seeking a solution to tackle the issue.

Tech industry body IMAI (Internet and Mobile Association of India) has urged Google not to delist Indian apps from Play Store after Google removed certain startup applications for allegedly not complying with payment policy.

The development came after the tech giant removed matrimony, job and real estate apps from its platform.

IAMAI, a not-for-profit body with more than 500 members, has said that Google had sent notices

to four of its members over billing policy.

"The affected members of IMAI are of the view that a substantive hearing of the case is pending before the Supreme Court of India, and Google should not take any coercive action during the pendency of the case," the industry body said.

Google clarified that existing users can still continue using these apps but new downloads will not be available as of now. Among the affected apps are matrimony apps like Shaadi, Matrimony.com, Jodii and Bharat Matrimony and dating apps like Truly Madly and Quack Quack. Other

delisted apps include Naukri, 99acres, Shiksha and KukuFM.

Last month, the Supreme Court declined to pass an order to protect firms such as Shaadi and Matrimony.com from being delisted. The court will hear their pleas challenging Google's billing policy on March 19.

Meanwhile, Sanjeev Bikhchandani, the co-founder of Info Edge, one of the country's oldest internet firms, told Moneycontrol that anti-trust regulator Competition Commission of India (CCI) must initiate action against the tech giant over its anti-competitive behaviour.

Despite policy support, China's manufacturing activity contracts for 5th straight month

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (Agencies): Manufacturing in China contracted for a fifth consecutive month in February, according to an official survey of factory managers released Friday, reflecting persistent weakness in the economy ahead of annual legislative meetings where officials are expected to boost policy support.

The official purchasing managers index, or PMI, fell to 49.1 in February from 49.2 the month before. The PMI is on a scale up to 100 where 50 marks the cutoff between expansion and contraction.

The manufacturing PMI has fallen in ten of the past eleven months, rising only in September. February's reading comes in spite of Beijing's recent measures to shore up the economy, including reducing a lending rate that benchmarks home loans and cutting banks' reserve requirements to boost lending.

A separate survey by financial



news outlet Caixin found that manufacturing PMI edged up from 50.8 to 50.9.

"We think it makes sense to average across both PMIs to gauge conditions in industry," Capital Economics' Huang Zichun said.

"On this basis, the headline

manufacturing reading remained unchanged at 50.0 and is in line with factory activity holding steady last month," she said.

As this year's Lunar New Year holidays -- a weeklong national holiday -- also fall in February, the readings could also be skewed by this period as factories

are typically inactive.

Meanwhile, the non-manufacturing PMI, which measures activity in sectors such as services and construction, rose to 51.4 from 50.7 in January. The reading is the highest since September last year, and is likely attributed to the surge of consumption around the Lunar New Year holidays.

Beijing is expected to focus on fiscal measures to boost the economy at the upcoming National People's Congress (NPC) meetings which open on March 5, as it seeks to boost consumption, investment and instill more confidence in its stock market.

Following a brief surge in the economy post COVID-19, the world's second-biggest economy has been grappling with an uneven recovery amid a property crisis and a slowing economy.

China is also expected to release its annual GDP growth target at the NPC.

Byju's unable to pay salaries as rights issue funds locked in separate accounts amid rift with investors

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (Agencies): Byju's founder Byju Raveendran said Saturday the edtech company will not be able to pay salaries to employees as the recent funds raised through a rights issue are inaccessible due to a legal dispute with certain investors.

In a letter to staff, Raveendran said the rights issue, launched a month ago, has been successfully closed.

"This was supposed to be a happy correspondence. After all, we now have funds to meet our short-term needs and clear our liabilities. However, I regret to inform you that we will still be unable to process your salaries," he said.

In the letter -- seen by PTI -- Raveendran said the company is still striving to ensure that salaries are paid by March 10.

"We shall make these payments the moment we are permitted to do so as per law," he added.

Further, Raveendran said that last month, the company faced challenges due to a lack of capital, and "now we are experiencing a delay despite having funds."

"Unfortunately, a select few (4 out of our 150 plus investors) have stooped to a heartless level, ensuring that we are unable to utilise the funds raised to pay your hard-earned salaries," Raveendran said. "At their behest, the

amount raised through the rights issue is currently locked in a separate account," he added.

Raveendran accused these select investors of having a callous disregard for the lives and livelihoods of others even though they had reaped substantial profits from investment in Byju's.

"It is an agonising reality that some of these investors have already reaped substantial profits -- in fact, one of them has made a staggering eight times their initial investment in BYJU'S. And yet, their actions convey a callous disregard for our lives and livelihoods," he said in the letter.

Raveendran noted that he has fought fearlessly



and tirelessly, "leaving no stone unturned" to find a way to honour the company's commitment to employees.

"Countless hours have been spent exploring every possible avenue, engaging our legal teams, and advocating for your rights. However, despite our best efforts, we are left with no option but to con-



front the heart-wrenching reality that we are temporarily unable to provide you with the financial support you deserve," he said.

Earlier this week, a company law court had asked the embattled edtech firm to consider extending the closing date of the USD 200 million rights issue, a request that the management had hinted

it would not accept even as estranged investors flagged technicalities that prevented the closure of the issue on Wednesday.

In an interim order dated February 27, the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Bengaluru Bench said the funds received by the company in respect to the rights issue should be kept in a separate escrow account, and it should not be withdrawn till the disposal of the matter.

The next hearing has been listed for April 4.

The select group of investors in Byju's alleged that the edtech giant siphoned off USD 533 million in an obscure hedge fund in the US and had sought a stay on a USD 200 million rights issue,

calling it illegal and contrary to law.

In a high-voltage corporate drama that unfolded last month, Byju's shareholders (prominent investors) voted unanimously for removing Founder-CEO Raveendran and his family from the board over alleged "mismanagement and failures" at what was once India's hottest tech startup but the company hit back calling the voting done in the absence of founders as invalid and ineffective.

Sources close to the investors had earlier said more than 60 per cent of the shareholders voted in favour of all the seven resolutions at the EGM, which included removing the current management,

reconfiguration of the board and a third-party forensic investigation into acquisitions done by the company.

The once-storied edtech startup, Byju's rose to dizzying heights before it faced a series of setbacks.

While the return of students to physical classes post-pandemic and the recent acquisition of Aakash put Byju's under a financial strain, the edtech firm in the last one year suffered other issues, including its auditor resigning, lenders beginning bankruptcy proceedings against a holding company, and a US lawsuit disputing the terms and repayment of a loan.

Delhi Capitals cautious, will not push Rishabh Pant in excitement: Sourav Ganguly

Sourav Ganguly has said that Delhi Capitals would be cautious when it comes to Rishabh Pant's return in the IPL 2024 season.

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (Agencies): Delhi Capitals Director of Cricket, Sourav Ganguly, has said that the franchise will be taking a cautious approach with Rishabh Pant and not try to push him in excitement.

Pant has made a fantastic recovery from the injuries he sustained in a car accident in December 2022. The wicket-keeper is all set to return to the field in the IPL and has been constantly posting videos on social media to show his progress.

Speaking to TOI, Ganguly said that DC are expecting the NCA to give Pant clearance by March 5. The former BCCI president also said that DC will take a match by match approach with Pant.

He has done everything to get fit and that's the reason NCA will clear him. Let Rishabh get cleared on Mar 5 only then



we'll talk about captaincy back-ups. We are taking a cautious approach with him because he has a very long career ahead of him. We don't want to push him in excitement. We will see how Rishabh reacts. He will be joining the camp once NCA gives him the clearance. We will see match by match. We can't predict.

Who are DC's wicketkeeping options?

During the IPL 2024 auction, DC did do a fair bit of shopping for players who could do a fine job behind the stumps. This could be in view with Pant possibly not taking up wicketkeeping duties for the entirety of the tournament.

Ganguly tipped Kumar Kushagra, Ricky Bhui, Shai Hope and Tristan Stubbs as the candidates for the job.

"As for wicketkeeping options,

there's Kumar Kushagra. Ricky Bhui has had a very good season. There is Shai Hope and Tristan Stubbs," said Ganguly.

Ganguly had earlier said that Pant had worked very hard to make his comeback and the wicketkeeper seems to be confident of playing for DC and the Indian team.

"It's a huge boost for Delhi Capitals because Indian players are gold in the IPL. Obviously, he has not played much cricket and I hope he gets back to rhythm very quickly. It's been a while he is away from competitive cricket, almost 17-18 months. He has worked very hard to make a comeback. He is confident and wants to play for Delhi Capitals and India. I am extremely happy he is back and hope he gets through the season," Ganguly told Revsportz.

Kapil backs BCCI strictness on domestic cricket



NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (Agencies): Former India captain Kapil Dev has backed the BCCI's decision to terminate central contracts for lack of commitment to domestic cricket, calling it a much-needed step to protect marquee

First-Class events like the Ranji Trophy.

Ishan Kishan and Shreyas Iyer were on Wednesday excluded from the BCCI's central contracts after ignoring the board's diktat to play in the Ranji Trophy.

"Kuch logon ko taqleef

hogi, hone do lekin desh se badhkar koi nahi hai (some people will suffer but let it be because nobody is bigger than the country)," he said.

"It was high time the message was given and this strong step by the BCCI will go a long way in restoring the prestige of domestic cricket. I have always believed in the process of international players making themselves available to play for their respective states. It helps them extend their support to domestic players. Also it is a nice way to pay back for the services rendered by the state association in grooming a player," he added.

Kapil also expressed gratitude to BCCI for enhancing the pension of former players, saying it has come as a major relief to their families.

MS Dhoni's game awareness was as good as Michael Bevan: Aakash Chopra

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (Agencies): Aakash Chopra heaped praise on MS Dhoni and said that the former Indian skipper had game awareness similar to Australia's Michael Bevan.

Dhoni, who retired from international cricket back in August 2020, was known for his presence of mind and his ability to keep his composure under extreme pressure.

Due to his calm and cool nature, he tasted success for India, both as a skipper and batter. Dhoni remains one of the greatest finishers in the history of the game.

Chopra hailed the now 42-year-old Dhoni as the best finisher to have played the game.

"Whenever a book is written on cricket, the finishing chapter will be written on him, and he might write it himself because there hasn't been a better finisher than him in the history



of cricket," Chopra said on his YouTube channel.

In successful run-chases in ODIs, Dhoni scored 2876 runs from 116 ODIs at an average of 102.71 and a strike-rate of 88 with 2 hundreds and 20 fifties to his name.

Chopra said that Dhoni's road to success lied in his ability to run hard between the wickets apart from playing big shots.

"Around 2008, MS Dhoni started developing as a limited-overs cricketer who finished matches. He started getting compared with Michael Bevan. Michael Bevan was one of the

best. Very few people have finished better than him," Chopra said.

"Michael Bevan's speciality was singles, doubles and running.

MS Dhoni ran singles and doubles, hit fours and sixes, stayed unbeaten till the end, and his game awareness was as good as Michael Bevan, if not better," he added.

Dhoni is currently gearing up to play for the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024, starting March 22. CSK's opening match is against Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) on Friday, March 22.

1st Test, Day 3: Rachin Ravindra Holds Fort For New Zealand After Australia Make Early Inroads

WELLINGTON, Mar 2 (Agencies): Australian spinner Nathan Lyon described unbeaten New Zealand batsman Rachin Ravindra as a budding "superstar" on Saturday but says the tourists are still well placed to win the first Test in Wellington. Ravindra struck an eye-catching 56 not out as the home side reached 111-3 at stumps on day three, having stumbled early in their pursuit of a lofty 369 to win the opening match of the two-Test series. Daryl Mitchell was on 12, with the pair having put on 52 in 20.3 overs together to give New Zealand a glimmer of hope in difficult batting conditions.

Lyon took 2-27 -- aided by some brilliant catching from Steve Smith -- to give him six wickets for the match.

Lyon shapes as a key figure in preventing New Zealand from scoring the remaining 258 runs they need on a Basin Reserve pitch taking turn and bounce.

New Zealand part-time spinner Glenn Phillips earlier capitalised on the conditions, snaring career-best figures of 5-45 as Australia were bundled out for 164 in their second innings.

Ravindra, who scored 240 in the first Test against South Africa last month, defied Australia late in the day with a series



of aggressive strokes in his 94-ball knock.

Lyon said it will be crucial to quickly remove the 24-year-old, who scored three centuries at last year's 50-over World Cup.

"Rachin seems like a really good player," Lyon said.

"This is the first time I've bowled to him -- I watched a lot of him during the World Cup and he's going to be a superstar. Credit where it's due, he's played very well here.

"But I know if we can put pressure on them and challenge their defence for long periods of time, hopefully we can crack them."

'Dream come true'

Mitchell was fortunate to survive an early stumping chance off Lyon, when the ball evaded the gloves of wicketkeeper Alex Carey, with the charging batsman well out of his ground.

Lyon was introduced in the sixth over of New Zealand's innings and quickly removed opener Tom Latham before claiming the key wicket of Kane Williamson, when Smith pouched a sharp catch at leg slip.

Smith's second catch was even better, to remove Will Young for 15 off part-time spinner Travis Head, reacting quickly to a fine edge that went low and to his left.

Earlier, Australia lost their last six wickets in the space of 13 overs, with Phillips producing the best figures by any New Zealand spinner on home soil in 18 years, complementing his 71 with the bat in New Zealand's first innings of 179.

Phillips, thanked captain Tim Southee for giving him the opportunity for a rare long spell.

"It's absolutely a dream come true. Timmy's an incredible captain. He gave me the confidence to go out there and stick to my plan," Phillips said.

"I never thought it would be in home conditions I could take a five-for. I definitely thought it would be more in the sub-continent."

Two wickets fell in the first session, nightwatchman Lyon departing for Australia's top score of 41 and opener Usman Khawaja for 28 after they resumed at 13-2.

First-innings centurion Cameron Green scored 34 and Travis Head 29 but the end of their 46-run partnership for the fifth wicket sparked a collapse.

Head miscued Phillips to be caught at long-on, before the spinner removed Mitchell Marsh and Alex Carey to close catches and Henry bagged the last two wickets to finish with 3-36.

Australia chief Hockley denies reports Big Three ignored study to save Test cricket

SYDNEY, Mar 2 (Agencies): Cricket Australia CEO Nick Hockley on Saturday rebutted reports that India, England and his organisation had not paid attention to a draft presented to the International Cricket Council to save Test cricket.

A report in the Sydney Morning Herald said that the three powerful boards were dismissive of a document compiled by New Zealand Cricket chair Martin Snedden, who proposed an overhaul of the future tours program (FTP) to save the longest version of the game.

"Categorically, I think there was some misreporting around that. Certainly, the discussions I'm in at the moment are very much thinking about how we can optimise the calendar and how we can continue to grow cricket around the world," Hockley told SEN Cricket.

The changes proposed in the blueprint document include additional windows for T20 leagues other than the Indian Premier League, alteration in the World Test Championship points system, 40-over ODIs, apprehensions about T20s and an effort towards pooling of broadcast rights revenue for bilateral series.

Hockley, when asked about the report, denied suggestions that

the powerful nations were turning a blind eye to Test cricket, saying he had met Snedden during the New Zealand-Australia first Test in Wellington and conveyed to him that Australia was very much committed to help ICC ensure all the three formats flourish.

"We had a great catch-up with Martin (Snedden) here yesterday (Friday in Wellington), Hockley said.

"We're very much involved with that piece of work.

I think at Cricket Australia we've got good influence and I think we've got a really important role to play around the ICC in terms of driving strategy.

"I think that Cricket Australia has been behind many of the developments. Whether that's the introduction of the World Test Championship. I'm on the FTP working group with the ICC, and making sure that we're keeping all three formats healthy and strong, that we're growing the game in all territories," he added.

Pointing out the growth of cricket across the world, Hockley said countries like the United States too had embraced the game and would be co-hosting the T20 World Cup with the West Indies later this year.

"It's just brilliant to see the way that the T20 World Cup in the US has been embraced. I understand that ticket sales were 20 times oversubscribed when they were over their release."

"So, I think cricket has a great opportunity to have a format strategy where all the formats play a role and all fit together. That is really the essence of the work that Martin has started. It's incumbent on all of us as members working together to make sure that we continue to take it forward," he added.

Hockley added that Australia had great respect for the World Test Championship and that its men's Test cricket was its prized property.

"Practically, it is making sure that the World Test Championship is given greater prominence so each Test series has context.

"I think it's looking at the economic viability in different territories and how we make sure that it is economically viable for those countries where it isn't (currently). Still for Australia men's Test cricket is the most valuable property. So, it's really working together."

"Then on the calendar, it's trying to configure the calendar in a way that there's space for all three formats," he concluded.

No Big Debut For Devdutt Padikkal? Report Claims Off-Colour Batter Will Be Retained In 5th Test vs England

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (Agencies): With the Test series against England in pocket, it was expected that the Rohit Sharma-led Indian cricket team would go in for some experimentation in the fifth Test. The final match of the series starts on Thursday in Dharamsala and Rajat Patidar, who had had a pretty ordinary series so far, was under scrutiny. In three Tests, Patidar's scores read 32, 9, 5, 0, 17 and 0. Out of all the debutants in the Test series so far, his is the most lacklustre show.

With the addition of Devdutt Padikkal, who has played two T20Is so far, there was speculation that he might be chosen over Patidar in the final Test. But now, a report has said that since the series has already been sealed, Patidar will get one more chance.

"The team wants Patidar to get one more chance as they feel Pati-



dar has talent and it's a matter of time before he gets runs. As India has already won the series, the team wants to try him out one more time instead of giving a debut to Devdutt Padikkal," a source told agency.

Patidar, 30, was included in the India Test squad as a replacement for Virat Kohli, who has gone on a break due to personal reasons. He made his debut in the second Test at Visakhapatnam after KL Rahul was injured.

Senior India batter KL Rahul will not feature in the fifth and final Test against England in Dharamsala owing

to an injury while pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah will return to the team, the BCCI said on Thursday. Rahul, who continues to feel sore in his right quadriceps, has travelled to London to get an expert opinion on his injury.

The wicketkeeper-batter became unavailable after the series-opener in Hyderabad in January and as per the BCCI, he was 90 per cent fit before the third Test in Rajkot earlier this month.

"Mr. KL Rahul, whose participation in the final IDFC First Bank Test was subject to fitness, has been ruled out of

the fifth and final Test in Dharamsala. The BCCI Medical Team is closely monitoring him and coordinating with specialists in London for further management of his issue," the Board said in a release.

Meanwhile Bumrah, who was released from the squad for the fourth Test in Ranchi in line with the team's workload management policy, will link up with the squad in Dharamsala for the final Test, beginning March 7.

India have already taken an unassailable 3-1 lead, following the victory in the fourth Test in Ranchi.

Rahul's absence from the final Test means Rajat Patidar remained with the squad but the MP batter can't be sure of his place in the playing eleven, having aggregated only 63 runs in six innings.

All-rounder Washington Sundar has also been released from the squad.

SoBT organises Curriculum Development Workshop at SMVDU

Top News Report

KATRA, Mar 2: A Curriculum Development Workshop was organized by SoBT at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University to develop a holistic curriculum in line with NEP-2020 guidelines, for the Undergraduate, Post-graduate, and Doctoral programs offered by the school.

The resource persons from premier national institutes and the stakeholders including the alumni of the school engaged in thorough deliberations for two days to develop a course curriculum that will meet the needs of the ever-changing industries and technologies. On Day One of the workshop, the experts and faculty mem-



bers engaged in discussion and deliberation on curriculum development of the Doctoral, Postgraduate, and Undergraduate Programs and provided their insightful remarks on the required necessities and demands of the rapidly evolving landscape of technology and industry. Day two of the workshop

included deliberations on the development of a robust curriculum for B. Tech. Biotechnology program to be offered from next academic session by the school.

The resource persons for the workshop were Dr. Madhulika Bhagat, Associate Professor, School of Biotechnology, Univer-

sity of Jammu, Dr. Kashmir Singh, Professor and Coordinator DST Centre for Policy Research, Department of Biotechnology, Panjab University, Chandigarh, Dr. Shaikh Z. Ahammad, Professor, Biochemical Engineering and Biotechnology, IIT-Delhi and Dr. Pravir Kumar Professor and former Head, Department of Biotechnology, Dean Internal Affairs, Delhi Technological University, Delhi. The alumni invited to the workshop were Dr. Akshi Spolia, Rabiya Tabassum Khan, Amook, and Swadha Kailoo.

The two-day-long discussions included proposals to offer minor and honors degrees in emerging areas of Genome Engineering and Tech-

nology and Sustainable Energy Engineering at the UG level for the B. Tech Biotechnology program. Dr. Shafaq Rasool, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, SMVDU highlighted the advantages and scope of the minor and honors degrees to be offered by the School of Biotechnology. Dr. Ratna Chandra, Associate Professor, Head of SoBT, and convener of the workshop also spoke at the occasion. Dr. Shafaq Rasool, Coordinator of the workshop carried out the proceedings of the workshop.

The workshop was conceptualized and organized under the active patronage of the Vice Chancellor, SMVDU, Prof. Pragati Kumar.

J&K Mahila Congress condemns suicide of minor girls in UP

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: In a deeply troubling incident that has shaken the conscience of the nation, two minor girls were gang-raped in Uttar Pradesh, ultimately leading to their tragic death by suicide.

This appalling incident underscores the urgent need for comprehensive action to address the escalating crisis of violence against women in our society.

On the direction of Sha-meema Raina, president Jammu and Kashmir Mahila Congress, vehemently protest and condemned this heinous act and stands in solidarity with the victims and their families.

She emphasized the importance of swift and decisive justice for the perpetrators of such



despicable crimes. The rise in crime against women is a grave concern that demands immediate attention from authorities at all levels.

It reflects a systemic failure to protect the most vulnerable members of our society and underscores the urgent need for systemic reforms to ensure the safety and well-being of women and girls.

Jammu and Kashmir Mahila Congress calls upon lawmakers, law enforcement agencies,

and civil society organizations to collaborate effectively to create a safer environment for women and to ensure that perpetrators of such crimes are swiftly brought to justice.

As a society, we must collectively condemn such acts of violence and work tirelessly towards building a culture of respect, equality, and justice for all. The time for action is now, and together, we can strive to create a world where women and girls can live free from fear and violence.

Shiv Public HSS Sari Rakwalan hosts Inspiring Science Exhibition



Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: Shiv Public Higher Secondary School and Shiv Kidz Planet collaborated to organize a captivating Science Exhibition aimed at cultivating students' creativity and scientific acumen.

The event, held on [insert date], witnessed enthusiastic participation from students spanning from class 3rd to 9th, showcasing an array of static and working models.

The exhibition featured an impressive array of models and experiments, ranging from rainwater harvesting and wind turbines to water filtration systems and circulatory system demonstrations. Students passionately presented their projects, providing detailed expla-

nations to the attendees, which included our Chief Guest, Balbir Lal (DDC Marh), Shiv Dev Singh Salaria (Sarpanch), Branch Manager of J&K Bank, Pouni Chak Varinder Gupta, as well as the school's Principal, Mehak Manhas, and Coordinator, Divanshi Jammal.

The Chief Guest, Balbir Lal, delivered an inspiring speech, highlighting the transformative power of technology and emphasizing the boundless opportunities available in the field of science.

He also took the time to interact with the students, acknowledging their efforts and distributing prizes to those who demonstrated exceptional creativity and presentation skills.

Principal Mehak Manhas

expressed her gratitude to all participants and attendees, remarking on the immense success of the event and the wholehearted participation of the students.

The presence of Branch Manager Varinder Gupta from J&K Bank further enriched the occasion, underscoring the importance of community engagement in educational initiatives.

The Science Exhibition served as a platform for students to unleash their innovative potential and garnered widespread appreciation from all quarters.

It exemplified Shiv Public Hr. Sec. School's commitment to nurturing holistic development and fostering a culture of scientific inquiry among its students.

Empyrean 2024 inaugurated at IIM Jammu

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: The Indian Institute of Management, (IIM) Jammu, commenced its highly anticipated cultural and management fest, "Empyrean 2024," being formally inaugurated by Chief Guest R.R. Swain, Director General of Police (DGP), Jammu and Kashmir. The inaugural event, held at the newly inaugurated, "Mandapam" Auditorium at the Jagti Campus.

The event was presided by Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu. Present on the occasion were Prof. Jabir Ali, Dean of Academics, IIM Jammu, and Cmdr. Kesavan Baskaran, Chief Administrative Officer, IIM Jammu along with faculty, officers, staff, and students at the Institute.

On the occasion, the second edition of IIM Jammu's Hindi Magazine Publication, "Tri-kuta", was unveiled by the Chief Guest R.R. Swain along with other dignitaries present on the dais, underscoring the institute's commitment to fostering literary and cultural endeavours alongside academic excellence.

The Hindi Patrika, "Tri-kuta" was compiled and

coordinated by PR-Corporate Communication Committee of IIM Jammu along with the faculty and other staff members of the Institute.

Chief Guest commended the state-of-the-art infrastructure at IIM Jammu Campus.

Inaugurating Empyrean 2024, he expressed anticipation for a strong alliance between IIM Jammu and Police Security, where he urged the students to delve into response management, operations, and thereby strengthening the comprehensive functions of the police force along with people's grievances management.

Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu illuminated the way forward as Empyrean 2024 was inaugurated, the cultural fest of IIM Jammu, emphasizing its student-driven essence. He reiterated that right from budgeting to artist arrangements, and sponsorship, the students have spearheaded every aspect of this cultural fest igniting creativity and collaboration.

The Kavi Sammelan, hosted as part of the Hindi Rajbhasha Committee in the inaugural ceremony of "Empyrean 2024", IIM Jammu show-



cased the timeless allure of poetry in Indian culture, reminding audiences of the profound impact of words on the human spirit. Renowned Hindi Poets including Shambhu Shikhar, Dinesh Bawra, Manika Dubey, Padmini Sharma, Prof. Sartaj Ul Hasan, Swayam Shrivastava, and Prof. Deepak Swami graced the stage, weaving tales of emotion and insight that resonated deeply with the audience.

Their eloquent delivery and intricate play of words left an indelible mark, evoking applause, and heartfelt appreciation. This activity was coordinated by Hindi Rajbhasha Committee, IIM Jammu.

Following the Kavyanjali Kavi Sammelan, the festivities continued with a soul-stirring performance by Aseem Sharma and

Band on the Main Stage, captivating the audience with melodious renditions and dynamic stage presence. As Empyrean 2024 unfolds, attendees can anticipate a diverse lineup of engaging events and performances that promise to captivate, inspire, and unite individuals from all walks of life.

With each event building upon the success of the last, there is palpable anticipation and excitement surrounding the remaining festivities of the festival. The seamless execution of the first event of "Empyrean 2024" has paved the way for the smooth implementation of the remaining events and competitions planned for the cultural and management fest of IIM Jammu.

With the inaugural event demonstrating a high level of organization and participation, there is confidence in the institute's ability to replicate similar success across all facets of the festival. As anticipation continues to mount for upcoming events, attendees can rest assured of a seamless continuation of the professionalism and quality demonstrated thus far. Empyrean 2024 serves as a testament to IIM Jammu's steadfast commitment to excellence, fostering an environment of innovation, talent development, and cultural enrichment.

As Empyrean 2024

Maharashtra gets 20 Kanal land in Kashmir

Bhawan will boost tourism, cultural bonding between regions: Raman Suri

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: Hailing the allotment of 20 Kanals of land to Maharashtra government at estate Ichgam, Budgam for constructing Maharashtra Bhawan in Kashmir, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) J&K Executive Member Raman Suri today said that this is a great development that will, while enhancing accommodation for tourists in Kashmir, also strengthen tourism and cultural relations between the two regions in a big way.

He said, until now Jammu and Kashmir had JK Houses at Delhi, Maharashtra, and Amritsar, but now it is going to be vice-versa. Maharashtra is the first state to have 20 Kanals of land at Kashmir at a price of Rs 8.16 crore and, the government of Maharashtra has also earmarked Rs 77 crore for building



Maharashtra Bhawans in Kashmir as well as Ayodhya.

Raman Suri said that these kinds of investments not only add to the economy but also enable people to know each other's culture closely. Beginning from language, cuisine, and attire to festivals, everything will be showcased at this facility, which will strengthen bonds between people and enhance their socio-economic presence in a big way, for which the Jammu and Kashmir Revenue Department has already approved land transfer for the Maha-

raashtra Bhawan.

The BJP leader said, Maharashtra Bhawan at estate Ichgam, Budgam will add to the accommodation facility, which falls short in almost every season. After abrogation of Article 370, the number of tourists has increased manifold and such facilities will add more beds, needed at the time of peak season. He said, earlier some politicians always remained against such developments for their vested interests and never allowed Kashmir to prosper socially as well as economically.

Now that the Maharashtra Bhawan in Srinagar would become the very first guesthouse by any state government in Kashmir, it is hoped that others will follow suit and build such facilities in days to come, Raman Suri said, adding that this Bhawan will provide good accommodations and

staple food to the people of Maharashtra as well as those intending to have a taste of the Maharashtrian cuisine.

Raman Suri hailed the efforts of Lieutenant Governor J&K Manoj Sinha in bringing peace to the region and, also expe-

diting the allotment of land in Kashmir for the construction of Maharashtra Bhawan. During his visit to J&K last year, Maharashtra Chief Minister had met Sinha at the Raj Bhawan in Srinagar and handed him a letter making the request.

World Wildlife Day celebrated at GDC Jourian

Top News Report

JOURIAN, Mar 2: GDC Jourian celebrated world wild life day today by organising slogan writing competition.

The event was organised by the department of EVS under the supervision and guidance of Dr Anuradha Pandoh, Principal of the college.

Prof. Archana Sharma, HOD, EVS department gave insight on wildlife conservation and its importance.

The theme of wildlife conservation this year is "connecting people and planet": Exploring Digital Innovation in wildlife conservation. Almost 20 students were participated in the whole event. The faculty members Dr. Suresh Sharma, Dr Sheetal Sharma, Dr Vandana Rajput and Dr Lotus Jamwal were also present on the occasion.

Prof R.K Uppal gets D. Litt

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 2: Professor R. K. Uppal received an honorary doctorate from Global Nation Open University for his outstanding contributions to higher education and research.

In his words, Dr. Uppal had made significant contributions to research and education.

Professor Rajinder Kumar Uppal, an eminent academic figure, is revered for his profound insights, relentless pursuit of excellence, and transformative impact.

Dr. Uppal epitomizes academic excellence, a beacon of knowledge, and a guiding force in banking and finance. Dr. Uppal, from humble beginnings in a small town near Bhatinda District in Punjab, is an inspirational figure.

His unwavering passion for learning has propelled him to the top.

Born on November 10th, 1960, in the vibrant tapestry of Malout, Punjab, Professor Uppal embarked on a journey marked by academic brilliance, unwavering dedication, and visionary leadership. Professor Uppal, with an extensive

educational background, has a diverse array of knowledge and expertise, reflected in his scholarly works that traverse banking, finance, and education.

His relentless pursuit of excellence, quest for knowledge, and dedication to scholarly pursuits characterize his educational journey, culminating in distinguished alumni status from prestigious institutions. Throughout his illustrious career spanning over three decades, Professor Uppal, an Associate Professor in Economics, has distinguished himself as a beacon of academic excellence, innovation, and societal change, inspiring generations of students through his pedagogical prowess and scholarly acumen.

His teaching transcended the classroom, sparking intellectual curiosity, fostering critical thinking, and instilling a lifelong passion for learning.

Professor Uppal was awarded the prestigious Punjab Rattan Award in 2022 for his exemplary contributions to academia. He is a Professor-Principal at Baba Farid College of Management and Technology (Punjab)

and holds the prestigious position of MTC Global Chair Professor: Banking and Finance. Besides being a Research Professor at the Indian Institute of Finance, New Delhi, he is also a Visiting Professor at many other institutions. His research fervor and academic zeal have culminated in a plethora of scholarly publications, earning him the esteemed World Record for "Maximum Books Written on Economics."

Professor Uppal's scholarly contributions have reverberated across national and international platforms, enriching academic discourse, fostering intellectual exchange, and shaping contemporary scholarship. Dr. Uppal's impressive scholarly contributions, with over seventy-two authored and edited books, 255 research papers, including 25 Scopus, and 152 UGC care list journals, have influenced many academics and researchers. His dedication to research is unparalleled, evidenced by his extensive publication record and numerous accolades, including prestigious awards and honors from renowned institutions worldwide.