

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper

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Leading lady: Raveena Tandon to star in the film Patna Shuklla



Will be on roads from 6am on poll days, says Bengal guv Bose

North Korea's Kim Jong Un rides luxury car given by Russian president Vladimir Putin, oversees drills



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BRIEFLY

Three injured in road accident in Poonch

POONCH, Mar 16 (Agencies): Three persons injured after an auto fell into a gorge in Qasba area in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday. The police officials said that an auto bearing registration number JK12B-5607 was on way from Qasba area of Bandi Chichiyan towards Poonch, however it met with an accident in the meanwhile, injuring three persons. He said the injured have been rushed to District Hospital Poonch for treatment. Further details are awaited.

Barring Gulmarg & Pahalgam, Night Temp Drops in J&K

SRINAGAR, Mar 16 (Agencies): Barring Gulmarg and Pahalgam, night temperature recorded drop in Jammu and Kashmir even as the weatherman has forecast generally dry weather till March 20. A meteorological department official here said that Srinagar recorded a minimum of 1.2°C against 1.7°C on the previous night which was below normal by 2.5°C for the summer capital of JK for this time of the year.

Body of Srinagar man who jumped into Jhelum last month retrieved

SRINAGAR, Mar 16 (Agencies): The body of a man who had jumped into the river Jhelum last month has been retrieved on Saturday. An official told news agency Kashmir Scroll that the dead body of a person identified Nazir Ahmed Matoo son Ali Mohd Matoo resident of Tenbagh Eidgah Srinagar has been recovered from river Jhelum at Shalteng bridge by Police. He said that man had jumped from Safakadal bridge on February 29 this year. Meanwhile police have already taken cognizance and investigation is going on.

Lok Sabha poll 2024 | Polls to be held from April 19 in 7 phases, result on June 4



NEW DELHI, Mar 16 (Agencies): The Lok Sabha elections would begin on April 19 in 7 phases and the results would be declared on June 4, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said on Saturday

and urged everyone to "get inked." Addressing a press conference to announce the Lok Sabha elections, Kumar said over 97 crore voters are eligible to exercise their franchise in the Lok Sabha

elections. The poll authority is preparing to set up 10.5 lakh polling stations across the country. "We are fully prepared and I request the voters to get inked," the Chief Election Commissioner

said flanked by two new Election Commissioners Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu. "This is a historic opportunity for all of us," he said. He said the poll panel promises to deliver the national election in a manner that can add to India's shine on the world stage. "After assessment in all states, we are confident of ensuring a memorable, independent and impartial polls," Kumar said. "We have 97 crore registered voters, over

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Govt bans J&K groups for involvement in terror, secession bid



NEW DELHI, Mar 16 (Agencies): The Central Government on Saturday banned the Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Freedom League and all factions of the Jammu

and Kashmir Peoples League associated with the separatist conglomerate Hurriyat Conference under strict anti-terror laws. Additionally, the ban

on the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), which is led by imprisoned terror accused Yasin Malik, has been extended by another five years. The announcement came just hours before the schedule for the general elections was to be declared. Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the Modi Government will remain unsparing to people and organisations involved in terror activities.

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Lt Governor addresses SRCC's Business Conclave 2024 in New Delhi

Top News Report

NEW DELHI, Mar 16: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today addressed the Business Conclave 2024 organized by Shri Ram College of Commerce in New Delhi.

In his keynote address, the Lt Governor shared the achievements of J&K UT after abrogation of Article 370 and vision for its future.

"Today J&K is growing



at an impressive pace and quiet transformation is taking place in various sectors. We have embarked on a transfor-

mation of key economic areas to achieve the goals of inclusive and rapid development to fulfill the aspirations of

the people," the Lt Governor said. Interacting with the students of SRCC, the Lt Governor highlighted the challenges, and achievements in diverse sectors under the leadership of Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi. Today, Jammu Kashmir has become the centre of innovation, industries, tourism, education, sports, agriculture, health,

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PoJK man nabbed on LoC in Rajouri

JAMMU, Mar 16 (Agencies): A 34-year-old Pakistani intruder was arrested along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials on Saturday said. Mohd Nadeem, a resident of Samani village of Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK), was intercepted by the alert army troops in Nowshera sector when he was moving into this side from across the border late Friday, the officials said.

They said the troops were on patrolling duty when they noticed an unarmed intruder and subsequently arrested him after a brief chase. Nadeem was being questioned to know the intention behind his infiltration into this side from across the border, the officials said.

Noted Bollywood singer Anuradha Paudwal joins BJP



NEW DELHI, Mar 16 (Agencies): Noted Bollywood singer Anuradha Paudwal joined the BJP here on Saturday ahead of the Lok Sabha elections.

Addressing a joint press conference with BJP leaders at the party's headquarters, Paudwal praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi and

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Anticipating record voter turnout in upcoming elections: Div Com Kashmir

SRINAGAR, Mar 16 (Agencies): Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Saturday said that upcoming elections in Jammu and Kashmir will be conducted in a free and fair manner.

"The administration is anticipating record-breaking voter turnout in the polls," he said. He said all prepara-



tions regarding the elections are in place

and the administration is ready to hold the polls.

"All preparations regarding upcoming elections are in place. Recently the Elections Commission of India (ECI) visited Kashmir and the administration gave a detailed presentation about preparations. The team was satisfied with the preparations in place, and whenever the poll

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Excise 'Scam' | Delhi Court Grants Bail to CM Kejriwal in case against him for skipping ED



NEW DELHI, Mar 16 (Agencies): A Delhi court on Saturday granted bail to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in two complaints filed by the Enforcement Directorate against him for skipping summons in a money laundering case linked to the alleged Delhi

excise policy scam. The court of Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Divya Malhotra also allowed Kejriwal to leave the courtroom. "Offence being bailable, accused Arvind Kejriwal is admitted to bail," it said. The court further

directed the ED to hand over documents related to the complaints to Kejriwal. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed two complaints before the magisterial court, seeking Kejriwal's prosecution for skipping multiple summonses issued to him in the case. The latest complaint pertains to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor not honouring summonses no. 4 to 8 sent by the federal probe agency under Section 50 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

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Ex-Bureaucrat Navneet Kumar Sehgal is new Prasar Bharati Chairman

NEW DELHI, Mar 16 (Agencies): Retired bureaucrat Navneet Kumar Sehgal has been appointed as the new Prasar Bharati chairman, a post that had been vacant for four years. Sehgal succeeds A Surya Prakash, whose term ended in February 2020 after he turned 70, the upper age limit for a person holding the post. "...The President, on the recommendation of the Selection Committee, is pleased to appoint Shri Navneet

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9419143503

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With heavy heart and profound grief we inform about the sad demise of our beloved mother, **Smt. Shanta Aima (Shyama Jee)** W/o Late Prof. Roshan Lal Aima, of Fateh Kadal Srinagar - Kashmir, presently residing at D-302, Satisar Apartments, Sector 7, Dwarka, New Delhi, on 11th March 2024, in New Delhi.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed on 20th March 24 at Gauri Shankar Mandir, Palam, at 8 AM followed by an **ASSEMBLY** at our residence D-302 Satisar Apartments, Dwarka at 11 AM.

We pray to the almighty, may her divine soul attain the state of eternal bliss - 'Moksha'. Om Shanli.

GRIEF STRICKEN:

Mr. Manish Aima - Son

Mrs. Rashmi Aima & Mr. Ashish Aima - Daughter in Law & Son

Mrs. Nancy Kaul - Sister in Law

Mrs. Kusum & Mr. Ramesh Kumar Raina - Sister in Law & Brother in Law

Mrs. Anu Aima & Mr. Anil K Aima

Mrs. Sushma & Mr. Virendra Salman

Mrs. Saroj Aima

**SMT. SHANTA AIMA
(SHYAMA JEE)**

Grand Daughters:

Mrs. Meenakshi Langer & Mr. Rakesh Langer Isha, Saanvi, Saiyette and Sharika
Mrs. Rani Wali (W/o Late Mr. M. L. Wali) Samast Wali, Aima and Raina Parivar
Mrs. Suman Wali (W/o Mr. R. K. Wali) Contact Number - 9810660346

**TENTH DAY KRIYA**

With heavy hearts and profound sorrow, we announce the unfortunate passing of our beloved patriarch, **Sh. Shadi Lal Koul, (Retd. SDE - BSNL)** S/o Late Sh. Amar Nath Koul, Original R/O 2nd Bridge, Sheelteng, Habba Kadal, Presently at F-8, SBI Officers Flats, Upper Rajender Nagar, Near B.S.N.L. Exchange, Bantala, Jammu, attained nirvana on the 8th of March 2024.

TENTH DAY KRIYA WILL BE HELD AT AKHNOOR GHAT ON 10-03-24 AT 6:30 AM & ASSEMBLY WILL BE HELD AT SHARDA MATA TEMPLE, LOWER RAJENDER NAGAR, BANTALAB, JAMMU AT 11:00 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN:

Smt. Sarla Koul - Wife

Son and Daughter-in-Law:

Mr. Kuldip Koul (SBI Emp.) and Mrs. Anita Koul (9419235998, 9419156813)

Mr. Ajay Koul and Mrs. Meenakshi Koul

Daughter and Son-in-Law:

Mrs. Urveshi Gargroo and Mr. Rahul Gargroo (9800644845/9560162578)

Mrs. Archana Zalpuri and Mr. Navin Zalpuri

Brother-in-Law and Sister-in-Law:

Mrs. Chundi Devi Kohra (9825062211)

Mrs. Durga Rani and Mr. D. H. Kohra (9012873469)

Brother and Sister-in-Law:

Mr. B. L. Koul (Retd. SBI Emp.) and Mrs. Sushma Koul (9818311366)

Sister and Brother-in-Law:

Mrs. Nancy and Mr. R. K. Dhar (Retd. SBI Emp.) (9419119019)

Mrs. Sanjiv and Mr. G. L. Raina (Retd. SBI Emp.) (9372155137)

Mrs. Usha and Mr. B. L. Raina (9818737003)

**SH. SHADI LAL KOUL,
(RETD. SDE-BSNL)**



Mrs. Koki and Mr. Ramesh Raina (9466962400)
Grandchildren: Aanya Koul, Jeevansh Gargroo, Yugansh Gargroo, Ayush Koul, Mahi Koul, Pranav Zalpuri, Siddhant Zalpuri
SAMAST PARIVARS OF KOUL, RAJMA, DHAR, KOTHA, BHAN, GARGROO, ZALPURI

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Mr. Rahul Bhat (Shibi)** S/o Late Sh. Ramesh Kumar Bhat (Mahnoori) from Village Mahnoora District Budgam Tehsil Chadoora Kashmir A/P Lane No.18, Block No. 96, Flat No.5, Jagti Migrant Camp Nagrota, Jammu.

10th Day Kriya will be performed at Sainik School Nagrota on 18-03-2024 Monday at 7 AM while **Assembly** at behind Lane No.20, Near Ration Depot Jagti Nagrota, Jammu at 10.30 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Guddi Bhat - Mother

Brother & Bhabhi

Abhinandan Bhat & Khushi Raina/Bhat

Kiran Bhat - Tayi

Ankur Bhat & Arli Bhat - Brother & Bhabhi

Children: Arav Bhat, Harika Bhat, Rihan Bhat

Mob: 8082670564, 9541758860



**MR. RAHUL BHAT
(SHIBI)**

MOURNING AND 10TH DAY KRIYA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW, WE INFORM UNTIMELY DEATH OF OUR BELOVED FATHER **SH BALKRISHEN PANDIT** S/O LT DINA NATH PANDIT ORIGINALLY FROM UMANAGRI BRARIANAGAN UTTERSOU KASHMIR PRESENTLY RESIDING AT SRB 24 C SHIPRA RIVERA INDIRAPURAM GHAZIABAD.

TENTH DAY KRIYA WILL BE HELD ON 19TH MARCH 2024 AT MURAD NAGAR.

GRIEF STRICKEN

RAJ DULARI PANDIT - WIFE

OMPRAKASH PANDIT - BROTHER

KISHNA DHAR - SISTER

SAMAST PARIVAR HANDOO ANNATNAG, BAMBROO AKURA AND KATH BILASPUR (SISTERS)

KUSUM & MANORANJAN PANDIT - DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND SON

RAHI & SUMAN PANDIT - DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND SON

RINKI JI & KIRAN PANDIT - DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND SON

ARTI & ARUN KOLL - DAUGHTER AND SON-IN-LAW

JYOTI & SANJAY PANDIT - DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND SON

KALPANA & KANAYA BHAT - DAUGHTER AND SON-IN-LAW

GRAND CHILDREN:

KAVISH, AYUSH, SAYURI, KARAN KOLL, VAIBHAV BHAT, YUTIKA, TANISH, SHALUJA BHAT, NITIN

9910882227 # 7428452227



SH BALKRISHEN PANDIT

10TH DAY/KARAM

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of beloved father **Darshan Kumar Magotra** S/o Lt Pt Nihal Chand Ward No. 11, Reasi.

10th Day will be performed on 17th of March 2024 (Sunday) at Bharatiya Vidya Mandir School Reasi at 11 AM.

KARAM on 18th March 2024 at our residence.

Deeply Remembered by

MAGOTRA FAMILY

Mob. 8803284041, 9906380109



**Darshan Kumar
Magotra**

SHADMOS & MASWAR

Those we love do not go away. They are always with us unseen and unheard. Six months have passed since you left us for your journey to heavenly abode. We still feel your presence every where & every moment with silent tears.

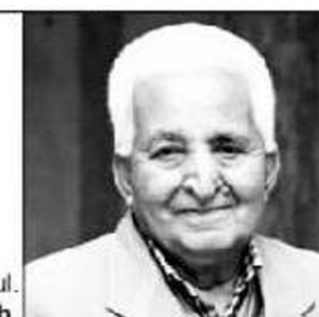
We pray to God to grant eternal peace to your soul.

Shadmos & Maswar of our beloved father **Lt. Sh. Makhan Lal Bhat (Gulgami)** of Kupwara Kashmir is being performed on 16.03.2024 and 17.03.2024 respectively at our residence Garhi near Govt Hr. Sec. School Udhampur.

DEEPLY MISSED & REMEMBERED BY

Bhat Parivar

7006894261, 9797661951



**Lt. Sh. Makhan Lal Bhat
(Gulgami)**

TENTH DAY/KRIYA/RASAM PAGRI (UTHALA)

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW WE INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF **SMT ARUNA SHARMA** W/O SHRI RAJ KUMAR SHARMA (KOOTAH WALE) R/O H.No. 118/C, LANE NO. 12, SHIV NAGAR JAMMU WHO LEFT FOR HEAVENLY ABODE ON 7TH MARCH 2024 (THURSDAY).

TENTH DAY SHALL BE PERFORMED ON 16TH MARCH 2024 (SATURDAY) AT 11.00 AM AT OUR RESIDENCE.

KRIYA SHALL BE PERFORMED ON 17TH MARCH 2024 (SUNDAY) AT 12.00 NOON AT OUR RESIDENCE.

RASAM PAGRI (UTHALA) SHALL BE PERFORMED ON 18TH MARCH 2024 (MONDAY) AT 2.00 PM TO 3.00 P.M. AT A.G.S OFFICE COMMUNITY HALL, A.G.S OFFICE COLONY JAMMU.

GRIEF STRICKEN

RAJ KUMAR SHARMA (HUSBAND)

SONS & DAUGHTERS IN LAW

POOJA AND ALOK SHARMA

POOJA DUBEY AND PARMOD SHARMA

LEENA SHARMA & DEEPAK SHARMA (DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW)

DEEPLY MISSED BY

PARI, KRISHNA, AMOD, PEEHU, PARTH

CONTACT NOS : 9858050680, 9906116114, 9419113041



SMT ARUNA SHARMA

BARKHI

One year has passed since you left us for heavenly abode but still it's difficult to believe that you are not with us. We all miss you deeply and feel your blessings and presence in every moment of life.

BARKHI of our beloved **Smt Seema Devi** W/o Sh. Sham Sunder Basson will be performed on 17th March 2024 (Sunday) at Sh. Guru Ravidass Mandir, Krishna Nagar.

SATSANG 12:30 pm

Guru Ka Langar : 1:30 pm

Deeply missed and remembered by :

Sham Sunder Basson (Rtd Sr SDE BSNL)- Husband

Sanjeev Kumar & Jyoti-Son and Daughter-in-law

Babli & Mohinder- Daughter and Son-in-law

Late Sh. Charan Dass & Smt. Pyari Devi- Brother and Bhabhi

ALL BASSON PARIVAR

Mobile 9419115511, 9419145600



Smt Seema Devi

W/o Sham Sunder Basson

OBITUARY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform sad demise of **Smt. Suman Sharma / (Pinkey)** W/o Sh. Ravi Ji Sharma originally resident of Akura (Mattan), presently at R/o H.No. 129 Adarsh Nagar Near J&K Bank Paloura has passed away on 15th March, 2024.

10TH DAY shall take place on 24 March, 2024.

GRIEF STRICKEN FAMILIES

Sharma's & Koul's

Mob: 9419118588, 9682365964



**Smt. Suman Sharma
(Pinkey)**

10TH DAY / KRIYA

With deep sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Hari Bhagat Gudda** (S/o Pt. Nathu Ram Ji) W.No. 6, H.No. 55, Court Road, Udhampur, who left for his heavenly abode on 07 March 2024.

10th Day will be performed on Saturday, 16th March, 2024 at Jagrit Oldage Home Billan Bawli Road Udhampur at 12:30 PM

Kriya will be performed on 17/3/2024 Sunday at Devika Ghat Udhampur.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Daughter-in-law & Sons

Neelam & Ramesh Chander Gudda (Govt. Contractor)

Bandana & Suresh Sharma (Master)

Smt. Lalita Magotra (Daughter)

Smt. Sawiti & Sh. Heera Lal Badyal (Daughter & Son-in-Law)

Smt. Rohini Devi (Daughter)

Smt. Santosh & Sh. Ashwani Sharma (Daughter & Son-in-Law)

Smt. Sudershan & Sh. Yash Paul Sharma (Daughter & Son-in-Law)

Grand Daughter and Grandson in law

Aayushi and Amit Gupta Grand Daughter in law & Grandson

Bhanu & Moksh Sharma

Anamika & Raghav Sharma Lavanya & Ulkarsh (Grandson)

M/s Hari Bhagat & Sons, Dhar Road Udhampur

Mob.: 9419161145, 9419162613, 9622735027, 9858001745



**Sh. Hari Bhagat
Gudda**

MASWAR/VAHARVAR

One year has been passed since you attained Nirvana and your noble soul departed for heavenly abode. We miss your joyous, kind and affable self.

Your memories are as fresh as ever in our hearts and minds.

Maswar & Vaharvar of our beloved **Late Sh. Rattan Lal Ganjoo**. Originally from Village Sarnoo Pulwama A/p H.No. 473 Sec. Vinayak Nagar Muthi Jammu will be performed on 16th & 17th of March 2024.

DEEPLY MISSED & REMEMBERED BY

Samast Ganjoo Parivar



**Late Sh. Rattan Lal
Ganjoo**

OBITUARY

With profound grief and sorrow we inform sad and untimely demise of our dear **Hari Krishan Koul (Thimu Ji)** S/O Late Sh. Nand Lal Koul erstwhile resident of Lanibal Krandigam Bejbahara Km. on 11.3.2024 at Jammu.

MOURNING is being observed at Community Hall, Lane No. 25 back side in front of block 151, Jagti Migrant Colony Jammu.

10TH DAY KRIYA will be performed at Bhaderkali Mandir Thalwal Jammu on 20.3.2024 and assembly will be held at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education Jammu at 11 AM.

Grief Stricken:

Hemra Kaul - Son

Rashika Kaul - Daughter

Santosh Kaul (Talte) - Babi

Bansi Lal Kaul - Brother

Rajinder Kaul / Usha Ji - Brother / Bhabhi

Ramesh Kaul / Jolly Ji - Brother / Bhabhi

Sandeep Kaul / Shalini - Nephew / Niece in law

Sunny Kaul / Sheela - Nephew / Niece in law

B. L. Raina - Jija Ji

Dulan Kaul Raina - Sister

Samast Kaul Parivar of Laribal Krandigam

Call No: 9899632033, 8307986764, 7006508583

8082852929



Hari Krishan Koul (Thimu Ji)

Obituary/Tenth Day Kriya

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the demise of our beloved **Smt. Tita Koul** W/o Late Ashok Kumar Koul originally resident of Rahipora, Pulwama on March 12, 2024.

Mourning is being held at H. No - 109 (1st floor) Enclave - 1A, Lower Roop Nagar, Jammu (HDFC Bank Lane)

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed on March 21, 2024 (Thursday) at Akhnor Ghat and the assembly will be held at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education at 10.30 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN:

Smt. Manu and Puneet Koul - Daughter-in-law and Son

Shri Rohit Koul - Son

Smt. Lovely and Ajit Koul

Smt. Dolly and Ramesh Koul

Smt. Seema and Rajinder Koul

Smt. Neetu and Anil Koul

Smt. Gita and Pradeep Bhat

Smt. Rajni and Rakesh Bhat

Smt. Angli and Anil Koul

Adarsh, Urvasi, Anupam, Nikhil, Hardik

Koush and Bhats

Phones: 965-443-4887, 7006441245, 8715048000, 7006044183



Smt. Tita Koul

CHOUBARS

Choubarsi of our beloved **Smt Mohini Gupta** W/o Lt. Sh. Tara Chand Gupta R/o 34/2, Vijay Nagar, Camp Road Talab Tillo Jammu shall be performed on Sunday 17th March 24 at 12 Noon at Mahajan Sabha Shalamar Jammu.

GRIEF STRICKEN :

Devrani

Smt. Manorma Gupta W/o Lt. Sh. Brj Mohan Gupta

Daughters in law & Sons

Rachna & Sanjay Mahajan (Gen Secy Jammu Central Mahajan Sabha)

Rupali & Amit Mahajan

Daughters & Sons in law

Anju & Vijay Gupta (SE Retd)

Veenu & Sanjay Gupta (Advocate)

Grand Children

Arushi & Pallav

Aksha & Aman

EDITORIAL

VACCINATION FOR A BETTER LIFE

Vaccination is necessary for infants to survive. Skipping routine vaccination can have life-threatening consequences for the newborn. Vaccination is the most effective and cost-effective way to protect the life and future of babies. More than half of the children in the world remain at risk and are deprived of receiving the vaccines necessary for a healthy life. If babies are vaccinated, then about 15 lakh infant deaths in the world can be prevented. Over the past two decades, India has made significant progress in improving health indicators, especially those related to child health. India got the certificate of polio free in 2014 and maternal and neonatal tetanus elimination in 2015. Vaccination acts as a protective shield to keep the family and community safe. By vaccinating our babies, we protect the most at-risk members of our community, like newborns. The Government of India has launched an ambitious programme, Mission Indradhanush, to reach out to the underprivileged by accelerating full vaccination. It is the world's largest vaccination program in terms of number of beneficiaries, geographical reach and volume of vaccines, targeting approximately 27 million newborns annually. More than 90 lakh vaccination sessions are conducted in India every year to ensure complete vaccination. New vaccines such as Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) and Rotavirus Vaccine (RVV) have also been included under this programme. Under this, a nationwide measles-rubella campaign is also being run. Due to which all children are targeted irrespective of where they live. Despite this progress, infectious diseases still have a high share in infant mortality and morbidity in India. Nearly 1 million children in India die before celebrating their fifth birthday. One in four of these deaths is caused by pneumonia and diarrhea, the two leading infectious diseases causing infant deaths worldwide. Most of these can be saved by giving infant breastfeeding, vaccination and treatment.

Only 65 percent of infants in India get complete vaccination in the first year of life. However, there is clear evidence of vaccination's ability to save lives and prevent disease. Yet millions of young children around the world miss out on vaccinations, which can put them and their communities at risk from diseases and epidemics. This should be unacceptable when life saving vaccines are available at low cost in the world today. Vaccination rates vary across states in India and are lowest in central and large Indian states. The majority of under-vaccinated or unvaccinated infants are in large states such as Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. The reasons for lack of vaccination are geographical, regional, rural-urban, poor-rich and gender related. On average, girls receive fewer vaccinations than boys and infants receive relatively fewer vaccinations depending on the height of their birth order. The national average of complete vaccination as per NFHS 4, 2015-16 is 62 per cent. DPT-3 coverage is 78.4 percent and coverage for first dose of measles is 81.1 percent. There are some new challenges in achieving the goal of complete vaccination such as limited capacity of workers, especially in large states with poor performance and at the grassroots level, as well as inability to accurately estimate demand, resources and cold chain management which can lead to wastage of vaccines. Immunization has been at the heart of UNICEF's work for the past 70 years. There is no organization better than this in providing services for babies in the world. UNICEF is the technical partner of the Government of India's vaccination program and is fully committed to supporting the Government to ensure that no child is affected by the diseases protected by vaccination. Vaccination dissemination is critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Polio and small pox, diseases that once killed thousands of children, have been eradicated and other diseases are also on the verge of eradication, primarily because of safe and effective vaccines. UNICEF partners with the Government of India and other partners, including the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. UNICEF supports GAVI through proposal development, annual progress reporting and implementation. UNICEF is an active member of policy development in the National Technical Advisory Group, Immunization Action Group and Polio Expert Advisory Group. UNICEF delivers on its commitment to child rights by improving routine immunization access for all boys and girls everywhere, saving lives. It, along with its associates and partners, is working to eliminate vaccination gaps among the poor, disadvantaged and less educated groups across all geographical locations, rural and urban areas. By doing this, it ensures that all the babies who come for vaccination get all the required and sufficient doses of the vaccine. Doing this includes ensuring necessary resources at all levels such as vaccinators, supplies, skills, motivation and community participation. Disseminating evidence-based information about the benefits and associated risks of vaccines can help to increase and maintain public trust in vaccines and health systems around the world. That's why UNICEF partners with the media, especially radio, and faith-based organizations and community leaders and influencers to share factual information about the benefits of vaccination.

It is important that awareness is spread about the importance of vaccination and that parents and caregivers have access to necessary information about the vaccination cycle, so they know when and where to bring their child for vaccination. What is the interval between vaccinations, what is its dosage and what is the importance of not skipping vaccination sessions.

India's commitment to improving access to immunization is central to initiatives to reduce infant mortality and immunization is prioritised at the highest levels of government. This Mission Indradhanush was run in 190 districts. Many diseases affecting India can be eliminated through regular and effective vaccination.

Of Labour, Tories and a storm in a teacup in Britain over racism, MPs

By: Farrukh Dhondy

“In this teacup of a country called the UK, an important almighty storm has broken....”

Suppose, gentle reader, that the sentence above began one of my weekly columns. Would I, then, be labelled as a “countryt” for calling the scepter’d isle a “teacup”?.

I pose the question because the above-mentioned storm that has broken out is to do, in the highest ranks of the governance of this precious stone set in the silver sea, with the interpretation of the following quote:

“It’s like trying not to be racist but you see Diane Abbott on the TV, and you’re just like I hate, you just want to hate all black women because she’s there, and I don’t hate all black women at all, but I think she should be shot.”

This, The Guardian reported, was what a capitalist called Frank Hester, donor of 10 million pounds to the Tory Party, said to a private gathering in 2019.

Regardless of the fact that the Guardian’s news desk seems a bit slow off the mark (2019?), the nasty statement was this week labelled a “racist” slur.

This condemnation came from a shadow minister in the Labour Party, a colleague of Dianne... err no... hang on -- NOT a colleague at the

moment, as Dianne, an East London MP, is at present suspended from the Labour Party for... err... racist anti-Semitism.

Nevertheless, the Labour Party leader, Sir Keir Starmer, the person who suspended her from the party, spoke this week after the Guardian’s report, very strongly in her favour, calling Hester’s words “racist”.

In contrast, as the media pointed out, Hedgie and the Tories remained schtum. Until... until Kemi Badenoch, a Tory Cabinet minister, of Nigerian origin and so, like Dianne, a black woman, spoke out calling Hester’s remarks “racist”.

Hah! Immediately, Hedgie’s No. 10 spokespeople joined in, condemning Hester’s diatribe as just that. Could this response from Hedgie have anything to do with the fact that this Kemi Badenoch is an open rival challenging Hedgie for the leadership of the party?

What an absurd thought! Hedgie’s hesitation was owing to not insulting a huge fat-cat Party donor. Ten million pounds! Conscience? What the f*** is that?

Competition for the leader’s post -- we feel it, we feel it!

Frank Hester himself, at first, denied that he was a racist. “Racist? Me? How dare you! Some of my best friends are racists!” (OK, he didn’t actually say that, but he could have, when he publicly apologised to

Dianne for his 2019 remarks).

The question is (said Alice), can you make one word mean so many different things? The answer, as Humpty Dumpty well knew, was that you could. For me, gentle reader, Hester’s vicious nonsense should be condemned as “racist” though it doesn’t seem to be a slur against every person of colour -- but then “mind of the beholder” and all that! I’m fine with calling his statement “racist”, but for me the absolutely more serious allegation is this exhortation that Dianne ought to be shot??? Isn’t it?

British MPs are the regular recipients of hate mail and of threats of rape and murder towards them and their families, on their phones and on the social media. Two MPs have been murdered by trolling maniacs.

Dianne has a right to complain and to protection from the State.

Why was she suspended from the Labour Party? It was, ironically, about the definition or perception of “racism”. She wrote a letter to the Observer newspaper which said that black people suffered a form of racism all their lives which the Irish, Jews, travellers and even people with red hair did not.

Jewish organisations called it anti-Semitic and, though Dianne apologised, she still remains suspended.

Dianne, whom I am acquaint-

ed with, is a colourful character in several ways. The first black woman MP and a great advocate of socialist institutions, she brought an avalanche of contemptuous criticism on herself when she sent her son to a fee-paying public school.

As shadow home secretary, she appeared on a radio programme and got extremely muddled and said her party in power would recruit thousands of police and pay them 30 pounds a year. She immediately retracted and placed the figure at 8,000 pounds -- another blunder from an arithmetically challenged potential home secretary.

Now there are calls for the Tories to return the 10 million pounds to Hester. I disagree. Why should he get his loot back? Hedgie should use the money instead to start an arts fund for black and Asian playwrights and pay them generously. Yes -- great suggestion!

Dear Hedgie and Kemi:

I am an Asian-British playwright and have a brilliant play featuring a black and an Asian character in the dramatic society of a London prison... No? Well maybe you’d prefer a play in which Boris Johnson introduces the serial killer Charles Sobhraj to a Daily Telegraph journalist called Mike? That would put the boot into BoJo...? No? Well then... I’ve got these monologues....

Not only Artificial intelligence, skill of Artificial intelligence is also important

By:Vijay Garg

It’s true that the technical skills that helped secure your first promotion may no longer be as effective for your subsequent promotions. If you want leadership, you have to understand emotional intelligence and use it efficiently in your work. Emotional intelligence is one of this year’s most important soft skills in the world of work. Let us tell you that in fact, 71 percent of employers consider technical skills while evaluating candidates.Give more importance to emotional intelligence. essential for your bonding This is a soft skill that establishes you as a reliable employee in the office. Because of this, they can handle stress better, communicate effectively and are more likely to seek natural support from others in solving problems.Let us understand the presence of emotional quotient or emotional intelligence with some examples: For example, after leaving a small town, you reach your first job in the office, everyone there speaks fluent English., There is a lot of work

going on there. You become nervous in your mind. But instead of running away on the very first day, they decide to try themselves. Let’s focus on the reasons why we are feeling nervous. Plan to learn essential skills by talking to people. Example 2: Your client is getting angry with you on the phone call. Although it is not your fault. In such a situation, you will decide to listen to his side completely. Will apologize and seek permission to call him again after checking the facts. This is a matter of emotional intelligence.In the first example, instead of looking for shortcomings in the office, the employee decided to do a self-assessment. In the second example, the distress felt by being in the client’s situation was anticipated and treated appropriately. That is, emotional intelligence is a soft skill related to the ability to recognize, understand and control one’s own and others’ emotions. There are clearly three elements involved.Understand the three ‘S’ Mindfulness – being self-aware, so as to recognize how your feelings or behavior are

affecting others., Empathy is the ability to recognize and understand the wants, needs, and perspectives of the people around you. ■ Connection The ability to connect with others. Because people like to be in touch with people who have good social skills and thus better networking happens. test yourself like this This skill can be developed easily. Start thinking something like this. # Give the right perspective to your reactions in the office: Put yourself in the shoes of others and be accepting of any new perspective. see if you Do you focus more on your achievements in office? Right Attitude Humility is a good skill. This does not mean being shy, but it means that you understand very well the work you did and are completely confident about its results. That’s why you don’t need a protective shield of your achievements. Do you have the perspective to see your shortcomings? Right attitude: Pointing the finger at oneself is the beginning of self-improvement. Do try to see the shortcomings in yourself with courage. How

do you react under stress? Associate Attitude: Being in control and remaining calm is especially valued in the working world. Develop like this. Record your voice and hear what effect it produces. Watch your body language in an office meeting or by recording a video of your conversation with a colleague. Practice understanding others’ body language. Start noticing the points that trigger you and practice not being influenced by them. Before speaking in any meeting, assess the atmosphere and mood of the people present. Try to understand. Practice active listening, that is, do not interrupt the conversation. If you encounter opposition, focus on solutions instead of blaming. In your career, you may have to work among people of different cultures. Therefore, avoid things like trolling, roasting on social media and seek professional help.

(Vijay Garg Retired
Principal Educational
Columnist Malout
Punjab)

Ahmedabad Defenders' hard-fought win over Delhi Toofans spices up Super 5s stage

Top News Report

CHENNAI, Mar 16: Ahmedabad Defenders earned a hard-fought victory over the Delhi Toofans in the Super 5s stage of the third season of RuPay Prime Volleyball League powered by A23, winning the match 15-10, 11-15, 10-15, 18-16 win at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium, Chennai on Friday to stay alive in the competition. Angamuthu was named the Player of the Match.

Angamuthu began well in attacks, helped on by Muthusamy's clever passing. There were consecutive net touches from Delhi and Ahmedabad made the most of them. Max Senica's indecisiveness on



attack allowed Delhi to gain an easy point while Santhosh's consistent attacks further helped. But it was Shikhar Singh who ensured the Defenders maintained their lead with consecutive monstrous blocks. Dodic started finding

spaces between Ahmedabad blockers to create chances for Delhi. An untimely injury to Nandhagopal depleted firepower from the Ahmedabad attack and Aponza started making blocks to bring Delhi back into the contest.

Santhosh's attacks from the middle kept testing the Defenders, and the momentum began to shift. Angamuthu kept getting good height on his attacks to earn crucial points, but Dodic's aggressive serves left

the Ahmedabad defence vulnerable, and Delhi took a 2-1 lead. Shon T started attacking well to launch Ahmedabad's fightback. Despite Senica's agonising errors, Ahmedabad maintained composure to push the match to fifth set, riding on Angamuthu's attacks. A couple of missed blocks from Aponza motivated Ahmedabad to launch pipe attacks. Muthusamy began involving his middle blockers in attacks to add force behind their attacks. Angamuthu continued to hit spikes from the outside lines to test Delhi, and helped his side get a crucial super point, and scripted an important win for his side.

Free Mega Medical camp organized by 162 Bn CRPF at Mughalpora

Top News Report

KUPWARA, Mar 16: A free Mega medical health check-up camp was organized on Saturday during the Civic Action Programme conducted by the 162 Battalion Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) at Boys Middle School Mughalpora Kupwara.

The camp was inaugurated by SSP Kupwara Shobhit Saxena along with Commandant 162 Battalion CRPF Vinod Kumar and Second in command Rajiv Kumar, Assistant Commandant Neeraj Kumar, Medical Officer Dr Ajay Kumar, Dr Javid Ahmad, and other officers graced the occasion by their presence.

Free medicines and medical checkup were provided to all villagers. During the medical



camp a number of people including the ladies, children and senior citizens of the area gathered in large numbers for the health camp and more than 200 people took advantage of the camp. Speaking on the occasion Commandant Vinod Kumar of 162 Battalion remarked "CRPF runs various schemes for assisting the needy and merging with the local population and for having better coordination with them. Today we have organised a free medical camp and consultancy

for those who require medical assistance and you see a large number of people turned up in the programme". "The aim of such programmes is to have good relations with locals and also help them in difficult times. It's a continuous process and 162 Battalion is periodically conducting community outreach programs in one or other way. In the past also such free medical camps were organised in different areas in Kupwara district", added Vinod Kumar.

CUJ organises Awareness Camp at Block Purmandal



Top News Report

SAMBA, Mar 16: In honour of International Women's Day and in alignment with this year's theme of "Inspiring Inclusion," Social work trainee Maknu, in collaboration with the Field Work Unit Department of Social Work at the Central University of Jammu, orchestrated a full-day awareness camp at Khada Madana, Block Purmandal, Jammu and Kashmir. Under the expert guidance of her mentor, Dr. Ranvir, the event garnered enthusiastic participation from over 110 attendees, including local women, social work trainees and research scholars from the department.

The day commenced with a spirited awareness rally championing women's rights and empowerment, drawing the participation of school children, women, as well as members of PRI and SHG. Dr. Ranvir Singh, Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Work, Central University of Jammu, delivered the welcome address, setting the tone for a day filled with enlightenment and empowerment. Dr. Nancy Mengi, Head of the Department of Social Work at the Central University of Jammu, deliv-

ered an insightful talk highlighting the pivotal role of women's empowerment in driving societal progress. Anuradha from the District Hub for Empowerment of Women explained the department's objectives and available benefits for women. Subsequently, Qazi Insha Akeel, Arti and Ankita, Counsellors and Case Workers from the One Stop Centre, outlined essential helpline numbers for individuals in distress and shed light on the various services offered, including counselling, temporary shelter and legal aid under Mission Shakti.

Further enriching the discourse, Purnima Rana from JK Bank discussed digital literacy and the array of financial services tailored for women. Miss Kajal from the Special Cell for Women engaged the audience in an interactive session on different forms of violence and reproductive health issues.

With the insight developed from various sessions, Dr. Ranvir Singh appealed to the Sarpanch of Madana and Khada Madana Panchayats to facilitate exclusive 'all women gram sabha' in their

respective panchayats so their issues and concerns get addressed appropriately. The event also showcased a poignant group dance performance by the girls of Govt. High School, Khada Madana, reflecting the challenges faced by women and girls in society. The efforts and initiatives of Maknu and the Department of Social Work at the Central University of Jammu were lauded by Sunita Devi Sarpanch Madan Panchayat and Mr. Anil Sharma, Sarpanch Khada Madana. Arti, Cluster Coordinator from JKRLM (UMEED), shared her experiences working with women clusters and elucidated the role of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in empowering women. Dr. Bhat Iqbal Majeed, Director of the Field Work Unit at Central University of Jammu, concluded the event with a vote of thanks, followed by the rendition of the national anthem and a group photograph. The day was not only intellectually stimulating but also spiritually uplifting, as attendees departed with renewed vigour to champion the cause of women's empowerment in their communities.

CUJ starts Short Term Upskilling Programs for women

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 16: School of Business Studies, Central University of Jammu launched Short Term Upskilling Training Program for Women candidates at multiple locations across Jammu Division under the mentorship of Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Vice Chancellor, Central University of Jammu and Mission Directorate, Department of Skill Development, J&K. Number of Job oriented courses are being offered by the University including Social Media Executive, Community Journalist, Yoga and Wellness, Digital Marketing, Soft Skills and Personality Development, Homestay Entrepreneurship Development Program, Multi-purpose Associate and Hospitality Trainee etc. In this series course on Social Media Executive was formally inaugurated at Government College for Women, Bhagwati Nagar Jammu in presence of Dr. Meeru Abrol, Principal, Project Team Members comprising of Prof. Jaya Bhasin, Dr. Shahid Mushtaq & Dr. Neelika Arora from School of Business Studies, Central University of Jammu.



Prof. Meeru Abrol in her welcome address appreciated the efforts of faculty members from School of Business Studies, Central University of Jammu under the visionary leadership of Prof. Sanjeev Jain in carrying out outreach activities in collaborative mode. Speaking on the occasion Prof. Meeru Abrol impressed upon the participants to take the maximum benefits from the leading faculty members from Central University of Jammu and other institutions of excellence. She highlighted that NEP-2020 envisions that skill courses to be made available to students enrolled in all Bachelor's Degree Programs irrespective of

disciplines. Prof. Jaya Bhasin in her address apprised the audience about the importance of Skilling, Upskilling, Reskilling and New Skilling for women in making them self-reliant. In her address she observed that for economic empowerment of women in today's changing job market is of paramount importance for bringing a change in society. Introducing the trainers for the Programme Dr. Asif Ali and N. Chibber. She pointed out that both trainers for the short training programme have significant corporate experience and focus would be on hands-on training. Dr. Neelika Arora in her address pointed out

that capacity building on latest technological developments is the need of hour. She highlighted the vision of Project Team in empowering the youth of Jammu and Kashmir through these outreach skilling initiatives. She also pointed out that Project Team members are ready for hand-holding and supporting your entrepreneurial ventures by providing necessary mentorship and in establishing market linkages. Dr. Shahid Mushtaq briefed the participants about the course and also highlighted the importance of upskilling Programs for women to ensure sustainable income and employment opportunities. He

stressed on the need for changing the mindset from Job seeking behaviour to Job creation as opportunities in Govt. sectors are shrinking as well as new types of Jobs are created because of technological advancements. He further pointed out that the United Nations theme on 'Invest in women: Accelerate progress to celebrate international women day is appropriate for an egalitarian society and Viksit Bharat@2047 as envisaged by Hon'ble Prime Minister of Narendra Modi. It is pertinent to mention here that Short Term Upskilling programmes are started at multiple locations and different Job oriented courses are in progress. Dr. Asif Ali and Naman Chibber, Resource Persons conducted the sessions. The entire programme was coordinated by Project Team members and faculty members from college including Dr. Pavanjeet Bali, Dr. Preeti Salathia. Dr. Preeti Salathia proposed a formal vote of thanks and students from the college conducted the proceedings of the program.

TFWHNM honours Mahant Rohit Shastri

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 16: Traders Federation Ware House-Nehru Market (Regd.) Jammu honoured Sanskrit scholar, social reformer and president of Shri Kailash Jyotish Avim Vedic Sansthan Trust, Mahant Rohit Shastri for honouring Mahant Rohit Shastri for becoming the First Sanskrit scholar

to receive State Award since independence and his achievements in the field of Sanskrit language. The program will be organised at office of Traders Federation Ware House-Nehru Market(Regd.) Jammu. On occasion Traders Federation Ware House-Nehru Market (Regd.) Jammu President Deepak Gupta presented a certificate as a sign of memento to inspire Mahant to continue his activities in the field of Sanskrit. Deepak Gupta said that the discussion of Sanskrit or culture is incomplete without mentioning the name of Mahant Rohit Shastri, who was devoted to the Sanskrit language and Indian culture in this twenty-first century. J&K, the only state in the whole world where Devvani Sanskrit has been used for the longest time in the past, not only as a language of reading but also as a contact language. The land of Jammu and Kashmir has been the eternal center of Shaivism, Acharya Abhinavagupta, Mahakavi Kalhana and Mahakavi Bilhan etc. All the Acharyas who have paved the way for uniting not only in India,



but the whole world with the tenacity of their deeds. But from the second half of the twentieth century, the conditions for Sanskrit in the Jammu and Kashmir became worsen. However, in such odd conditions and unfavorable environment for the Sanskrit and for the preservation of culture, Mahant Rohit Shastri remains ready. Traders Federation Ware House-Nehru Market (Regd.) Jammu Mr. Munish Gupta, Sr. Vc. President said Mahant Rohit Shastri, whenever there is a conflict in the field of rituals and astrology, he plays his important role as a successful judge. They are known only

for their specific contribution in the field, they never get distracted in their work in Vedic worship, rituals etc. Mahant Rohit Shastri is promoting Devvani Sanskrit in their state every day. He has written many books and many of his articles have been published in magazines. He publishes and edits 'Kailash Sandesh Panchang Calendar' every year and distributes it free of cost. Mahant Rohit Shastri has played his special role in the upliftment of the society by doing the important work of taking Sanskrit language and Indian culture to people. He has been honored by his Excel-

lency the Governor, Lt Governor, Hon'ble Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha members and eminent public representatives for his unprecedented contribution in various social and cultural works. We talk about the contribution of youth in the efforts being made for Devvani Sanskrit in Jammu and Kashmir, then one name comes in front of us in the most powerful form. And that name is young Sanskritist of Jammu, dedicated to the promotion of Devvani Sanskrit, Jyotishacharya Mahant Rohit Shastri. On occasion Sham Lal Langer, Abhimanyu Gupta, Vice President, Aditya Abhiraj were also present.

Horticulture Deptt organizes Farmer Interaction Programme

Top News Report

KHOUR, Mar 16: The Department of Horticulture Khour, in its continuous endeavor to empower local farmers and enhance agricultural practices, organized a Farmer Interaction Programme at Panchayat Serh of block Kharahbali wherein large number of farmers participated. The event provided a platform for farmers to engage directly with experts and gain valuable insights into the latest agricultural schemes and practices. The highlight of the event was the comprehensive briefing delivered by the Chief Horticulture Officer Jammu, Ashwani Sharma, shedding light on various departmental schemes, with special emphasis on the Holistic Agriculture Development Plan. Through detailed presentations

and interactive sessions, farmers were acquainted with the intricacies of these initiatives, aimed at fostering sustainable agricultural growth and enhancing productivity. The Holistic Agriculture Development Plan, in particular, emerged as a focal point of discussion, showcasing the department's commitment to holistic development and innovation in agriculture. With its multifaceted approach encompassing technological interventions, crop diversification, market linkages, and farmer capacity building, the plan underscores a paradigm shift towards modernized and resilient agricultural practices. Speaking at the event, the DDC member Bushan Bral expressed his enthusiasm for the proactive participation of farmers and reiterated the department's unwavering support towards their welfare and prosperity. He emphasized the pivotal role

of such interactions in bridging the gap between farmers and stakeholders, fostering a collaborative environment conducive to growth and progress. Speaking on the occasion DDC vice chairman Suraj Singh highlighted that such initiatives like these serve as catalysts for transformation, empowering farmers to adapt to emerging challenges and seize opportunities for sustainable growth. The Department of Horticulture Khour remains committed to fostering a culture of innovation and excellence in agriculture, driving positive change and prosperity across the region. Events such as the Farmer Interaction Programme underscore the department's proactive approach towards empowering farmers and nurturing a vibrant agricultural ecosystem. The vote of thanks was presented by HDO khour.

'Fake news': Amitabh Bachchan on reports of his hospitalisation; posts photos attending ISPL 2024 finals with son Abhishek and Sachin Tendulkar

Megastar Amitabh Bachchan has dismissed reports of ill health as "fake news", putting an end to rumours about his hospitalisation.

Social media platforms were flooded earlier in the day with worried fans enquiring about Bachchan's health after several reports claimed the megastar had undergone an angioplasty procedure for either a clot in his leg or a blocked artery.

In the evening, Amitabh Bachchan and son Abhishek were photographed at the Dadoji Kondadev Stadium in Thane attending the final match of the Indian Street Premier League (ISPL) between Majhi Mumbai vs Tiigers of Kolkata, hours after reports of his hospital visit surfaced.

In a video, circulating on social media, Bachchan is seen exit-



ing the stadium when someone from the crowd asks him about his health. The actor is initially seen gesturing with his hands that everything is fine.

The person then asked him, "How are you? All fine? to which Bachchan said, "Fake news."

The reports started in the afternoon with some saying he had

gone to the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital for a routine check. Others said he was hospitalised for an angioplasty -- a balloon procedure to open up blocked arteries and blood vessels -- to remove a blockage in his leg. And there were some who reported he had an angioplasty for a blocked artery.

However, there was no confirmation from either the hospital or his office for much of the day.

And though the reports could not be independently verified, #Amitabh Bachchan and #Kokilaben Hospital were top trends on X.

Among those who wrote were Congress leader Sanjay Nirupam. "Praying for Amitabh Bachchan's speedy recovery. #AmitabhBachchan," he posted on X. Scores of others wrote wishing him to get well soon and that they were praying for his good health.

Amitabh Bachchan was last seen in a cameo appearance in Tiger Shroff's "Ganapath". His upcoming films include Deepika Padukone and Prabhas-starrer "Kalki AD 2898". He will also be seen alongside Rajinikanth in the Tamil film "Vettaiyan".

Star power: Shah Rukh Khan turns narrator for rapper Badshah's album EK Tha Raja



Rapper Badshah is all set to come up with his studio album Ek Tha Raja and, interestingly, superstar Shah Rukh Khan's magic has been added to it. SRK has lent his voice to the announcement video of Badshah's album.

The video reveals a formidable line-up of collaborations across 16 songs. It also celebrates Badshah's 12 years in the music industry and how he has pushed artistic boundaries over the years.

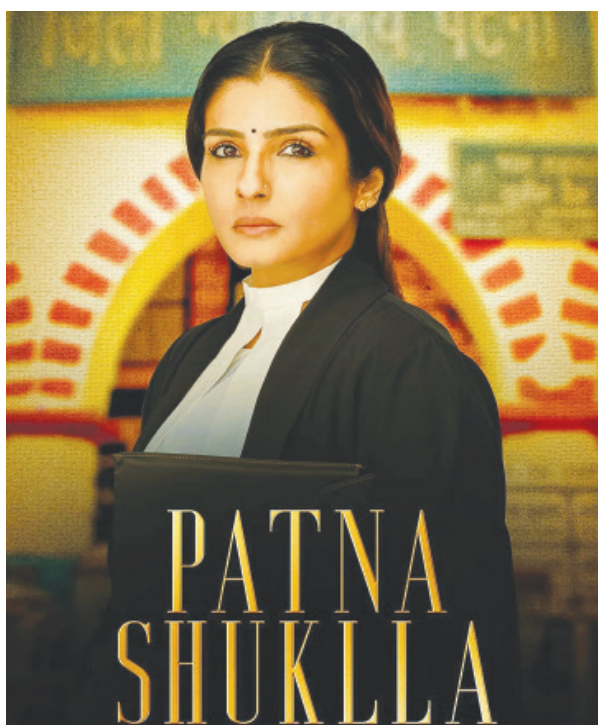
In the coming months, Badshah will be seen enthralling music lovers with his 'The Paagal Tour 2024', which will take place in Canada and USA.

Leading lady: Raveena Tandon to star in the film Patna Shuklla

Disney+ Hotstar's upcoming film Patna Shuklla takes you on an uncommon journey of Tanvi Shukla, a common woman who takes matters into her own hands when she sees a student entangled in a roll number scam. Patna Shuklla dives into the education scam of roll numbers that affects the lives of thousands of earnest students in India. Produced by Arbaaz Khan Productions Pvt Ltd and directed by Vivek Budakoti, the courtroom drama begins streaming on March 29.

Playing the role of Tanvi Shukla will be the Raveena Tandon, who will be seen along with Anushka Kaushik, Manav Vij, Chandan Roy Sanyal, Jatin Goswami and the late Satish Kaushik, among others.

Producer Arbaaz Khan shared, "Patna Shuklla is a very special story, the journey of Tanvi Shukla is uncommon yet relatable. A woman man-



aging her household and profession is what we have been seeing in today's time, but what makes Patna Shuklla the superwoman is her courage to stand up for the truth. Each person who has worked in the film is extremely proud to bring the story on to

the screen." Raveena Tandon said, "It is the story of a woman managing her household and work life. I've poured a part of myself into my character. The trailer offers just a glimpse, there's so much more awaiting the audience in the film."

Orry finally sheds light on his primary source of 'Rs 15 to 30 lakh' income

He says, 'I get paid for the pose that I do and...'

Orhan Awatramani aka Orry is known for being friends and partying with Bollywood celebrities, leaving many to speculate about his livelihood. However, in an exclusive interview with Forbes India, Orry has finally shed light on his primary source of income, debunking misconceptions surrounding his career.

Contrary to conventional professions, Orry disclosed that he earns his living by spreading joy and attending various events. "For now, my focus is to spread the message of happiness. It resonates with people, keeps me going, and allows me to attend events that bring joy to others and myself. These appearances are currently my primary source of income," he revealed.

The social media sensation further claimed that his presence at events, often requested by people who consider him a friend, fetches him substantial sums ranging between Rs 15 to 30 lakh.

Orry's financial disclosure



doesn't stop there. Previously, he shocked audiences when

he appeared on Bigg Boss 17 and revealed that he earns Rs

20 to 30 lakh merely by posing for photos at events. "I get paid to get pictures clicked at the events with the pose that I do and post them. I earn around Rs 20 to 30 lakh for these pictures in one night," he shared, leaving even host Salman Khan taken aback.

In a recent appearance on 'Koffee With Karan', Orry hinted that he planning a "digital demise". "When you see me on paparazzi pages and on screen, that's the story I'm telling. I spend the whole day reading. I am in the comments section reading every review of my images. And everyone's like, 'Oh his 15 minutes will end, he's going to vanish, just wait. The fame's getting to his head.' Yes, the fame is getting to my head, yes, I have an attitude problem now. I think I am better than everyone but I am planning my own downfall now. The time has come, anything that goes up, goes down. The brightest star burns out the fastest," he said to host Karan Johar.

Cinema, city & celebrities: Cinephiles are in for a treat as the first edition of Cinevesture International Film Festival, City Beautiful's very own movie extravaganza, takes off on March 27

It's quite a think-tank. The creative team, all set to unveil the first edition of Cinevesture International Film Festival, which boasts of names like artistic director Bina Paul, an award-winning film editor, shares why Le Corbusier's City Beautiful deserves a festival of its own and what all it will entail.

With decades of experience behind her, the former Managing Director, National Film Development Corporation, Nina Lath Gupta, whose brainchild the festival is, says, "Look at the demography of Chandigarh; it has academia, artists and an educated populace that appreciates finer things of life. Since cinema is a culmination of many arts, this hub of North was the ideal place."

VS Kundu, former Director General Films Division of India, and Director of CIFF, believes there was a huge vacuum not only in the city, but the entire north region. He adds, "With a vibrant Punjabi film industry apart from a rocking music scene and Haryana's cinema picking up, there was an urgent need to be the bridge between producers and talent from the region."



Unique flavour In fact, what makes the festival different is the thrust on the market and with former Head of Cannes Film Market, Jerome Paillard, on the advisory board, one can expect a host of innovative ideas. Paul agrees that every festival must have a unique flavour and what distinguishes CIFF is the producers' forum. Actually, the festival has three major verticals, namely movies, workshops and market. For workshops, big names like Shekhar Kapur, Sudhir Mishra, Hansal Mehta et al are likely to enlighten cinephiles on the craft of

cinema. Of course, ultimately cinema is what makes the festival. Paul, who has been associated with International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK) for over two decades, has given the first outing of CIFF much thought. The audience's tastes, representation, particularly from the region, and movies that viewers normally don't get to see, are some of the factors that Paul has weighed in while designing the festival, which she finds as challenging as editing a film.

Screen magic If the opening film is the

Cannes-winner French movie The Taste of Things, starring Juliette Binoche, the closing one is South Korea's highest grossing horror film Exhuma (Pamyu), which premiered at 2024 Berlinale. The 2024 Oscar contender Holocaust drama, The Zone of Interest, Palme d'Or Winner and Academy Nominee Hirokazu Kore-eda's Monster, 2023 Academy Award-winner, The Whale, starring Brendan Fraser, Seven Winters in Tehran; Singapore's Oscar entry, Breaking Ice, Deepa Mehta's TIFF film, I am Sirat, and the Roshan Mathew-starrer Paradise,

stand out in the fine line-up. The number of films may not be staggering, but not any less significant.

Indian features and documentaries include Toronto International Film Festival winner Marathi film Sthal, Venice Film Festival movie Stolen, Rima Das' Assamese film Tora's Husband, and, not to miss, Harjit Singh's documentary on the late Punjabi painter and writer Imroz. Auteur filmmaker Gurvinder Singh's much-acclaimed Punjabi feature Adh Chanani Raat will also be screened during the festival. He has designed the CIFF poster

too, keeping the spirit of Chandigarh and legacy of Le Corbusier in mind.

Lijo Jose Pellissery's Malayalam film Malaikottai Vaaliban, Sreemoyee Singh's documentary, And, Towards Happy Alleys, an ode to Iranian cinema and poetry featuring Jafar Panahi, Varun Grover's short film Kiss and the Riz Ahmed-starrer short Dammi, are some of the other highlights.

Old is gold Richa Chadha, Ali Fazal, Roshan Mathew, Gulshan Devaiah, Varun Grover, Rasika Duggal, Rashmeet

Kaur and Tahira Kashyap Khurrana will add lustre to the proceedings. Of course, as Bina who has built audiences for IFFK assiduously over the years, observes, "Ultimately, it's the audiences that make the festival."

Movie buffs, keep your date with the festival that brings in its fold an experiential exhibition on Raj Kapoor and Dev Anand (at Underpass, Sector 17) to mark their birth centenary year. 'Old is gold' will also reflect in screenings of classics such as Satyajit Ray's 1958 musical Jalsaghar and Guru Dutt's Kaagaz Ke Phool. The Godfather Code: The Death of Michael Corleone (2020), a recut of the original Godfather 3 by Francis Ford Coppola, will mark the 30th anniversary of the iconic film. To be held in Chandigarh from March 27 to 31, venues for the festival are Cinepolis Jagat and the Government Museum, Sector 10, Chandigarh. Fault finders can rest easy, the festival promises to get bigger and better with each edition. Of course, the first time is the charm and the organisers insist the festival has all that it takes to create a buzz.

No corrupt person will be spared, says PM Modi day after BRS leader Kavitha's arrest

Addressing a rally, Modi attacked Congress and BRS alleging that both together shattered every dream of Telangana's development

HYDERABAD, Mar 16 (Agencies): A day after the arrest of BRS leader K Kavitha in a money-laundering case, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday alleged that the BRS entered into "partnership with other hardcore corrupt parties" and also asserted that no corrupt person will be able to escape.

Addressing a BJP rally at Nagarkurnool, about 135 km from here, Modi attacked the Congress and the BRS alleging that both together shattered every dream of Telangana's development.

"The BRS went outside the state (Telangana) and entered into a partnership with other hardcore corrupt parties. That truth is also coming out daily,"



he said.

"No corrupt person will be spared. Today, I am promising the people of Telangana that no corrupt person will be able to escape. I need Telangana's support in the fight against corruption," he said.

He also attacked both the Congress and the BRS for their alleged corruption, charging that the partnership of corruption is very strong in dynastic parties. Both the Congress and the

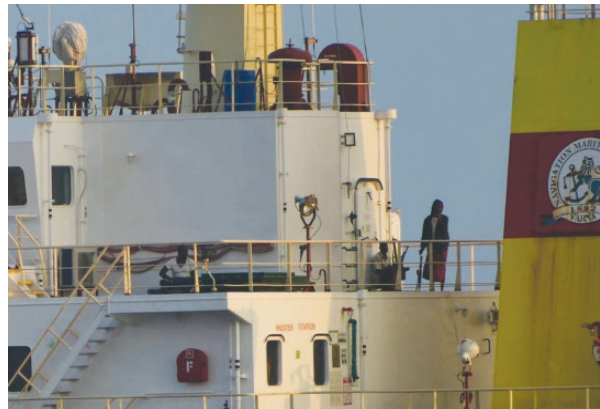
BRS are partners of corruption, he said. The Congress did the 2G scam, while the BRS resorted to corruption in irrigation. Both the Congress and BRS support the land mafia, he alleged.

He further said 25 crore people were lifted out of poverty in the country. The same change has to be brought in in Telangana.

The Enforcement Directorate on Friday arrested BRS leader K Kavitha in Hyderabad in connection with a money-laundering probe linked to the Delhi excise policy scam case.

Even before the formal announcement of the poll schedule, people of the country have announced the result that NDA would cross 400 seats this time, Modi said.

Indian Navy responds after pirates' fire at warship in Arabian Sea



NEW DELHI, Mar 16 (Agencies): A hijacked merchant vessel that was being used by pirates as base, opened fire on an Indian Navy warship in the Arabian Sea. The Navy has responded back.

Navy Spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said "the war-

vessel and any civilians they may be holding against their will.

Pirates have been using MV Ruen, which had been hijacked by Somali pirates on December 14, 2023. It was then sailing out as pirate ship conducting acts of piracy on high seas.

The vessel was intercepted by an Indian Navy warship on March 15.

The pirate ship has a significant number of pirates, posing a threat and danger to international shipping and mariners.

At present the pirate vessel is not flying the flag of any country.

Nitish Kumar distributes portfolios, retains Home, General Administration departments

PATNA, Mar 16 (Agencies): A day after the expansion of his cabinet, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Saturday allocated portfolios to the ministers of the NDA government. While Kumar retained the Home and General Administration departments, Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary has been given Finance and Commercial department portfolios.

Another Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sinha, who is also from the BJP, has been given



portfolios of Road Construction, Mines and Geology and Art & Culture departments, a notification issued by the Cabinet Secretariat department said on Saturday.

Nitish Kumar on Friday expanded his cabinet,

Railway staffer, his 8-year-old son found murdered in MP; minor's body recovered from fridge

BHOPAL, Mar 16 (Agencies): A railway employee and his eight-year-old son were allegedly murdered at their residence in Jabalpur city of Madhya Pradesh, and the body of the boy was found stuffed in a refrigerator, police said on Saturday.

The minor daughter of the deceased railway staffer went missing following the incident that occurred on Friday at the Millenium Colony located under the Civil Line police station, with the police suspecting that she eloped with their neighbour after



the latter murdered the father-son duo.

The deceased, Rajkumar Vishwakarma, lived with his two minor children following the death of his wife, Superintendent of Police (SP)

her father and brother," he said.

Vishwakarma's brother, a resident of Pipariya town in the state, then informed the police, he said.

"After getting the information, the police broke into the house and found that the man and his son were murdered. The body of the son was found stuffed in their fridge," he added.

It was found that the father-son duo was murdered with a sharp weapon, Singh said.

The minor daughter of the victim has gone missing apparently with

the accused, he said, adding that it was a suspected case of love affair.

"The police have launched a search for them. As per the evidence collected so far, the accused visited Vishwakarma's house on Friday morning," he said.

According to the police official, the girl had run away with the accused in September 2023 but later lodged a case of rape against him.

Further investigation is underway with the help of forensic experts, he said.

Electoral bonds scheme an extortion racket used for toppling govts, breaking parties: Rahul Gandhi

He was addressing people at Jambhali Naka in Maharashtra's Thane during his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra before heading to Mumbai.

THANE, Mar 16 (Agencies): Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday stepped up his attack on the BJP-led central government as he described the electoral bonds scheme as an extortion racket used for toppling governments and breaking political parties.

He was addressing people at Jambhali Naka in Maharashtra's Thane during his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra before heading to Mumbai.

"The electoral bonds scheme is an international-level extortion racket and those who protest, the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Income Tax Department go after them," he alleged.

"It's an extortion racket used for toppling governments led by opposition parties, and for breaking political parties,"



Gandhi said.

"Do you think Shiv Sena and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MLAs in Maharashtra ran away for free?" he asked, referring to a split in the two parties triggered by the rebellions led by Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar respectively.

People belonging to backward

communities, Dalits, Adivasis, minorities and poor from the general category account for more than 80 per cent of the population, but have minuscule representation in the top echelons in government and private sectors, Gandhi said.

He claimed that 50 lakh people died of COVID-19 in

India during the pandemic.

"When people were dying of coronavirus, vaccine-maker Serum Institute of India donated money to PM Modi in the form of electoral bonds," the Congress leader claimed.

Gandhi also alleged that only film stars and top industrialists attended the Ayodhya Ram temple consecration ceremony as guests, but there were no poor people.

"Even the President of India (Droupadi Murmu) was not allowed (at the event) as she is an Adivasi," he claimed.

NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar) MLA Jitendra Awhad, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Kedar Dighe were present with Gandhi when his yatra entered Thane.

At Bhiwandi in the district, Samajwadi Party MLA Raees Sheikh welcomed him.

ED conducts fresh searches in Bihar sand mining case



PATNA, Mar 16 (Agencies): The Enforcement Directorate on Saturday conducted fresh searches in Bihar as part of a money laundering case investigation linked to alleged illegal sand mining in the state, official sources said.

The searches are being conducted in an around Arrah town in Bhojpur district. The premises of a businessman and some linked persons are being covered, the sources said.

The central agency last week arrested Subhash

ties like Mithilesh Kumar Singh, Baban Singh and Surendra Kumar Jindal were arrested by the ED last year and they are currently lodged in jail under judicial custody.

A chargesheet was filed against them in November, 2023, before a Patna special PMLA court.

The alleged sand trade is controlled by a syndicate that invested funds in the said company and the syndicate earns profit by selling illegal sand which is nothing but proceeds of crime, as per the ED.

Subhash Yadav is stated to be the "key syndicate" member in BCPL, the sources said.

The ED has claimed that proceeds of crime to the tune of Rs 161 crore were generated in this case.

Will be on roads from 6am on poll days, says Bengal gov Bose

KOLKATA, Mar 16 (Agencies): West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose on Saturday expressed his commitment to actively engage in the upcoming general elections, pledging to put an end to violence and corruption in the state.

He declared his intention to be present in the field from the very first day of the election process.

Bose emphasised his dedication to serving the common people, highlighting his plan to hit the streets as early as 6am on polling days, even before others are awake.

Bose conveyed that his two



main priorities for the election are ending violence and corruption.

The governor assured that he would exert his utmost effort to achieve these goals.

"I will be in the field right from day one of the election. My two priori-

ties will be to see that no violence and corruption takes place during the election. I will be on the road at 6am before others wake up," he told reporters here.

Additionally, he emphasised his accessibility to the public, stating his intention to function as a mobile Raj Bhavan and be available to the people.

Referring to his stance during last year's panchayat elections, Bose reiterated his firm opposition to political violence, declaring that "political holi with human blood will not be allowed in Bengal anymore."

BJP's Rajya Sabha MP Ajay Pratap Singh quits party; says unhappy with selection of LS poll nominees



BHOPAL, Mar 16 (Agencies): Bharatiya Janata Party's Rajya Sabha member from Madhya

Pradesh, Ajay Pratap Singh, on Saturday said he has resigned from the party's primary membership, saying he was not happy with the ruling outfit's process of selecting candidates for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls.

Singh shared his resignation letter in a post on his official X account on Saturday morning.

"I am resigning from the primary membership of the party," he stated in the one-line letter addressed to BJP chief J P Nadda.

He didn't mention any reason behind his resignation in the letter.

Singh was nominated to the Upper House of Parliament by the BJP in March 2018.

His tenure as Rajya Sabha member will end on April 2. He was not re-nominated by the party.

Talking to reporters, Singh expressed displeasure over the party's process of selecting candidates for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls.

He said although he wanted to contest from the Sidhi Lok Sabha seat, the BJP fielded Rajesh Mishra from there.

Russians cast ballots on Day 2 of an election preordained to extend Putin's rule

Voting is taking place at polling stations across Russia's 11 time zones, in illegally annexed regions of Ukraine, and online.

MOSCOW, Mar 16 (Agencies): Voters across Russia cast ballots Saturday on the second day of an election set to formalise six more years of power for President Vladimir Putin, who faces no serious challengers after crushing political dissent over his nearly 25 years of rule.

The election comes against the backdrop of a ruthless crackdown that has stifled independent media and prominent rights groups. Putin's fiercest political foe, Alexei Navalny, died in an Arctic prison in February, and other critics are either in jail or in exile.

The 71-year-old Putin faces three token rivals from Kremlin-friendly parties, who have refrained from any criticism of him or his invasion of Ukraine. Putin has cast his war in Ukraine, now in its third year, as an existential battle against the US and other Western powers bent on destroying Russia.

Russia's wartime economy has proven to be resilient, expanding despite bruising Western sanctions. The Russian defence



industry has served as a key growth engine, working around the clock to churn out missiles, tanks and ammunition.

Russia's opposition movement has urged those unhappy with Putin or the war to show up at the polls at noon Sunday, the final day of voting, as a form of protest. The strategy was endorsed by Navalny not long before his death.

Voting is taking place at polling stations across Russia's 11 time zones, in illegally annexed regions of Ukraine, and online.

In the run-up to the vote, Putin boasted about battlefield successes in Ukraine, where the

Russian troops have recently made incremental gains relying on their edge in firepower. Ukraine, meanwhile, has fought back by stepping up attacks on Russia's border regions and launching drone strikes deep inside the country.

On Friday, Putin described the week's cross-border shelling and incursions by Ukrainian forces as an attempt by Ukraine to frighten Russians and derail the vote. He vowed that the attacks "won't be left unpunished".

Officials said voting was proceeding in an orderly fashion. But despite tight controls, at

least half a dozen cases of vandalism at polling stations have been reported, including a fire-bombing and several people pouring green liquid into ballot boxes. The latter was an apparent homage to Navalny, who in 2017 was attacked by an assailant splashing green disinfectant in his face.

Western leaders have derided the vote as a travesty of democracy.

European Council President Charles Michel mockingly congratulated Putin Friday on "his landslide victory" in an election that was technically still underway. "No opposition. No freedom. No choice," he wrote on the social media platform X.

Beyond the lack of options for voters, the possibilities for independent monitoring are very limited. No significant international observers were present. Only registered, Kremlin-approved candidates — or state-backed advisory bodies — can assign

observers to polling stations, decreasing the likelihood of independent watchdogs.

North Korea's Kim Jong Un rides luxury car given by Russian president Vladimir Putin, oversees drills



SEOUL, Mar 16 (Agencies): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un publicly rode in a car given to him by Russian President Vladimir Putin in "clear proof" of the strengthening friendship between the two countries, state media reported on Saturday.

Pyongyang and Moscow have forged closer ties since Kim met Putin in Russia in September and vowed to deepen military relations. They deny West-

ern accusations that North Korea is supplying Russia with artillery shells and missiles used in Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

Kim's ride on Friday in the Russian Aurus limousine is "clear proof of the DPRK-Russia friendship, which is developing in a comprehensive way on a new high stage," the leader's sister Kim Yo Jong said, according to state media KCNA, using North Korea's official name, the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Kim Jong Un oversaw air warfare drills on Friday and urged "realistic" preparation for combat, KCNA said, after joint annual drills involving South Korea and the United States wrapped up this week.

"Only realistic training directly related to warfare can prepare soldiers as real combat fighters," Kim said, according to KCNA.

The South Korea-U.S. joint drills were the first since Pyongyang in November scrapped a 2018 inter-Korean military pact aimed at de-escalating tensions.

Kim also attended the opening ceremony of a greenhouse farm on Friday, KCNA said. Photos showed Kim's daughter Ju Ae attending the drills and the opening ceremony.

Attack on Pakistan military post kills 5 security force members

The incident was carried out by six attackers, the military's media wing said in a statement

PESHAWAR, Mar 16 (Agencies): Militants attacked a military post in Pakistan near Afghanistan on Saturday morning using a vehicle laden with explosives, killing five security force members, Pakistan's military said.

The incident in north-west Pakistan was carried out by six attackers, the military's media wing said in a statement, without naming the militant group responsible for the attack.

"The terrorists rammed an explosive laden vehicle into the post, followed by multiple suicide bombing attacks, which led to collapse of portion of a building, resulting into Shahadat (martyrdom) of five," the statement said.

Residents in



Waziristan, an area bordering Afghanistan in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, told agency an explosion shook doors and damaged windows around the time of the start of the attack.

Pakistani government and security officials say attacks have risen in recent months, many of them claimed by the Pakistani Taliban (TTP). Officials say militants

are using Afghan soil to launch attacks.

That has damaged the relationship between Pakistan and the ruling Afghan Taliban, who deny allowing Afghanistan to be used by militants.

Pakistan's national elections in February took place under tight security.

Nine people died in blasts, grenade and gun attacks on Election Day.

Taiwan warns Chinese coast guard boats to 'turn around immediately' as tensions rise

TAIPEI, Mar 16 (Agencies): Amid simmering tensions across the delicate Taiwan Strait, Taiwan warned off Chinese coast guard ships Saturday that ventured into its restricted waters near front-line islands near China for the second day in a row.

Taiwan's coast guard reported that four Chinese coast guard vessels had entered the Taiwan-controlled Kinmen islands' restricted waters on Saturday morning. The Kinmen islands about the Chinese coast. It claimed that after being asked to leave by Taiwanese authorities, the Chinese boats stayed for just over an hour.

Despite Taiwan's adamant protests, China regards the democratically run island as its own territory. In recent years, it has increased its military presence close to Taiwan, invading air defense identification zones practically every day.

"You have entered our country's restricted waters. Please turn around immediately," a Taiwan official said via radio in a broadcast message to their Chi-



nese counterparts, according to footage released on Saturday by Taiwan's coast guard.

The footage shows a Taiwan coast guard boat tracking the movement of two Chinese ships in the near distance.

"The move has seriously impacted traffic and safety. To avoid triggering naval incidents we urge them to stop such behaviours," Taiwan's coast guard said in a statement.

There was no immediate comment from China's coast guard, which does not have publicly available contact details.

China's coast guard conducted patrols near the Kinmen Islands on Friday as well, with four Chinese coast guard boats being

warned away by their Taiwanese counterparts, according to Taiwan's official Central News Agency.

Last month, China's coast guard began regular patrols around Kinmen, after two Chinese nationals died while trying to flee Taiwan's coast guard after their boat entered prohibited waters.

Taiwan dispatched coast guard boats on Thursday to join a rescue mission at China's request after a Chinese fishing vessel capsized near the Kinmen islands. Taiwan's government has stressed the importance of co-operation between Taiwan and China amid the heightened tensions.

On Friday, Taiwan also sent several boats at China's request to help search for a Chinese fisherman who went overboard near the Taiwan-controlled Matsu islands, in the northern end of the Taiwan Strait.

A senior Taiwan security official, who requested anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter, told agency that Beijing is sending out "confusing" messages by continuing its harassment of Taiwan, while also asking for Taipei's assistance on dealing with maritime incidents.

The official said the latest moves by the Chinese coast guard in Kinmen "did not carry substantial security threats" but complicated the situation there.

"We are clueless," the official said. "We tried to save their fishermen yesterday and today they are baring their teeth and claws."

Last week, Taiwan's top China policy-making body urged its giant neighbour not to change the "status quo" in waters near Kinmen by sending coast guard boats into restricted areas.

Hong Kong sentences 12 pro-democracy protesters over riot inside parliament in 2019

HONG KONG, Mar 16 (Agencies): In a high-profile rioting case connected to the storming of the city legislature during a pro-democracy protest in 2019, a Hong Kong court on Saturday sentenced 12 people to prison terms ranging from more than four years to nearly seven years.

The event marked a turning point in the months-long demonstrations that engulfed the city ruled by China in the most audacious populist rebellion against the Chinese Communist Party since the Tiananmen Square demonstrations in Beijing in 1989.

On July 1, 2019, a wave of protesters broke through the windows of the Legislative Council building in Hong Kong and poured inside, demonstrating against a bill that would have permitted authorities to extradite individuals to mainland China for trial.

Those sentenced by district court Judge Li Chi-ho included actor Gregory Wong, 45, who was jailed for six years and two months after pleading not guilty.

Political activists Ventus Lau and Owen Chow, who had pleaded guilty, received terms of 54 months and 20 days, and 61 months and 15 days, respectively.

Li described the incident as a "serious" blow to the city's rule of law.

"The large number of protesters, the intensity, the unique constitutional status of the Legislative Council, and the intention to weaken the significance of the (Hong Kong) government, are insulting," he said.

The judge described in detail how protesters had rammed their way into the building



with metal barricades, pelted the area with eggs, sprayed political slogans on the walls and inked over a government emblem.

The former president of the University of Hong Kong's student union, Althea Suen, 27, who had pleaded guilty, was sentenced to four years and nine months.

Relatives and supporters cried and shouted "Take care!" and "Hang in there!" as the defendants were led away from the glass dock.

Chow said the government's refusal to withdraw the extradition bill after one million people marched against it was the immediate cause of the incident.

"No matter what punishment the court imposes on me, I'll continue to move forward and convert my fear into a force for change, just like the day I walked into the chamber," Chow told the court before the sentences were handed down.

He said their actions stemmed from a need to stand up for basic human rights that were

under threat from authorities.

"Martin Luther King, leader of the human rights movement who has always advocated peaceful and rational demonstrations, once said, 'A riot is the language of the unheard,'" Chow told the court.

Lau said he had rushed to the scene given his fears of a bloody crackdown by the police. Lau later left Hong Kong returned despite the risk of prosecution.

"I don't want the public to think all the people in this movement only care about their own safety," he said.

In a mitigation letter submitted to the court last month, actor Wong said his arrest and conviction had essentially derailed his career as an actor since the age of 12.

"I will still help people in need with a sincere heart," Wong wrote.

Student reporter Wong Ka-ho and online media reporter Ma Kai-chung, who were acquitted of rioting but found guilty of "entering or staying in the precincts of the chamber", received fines of HK\$1,500 (\$190) and HK\$1,000 respectively.

Rioting holds a maximum seven-year sentence in Hong Kong's district court.

More than 10,200 people were arrested in relation to the protests in 2019, of whom 2,937 have so far been charged with offences including rioting, unlawful assembly and criminal damage, according to police figures.

Of these, over 870 people have been charged with rioting, according to the Witness, opens new tab, an online news portal specialising in legal news.

Russia claims it used 'vacuum bomb' to kill large number of Ukrainian soldiers

MOSCOW, Mar 16 (Agencies): Russia says it killed large numbers of Ukrainian soldiers with a so-called "vacuum bomb", a powerful munition that sucks in oxygen from the surroundings to sustain an explosion.

The deputy chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces told Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu during a meeting that up to 300 soldiers were killed "as a result of an accurate strike by an aerial munition," Russia's Defense Ministry said on Saturday.

Colonel General Alexei Kim did not indicate where the strike took place but described the location of the strike as the "deployment point of the 'Kraken' nationalist formation," according to the ministry, referring to a special unit of the Ukrainian Defense Intelligence.

Kim said a "volumetric

detonation bomb" was used in the airstrike, RIA Novosti reported Saturday.

Volumetric weapons are also known as vacuum bombs, thermobaric weapons or fuel-air explosives.

The destruction caused by a thermobaric weapon is caused by the blast wave it creates and also the vacuum resulting from the fuel-air mixture sucking in oxygen to sustain the detonation, according to the Lieber Institute for Law & Warfare at the US Military Academy at West Point, New York.

The force of such a blast is enough to collapse buildings and rupture organs. Walls or even caves don't provide protection, according to the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.

Details of the Russian airstrike emerged during a meeting at the headquarters of the

Joint Group of Forces, where Shoigu heard reports from commanders on the current situation in the "zone of the special military operation," the ministry said, Russia's phrase for its war in Ukraine.

Kim also did not mention when the strike was carried out but noted that "over the past week alone, as a result of effective work of reconnaissance and strike systems, three American Patriot complexes, a Vampire multiple rocket launcher, more than 10 foreign-made artillery systems and fuel and ammunition depots were destroyed," according to the ministry. Kim also told Shoigu during the meeting that Ukraine is "suffering significant losses in both equipment and manpower as a result of the use of high-precision weapons and strike drones," the ministry said.

Modi govt strengthened J&K economically & socio-politically: Ashwani

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 16: Narendra Modi government has developed Jammu & Kashmir and has strengthened it economically as well as socio-politically, stated Ashwani Sharma, former MLA.

Ashwani Sharma, former MLA & senior leader of BJP, accompanied by J&K BJP Publicity Secretary Ajay Vaid and Incharge Health & Medical Cell Puneet Mahajan were attending to the public grievances at party headquarter, Trikuta Nagar,



Jammu.

Senior BJP leader listened to the grievances of a large number of people hailing from different areas of the UT. These people had reached the party office in deputations and as individuals with their

day-to-day problems and sought the help of the BJP leaders in mitigating the same.

Ashwani Sharma, on this occasion, said that under the Modi government, large number of public welfare steps have been taken

for J&K ever since the abrogation of Article 370 and a new era of development has initiated in the region. He said that the Union government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken a number of historic initiatives after the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A strengthening Jammu & Kashmir both economically as well as socio-politically.

"Every BJP worker dedicates whole potential for the welfare of the public and this public darbar, being held by BJP in its headquarter, further helps the party and its leaders to work extensively to mitigate the issues and the grievances of the public", said Ashwani Sharma.


Ajay Vaid said that the BJP activists are always on forefront to provide help to the masses and said that with a purpose to sort out the public with ease, the party holds daily grievance camps in its headquarter.

Puneet Mahajan said that many individuals and deputations had visited the party office to seek the intervention of senior party leaders in resolving their issues

Sawhney criticises Election Commission for delay in State Elections

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 16: Yogesh Sawhney, former Minister of J&K and senior Congress leader, expressed disappointment with the Election Commission of India for not conducting state elections for Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasized that the ECI's delay in announcing overdue assembly elections has disappointed the people of J&K, highlighting that neither Supreme Court directions nor the 'One Nation One Election' slogan could expedite the restoration of democracy



in J&K.

Sawhney underscored the importance of democratic processes in Jammu and Kashmir, emphasizing that the delay in conducting state elections only prolongs the disenfranchisement of the region's populace. He lamented the missed opportunity for the people of J&K to actively participate in shaping their governance and voiced concerns over the erosion of democratic principles in the region.

Furthermore, Sawhney criticized the lack of proactive measures from both the Election Commission and the central government in addressing the electoral impasse in J&K. He called for urgent action to be taken to ensure that the voices of the people are heard through free and fair elections, reinstating the democratic fabric that is essential for the region's progress and stability.

BJP will 400 seats in LS elections: Chugh



Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 16: Tarun Chugh, BJP National General Secretary & Prabhari J&K and Ravinder Raina, President J&K BJP accompanied by Dr. Narinder Singh, National Secretary, Dr. Nirmal Singh, Parliamentary Cluster Incharge, Jugal Kishore Sharma, MP (Lok Sabha) & candidate for Jammu-Reasi parliamentary constituency in Parliament election 2024, and Ashok Koul, General Secretary (organization), addressed a meeting of Jammu-Reasi parliamentary constituency core group at party headquarter, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

Tarun Chugh, on the occasion, stressed that the mood of country is in favour of BJP. He said that the 10 years report card of Modi Govt is full of achievements and it will help BJP to win 400

seats. He said that policies and programmes of Modi government has brought vast changes in the lives of poor and needy as 4 crore people have got houses under PM Awas yojana, 80 crore people are getting free ration, 14 crore people have got tap water connections after independence, 11 crore have got free gas connections under Ujwala yojana, 12 crore toilets have been constructed for poor, 60 crore people have got medical cover under Ayushman Bharat scheme and there is 100 percent medical cover in Jammu and Kashmir and abrogation of 370 and 35A has brought peace, prosperity and progress in Jammu and Kashmir.

Chugh further said that zero tolerance towards terrorism and the will to take bold decisions are appreciated by the

people at large, which will give the BJP a decisive victory in the upcoming parliamentary elections to pave the way for the BJP to form the govt for a third consecutive term under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said the BJP is committed towards the security of the country and works for its unity and integrity.

Ravinder Raina, while addressing the meeting, focused on the hundred percent coverage of the voters and the areas by the party leaders. He asked the senior leaders of the party present in the Jammu-Reasi parliamentary constituency core group to approach every single voter in this Parliament election. He especially focused on the youth voters. Stressing that the "Yagya of Democracy will not be complete without the complete participation by the youth", he asked the senior leaders of the party to encourage the youth of J&K to vote for the nation by voting in heavy numbers for the Modi government in the Parliament elections 2024.

Ramakrishna Mission Medical Centre organises Free Neurology Camp

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 24: The Ramakrishna Mission Medical Centre in Udhewala, Jammu organized a one-day free neurology camp on Saturday. The camp featured Dr. Sushil Razdan, a highly renowned Neurologist from Jammu and Kashmir, Dr. Rajni Razdan, a Gynaecologist, and Dr. K.K Pandita, a Physician MD.

The health camp provided a comprehensive range of free medical services, including consultations with Neurologists, Orthopaedics, Gynaecologist, Dental Surgeons, ENT specialist, Ophthalmologist, Allopathy Physicians, Ayurveda Physician, and Physiotherapist. A total of 455 patients benefited from the expertise of 14 doctors at this camp.

In addition to the free consultations, the camp offered check-ups for blood sugar, HbA1c, and blood pressure at no cost. A Full Body Check-up covering 65 parameters, including CBC, LFT, KFT, Lipid profile, BSF, Urine tests, and thyroid function tests (T3, T4, TSH), was available for a nominal fee of Rs. 700, a substantial discount from the usual price of Rs. 1400. The camp also facilitated 150 free blood sugar and hba1c tests and distributed some medicines free of charge.

This camp was a part of Ramakrishna Mission Medical Centre's ongoing commitment to serving the community and providing accessible healthcare services to all.

Distinguished guests including Shri Suresh Kumar Gupta IFS, Principal Secretary, Culture and Tribal affairs, Shri Rajiv Khajuria, graced the event with their presence.

Suresh Kumar Gupta commended the Centre's efforts in alignment with Swami Vivekananda's vision and urged public support for such humanitarian initiatives.

Dr. Sushil Razdan praised the Mission's commendable work and encouraged local citizens to make the most of these medical services.

Swami Yajnadharaananda, Secretary of Ramakrishna Mission, Jammu, highlighted the organization's commitment to the ideals of Sri Ramakrishna Dev, Maa Sarada, and Swami Vivekananda, emphasizing service to humanity as a form of divine worship. He also announced plans to organize such free camps monthly.

For other information contact us on number 9596984032. Ramakrishna Mission, Jammu provides cultural, educational and medical services following the ideals of Sri Ramakrishna Dev, Maa Sarada and Swami Vivekananda.

NCC Cadets of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh Directorate Celebrate Women's Day at GCW Udhampur

Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Mar 16: On the occasion of International Women's Day, the Cadets of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh Directorate witnessed a remarkable celebration marked by insightful discussions, engaging workshops, and inspiring performances, all aimed at promoting gender equality and women's rights at GCW, Udhampur.

In a grand valedictory session held as culmination of the weeklong programme, Lt (Dr) Kamaldeep Kour of GCW Udhampur, an Associate NCC Officer of 2 J&K NCC Battalion, showcased her literary prowess as an author by releasing reference books authored by her. The event, attended by NCC Cadets from both 1 & 2 NCC Battalions of the Directorate, was a testament to the commitment towards the holistic development of cadets.

The programme, meticulously curated to empower and enrich, featured renowned speakers addressing crucial topics. Dr. Ifrah Dil Nawaz shed light on Common Female Health Issues, while Dr. Simran Preet Kour during her online session from Bhartiya Vidhya Peeth Deemed University, Pune advocated for gender equality in her session on "Inspire Inclusion; Breaking barriers for Gender Equality." Additionally, Lt Col Ruby Garg provided insights into "How to join Indian Army," motivating the young minds towards a career in the armed forces.

Webinars conducted by Dr. Maansi Gupta and Dr. Piyali Arora delved into Developing Entrepreneurial Mindset and Women's Mental Health, respectively, further adding depth to the discussions.

The NCC cadets from 1 & 2 JK NCC Battalions captivated the audience with scintillating dance performances on the theme "Womenhood," embodying the spirit of celebration and unity. Corporal Maanvi presented a beautiful self-composed poem on the occasion.

Professor Nalini Pathania, Principal of GCW Udhampur, expressed her appreciation for all participants, emphasizing the importance of such platforms for meaningful dialogue among students, faculty, staff, and community leaders.

The NCC fraternity commended Lt (Dr) Kamaldeep Kour and Prof. Ruksana Kousar for their unwavering dedication towards empowering NCC Cadets, ensuring their holistic development through participation in such empowering events. The event was a true reflection of collective efforts towards fostering an inclusive society and empowering the future leaders of our nation.

FROM PAGE 1

Lok Sabha poll 2024 | Polls to be held from April 19 in 7 phases, result on June 4

10.5 lakh polling stations manned by 1.5 crore personnel, and 55 lakh EVMs," he said.

Kumar said the Commission has conducted 17 Lok Sabha elections, 16 Presidential elections and more than 400 assembly elections.

The CEC said there are 97.8 crore eligible voters of which 49.72 crore were male voters and 47.1 crore were female voters.

He said there are 1.82 crore first-time voters The last 11 state elections were peaceful and violence-free with near-zero re-polls, he said, adding that this will further be improved going forward.

In the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, polling was held in seven phases.

There were a total of 91.2 crore eligible voters with about 43.8 crore female voters and nearly 47.3 crore male voters.

A total of about 61.5 crore votes were cast and the voter turnout was 67.4 per cent.

In the 2019 poll results, the BJP won 303 seats, Congress 52, Trinamool Congress 22, BSP 10, NCP 5, CPI-M 3 and CPI 2.

Phase 1 voting will be held on April 19, Phase 2 voting will be held on April 26, Phase 3 voting will be held on May 7, Phase 4 voting will be held on May 13, Phase 5 voting will be on May 20, Phase 6 voting will take place on May 25 and Phase 7 voting will be held on June 1.

The tenure of the present Lok Sabha ends on June 16 and a new House will have to be constituted before that.

The tenure of Andhra Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, and Odisha assemblies will also end in June.

With the announcement of election dates, the model code of conduct comes into immediate effect.

Govt bans J&K groups for involvement in terror, secession bid

"The Modi Government has designated the Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Freedom League (JKPFL) as an 'Unlawful Association' for five years. The organisation threat-

ened India's integrity by promoting, aiding and abetting the secession of Jammu and Kashmir through terrorism," he wrote on 'X'.

Shah also said that pursuing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's policy of zero-tolerance towards terrorism, the Union home ministry has declared four factions of the Jammu and Kashmir Peoples League "unlawful associations". There are the JKPL (Mukhtar Ahmed Waza), the JKPL (Bashir Ahmad Tota), the JKPL (Ghulam Mohammad Khan) and the Yaqoob Sheikh-led JKPL (Aziz Sheikh).

These organisations were involved in inciting terror and abetting secessionism in Jammu and Kashmir and the Government is committed to suppressing terrorism ruthlessly, he said.

The Union home minister said the Modi Government has extended the ban on the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front for a further period of five years.

"The banned outfit continues to engage in activities that foment terror and secessionism in Jammu and Kashmir. Anyone found challenging the security, sovereignty and integrity of the nation will face harsh legal consequences," he said.

In a notification, the Union Home Ministry said the JKPFL, chaired by Mohammad Farooq Shah, was indulging in unlawful activities prejudicial to the integrity, sovereignty and security of the country.

Members of the JKPFL have remained involved in supporting terrorist activities and anti-India propaganda to incite secessionism in Jammu and Kashmir, and its leaders and members have been involved in mobilising funds to perpetrate unlawful activities, including supporting secessionist, separatist and terrorist activities, in the Union territory, it said.

The JKPFL and its members show sheer disrespect towards the constitutional authority and the constitutional set-up of the country, the Union Home Ministry said, justifying its decision to ban the group for five years under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

In a separate notification, the home ministry said the four factions of the Jammu and Kashmir Peoples League (JKPL) were indulging in unlawful activities prejudicial to the integrity, sovereignty and security of the country.

It said members of these factions of the JKPL have remained involved in support-

ing terrorist activities and anti-India propaganda for fuelling secessionism in Jammu and Kashmir.

They have been involved in mobilising violent protests in various parts of Jammu and Kashmir to perpetrate unlawful activities, including sustained stone-pelting on security forces, the ministry said.

The JKPL has constantly asked the people of Jammu and Kashmir to refrain from taking part in elections and thereby, targeted and hampered the very basic constitutionally recognised fundamentals of Indian democracy, the home ministry said, announcing the ban on these groups for five years.

In another notification, the ministry extended the ban on the JKLF-Yasin Malik faction for five years and said that the group has been indulging in activities prejudicial to security and public order and has the potential to disrupt the unity and integrity of the country.

The Home Ministry also cited neatly a dozen violent cases in which the members of the group were involved.

Lt Governor addresses SRCC's Business Conclave 2024 in New Delhi

entrepreneurship and handicrafts, the Lt Governor said. He said the commitment of the administration towards inclusive development has created an enabling environment for the deprived sections, youth, women and farmers to unleash their true potential. We have taken concrete steps to create a fear-free, corruption-free and terrorism-free J&K. People-centric governance, efficient public service delivery mechanism, accelerated speed of project completion, saturation of welfare schemes and equal opportunity for all have empowered the common man and improved ease of living, the Lt Governor further added.

The Lt Governor said that policy for him is not just a piece of paper but dreams and aspirations of the people.

"We have made the common man a stakeholder in policy-making and development works are being taken up as per their needs. J&K is making impressive strides in the country in digital connectivity and physical connectivity. Smart City projects

have realized the dream of urban transformation and the aspirations and dreams of the youth are blossoming," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor also congratulated the administration, faculty and students of the prestigious institution.

Prof. Simrit Kaur, Principal, Shri Ram College of Commerce; prominent citizens, faculty members and students of the college were present.

Noted bollywood singer Anuradha Paudwal joins BJP

said she was happy to join the party led by him.

The famous playback singer, who was conferred the Padma Shri, the country's fourth-highest civilian award, joined the BJP in the presence of its senior leaders, including national general secretary Arun Singh and chief spokesperson Anil Baluni.

Massive fraud unearthed at J&K Bank's Pouni branch

Manager (AM).

Ishwinder Singh, the AM of the bank, is accused of illegally withdrawing a whopping Rs 126.34 lakhs from dormant and deceased accounts over a span of three years, quietly siphoning off funds from long-forgotten accounts.

The scam came to light when Ishwinder attempted to withdraw money from an active account, triggering suspicion from the account holder, who promptly alerted the authorities. Recognizing the gravity of the situation, SSP Reasi Mohita Sharma sprang into action, assembling a crack team led by DySP Headquarters, Reasi Neeraj Padyar. Following an exhaustive search across Jammu, Ishwinder was apprehended from his hideout in Sainik Colony, Jammu.

SSP Reasi Mohita Sharma expressed relief at the arrest, emphasizing the importance of capturing the culprit responsible for a loss of Rs 126.34 lakhs to the public.

Anticipating record voter turnout in upcoming

elections: Div Com Kashmir

schedule will be announced the elections will be conducted in a free and fair manner," Divisional Commissioner Kashmir VK Bidhuri as per Greater Kashmir told reporters on the sidelines of a function held in Srinagar. Bidhuri while responding to a query said the administration has tried its best to ensure adequate electricity supply during Sehri and Iftar times in the holy month of Ramadhan. "The power supply scenario has vastly improved in valley since we had requested people to avoid usage of crude electronic gadgets," he said.

Excise 'Scam' | Delhi Court Grants Bail to CM Kejriwal in case against him for skipping ED

The ED had earlier moved the magisterial court seeking Kejriwal's prosecution for not attending the first three summonses issued to him in the money laundering case linked to the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy.

Ex-Bureaucrat Navneet Kumar Sehgal is new Prasars Bharati Chairman

Kumar Sehgal, IAS (retd) as the Chairman of the Prasars Bharati Board with effect from the date of his assuming charge of the post for a term of three years or until he attains the age of seventy years, whichever is earlier," an order dated March 15, 2024, issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting said. Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday chaired a meeting to select the chairman of the country's public broadcaster. The vice president, who is also the chairman of the Rajya Sabha, heads the selection panel for the post of the Prasars Bharati chairman. The chairperson of the Press Council of India and a nominee of the President complete the three-member panel. The meeting was attended by Press Council of India chairperson Justice Ranjana Desai (retd) and Information and Broadcasting Secretary Sanjay Jaju.

Govt removes permit requirement for untested AI models, calls for labelling content

Top News Report

NEW DELHI, Mar 16 (Agencies): The government has dropped the permit requirement for untested AI models but emphasised the need to label AI-generated content, according to a latest advisory on Artificial Intelligence technology. Instead of permission for AI models under development, the fresh advisory issued by the Ministry of Electronics and IT on Friday evening fine-tuned the compliance requirement as per IT Rules of 2021.

"The advisory is issued in suppression of advisory...dated 1st March 2024," the advisory said. It has been observed that IT firms and platforms are often negligent in undertaking due diligence obligations underlined under the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics



Code) Rules, 2021, according to the new advisory.

The government has asked firms to label content generated using their AI software or platform and inform users about the possible inherent fallibility or unreliability of the output generated using their AI tools.

"Where any intermediary through its software

or any other computer resource permits or facilitates synthetic creation, generation or modification of a text, audio, visual or audio-visual information, in such a manner that such information may be used potentially as misinformation or deepfake, it is advised that such information created generated or modified through its software

or any other computer resource is labelled.... that such information has been created generated or modified using the computer resource of the intermediary," the advisory said.

In case any changes are made by the user, the metadata should be so configured to enable identification of such user or computer resource

that has effected such change, it added.

After a controversy over a response of Google's AI platform to queries related to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government on March 1 issued an advisory for social media and other platforms to label under-trial AI models and prevent hosting unlawful content.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, in the advisory issued to intermediaries and platforms, warned of criminal action in case of non-compliance.

The previous advisory has asked the entities to seek approval from the government for deploying under trial or unreliable artificial intelligence (AI) models and deploy them only after labelling them of "possible and inherent fallibility or unreliability of the output generated".

How will T+0 settlement benefit investors and traders? SEBI to roll out beta feature on March 28

Top News Report

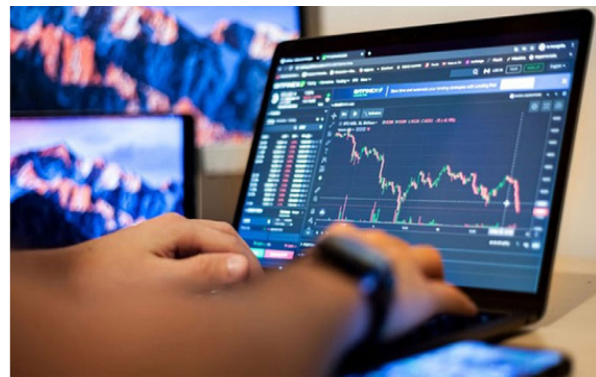
MUMBAI, Mar 16 (Agencies): SEBI has launched the beta version of the T+0 settlement cycle for investors and the feature will go live from March 28.

The new T+1 regime will be available as an option alongside the existing T+1 settlement cycle. The beta version will be limited to a set of 25 scrips initially with a limited number of brokers.

The market regulator will continue to deliberate with the stakeholders, including the beta users, following which it will decide on future course of action based on three-month and six-month reviews.

What is T+0 settlement? In case of T+0 settlements, the trades taking place on each trading day will be required to be settled on the same day.

Indian markets have been following a T+1 settlement cycle since 2021 and under this, funds and



securities for a transaction will be settled on following business day. Introduced in phases, the T+1 settlement was fully implemented in January 2023.

The original T+5 cycle was shortened to T+3 in 2002 and to T+2 in 2003.

How will T+0 benefit investors?

Improve market efficiency
Boost liquidity in markets

Free up the margins
Reduce time lag between trade execution and settlement

Instant receipts and quicker payouts give investors more control over funds

Reduce the risk of settlement shortages in case of default or delay

Faster fund payouts against securities to sellers and faster security payouts against funds to buyers

SEBI has also approved measures to bring flexibility for Initial Public Offerings (IPOs), Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs) and Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs).

Sebi relaxes FPI disclosure norms

Top News Report

MUMBAI, Mar 16 (Agencies) In a relief to foreign portfolio investors (FPIs), the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has exempted certain FPIs from the additional disclosure framework.

The Sebi Board on Friday approved a proposal to exempt additional disclosure requirements for FPIs having more than 50 per cent of their India equity AUM in a single corporate group, in case the concentrated holdings of the FPIs are in a listed company with no identified promoter, if the certain conditions are met.

In a circular in August 2023, Sebi had asked select FPIs to provide granular details regarding their beneficial ownerships, economic interest and control up to the level of all natural persons. These were FPIs, who held more than 50 percent of their Indian equity Assets Under Management (AUM) in a single Indian corporate group and those that individually or along with an investor group held



more than Rs 25,000 crore of equity AUM in Indian markets.

On Friday, the Sebi board approved a proposal to relax the timelines for disclosure of material changes by FPIs. Currently, FPIs must disclose to their DDP (designated depository participant) material changes to information provided earlier, within seven working days.

Sebi said a minimum time-period of 180 days or end of registration block, whichever is later, will be provided for disposal of securities in case of adverse change in compliance status of the home jurisdiction of the FPI or non-submission of documents for reclassification of FPI category from I to II.

In cases where the

securities held by an FPI have not been disposed of even after the lapse of the specified time period of 180 days, an additional time-period of 180 days will be provided to the FPIs for disposal of their securities, subject to a financial disincendive of 5 per cent of sale proceeds, which will be credited by the custodian to SEBI's Investor Protection and Education Fund (IPEF). Securities remaining unsold after expiry of the additional 180-day period will be deemed to have been compulsorily written-off by the FPI, it said.

The Sebi Board also approved the launch of a Beta version of optional T+0 settlement, for a limited set of 25 scrips, and with a limited set of brokers. "In parallel,

SEBI will continue to do further stakeholder consultation, including with the users of the Beta version. The Board will review the progress at the end of three months and six months from the date of this implementation, and decide on further course of action," the regulator said.

Sebi has decided to do away with the requirement of one per cent security deposit in public/rights issue of equity shares and also provide flexibility in extending the offer closing date due to force majeure events, Sebi said.

On the relaxation of FPI norms, Vivek Singhania, Co-founder, Dovetail Group, said, "We welcome SEBI's decision to consider relaxing the timelines for disclosure of material changes by FPIs. The current 7-day deadline poses practical challenges, particularly with multiple teams involved across different jurisdictions. Extending the reporting timeframe to 30/45 days offers a more reasonable window, greatly benefiting FPIs."

Centre paves way for Tesla's entry with new EV scheme, eases duty for some imports

NEW DELHI, Mar 16 (Agencies)

The union government released a new electric vehicle (EV) policy easing duty for a limited number of EV imports for manufacturers setting up facilities in India with a minimum investment of Rs 4,150 crore, the fine print of the policy released by the ministry of heavy industries on Friday said.

This comes as some global EV manufacturers, such as Teas-based Tesla, Inc., had been seeking tariff concessions as a precondition for building a manufacturing plant in India.

The new EV policy released allows the import of completely built-up (CBU) cars at a 15 per cent import duty.

Currently, the customs duty on cars imported as CBUs is 60 per cent or 100 per cent, depending on engine size and whether the cost, insurance, and freight (CIF) value is higher or lower than \$40,000. Where the car costs \$40,000 or more, the duty is 100



per cent; a cheaper car attracts 60 per cent.

In 2021, Tesla had written to nodal central ministries seeking a reduction in import duties on fully assembled cars and had asked for duties to be cut to 40-15 per cent depending on the price of the car. The new policy effectively fulfills that demand.

"Under this scheme, EV passenger cars (e-4W) can initially be imported with a minimum CIF value of \$35,000, at a duty rate of 15 per cent for a period of 5 years from the date of issuance of approval letter by Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI)," the new EV policy said.

However, the maximum number of e-4W allowed to be imported at the reduced duty rate has been capped at 8,000 per year. The carryover of unutilised annual import limits would be permitted, the policy read. In order to avail duty concessions, the EV policy has set the minimum investment limit for manufacturers at Rs 4,150 crore.

"The manufacturing facility(ies) shall be made operational within a period of 3 years from the date of issuance of approval letter by MHI and achieve minimum Domestic value addition (DVA) of 25 per cent within the same period.

The approved applicant will be required to achieve a minimum DVA of 50 per cent within a period of 5 years from the date of issuance of approval letter by MHI," the policy said.

The government said that the scheme is intended to promote EV manufacturing in India, a sector that is expected to grow into a major category within the automobile sector in the coming years. India is currently the world's third largest automobile market and one of the fastest growing automotive markets in the world. The current market size of the automotive sector is Rs 12.5 lakh crore and the sector is expected to cross Rs 24.9 lakh crore by 2030. The automotive sector contributes over 7.1 per cent to India's GDP.

Officials said India has the opportunity to lead the global transition from conventional Internal combustion engine (ICE) powertrain to a more efficient and decarbonized EV technology.

Passive smoking exposure nearly doubles stroke risk, says new study

NEW DELHI, Mar 16 (Agencies): Researchers have explored in detail how varied smoking habits influence the risk of getting a stroke, in a new study published in the journal eClinicalMedicine.

It found that current smokers are at a higher risk of getting a stroke compared to those who never smoked, with the association being stronger for ischaemic stroke, the most common kind and caused when blood fails to reach the brain. The international study included researchers from St John's Medical College and Research Institute, Bangalore.

Both filtered and non-filtered cigarettes were linked with an increased stroke risk and passive smoking - exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) - for more than ten hours a week was found to nearly double the stroke risk, especially that of ischaemic and intracerebral haemorrhage (ICH). ICH

is caused by bleeding of a ruptured blood vessel in the brain.

The team also found that in young heavy smokers (more than 20 cigarettes a day) under 50 years of age, stroke risk more than doubled, which was higher compared to increasing 1.5-fold in participants aged 70 and above.

Among those aged 50-59, they observed an 8-fold risk increase of large vessel stroke, involving large vessels supplying blood to the brain.

Regionally, the researchers found that the Western European and North American regions had the highest risk of stroke among current smokers. Data of participants from 32 high-, middle- and low-income countries were analysed, including those from Africa, South Asia (India and Pakistan) and South America. They were recruited from January 2008 to August 2015.

The researchers found that across income levels, stroke risk from smoking was higher in high income countries (HICs) than low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), with younger smokers at higher risk than older ones. Risk of stroke rose with the number of cigarettes smoked per day, especially in HICs, they said.

The study findings are relevant to global efforts directed at reducing tobacco use and exposure, the researchers said.

Their suggested measures included preventing the youth from initiating and encouraging current smokers to quit, along with legislations aimed at building and supporting a smoke-free environment. Around 46 per cent of young men in South East Asia were found to be current smokers, while those among young females in Eastern/central Europe/Middle East were found to be over 16 per cent.

Pelvic pain in pregnancy: Causes, treatment and expert tips on when to seek help

NEW DELHI, Mar 16 (Agencies): Pelvic pain is seen as a common issue that pregnant women experience ranging from mild discomfort to severe pain that can occur at various stages of pregnancy. Multiple causes can lead to the occurrence of pelvic pain including the stretching of the ligaments, hormonal imbalances, putting too much pressure on pelvic organs, excessive activity of the pubic symphysis, or stretching of the round ligaments supporting the uterus.

In an interview with HT Lifestyle, Dr Nidhi Jha, Consultant - Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Rosewalk Healthcare in Delhi, shared, "While pelvic pain during pregnancy is common, there are instances when it may indicate a more serious problem. It's important to seek medical attention if you are experiencing severe or constant pain accompanied by vaginal bleeding or fluid leakage as this could be a sign of preterm labor or other complications and require immediate medical attention. Additionally, pregnant women

suffering from pelvic pain should seek help if they are experiencing difficulty in walking or performing daily activities, frequent fevers or chills or pain during urination or bowel movement, thereby, making it crucial to seek medical advice."

She added, "Pregnant women often face various physical and hormonal difficulties during the different stages of pregnancy, however, pelvic pain can be cured or treated with certain medications and therapies to alleviate the pain. These include resting and warm compresses, which reduce pain by helping muscles relax. Moreover, other treatments include physical therapy, pain medication, hydrotherapy, and pelvic support devices (maternity belts or pelvic support bands). Needless to say, pregnant women should first consult their gynaecologist to effectively diagnose and treat the sinister causes of pelvic pain. He/she can help in identifying mild causes and address these immediately in order to reduce the pain significantly."

US probing Adani Group and founder over potential bribery: Report



Top News Report

The United States has widened its investigation of India's Adani Group to focus on the conduct of its founder, Gautam Adani, and whether the company may have engaged in bribery, Bloomberg News reported on Friday.

Prosecutors are digging into whether an Adani entity or people linked to the company, including Gautam Adani, were involved in paying officials in India for favorable treatment on an energy project, the report said,

citing people with direct knowledge of the matter.

The US Attorney's office for the Eastern District of New York and the Justice Department's fraud unit in Washington are handling the investigation and are also looking at Indian renewable energy company Azure Power Global, the report added.

"We are not aware of any investigation against our chairman," Adani Group told Bloomberg News.

Adani Group, Azure Power and the DOJ did

not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comments. The Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York could not be immediately reached.

Adani Group's stocks and bonds saw a massive selloff early last year after US short-seller Hindenburg Research issued a report that alleged improper governance practices, stock manipulation and the use of tax havens by the group. The Indian company has denied these allegations.

Women’s Premier League: In-form Delhi Capitals look to win maiden title after falling short last year

RCB, on the other hand, finished third in the league phase after an inconsistent run but they clicked when it mattered

NEW DELHI, Mar 16 (Agencies): In-form Delhi Capitals, led by the inspirational Meg Lanning, would hope to be second time lucky and lift their maiden Women's Premier League title when they take on a plucky Royal Challengers Bangalore in the summit clash here on Sunday.

After missing out on the title in WPL's inaugural edition last year, losing by seven wickets to Mumbai Indians in the final, DC looked a rejuvenated side this year.

DC have been in superb form this year, topping the five-team league standings with 12 points from eight matches.

Lanning has led DC from the front, scoring 308 runs from eight innings, while South African all-rounder Marizanne Kapp and Australian left-arm spinner Jess Jonassen are the highest wicket-takers for the side with 11 scalps each.

DC's only two defeats this season came against Mumbai Indians UP Warriorz. Leaving aside those two matches, they have enjoyed a near-perfect campaign.

Going into the final, they will definitely start as favourites, having never lost to RCB in four meetings.

But having said that, past results will hardly have any sig



nificance in the final. It will be a new day and the side which can withstand pressure and expectations will lift the title.

DC will expect the explosive Shafali Verma to provide them with a quick start alongside Lanning.

Jemimah Rodrigues has been in fine nick in the middle, but Lanning would expect more contributions from the likes of all-rounders Alice Capsey and Kapp.

On the bowling front, Jonassen has been the star performer but the likes of Kapp and Shikha Pandey too have contributed.

Left-arm spinner Radha Yadav has also been effective with 10 wickets and the home team will definitely depend a lot on its spinners in a relatively slow

Kotla pitch.

RCB, on the other hand, finished third in the league phase after an inconsistent run that yielded eight points from as many games but they clicked when it mattered, knocking out defending champions MI by five runs in the eliminator here on Friday.

All-rounder Ellyse Perry will be key to RCB's success on Sunday as besides being the highest run-getter with 312 runs, the Australian has been impressive with the ball, scalping seven wickets.

If not for Perry's all-round show against MI on Friday, the result could have been different. She first played a vital 50-ball 66-run knock and then returned with figures of 1/29 to play a key role

in RCB's journey to the final.

But Perry would look for more support from the likes of skipper Smriti Mandhana, Sophie Devine, Richa Ghosh and Sophie Molineux with the bat.

However if RCB were to stop DC, they would need efforts from their bowlers, especially the likes of Renuka Singh, Shreyanka Patil, Georgia Wareham etc.

All in all it promises to be a cracker of a contest with the balance slightly tilted towards hosts DC.

Teams:

Delhi Capitals: Taniya Bhatia (wk), Laura Harris, Meg Lanning (c), Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma, Alice Capsey, Marizanne Kapp, Shikha Pandey, Annabel Sutherland, Jess Jonassen, Minnu Mani, Poonam Yadav, Arundhati Reddy, Titas Sadhu, Radha Yadav, Ashwani Kumari, Aparna Mondal, V Sneha Deepthi.

Royal Challengers Bangalore: Richa Ghosh (wk), Disha Kasat, Smriti Mandhana (c), Sabbhineni Meghana, Indrani Roy, Satheesh Shubha, Heather Knight, Simran Bahadur, Nadine de Klerk, Sophie Devine, Shreyanka Patil, Ellyse Perry, Asha Sobhana, Ekta Bisht, Kate Cross, Sophie Molineux, Shraddha Pokharkar, Renuka Singh, Georgia Wareham.

Pant on track as Delhi Capitals prepare for IPL glory



VISAKHAPATNAM, Mar 16 (Agencies): Rishabh Pant seems to be hitting the ball as well as he has ever been known to, something that is lifting the spirits of his Delhi Capitals' teammates, head coach Ricky Ponting said after his first session ahead of the upcoming IPL starting next Friday.

Pant, who had been out for 14 months following a horrific car crash near his hometown Rourkee in December

2022, has been cleared by the BCCI to play both as a batter and wicket-keeper.

"We missed him (Pant) incredibly last year. The whole tournament missed him. Rishabh brings so much energy to the team. He's got that smile on his face, he's hitting the ball as good as ever and he tends to lift all of his teammates around him," Ponting said.

However, the coach admitted that the team is

yet to pick up pace even with only eight days left for DC's first game against Punjab Kings in Mullanpur's newly-constructed Stadium.

"It's just the start. We don't expect to be practising at our absolute best right now. We're not even so much looking forward to the first game yet. We're getting some volume work done," said the former Australia skipper, referring to the workload at the training session.

Asked about the team's approach this year, Ponting said: "It's not a different approach, it's the same, but I'm going to be more intense with the way that I go about it this year. Every time I come here, I talk about winning the IPL and nothing changes there," he said.

Pandya promises fireworks from MI

MUMBAI, Mar 16 (Agencies): Back in Mumbai Indians colours, star all-rounder Hardik Pandya today vowed to play a brand of cricket which no one will forget as he leads the five-time champions this IPL season. Pandya was traded to MI from Gujarat Titans. "The feeling of wearing these colours is very special for me. Journey started here, coming back home and playing is always going to be spe-



cial," said Pandya, who replaces Rohit Sharma as captain.

"We will make sure we will play a brand

of cricket which all will be proud of and at the same point of time it's going to be a ride no one will forget."

Aakash Chopra feels Sanju Samson and Dhruv Jurel can make it to T20 World Cup

NEW DELHI, Mar 16 (Agencies): Former India cricketer, Aakash Chopra opined about the prospects for Sanju Samson and Dhruv Jurel to make it to India's T20 World Cup 2024 squad. He talked about the opportunities for wicketkeeper batters ahead of ICC's marquee tournament and that they have to prove their mettle on the back of IPL performances.

Samson and Jurel, the Rajasthan Royals teammates, will be in focus along with Jos Buttler and Yashasvi Jaiswal as the franchise eye a title win that has eluded them since 2009. Jurel emerged as India's breakout star in India's 4-1 triumph over England in the 5-match Test series.

He was included in the

national squad because of his performance for RR in IPL 2023 and at domestic level as well. His match-winning 90-run knock helped India win the series in the Ranchi Test match. Meanwhile, Samson, who last represented India in the T20I series against Afghanistan, couldn't make much impact with the bat. With eyes on the T20 World Cup, starting from June 1, the RR skipper will hope to get back in form to make his case strong.

"There are many opportunities. Yashasvi Jaiswal has the opportunity to win the Orange Cap. Jos Buttler has the opportunity to show his dominance once again. Sanju Samson has the opportunity to be selected for the T20 World Cup, and the same can



be said about Dhruv Jurel," Chopra said on his YouTube channel.

However, Chopra also mentioned that despite Rishabh Pant being declared fit and being fully fit doesn't guarantee his spot in India's T20 World Cup squad. Hence, there will be competition between the RR players for the wicketkeeping batter's spot.

"This (RR) is a team

where there is a competition between two players for a spot for the T20 World Cup. An opener will not go. So Ishan Kishan is there as an opener keeper, but he will not go. Rishabh Pant is available now. However, it doesn't mean that he will straight away be selected for the T20 World Cup," he explained.

Jurel, while speaking

at the India Today Conclave 2024, revealed that he has not been thinking about his spot in the T20 World Cup squad and that he will keep on doing his hard work without putting much pressure on himself.

I don't want to think much about it. One day at a time and just control the controllable, the rest will fall into place. I don't want to take a lot of pressure and not give myself unnecessary expectations to myself. Whatever will happen, will happen eventually, whatever we can do, will do.

The Rajasthan Royals will host the Lucknow Super Giants in their tournament opener at Jaipur on March 24, Sunday.

Ranji Trophy winner Shardul Thakur thrilled to be back in CSK



MUMBAI, Mar 16 (Agencies): Fresh from a title-winning run with Mumbai in the Ranji Trophy, India all-rounder Shardul Thakur is

now looking forward to his IPL homecoming with the Chennai Super Kings where he expects to "grow" under the leadership of Mahen-

dra Singh Dhoni after a not-so-great season last year.

Thakur was part of the CSK squad from 2018 to 2021 before playing his trade with Delhi Capitals (2022) and Kolkata Knight Riders (2023). He returns to CSK this season after being bought for Rs 4 crore.

"I am very excited to play under Mahi Bhai. There is always something you take away from the game when you are playing with him," he said.

Cricket: ICC makes stop clocks permanent in ODIs, T20Is

DUBAI, Mar 16 (Agencies): Stop clocks used to regulate the time taken between overs will become a permanent fixture at limited-overs internationals from June following a successful trial, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said.

The ICC said that the feature, which has been on trial in limited-overs men's internationals since December, demonstrated that approximately 20 minutes had been saved per One-day international game.

It has been added as a mandatory playing condition in all full member ODI and T20 international matches starting with the men's T20 World Cup in the West Indies and United States, the ICC said after its annual board meeting.



Fielding sides will be expected to start a new over within a minute of completing the previous one, with an electronic clock displayed at grounds starting a countdown each time.

If a team is not ready to bowl the first ball of the next over within 60 seconds of the previous one being completed, they will receive two

warnings with any further breaches leading to a five-run penalty per incident.

Clocks can be stopped in some cases as determined by the third umpire, such as when a new batter comes to the wicket in between overs, during official drinks breaks and injury breaks among other circumstances.

Van Dijk revels in pressure of Liverpool's enduring feud with Man Utd

LONDON, Mar 16 (Agencies): Virgil van Dijk says the intensity of Liverpool's bitter rivalry with Manchester United will make Sunday's FA Cup quarter-final a major test for his quadruple chasers.

Liverpool head to Old Trafford looking to move a step closer to the second trophy of manager Jurgen Klopp's farewell season.

Having beaten Chelsea in the League Cup final, Klopp's side are embroiled in a gripping Premier League title race with Arsenal and Manchester City, and also face Atalanta in the Europa League quarter-finals.

With Liverpool targeting a trophy clean-sweep and United hoping to preserve their last chance of silverware this season, the stage is set for the latest chapter in English football's most historic feud.

Separated by just 30 miles, the cities of Liverpool and Manchester have been united in mutual loathing since the Industrial Revolution, competing for bragging rights in football, music, fashion and numer-

ous other domestic squabbles.

On the pitch, Liverpool and United have produced countless classic encounters.

But the rivalry turned ugly in the 1970s and '80s when bloody battles between hooligan gangs made the fixture one of the most vicious on the domestic calendar. While violence in the stands is less prevalent these days, police will be on red alert on Sunday when 9,000 Liverpool fans descend on Old Trafford.

United have a record 20 English titles, but Liverpool, who have six European Cups to their rivals' three, hope to equal that feat this season.

In recent years, Manchester City have emerged as Liverpool's closest challengers in a series of heavyweight fights for Premier League supremacy.

But despite that change in the balance of power, Liverpool captain Van Dijk believes meetings with United still require a unique level of commitment.

Asked to describe the experience of facing United, the Dutch

centre-back said: "Intense. Not only the actual game but the whole build-up is a game on its own. I like to be involved in these type of games."

'Extra expectation'

Van Dijk added: "We always have a difficult game against them and I expect a difficult one on Sunday as well.

"They are finding ways to win but I focus on what we have to do against them. It's always difficult, it's always intense.

"The history of the games with the two biggest clubs in England brings extra expectation and pressure. But why not just go out there and enjoy it, play our game and hopefully go to the next round."

Liverpool have held the upper hand of late, powering to a 5-0 victory at Old Trafford in 2021 and winning 7-0 at Anfield last year. United, winners only three times in their previous 18 games against Liverpool, are desperate to avoid the indignity of their enemies effectively ending their season. Erik ten Hag's team sit sixth in the Premier League and

face a tough task to qualify for the Champions League via a top-four finish.

Closely scrutinised by new co-owner Jim Ratcliffe, Ten Hag has been under fire in a disappointing second season, but victory over Liverpool would buy the Dutch manager some breathing space.

"Actually, we never got to turn around so far," Ten Hag said. "We had our opportunities, but we missed them.

"Sunday we have another good opportunity to get the momentum. The team showed lately we are in a very good series of games with a lot of wins."

United will be boosted by the expected return from injury of Denmark striker Rasmus Hojlund and defenders Harry Maguire and Aaron Wan-Bissaka. "They have to believe they can do it. Now we have to take the momentum," Ten Hag said.

"That is what I feel when I train with them, that they have belief. A good spirit is there. Go and get the turnaround."

NHM delegation calls on Chief Secretary & Administrative Secretary Health J&K

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 16: Advocating the employee's right and taking their issues and grievances at different platforms, a delegation of National Health Mission employees under the banner of UT Level NHM Coordination Committee called on Chief Secretary Atal Dullo and Administrative Secretary H&ME Deptt J&K Dr Syed Abid Rasheed Shah to discuss the pressing issues of NHM employees of UT J&K at Civil Secretariat Jammu.

The delegation led by President JKNHMEA Jammu Division Dr Vikas Sharma along with Vice President Kashmir Division Mr Altaf Ahmed Bhat, Ajay Sharma (General Sec Jammu), Dr Ashish Khajuria (Treasurer), Javed Amin (President NHM Baramulla) and Mr Shiv Sandeep Singh

(Advisor Jammu Division) raised the several issues confronted by the employees & also had a threadbare discussion on the charter of demands presented to both the officers.

Earlier the delegation met Chief Secretary Atal Dullo and apprised him about the genuine concerns of NHM employees issues and underscored the urgent need to find a comprehensive solution to their persistent problems underlined in the written memorandum.

They urged the Chief Secretary to make a definitive decision on their issues as a goodwill gesture and to swiftly resolve the issue on priority, so that NHM employees working across J&K UT may not suffer anymore.

The delegation also shed light on the challenges faced by NHM employees within the

department and requested that necessary steps be taken to prioritize their regularization issue besides fulfilling of other genuine demands like revision of salary, hike in yearly increment, equal pay equal work benefit on the analogy of other UT/States & other issues.

In addition, the delegation urged the Chief Secretary to consider raising the salaries for all categories of NHM employees which would help them cope with the rising cost of living, making it possible to meet their financial needs.

Later on the delegation met Administrative Secretary Health & ME Deptt J&K Dr Syed Abid Rasheed Shah (IAS) and also submitted him with a written memo of demands and undertook a threadbare discussion on each and every point raised in the memorandum.

While addressing to the media, the JKMEF Jammu led by its President Sushil Sudan has accorded full support of his organization to NHM Employees and has assured that they will highlight and fight for the genuine concerns of NHM employees at every platform.

However, the President NHM Jammu Division Dr Vikas Sharma has extended his sincere gratitude and thanked the worthy CS J&K & Health Secretary J&K for listening to their demands patiently on a positive note, besides the President also thanked President JKMEF Jammu Sushil Sudan for his unconditional support and affiliation to his organization, added that it would boost up the morale of NHM employees & to lead the mission in a good direction.

Meanwhile, a joint press conference of NHM Employees Association Jammu and JK Medical Employees Federation was held in support of the demands of NHM employees working in the UT J&K.

SMVDU holds 36th Meeting of Academic Council



Top News Report

KATRA, Mar 16: The 36th meeting of the Academic Council of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) was chaired by Professor Pragati Kumar, Vice Chancellor, SMVDU.

The meeting began with a welcome note by the Sh. Ajay Kumar Sharma, Registrar, SMVDU. The Vice-Chancellor, SMVDU highlighted the achievements of the University and informed the house about the grant received by the University under the PM-USHA scheme of the Ministry of Education, Gol. The agenda items were

presented by Professor Balbir Singh, Dean of Academic Affairs. The agenda for the meeting contained significant items for approval, ratification, and information. Prominent among these were course structure for Four Years Undergraduate Program & B.Tech. Program, new programs as per NEP 2020, the amendments to the Ph.D. Ordinance, Academic Rules & Regulations, selection criteria for faculty positions at SMVDU. The meeting was attended by Professor Madhusudan Singh, Professor, DTU, New Delhi; Professor Anju

Bhasin, Professor, Department of Physics, University of Jammu; Pranavant, Partner Deloitte India and Dr. Rina Surana, Associate Professor, Dept. of Architecture & Planning, MNIT, Jaipur. Professor Majid Jamil, Professor, Department of Electrical Engineering, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi and Professor Sandeep Sancheti, Pro Vice Chancellor, Marwadi University, Rajkot, Gujarat attended the meeting via online mode. The meeting was also attended by Deans, Faculty in-charge Examination and Heads of various schools and sections.

National Vaccination Day celebrated at Aryans

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 16: To promote the importance of vaccines and the role they play in improving public health, National Vaccination day was celebrated by Aryans Institute of Nursing, Rajpura, Near Chandigarh. Dr. Sheenab Mittal, M.D. Pathology, A.P.Jain Civil Hospital Rajpura addressed students including B.Sc. Nursing, GNM, ANM etc.

A skit was also organized to spread awareness. Also Matern, Inderroop, Jaswinder Singh, MLT Grade-1, Harmeet Kaur, Staff Nurse, Mandeep Singh, MLT, A.P.Jain Civil Hospital Rajpura were present. Dr. Anshu Kataria, Chairman, Aryans Group presided over the event.

Mittal while addressing said that the main aim



of this day is to create awareness among the masses about their effectiveness against deadly diseases. The first dose of oral Polio vaccine was administered in 1995 in India.

It was the same year that March 16 was des-

ignated as National Vaccine Day or Immunization Day, she highlighted.

Mittal further added that With the theme "Vaccines Work For All" resonating throughout the country, India's National Immunization

Day serves as a rallying call for communities to come together in the fight against polio.

This Day also acknowledge and appreciate the hard work of frontline health care workers to ensure the vaccination of every child.

GDC R S Pura organizes Poster Making Competition on "No Smoking Day"

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 16: Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan Committee of Government Degree College R.S.Pura in collaboration with Red Ribbon Club organised Poster Making Competition on Saturday in order to spread awareness about the detrimental effects of smoking under the mentorship of Prof. (Dr.) Rajni Bhagat (Principal of the College).

While addressing the students she said that No Smoking Day started as a campaign to escalate awareness among the youth about the health risks associated with smoking and to encourage smokers to quit smoking. Furthermore, she stressed upon the major health risks associated with smoking including respiratory infection, pneumonia, COPD,



bronchitis, cardiovascular diseases, blood clots and cancers. She also appreciated the efforts of students and convenor of Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan for incorporating of such initiative for making the youth of the college aware. Students of the college enthusiastically

participated in the event and also pledged to disseminate the knowledge among youth, family and society. The event coordinator Prof. Neelam Kumari also appreciated the efforts of the students and team.

The program was concluded with the distribution

of certificates and prizes to the participants.

The other faculty members who were present in the event- Dr. Geetika Goswami, Dr. Meeshu Pandita, Prof. Vishal Sharma, Prof. Jai Mala Thakur, Dr. Sunil Kumar Mangoch, Dipika and Dr. Rekha Rani.

Father urges Defence Minister to save navy soldier Sahil Verma

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 16: Subash Chander, a father of missing soldier of Indian Navy, Sahil Verma request to the Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh to intimate the matter as soon as possible so that the soldier of Indian Navy Sahil Verma have come to his home as soon as possible.

In a press conference, Subash Chander said his son Sahil Verma working in Indian Navy from last 2 years but he has gone missing since 27 February 2024 from Western Naval Command Mumbai in the Ship INS Kochi.

"We also went to the local authorities and



have some verbal assurances and also I went to Mumbai, INS Kochi Ship and Local Police of Mumbai were also with us and did not allow us to boil there and on the contrary they pressurized us," he said.

He said that the family of the country's soldier sought justice.

He request to the Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh to intimate the matter as soon as possible so that the soldier of Indian

Navy Sahil Verma have come to his home as soon as possible.

Others present in press conference were Subash Chander, Shivam Verma Gautam verma, Rama Kumari, Sohan Verma.

Harbans Roshan Bhalla Educational Foundation gives 650 scholarships on 27th Annual Day

Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 16: Harbans Roshan Bhalla Educational Foundation gave 650 Scholarships on 27th Annual Day.

The Guests of Honour Shri Vinay Kochhar, Vijay Bhagotra and other dignitaries gave scholarship certificates and medals of merit to students. 80% of the students were girls from rural areas and financially weak sections of society. They encouraged and emphasized to the children & their parents to make the best use of the opportunity provided by the Foundation. The Guests & dignitaries interacted with children and their families to motivate & giving best wishes.

Educational support to children is provided by Harbans Roshan Bhalla Educational Foundation team by providing online tuition classes, evaluation tests and Counseling sessions. The Foundation also organizes free medical camps and provides treatment and medicines to children



and their families with help from Bee Enn General Hospital (NABH).

The Children and their families travelled from distant villages like Hiranagar, Chak, Rattian, Doomi, Gajansoo, Arnia, R.S Pura, Birpur, Rehian, Jourian, Dansal, Kangrail, Gurah Slathia, Ghou Manhasan, Saruinsar, etc. to participate in the function.

A wide range of cultural

activities like traditional dances, songs and poems were performed by children. The function was followed by "Preeti Bhoj," (Traditional Dogri Meal) which was thoroughly enjoyed by the gathering of more than 2500 including students, their families, teachers, donors and supporters, staff of Bee Enn General Hospital and Bee Enn College of Nursing.

The Managing Trustee, Kunil Bhalla dwelt on the activities of the Foundation and its history and future vision. The Managing Trustee informed that every year 100-150 new students are added to the list. He stressed that parents of bright and needy children who can't afford but want to pursue education should apply to HREF for scholarship.

GDC Kathua organises geological field study tour to Mansar

Top News Report

KATHUA, Mar 16: Department of Geology Government Degree College (GDC) Kathua organised a geological field study tour to Mansar and adjoining areas under the patronage of Prof. (Dr.) Seema Mir, Principal of the College and under the guidance of Dr. Sanjay Karlupia, HoD geology.



Davidner Singh assistant professor of the department as a tour

coordinator with other faculty members Dr Ravi Sharma, Dr Deepak

Choudhary, Dr Reyaz Wani and the helper of the department accompanied about 95 students of the geology semester 2nd, 4th and 6th conducted the geological field study in the Mansar and surrounding areas. In this visit students learnt the first hand knowledge of various geomorphological, structural and sedimentary features of that particular area.