

# TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, FRIDAY, JULY 05, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



ENTERTAINMENT | 6

**Samantha Ruth Prabhu issues clarification on nebuliser post after backlash**



NATIONAL | 7

**'Education Ministry sabotaging education of children': Congress slams Centre over delay in publishing Class 6 textbooks**

INTERNATIONAL | 8

**Liz Truss, former UK Prime Minister, loses her seat in general elections**



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## BRIEFLY

### SK Bhagat posted Addl Secy Law & Justice Deptt

LEH, Jul 5 (Agencies): The Union Territory administration in Ladakh has ordered that Shashi Kant (SK) Bhagat, awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, shall join the Law & Justice Department as Additional Secretary with immediate effect.

### Man found dead in abandoned shopping complex in Budgam

SRINAGAR, July 5: A male body was found in an abandoned complex near Sebden bridge of central Kashmir's Budgam district on Friday afternoon. An official told news agency Kashmir Scroll that an unidentified male body was found lying in the second story of an abandoned shopping complex at Sebden bridge in Budgam.

The body is in decomposed condition while police have taken up legal and medico formalities in this regard. Inquest proceedings in this regard have been initiated, he said.

### Hemant Soren, out on bail in money laundering case, takes oath as Jharkhand CM

JHARKHAND, Jul 5 (Agencies): Jharkhand Mukti Morcha executive president Hemant Soren, who is out on bail in a money laundering case, took oath as the Jharkhand chief minister at Raj Bhavan on Thursday.

Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan administered the oath and office of secrecy to Soren.

Earlier in the day, the JMM announced that Soren would take oath as the chief minister on July 7, following the governor's invitation to form government in the state. Later, the party-led coalition decided that Soren would take oath on Thursday.

Soren, along with a delegation of the JMM and its allies, met the governor at Raj Bhavan on Wednesday and staked claim to form government after his party colleague Champai Soren resigned as the chief minister.

Congress state unit president Rajesh Thakur, RJD minister Satyanand Bhokta and CPI(M)-L MLA Vinod Singh were part of the delegation.

■ Turn to page 9

## Amarnath Yatra 2024 | Another batch of pilgrims leaves for Amarnath Shrine

JAMMU, Jul 5 (Agencies): A fresh batch of 6,900 pilgrims left for the cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir Himalayas on Friday, officials said.

The eight batch of pilgrims left the Bhagwati-Nagar Yatri Niwas in 277 vehicles for the twin base camps of Baltal and Palagam at 3.45 am and were escorted by CRPF security personnel, they said.

While 4,377 pilgrims took the 48-km traditional Pahalgam route, 2,542



pilgrims took the shorter but steep 14-km Baltal route, they said.

With this, a total of 44,441 pilgrims have left the Jammu base camp for the valley since June 28.

The number of pilgrims who have paid obeisance at the shrine till date stands at 1,33,000.

The 52-days yatra formally began on June 29 and will conclude on August 19.

More than 4.5 lakh pilgrims paid obeisance at the cave shrine last year.

## Out on parole, Amritpal Singh, Engineer Rashid take oath as LS Members

NEW DELHI, Jul 5 (Agencies): Jailed radical Sikh preacher Amritpal Singh and Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid, who were granted parole to take oath as members of the Lok Sabha, were sworn in as MPs on Friday, amid heavy deployment of security personnel in and around the Parliament complex.

While Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, is in Delhi's Tihar jail in a terror funding case registered under the Unlawful Activities



(Prevention) Act, Singh is lodged in a prison in Assam's Dibrugarh district for offences under the National Security Act. They were brought to the Parliament complex



by security personnel this morning. The MPs-elect took oath in the chamber of the Lok Sabha speaker after completing formalities, a

■ Turn to page 9

## Speedy oil tanker falls into Jhelum river in Bandipora

SRINAGAR, Jul 5 (Agencies): Two persons including a driver were missing when an oil tanker skidded off the road and fell into river Jhelum in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora district, officials said on Friday.

They said one unknown oil tanker on way from Srinagar towards Sumbal

skidded off the road near Wangipora checkpost during the night of Thursday and Friday and fell into river Jhelum after the driver lost control due to alleged rash driving and negligence.

Police said that the driver and his companion were in the oil tanker when the accident took place.

■ Turn to page 9

## New dates announced for NEET-PG 2024, exam to be held on August 11

NEW DELHI, Jul 5 (Agencies): The NEET-PG 2024 entrance examination will be held on August 11 in two shifts, the National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences announced on Friday.

The exam was earlier scheduled to be held on June 23.

"In continuation of NBEMS notice dated 22.06.2024, the conduct of NEET-PG 2024 examination has been rescheduled. It will now be conducted on August 11 in two shifts. The cut-off date for the purpose of eligibility to appear in the NEET-PG 2024 shall continue to be August 15,

2024," the Board said. The Union Health Ministry on June 22 postponed the NEET-PG entrance examination, scheduled to be held on June 23, as a "precautionary measure" in the wake of allegations on the integrity of certain competitive exams.

■ Turn to page 9

## Srinagar ex-Mayor Junaid Mattu takes break from politics

SRINAGAR, Jul 5 (Agencies): Former Mayor of Srinagar and Apni Party leader, Junaid Mattu, on Friday announced an interim cessation of all his political activities.

Mattu said he would share his views elaborately in a few days.

"After considerable thought, I announce an

interim cessation of all my political activities. A strong conviction has to precede any meaningful work and with all humility at my command, I want to renew my pristine idealism. Will share my views elaborately in a few days," he posted on X.

Mattu served as mayor of Srinagar for nearly five

■ Turn to page 9

## PW(R&B) deptt reshuffles incharge XENS

JAMMU, Jul 5 (Agencies): The Public Works (Roads and Buildings) Department has ordered transfers and postings of Incharge Executive Engineers (Civil). As per an order, Syed Hilal Ahmad has been transferred from PMGSY Division, Kulgam, to PMGSY

■ Turn to page 9

## In fake encounter, former cop gets bail after 18 years in custody

SRINAGAR, Jul 5 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court recently granted bail to a former policeman who was arrested in 2006 for murdering a man and then projecting him as a militant.

Justice Atul Sreedharan expressed shock over the fact the trial was yet

to be completed, as it noted that out of the 72 witnesses, only 28 had been examined in the past seventeen years.

"This Court is astound[ed] by the facts of this case. This is a clear cut case of violation of Article 21 on account of delayed trial. The trial is delayed at the stage

of prosecution witnesses. The State is unable to show how the delay could be attributed to the applicant," the judge said in the order dated July 3.

The 56-year-old accused, Bansi Lal moved the Court this year through his wife seeking bail.

■ Turn to page 9

## Begin preparations now for Assembly Polls: NC to Party Cadre

SRINAGAR, Jul 5 (Agencies): The National Conference (NC) top brass has asked the party leaders to gear up for the assembly polls, directing them to start their preparations and not to wait for the formal notification.

The two-day Working Committee meeting chaired by NC president

Dr Farooq Abdullah at Nawa-e-Subha concluded today in which several leaders including the party Vice President Omar Abdullah, General Secretary Ali Muhammad Sagar, Provincial President Kashmir, Nasir Aslam Wani and others participated.

Source said that the

threadbare discussion was held on the recently held parliamentary polls, especially the defeat from north Kashmir's Baramulla seat was discussed. "All the participants expressed their concern over the defeat and also shared their views over the issue," they said.

■ Turn to page 9

**MBA MOTORS**  
MERCEDES - BMW - AUDI

DEALS IN SALE, PURCHASE, REPAIRING AND SERVICING OF USED CARS AND ORIGINAL SPARE PARTS

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## Unexploded shell defused by Army's Bomb disposal squad in Kargil

KARGIL, Jul (Agencies) 5: An unexploded shell was defused by the army's bomb disposal squad in Kargil district of Ladakh Union Territory, officials said on Friday.

They said the unexploded ordnance was found in the District Hospital Kargil during construction activities. The Army unit led by the Sappers of Forever in Operations division in coordination with local authorities shifted the unexploded ordnance to a safe location and destroyed it.

"Acting promptly on an information received from the Police regarding an unexploded ordnance, found in the District Hospital Kargil during construction activities, the fearless Sappers of Forever in Operations Division in coordination with local authorities shifted the unexploded ordnance to a safe location and destroyed it," Indian Army's Leh based Fire and Fury Corps said in a post on X.



5TH DAY

With profound grief we inform the sad demise of **Smt. Sudesh Gupta** W/o Lt. Satveer Gupta R/o F-120 Lower Shiv Nagar near AG Office (Belcha Walla) **5TH DAY** will be performed at Sheesh Mehal Opp. BSF School Paloura on 06-07-2024 (Saturday) from 11.00 am to 12.00 Noon.



Smt. Sudesh Gupta

**Grief Stricken**  
**Brothers & Sister-in-Laws**  
Smt. Binla Gupta W/o Lt. Sh. Chaman Lal Gupta  
Smt. Sandana Gupta W/o Lt. Sh. Subash Chander Gupta  
**Sisters & Brothers-in-Law**  
Smt. Kamlesh Gupta W/o Rajinder Gupta  
Smt. Rajni Gupta W/o Sh. Suresh Gupta  
Smt. Madhu Gupta W/o Sh. Sanjay Gupta  
Smt. Sunita Gupta W/o Lt. Bharat Bushan Gupta  
Smt. Anita Gupta W/o Kamal Krishen Gupta  
Smt. Pooja Gupta W/o Sh. Rakesh Gupta  
Smt. Surbhi Gupta W/o Sh. Sahil Gupta  
9419185282, 9419194904

OBITUARY/TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved father **Sh. Omkar Nath Turki** S/o Late Sh. Shankar Nath Turki originally resident of Rainawari/ 473, Karan Nagar, Srinagar and presently residing at 7/4, Hazuri Bagh, Talab Tillo, Jammu on 2nd July, 2024.



SH. OMKAR NATH TURKI

**Tenth Day Kriya** shall be performed on Thursday 11th July, 2024 (8.30 AM) at Muthi Ghat.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
Shanta Turki - Wife  
**Sons & Daughters-in-law**  
Surinder & Saroj Turki  
Daleep & Sangeeta Turki  
Sanjay & Rajni Turki  
**Grand Daughter & Grand Son-in-law**  
Sakshi & Saurav Jamwal (Gaurika)  
Sanchit, Saahil, Saksham, Saarthak & Saanvi - Grand Children  
Contact Nos: 6005167807, 6005787407, 9469571203

TENTH DAY KRIYA

**TENTH DAY KRIYA** of **Smt. Sheela Kaul Kotru** W/o Late Pyare Krishan Kotru (originally from Baghdaji, Rainawari, Srinagar, Kashmir) presently at 401-C (Regent) Shipra, Sun City, Indrapuram, Ghaziabad (UP) who left for her heavenly abode on 29-06-2024, will be performed on 07-07-2024 (Sunday) at Brih Ghat, Garmukhteshwar, (Ghar Ganga) at 7:30 AM.  
**Shanti Path/Homage** at Kashyap Rishi Bhawari, Sector 34, Noida from 12 PM-1PM.  
**In Grief:**  
Aahutosh & Nufan Kotru (Son & Daughter-in-law)  
9420699922, 9011338859  
Rajeev & Anupama Kaul (Son-in-law & Daughter)  
9810412561, 9312052069  
Pallavi Kaul, Rahul & Aryan Kotru (Grandchildren)  
Kauls, 18, Karan Nagar, Srinagar.



Smt. Sheela Kaul Kotru

10TH DAY /KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Des Raj Anand (Retd ZEPD)** R/o Bani (Kathua) **TENTH DAY** will be performed at our residence ward No 06 Near Bus Stand Bani on 3rd of July 2024 (Wednesday) at 10.00 AM.  
**KRIYA** will also be performed at our residence at Bani on 06th of July 2024 (Saturday) from 9:00 AM onwards.



LT SH. DES RAJ ANAND (RETD ZEPD)

**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
Smt. Chander Kanta (Wife)  
**Daughters in Law and Sons**  
Smt. Omash & Sh. Manoj Anand  
Smt. Sandhya & Sh. Vinod Anand  
Smt. Rishi & Sh. Vinay Anand  
**Daughters & Sons in Law**  
Dr. Ypan & Sh. Ajay Gaudotra  
Dr. Rakha & Sh. Poojaram Bakwal  
Smt. Pankaj & Sh. Pawan Babbar  
**Sister in Law**  
Smt. Kamlesh Khanna  
**Brother in Law**  
Sh. Subash Khanna  
Grand Daughters & Sons  
Saanya, Maya, Sumit and Navyukt  
MOBILE NO: 9906280808, 9906192469

KIRYA/UTHALA/RASAM PAGRI

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved father **Sh. Romesh Kumar (Meshi Shah)** S/o Late Sh. Des Raj R/o H No. 71, Sector 7, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, left us on 24 June 2024 for eternal journey to heavenly abode.  
**Kirya** will be performed at our residence at Trikuta Nagar on 6th of July 2024 (Saturday) at 12 Noon.  
**Uthala/Rasam Pagri** will be performed on Saturday, 6th of July 2024 from 4 pm to 5 pm at Shiv Mandir Sec-5-7, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

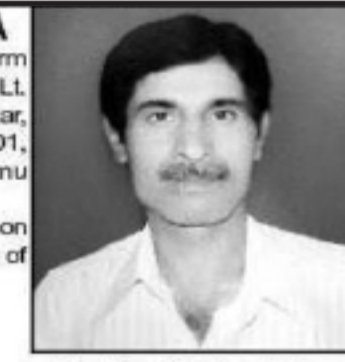


Sh. Romesh Gupta (Meshi Shah)

**Deeply Remembered By:**  
Smt. Shashi Yad (Wife)  
**Brothers & Bhabhis**  
Prof. Jagdish Raj & Smt. Kanchan Gupta  
Late Sh. Kewal Krishan & Late Smt. Nimla Gupta  
Late Sh. Manohar Lal Gupta & Smt. Kanta Gupta  
**Sister's & Brother's in Law**  
Late Smt. Pushpa Devi & Late Sh. Narsingh Dayal  
Smt. Chanchla Gupta & Sh. Vinay Gupta  
**Son's & Daughter's in Law**  
Sh. Anush Gupta & Smt. Rachita Gupta  
Sh. Vikram Gupta & Smt. Richa Gupta  
**Daughter's & Son's in Law**  
Smt. Vandana Gupta & Sh. Rajeev Gupta  
Smt. Neetu Gupta & Sh. Vikul Gupta  
**Grand Children:**  
Katyon, Kshinooz, Arhan, Kamiya, Ishan, Ojasvi, Ritani  
Contact : 9419192468, 9419833895  
M/S ROMESH KUMAR TIMBER MERCHANT, R S PURA  
VIKRAM MARBLES, MARBLE MARKET, JAMMU.  
S.V FARM, R S PURA

OBITUARY AND TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and deep sorrow we inform the sad demise of **Sh. Rup Kishen Bhan** S/o Lt. Sh. Prem Nath Bhan of Bagh Jogi Linkar, Rainawari, Srinagar presently residing at 201, Ambika Vihar, Talab Tillo, Camp Road, Jammu on 29-06-2024.

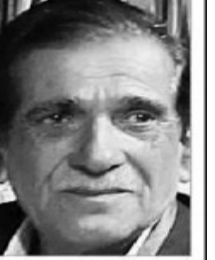


Sh. Rup Kishen Bhan

The **TENTH DAY KRIYA** will be performed on 06/07/2024 at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education Jammu at 8:30 am.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
Smt. Girja Bhan (Wife)  
**Daughter-in-Law and Son**  
Smt. Shivani Bhat W/o Sh. Ravi Bhan  
**Neha Bhan - Daughter**  
**Bhabhi and Brother**  
Smt. Kishni Bhan W/o Lt. Sh. C.L. Bhan.  
Smt. Sheela Bhan W/o Lt. Sh. R.N. Bhan.  
Smt. Nancy Bhan W/o Lt. Sh. K.L. Bhan  
Smt. Vijay Pandit W/o Sh. Yoj Raj Pandit- Sister and Brother in Law  
Contact Details: 9650796732, 9419792428, 7383954183, 9899032412

BARKHI

One year has passed when you left us for heavenly abode. We all miss you and feel your presence at everywhere, every moment. Your love and memories shall remain alive with us till our last breathe.



Sh. Vakil Singh

The **Barkhi** of our beloved **Sh. Vakil Singh** S/o Late Sh. Abdul Singh will be performed on 6th July 2024 (Saturday) at our residence Gurha Slathia, Mandi Udh at 10:00 A.M.  
**Grief Stricken :**  
Smt. Sarfa Devi (Wife)  
**Sons & Daughters-in-law**  
Sh. Yashpaul Singh and Smt. Neelam Devi  
Sh. Sanjay Singh and Smt. Neha Jamwal  
**Daughter and Son-in-law**  
Smt. Rohi Slathia and Sh. Navneet Singh

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved father, **Shri Omkar Nath Chandra** (Supdt. of Police, Retd.) S/O Late Pt. Damodar, originally from Habba Kadal, Srinagar, at present 50, New Mohinder Nagar, Indira Theatre Lane, Canal Road, Jammu on June 27, 2024 in Delhi.



Shri Omkar Nath Chandra

**TENTH DAY KRIYA** will be held on July 6, 2024 at 9 am at Ghat Samaypur Badli Bridge (near Temple), Bawana Road, Sector -16 Rohini, Delhi.  
**ASSEMBLY OF RELATIVES AND FRIENDS** will be held at 10 AM at our residence H. No: 16, 2nd Floor, Shubh Enclave (Behind Saroj Medical Institute), Pkt-8B, Sector-19, Rohini, Delhi.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN:**  
**Sons and Daughter-in-Laws**  
Ashwani Kumar & Sunita Chandra  
Dr. Shiv Kumar & Veena Chandra  
**Daughters and Son-in-Laws**  
Vijay & Er. SK Zadoo  
Dr. Girja & Dr. Sunil Sharma  
Sushma & Er. Mukul Handoo  
**Grand children :** Tanis, Tanisha, Pranav, Palek, Mayank, Sheerin, Rishab, Nishad, Dr. Shival, Dr. Vjul.

TRIBUTE

**25TH SHAHEEDI DIWAS OF SHAHEED VEER UDHAYMAAN SINGH (SENA MEDAL)**  
"A martyr does not die, their sacrifice lives on forever"



Shaheed Veer Udhaymaan Singh  
Date of Birth: 03-08-1979  
Date of martyrdom: 05-07-1999

The floral tribute will be presented to **Shaheed Veer Udhaymaan Singh** (Sena Medal) on day, 5th Friday of July, 2024 (11.50 A.M onwards) by Army personnels & family members at native village Shama Chack (Jhiri), Jammu, who laid down his life while conquering the Tiger Hill during Operation Vijay in Kargil Sector on 5th July, 1999.  
**DEEPLY REMEMBERED BY:**  
**Parents**  
Smt. Kanta Devi & Omkar Singh (9078083333)  
**Sister & Brother-in-law**  
Smt. Vandana & Rajesh Singh (7006647030)  
Smt. Kandhan & Darshan Singh  
**Nieces & Nephew**  
Kundanika Singh, Anmol Rajput and Master Udhay Pratap Singh  
**Staff & Management of**  
**Shaheed Udhaymaan Singh (S.M) Gas Agency, Mishriwalla, Jammu**  
M. No: 9419136687; 0191-2605608

10TH DAY/RASAM PAGRI

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved **Late Sh. Chaman Lal** R/o Malhotra Mohalla Bantalaab Jammu.



Late Sh. Chaman Lal

**10th Day** will be performed on 3-7-2024 (Wednesday) at Govt School Peer Baba Bantalaab at 10.00 am  
**Rasam Pagri** will be performed on 06-07-2024 at Malhotra Mohalla Bantalaab Jammu from 3pm to 4pm.  
Raman Malhotra- Son 9596839965  
Aman Malhotra- Son 8492041050  
(Malhotra Family)

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, it is informed that our beloved father, **Shri M. L. Bhat** S/o Late Shri Samsar Chand Bhat of Wandhama, Ganderbal, Kashmir; presently residing at 45 Ashoka Enclave Main, Sector 34, Faridabad, Haryana 121003 left for heavenly abode on 29th June-2024.



SHRI M. L. BHAT

**10TH DAY KRIYA** will take place at Chota Haridwar, Murad Nagar at 07:00AM on 8th July, 2024  
**GRIEF STRICKEN:**  
Smt. Kshri -Wife  
Shri Surinder Bhat & Anita Bhat - **Son & Daughter-in-law**  
Smt. Geeta & Sh. R. K Pandita - **Sister & Brother in law**  
Smt. Madhu and Sh. Rakesh Bhat.  
**Deeply missed by**  
**Grand Children :** Ojas, Kartik, Ehsas and Parnika  
Mob: 09873622029, 09811230887, 09811322029, 07678124170.

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt. Kartaro Devi** (W/o Lt. Sh. HANS Raj Gupta) R/o MIG-55 Housing Colony Udhampur who left for heavenly abode on 27/06/2024.



SMT. KARTARO DEVI

**TENTH DAY** will be performed on 06 July 2024 (Saturday) at 11:00 AM at SHIV MANDIR Housing Colony Udhampur  
**KRIYA** will be performed on 09 July 2024 (Tuesday) at Devika Ghat Udhampur.  
**Daughter-in-law and Son**  
Smt. Kavita and Sh. Anoop Kumar Gupta (Rtd CAO)  
Smt. Suman and Sh. Anil Gupta (Rtd XEN PWD)  
**Daughter and Son-in-Law**  
Smt. Vijay and Sh. Padam Dev Singh  
Smt. Vasudha and Sh. Satish Arora  
**Grand Daughter and Grand Son-in-Law & Grand Sons**  
Aayushi and Tarun  
Aishwarya and Akhil  
Aabyooh, Sushain Mahajan  
Mob: 9419296579, 9419161385

OBITUARY AND 10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of **Dr. Ved Vyas Kuchroo** S/o Late Sh. Moti Lal Kuchroo R/o Raj Ghat Baramulla, Kashmir presently residing at 702-B, Tower-7, Trishla City, Zirakhpur, Punjab on 28th June 2024.  
The **10th Day Kriya** will be performed on 7th July 2024 (Sunday) at Ghaghar Ghat, Panchkuta at 08:30 AM.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN:-**  
Smt. Shashi Kuchroo (Wife)  
(Brother & Bhabhi)  
Late Mohan Kuchroo & Sarojini Kuchroo (Sister & Brother-in-law)  
Nimta & Ashwani Kumar Chingoo  
Vishali Kaul W/o Lt. Sh. Anil Kaul (Sister)  
Sanket Kaul S/o Lt. Sh. Anil Kaul (Nephew)  
Phoolo Kuchroo W/o Lt. Sh. K.L. Kuchroo (Aunty)  
Netau & Sanjay Malhotra (Sister & Brother-in-law)  
Dr. Vineer Sharma (Father-in-law)  
Smia Sharma & Anil Sharma (Sister-in-law & Brother-in-law)  
Ravinder Sharma & Kusum Sharma (Brother-in-law & Sister-in-law)  
Sanjay Sharma & Renu Sharma (Brother-in-law & Sister-in-law)  
Phone Numbers: 7506604419820287658



DR. VED VYAS KUCHROO

OBITUARY

Our beloved Mother, **Mrs. Uma Raina**, W/o Late Sh. Gopi Nath Raina left for her heavenly abode on 27th June, 2024.  
**Tenth Day Kriya** will be performed at Gauri Shankar Wandir, New Palam Vihar, Gurgaon on 6th July 2024, at 8:00 am.  
**Mourning** at: Tower 9, 1801 Vipul Belmonte, Golf course Rd, Gurgaon.  
9811051615, 9419160115



Mrs. Uma Raina

**IN GRIEF**  
Bansi & Nancy Raina,  
Subash Raina, Urmila Salaria, Promila Kaul, Avtar & Shobha Bhat,  
Rakesh & Jyoti Kaul, Sanjay Raina, Ritu Raina  
Aarti & Marz, Shivani & Ishet, Rahul & Alka, Shikha & Rishi,  
Priyanka & Gunjan, Ankush, Shubdha & Abhishek, Kanika & Sauren,  
Adhir & Rajshri, Shailja & Ashish, Ashim, Niyati, Dristhi & Taaruk

Maswar & Vaharwar Remembrance

One year has passed since you left us in grief & sorrow.



Late Sh. Arvind Wali

**Maswar & Vaharwar** of our beloved **Late Sh. Arvind Wali** S/o Late Sh. Avtar Krishan Wali will be performed on 5th July & 6th July 2024 at our residence at Rehari Colony near J&K Board of School Education Jammu.  
**Grief Stricken**  
Mansi & Neeraj Sharma - **Daughter & Son-in-law**  
Aarti & Aniket Bangroo - **Daughter & Son-in-law**  
Jyoti & Dr. Pradeep Wali - **Brother & Bhabhi**  
Renuka & Ashwani Wali - **Brother & Bhabhi**

TENTH DAY/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform you the sad demise of our beloved **Smt. Shakuntla Heera** W/o Late Sh. Lakhmi Dutt R/o Ward No.2, Adarsh Colony, Udhampur.



SMT. SHAKUNTLA HEERA

**Tenth Day** will take place at Ved Mandir Adarsh Colony, Udhampur on Thursday 04-07-2024 from 11 AM to 12 Noon.  
**Uthala** will be performed on Monday 08-07-2024 at Ved Mandir Adarsh Colony, Udhampur from 4 PM to 5 PM.  
**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
**Sons & Daughters-in-law**  
Ramesh Heera & Santosh Heera  
Mohinder Heera & Mala Heera  
Ravinder Heera & Anita Heera  
**Sons-in-law & Daughters**  
Late Sh. Kuldeep Sethi & Usha Sethi  
Pradeep Kapoor & Sandhya Kapoor  
Mob.No: 9858625626, 9086055558

BARKHI

ONE YEAR HAS PASSED SINCE YOU LEFT FOR HEAVENLY ABODE, YOUR MEMORIES AND BLESSINGS ARE ALWAYS WITH US. **BARKHI** OF OUR BELOVED MOTHER **SMT. KAILASH GUPTA** W/O LATE SH. RAM NATH GUPTA (KASHMIR WALE) WILL BE PERFORMED AT SAI PALACE, TRIKUTA NAGAR ON 6TH JULY, 2024 (SATURDAY) 12 PM ONWARDS FOLLOWED BY PREETI BHOJ



SMT. KAILASH GUPTA

**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
**DAUGHTER & SON-IN-LAW**  
SMT. PROMILA GUPTA & SH. SAT PAUL GUPTA  
**SONS & DAUGHTER-IN-LAW**  
SH. RAVI GUPTA & SMT. SUDHA GUPTA  
SH. RAMESH GUPTA & SMT. MADHU GUPTA  
SH. RAJESH GUPTA & SMT. RAJNI GUPTA  
PH NO. 7006571228 (RAVI GUPTA), 9419186695 (RAJESH GUPTA)

10TH DAY/13TH DAY

With grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of **Smt. Chander Kanta (Retd Tr)** W/o Sh. Hans Raj Rana R/o Janwas (Shrawal) Sarthal Kishwar A/P H No. 96/6 Butta Nagar Paloura Jammu on 25-06-2024.



Late Smt. Chander Kanta

**10th Day Kriya** will be held on 4-07-2024 at Muthi Ghat from 8.30 am.  
**13th Day Kriya** will be performed on 7-07-2024 at our residence Butta Nagar Paloura from 9 am onwards.  
**Grief Stricken :**  
Hans Raj Rana (Husband)  
**Sons & Daughters in law**  
Pankaj Rana and Vidya Devi  
Vikas Rana and Nisha Rakwal  
**Grand Children**  
Vaidika Rana, Mimansa Rana, Vraan Rana, Anaisha Rana  
Mob Nos : 9419257929, 9797664100, 7889839363

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief & sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our father **Sh. Ramesh Kumar Tickoo** S/o Lt. Manohar Lal Tickoo originally resident of Mattan at present H.No. 20 Lane No. 1 Vinayak Vihar, Paloura Jammu.  
**TENTH DAY KRIYA** will be performed at Muthi Ghat on 11th of July 2024 (Thursday) at 8:00 AM.



Sh. Ramesh Kumar Tickoo

**GRIEF STRICKEN**  
**Son & Daughter-in-law**  
Sanjay Tickoo & Pooja Tickoo  
**Daughter & Son-in-law**  
Jyoti Pandit & Ravi ji Pandit  
Binny Bhat & Vikas Bhat  
M.Nos.: 9419987777, 8899217489, 9469549493

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# LG attends First Convocation Ceremony of UoL

## 493 students, Honoris Causa degrees conferred during occasion

### Top News Report

LEH, July 5: The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (DR) BD Mishra (Retd) attended the First Convocation Ceremony of the University of Ladakh (UoL) as the chief guest in a grand event held at Sindhu Sanskriti Kendra in Leh in which 493 students, including 240 under-graduate and 253 post-graduates, were conferred with degrees.

Congratulating the awardees, distinction holders and medal winners, the LG stated that he is pleased to be a part of the auspicious and momentous occasion of the first Convocation Ceremony of the University of Ladakh. He commended the girl students for being in more numbers than boys and for taking the lead in academics, which, in turn, would shape society and also benefit the posterity. He also congratulated the assistant professors/professors and the parents for supporting students in their studies.

Commending the Vice-Chancellor of University of Ladakh for organising the first Convocation Ceremony of the University,

the LG stated that the convocation is not only a ceremony but an academic process and procedure which has its own sanctity that must be done on time and periodically, which the Vice-Chancellor has done meritoriously. He stated that a university can achieve glory through the combined approach of teachers, students and supporting staff. He also stated that certain derogatory actions can cut the path of the progress of a university such as lawlessness and agitation on the campus and damage and breakages.

The LG, who is also the Chancellor of the University of Ladakh, stated that the University campus should be peaceful, placid and conducive for studies and the need to prepare the academic calendar beforehand so that the management can implement it. He also stated that the University must ensure that classes run at an optimum level, exams are conducted in a free and fair manner, results are declared on time and the admission of students is conducted on time to improve the ranking of the University for the benefit of students. He highlighted the need

to follow the UGC norms and strike a balance of teaching faculty between locals and outsiders for the overall benefit of students.

The LG informed about asking the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ladakh to give a pamphlet on the Fundamental Duties enshrined in Article 51(A) of the Indian Constitution and asked the students to understand, assimilate, practice and teach others to follow the Fundamental Duties. Stating that age is no bar for education, the LG also stated that there is no substitute for hard work and shared a few qualities that work as guiding lights for students: observant eyes, perceptive mind, innovative ideas, result-oriented actions, perseverance and converting challenges into opportunities. The LG also advised the students and parents not to become job seekers and instead upgrade their skills and become job providers through start-ups.

The LG stated that teachers must possess knowledge about the subject that he/she shall teach to students, prepare the lesson to be taught, show punctuality

and self-discipline and become involved and committed to helping in the growth of the personality of students.

The LG awarded Doctor of Science (Honoris Causa) to Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India, Prof (Dr) Ajay Kumar Sood; Doctorate (Honoris Causa) in the field of Innovation to Chewang Norphel, also known as the Ice Man of India and Doctorate (Honoris Causa) in the field of Literature to Akhon Asgar Ali Basharat. The LG also awarded all 13 toppers of different undergraduate and postgraduate courses for the academic years 2020 and 2021.

Principal Scientific Advisor to Government of India, Prof (Dr) Ajay Kumar Sood, congratulated the graduating students and medal winners and expressed his happiness to see gender balance among the medal winners. He stated that the convocation ceremony holds a special place in the hearts of students, teachers and faculty as it marks the culmination of years of their hard work. Expressing hope to see the University of Ladakh becoming one of the best

universities in the country, Prof (Dr) Ajay highlighted four pillars that make a country great: education, science and technology, innovation and societal values.

Earlier, Vice-Chancellor, UoL, Prof SK Mehta welcomed the guests. A short film on different courses and departments of University of Ladakh was also screened on the occasion.

Drukpa Thuksey Rinpoche; CEC/Chairman, LAHDC Kargil, Dr Mohd Jaffer Akhoun; Executive Councillors/Councillors of LAHDC Leh/Kargil; Principal Scientific Advisor to Government of India, Prof (Dr) Ajay Kumar Sood; Advisor to the HLG, Dr Pawan Kotwal, IAS; former MP Ladakh, Jamyang Tsering Namgail; administrative secretaries; Commissioner/Secretary, Higher Education, Padma Angmo; former VC, UoL, C Phunsog, IAS (Retd); Prof Talat Ahmad; members of University Council; members of political, religious organisation; HODs; government officials; officials from University of Ladakh; students and parents were present during the Convocation Ceremony.

# Every third Indian has fatty liver; predates diabetes, metabolic disorders: Dr Jitendra

### Top News Report

NEW DELHI, July 5: Every third Indian has fatty liver, which predates Type 2 Diabetes and other metabolic disorders, said Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh who is himself a nationally renowned Diabetologist. Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh launched Indo-French Liver and Metabolic Disease Network (InFLiMeN) a virtual node to prevent/cure metabolic liver diseases at Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences Today in New Delhi.

Addressing the launch programme Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted that the Indo-French Node, InFLiMeN, aims to address key issues related to a common metabolic liver disorder, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), which can progress to cirrhosis and primary liver cancer eventually. It predates diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and many other diseases. As an endocrinologist myself, I understand the nuances of fatty liver and its relation with diabetes and other metabolic disorders.

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space and MoS Personnel,

Public Grievances and Pensions Dr. Jitendra Singh said "Both the Indian subcontinent and Europe attributable to changes in lifestyle, diet and importantly metabolic syndromes such as diabetes and obesity has contributed to a significant rise in NAFLD." The Minister shared that nearly 1 in 3 Indians has fatty liver. While in the West most NAFLD is associated with obesity, intriguingly in the Indian subcontinent, NAFLD occurs in about 20% in non-obese patients.

Emphasizing the vitality of this initiative the science and technology minister "There is a considerable burden of alcoholic liver disease (ALD) in India and France." He further added that both NAFLD and ALD exhibit a very similar progression from steatosis to steatohepatitis, cirrhosis and HCC.

Highlighting India's progress in the last decade in the health sector, Dr. Jitendra Singh said "India became a global leader not just in curative healthcare but also in preventive healthcare." There is an urgent need to develop simple low-cost diagnostic tests for the detection of different stages of fatty liver and their progression to severe full-blown diseases. The approaches and algorithms should suit the Indian context, low priced and point of care.

Dr. Jitendra Singh

advised that a joint multi-disciplinary collaborative program like InFLiMeN is urgently needed to understand the development, progression and possible management of liver diseases using a comprehensive omics approach for biomarker discovery.

Emphasising on the cooperation and collaboration of both the Government and Private sector to provide best services to citizens and promote ease of healthy living. He also highlighted the government's initiatives and policies aimed at supporting and improving the healthcare system.

The Minister highlighted the need of generous funding for cutting-edge science. Expressed his belief that the virtual node would become a real node within a short span. He also assured that his departments would help the node in all possible manner. He also appreciated 'Department of Science and Technology' (DST) and Indo-French Centre for the Promotion of Advanced Research (CEFIPERA) for taking this novel approach proposed by ILBS.

The Minister congratulated Dr. Shiv K. Sarin and his team along with the French collaborators directed them to find remedies for the metabolic disorders in a low cost and high output manner. 11 French and 17 Indian doctors work jointly in this node.

# DADAA delegation meets President JPPF

### Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: A delegation from the Doordarshan Approved Drama Artists Association (DADAA) Jammu, led by President J.S. Babli and accompanied by Vice President Madan Rangila and spokesperson Janak Khajuria, on Friday met with Mohinder Singh Katoch, President of the Jammu Province People Forum (JPPF).

The meeting took place at the JPPF office in Narwal, Jammu, where the delegation conveyed their association's mission to safeguard, promote, and enrich the cultural heritage, arts, and languages of Duggar Pradesh. They also advocated for the welfare of artists within the fraternity.

A major point of discussion during the meeting was the longstanding demand for a Satellite

Duggar Channel, which has been pending since 2013.

The spokesperson of DADAA emphasized the cultural richness and linguistic diversity of the Duggar region, underscoring that a dedicated channel would cater to the cultural and developmental aspirations of the people.

This demand has garnered support not only from local residents but also from non-resident Dogras living outside the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and abroad.

Expressing concern over the delay in meeting this legitimate demand, the delegation sought the support of JPPF in advocating for the establishment of the Satellite Duggar Channel.

In response, Mohinder Singh Katoch and the executive members of JPPF assured the delegation of their full support.

They emphasized that the demand for a Satellite Duggar Channel is not just an issue for the artists' fraternity but is of paramount importance to all Dogras. The JPPF pledged to stand alongside DADAA in their efforts until this longstanding demand is fulfilled.

The meeting concluded with a commitment from both parties to continue advocating for the establishment of the Satellite Duggar Channel. They aim to ensure that the cultural heritage, arts, languages, and aspirations of the Duggar region are duly recognized, preserved, and promoted through this dedicated medium.

This collaborative effort underscores the importance of cultural preservation and community advocacy in promoting regional identity and unity.

# Illegal felling of green gold cedar & pine trees continue in Forest Block Roat

### Top News Report

RAMBAN, July 5: The Supreme Court ban is fast depriving Jammu and Kashmir of its precious forest wealth.

Green trees worth millions of rupees have been illegally chopped off in compartment no.57 & 58 in the forest block of Roat Khellani range of Batote forest division Doda.

There is an illegal large-scale felling of trees Cedar & pine trees in Batote Division.

The concerned forest officer are responsible for the decrepit condition of the forest and should be punished by the administration for not only damaging environment, but also causing huge damage to the state exchequer. Going by the

pace of cutting, the green gold is dwindling in this reserve forest area and more and more. illegal forest cutting are coming up without any check, it seems the administration has willfully chosen to turn Nelsons eye towards mafias and their illegal activities. When contacted DFO Batote he said that he will see the matter.

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
**Extend Tender Notice**  
 Sr.DEE/GFZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders (www.iressp.gov.in) against below titled Tenders Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only.

Tender No	Name of Work	App Cost (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Completion Period	Opening of tender	Website Particulars
251-Elect/T-23/2024-25	Annual Maintenance contract of Inverters & UPS and replacement of overaged UPS/Batteries of different capacities over 2024-25 Firezpur Division for three years.	1,02,39,004.85	2,01,200.00	36 Months	25.07.2024 after 15:00 Hrs.	www.iressp.gov.in

No. 251-Elect/T Notice No. 17-Elect/2024-25 Dated: 03.07.2024  
 Serving Customers With A Smile

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) MECH RURAL DIVISION JAMMU**  
**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

**e-NIT No. 10 of 2024-25**  
 For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of J&K UT, Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Mech. Rural Division Jammu, invites tenders by e-tendering mode from the reputed/registered firms/individuals for the below mentioned work:-

S. No.	Name of work	Est. cost (in Lakh)	Cost of document/ tender fee (in ₹)	Earnest Money (in ₹)	Validity of Rates	Bid validity
1.	Providing, installation, testing and commissioning of 10000 GPH x 250 mtrs head HC pump set including modification in foundation block installed at T/well cum P/s Machine Domana under MH-2215 M&E.	4.00	Rs. 200/-	8000/- in the shape of CDR / FDR	180 days	180 days

**Date of Publishing: 02/07/2024**  
 1. Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from **02/07/2024 (04:00 P.m)**  
 2. The Bids shall be deposited on the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from **02/07/2024 (04:00 P.m) to 08/07/2024 (02:00 P.m)**.  
 3. After opening the tender Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 4 & 5 of the table (and for DIC/SSI registered firms as per Industrial Policy of J&K Govt.) payable at Jammu pledged in favour of Executive Engineer PHE Mech. Rural Division Jammu.  
 4. Bid security will have to be in form of CDR/FDR of any scheduled bank and shall have to be valid for one year from the date of issuance of tender. The cost of downloaded tender documents should be in form of Treasury Challan/e-Challan in favour of Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Mech. Rural Division Jammu payable at Jammu.

**DIP/J-2324/24**  
 Sd/-  
**Executive Engineer  
 Jal Shakti (PHE) Mech. Rural  
 Division Jammu**

# ADGP Jammu felicitates athletes gearing up for test of endurance 'Ironman Vitoria' Spain

### Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: The Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), Jammu Zone, Anand Jain felicitated Aman Gupta, Archit Puri, Sawan Nagpal, and Sukaran Raj Sharma from Jammu, who are preparing for the ultimate test of endurance: Ironman Vitoria, Spain.

This gruelling single-day event, renowned as the toughest in the world, combines swimming, cycling, and running, pushing athletes to their limits. They are the only athletes from the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir to have completed a triathlon and have also formed the registered triathlon club, Iron Tribe Sports Club.

The Ironman triathlon, known for its extreme demands on physical and mental stamina, consists of three main segments: '3.8 km Swim' Participants will brave open water to complete the swim leg, often facing varying weather conditions and strong cur-

rents. '180 km' Bicycle Ride; Cyclists will pedal through scenic yet challenging landscapes, battling fatigue, elevation changes, and maintaining high energy levels. '42.2 km Run'; The marathon run awaits, demanding immense mental fortitude and physical resilience as participants push their limits to cross the finish line.

What sets the Ironman triathlon apart is that each sport must be completed back-to-back, with a total finish time of 15 hours and 50 minutes. The completion of these gruelling events in sequence is a testament to the athletes' dedication, discipline, and determination.

For the past four months, Aman Gupta, Archit Puri, Sawan Nagpal, and Sukaran Raj Sharma have undergone rigorous training at the Police GYM. Their preparation has included not just physical training but also mental conditioning, nutritional planning, and recovery strategies. They have benefited from top-

notch coaching and the state-of-the-art facilities provided by the Police department.

During the felicitation ceremony, ADGP Jammu, Anand Jain praised the athletes for their unwavering commitment and relentless hard work. He expressed immense pride in their achievements and lauded their spirit of perseverance and determination. "These young athletes are not only making Jammu and Kashmir proud but also setting an example of dedication and resilience for others to follow," he said.

The athletes themselves expressed their readiness and enthusiasm for the upcoming challenge. "We're ready," said Aman Gupta, Archit Puri, Sawan Nagpal, and Sukaran Raj Sharma. "Ironman isn't just a race; it's a journey of self-discovery and determination. Each of us has pushed our limits, learned about our strengths and weaknesses, and grown as individuals and as a team."

Their journey has been fuelled by a strong sense of camaraderie, passion for the sport, and the unwavering support of their families, friends, and the community. The Iron Tribe Sports Club, which they formed, has been a significant source of motivation and inspiration for them. The club aims to promote triathlon and endurance sports in the region, encouraging more young athletes to take up such challenges.

Their participation in Ironman Vitoria, Spain, not only highlights their personal achievements but also brings recognition to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir on an international stage. ADGP Jammu concluded the ceremony by encouraging the athletes to give their best and make the Union Territory proud. He emphasized the importance of such events in fostering a spirit of sportsmanship, discipline, and excellence among the youth. May they return victorious and continue to inspire future generations; he wished.

**GOVT. COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, PARADE GROUND, JAMMU-180001, J&K.**  
 (Erstwhile Maharani Mahila College)  
 Autonomous College affiliated to the University of Jammu  
 College with Potential for Excellence, 2016  
 (Estd. 1944)

**PG ADMISSION NOTIFICATION: 02/2024**  
**EXTENSION OF LAST DATE FOR REGISTRATION OF ONLINE ADMISSION FORM**  
 In continuation to the Notification No. WCP/Coll/2024/2102 dated 19-06-2024 for admission to PG Programmes (English, Music, Home Science, Zoology & MCA) for the Academic session 2024-25, the last date for filling of online registration/ admission form has been extended as per details given below:

Admission Schedule	
Link for filing the application form.	<a href="https://forms.gle/eTbmFPx6g8st8sd7ds">https://forms.gle/eTbmFPx6g8st8sd7ds</a>
Last Date for filling of online admission form.	08.07.2024

Latest updates regarding the admission shall be uploaded on the college website. [www.gcwparade.in](http://www.gcwparade.in)

Sd/-  
 Principal  
 Govt. College for Women  
 Parade Ground Jammu

**DIP/J-2330/24**



## EDITORIAL

MANSOON  
PREPERATION

**M**onsoon is a critical season in the agricultural calendar of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly for the cultivation of paddy and other crops. This period, usually spanning from June to September, marks the onset of monsoon rains in the region. The preparation for Monsoon in Jammu involves a series of agricultural practices, cultural significance, and community traditions that are integral to the livelihoods and cultural fabric of the region.

The preparation for Monsoon in Jammu begins well in advance, as farmers gear up for the cultivation of paddy, the primary crop during this season. Paddy fields need to be properly irrigated and prepared to receive the monsoon rains. Farmers undertake activities such as plowing, leveling the fields, and ensuring adequate water management through traditional irrigation systems or modern techniques where available.

Beyond its agricultural importance, Monsoon holds deep cultural significance in Jammu and Kashmir. The arrival of monsoon rains is often celebrated with traditional festivals and rituals that reflect the region's cultural heritage. Communities come together to pray for abundant rainfall and a prosperous agricultural season ahead. Rituals such as "Bajray Bhasa" (appealing to rain gods through prayers) are performed in villages, invoking blessings for good harvests and overall well-being.

During Monsoon, folk songs and dances are also performed, depicting the joy and anticipation associated with the rains. These cultural expressions not only entertain but also reinforce the connection between the people and their natural environment, emphasizing harmony and respect for nature's cycles.

In rural Jammu, Monsoon preparation is a community affair, where neighbors often collaborate to complete agricultural tasks efficiently. The collective effort extends to communal activities such as repairing irrigation channels (known as kuls), organizing traditional water-sharing systems (kandis), and participating in local governance bodies (panchayats) to address shared challenges and opportunities during the Monsoon season.

Furthermore, Monsoon is a time when social bonds are strengthened through festivals, weddings, and gatherings that bring families and communities together. Traditional cuisine prepared from fresh seasonal produce, especially from the first harvests of Monsoon, adds to the cultural richness of the celebrations. These traditions not only preserve cultural identity but also contribute to the socio-economic cohesion of rural communities in Jammu.

Despite its cultural and agricultural significance, Monsoon preparation in Jammu faces challenges such as climate change impacts, water scarcity, and fluctuating market prices for agricultural produce. Farmers are increasingly adopting innovative practices such as rainwater harvesting, crop diversification, and the use of organic farming techniques to mitigate these challenges and enhance sustainability.

Government initiatives and support for agricultural extension services play a crucial role in educating farmers about modern technologies, providing timely weather forecasts, and facilitating access to credit and insurance schemes. These efforts aim to empower farmers, improve agricultural productivity, and ensure food security amidst evolving environmental and socio-economic conditions.

In conclusion, Monsoon preparation in Jammu embodies a harmonious blend of agricultural practices, cultural traditions, and community resilience. It highlights the deep-rooted connection between people and nature, as well as the adaptive strategies employed by farmers to navigate challenges and harness opportunities during this pivotal season. By preserving age-old customs while embracing modern innovations, Jammu continues to uphold its agricultural heritage and sustain the livelihoods of its farming communities through Monsoon and beyond.

## Why New Delhi needs to take fresh look at Beijing

By: Abhijit Bhattacharyya

**W**ith the Narendra Modi government having begun a fresh term last month, it is time for it to undertake a full-scale review of its policy towards the People's Republic of China. One only has to see the sordid happenings during its 2019-2024 second term. This included the Dragon's unilateral push to Delhi to the precipice, to show who's the real boss of Asia, especially South Asia.

The unilateralism shown by the post-1949 Communist Party of China and its overlord, Chairman Mao Zedong, has now rubbed off on his successors. Little wonder then that what Mao did to India in 1950s and 1962, Xi Jinping did to India in 2019-2024 with vengeance. History repeated itself in its ugliest form to hit the 21st century successors of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (1947-1964).

Nehru, a liberal, had idealism and a vision, which regrettably led to his monumental China failure. It will be wrong, however, to look at Nehru's broad vision and policies only through the China prism, for he also had mega-successes which far outweigh the negativity. Just as non-violence was Mahatma Gandhi's path-breaking means to end British rule, "non-alignment" and "Panchsheel" were Nehru's enduring contributions to the world of diplomacy. India still follows this path with great elan, as seen by the world in the 28-month ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. So far, India has done very well; thanks to inherited wisdom of the professional mandarins of South Block, who have kept the ship of state steady, even in a rocky ambience of deceptive Chinese hostility and Western diplomatic irritants and pressure.

In dealing with China, one has to be prepared for more deception. Remember Mao's formula of "one step backward and two steps forward" when the situation so demands? Remember Deng Xiaoping's prescription once China started interacting with the world of foreign "barbarians" from its claustrophobic Forbidden City: "Hide your intent and bide your time"? Secretiveness is in the DNA of Chinese diplomacy. That is what needs to be effectively countered by India today.

The inflexibly bellicose Han dictator must be tackled upfront. As China now faces a robust push-back from the West and East on trade, import, export and military hotspots, out of sheer exasperation Xi Jinping was forced to quote Nehru's 1954 "Panchsheel" (Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence) to influence the world, without of course giving Nehru due credit for coining those memorable words.

In India, two Chinese diplomats (the ambassador in Delhi and the consul-general in Kolkata) arrived in midst of the parliamentary election and straightway began a verbal charm-offensive to impress Indians and create a pro-China lobby. The idea was to put pressure on Indians -- to humble the enemy without a fight, through internal sabotage. The Chinese take their cue from India's history, where battles were lost to foreigners, with internal lobbyists ensuring victory for external foes.

One need not go into the myriad ways in which China has inflicted damage on India. The question is how India should re-orient its entire policy spectrum in order to counter-balance Han aggression. The Hans' psyche solely revolves around the Opium War (1839-1842) and subsequent events like the burning of

Royal Summer Palace (1860), Boxer Revolt (1898), and suppression by the "barbarians" (foreigners) of the "Son of Heaven" (Emperor) living in the opulent Forbidden City of Beijing.

This "revenge factor" is deeply embedded in the psyche of 1.5 billion Chinese people. Let India not be bullied or get carried away by false hopes from outside and internal pressures mounted by China's lobbyists for their own private agenda, which may not necessarily benefit the 1.4 billion Indians.

Therefore, first insist on going back to India's territorial status quo ante of April-May 2020. This is absolutely non-negotiable. Inviolability and sovereignty of territory comes first and foremost for any nation-state. It's good that India's external affairs minister, at least, has been publicly harping on this for quite some time. Despite the parrot-like utterances of some of China's "wolf-warrior" diplomats, there can be no "business as usual" without a proper territorial resolution. Beijing is circulating a false narrative that "India and China have more convergence than divergence". This is nothing more than a backdoor device to open the gates for hordes of Chinese people to enter India for "business", which will only benefit Beijing. New Delhi must not fall into this trap, otherwise the leaders of today will face the harsh judgment of history, even worse than Nehru in 1962.

India-China bilateral trade is in shambles. The \$100 billion-plus deficit can't be wished away with a magic wand. The options are limited, and some hard decisions are needed. It's time to take action to prohibit through the commerce ministry the import of all non-essential goods from the Chinese, on which India's traders are making humongous profits by selling in the

domestic market at steep markups. Second, impose stiff tariffs on all Chinese imports. Then, impose non-tariff barriers as well.

The WTO today is hardly in a position to deal with disputes between the "big boys". The United States imposed 100 per cent tariffs on Chinese-made electric vehicles. The European Union followed, with a maximum 38.4 per cent import duty. The entire West is trying to protect their domestic industry from brutal Chinese assault through cheap products. Let India recognise the harsh reality that the days of rampant globalization may be past. The monopoly-like Chinese juggernaut has taken on the entire West, and India is bound to be Dragon's next target.

The global pushback Beijing is facing is bad news for its economy. India must keep watch on the fast-unfolding scenario. Unfortunately, it has let itself become excessively dependent on cheap Chinese products and raw material. It's now heard that some Indian companies may "collapse" without "imported Chinese managers" running them. Truly bizarre! Have some people, in their over-enthusiasm to make money through any means, lost their mind? Can India be (mis)-guided by them?

It's time for South Block to crack the whip and ensure that the tentacles of the Chinese Dragon don't spread any further in this country. Just consider some facts. In a reply to a Parliament question in December 2022, the government had acknowledged that "nearly 3,560 companies in India have Chinese directors" and that "174 Chinese companies are registered in India". These need to be kept under close watch and acted upon, to ensure that India's self-interest is not compromised in any way.

## After the fiasco over Neet leaks &amp; NET row, what's the way forward?

By: John J. Kennedy

**T**he National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Neet) fiasco is becoming increasingly complex and contentious. Intense discussions and widespread protests are occurring on multiple fronts. In Parliament, heated debates are taking place, while on the legal front, petitions have been filed in the courts in several states. Meanwhile, the government is implementing mechanisms to investigate the issue and recommend remedial measures.

Politically, the issue has ignited sharp criticism and pertinent questions in Parliament. The Opposition leaders have demanded a detailed discussion, urging the Prime Minister to facilitate a debate as the issue impacts millions of hopeful students. Samajwadi Party MP Akhilesh Yadav has accused the government of fostering paper leaks. Rahul Gandhi's call for a debate deserves serious consideration. A thorough discussion on this critical issue is crucial for the nation. The government could improve its image by engaging in such a debate and showing commitment to addressing significant student-related problems. No system is perfect, but efforts must be made to rectify exposed flaws. The discussion should aim to identify loopholes and find solutions. The government must prioritise student welfare by allowing this discussion. Rhetoric alone is insufficient. Although President Droupadi Murmu did mention the issue in her address to the joint sitting of both Houses, and emphasised the government's commitment to a fair investigation, a debate in both Houses of Parlia-

ment would be a good starting point. Also, it is important not to dismiss the government's actions, such as replacing officials and postponing exams, as mere "cover-up" tactics. However, to restore faith in the system, the government must engage in a thorough discussion, as the nation deserves to know the truth.

On the legal front, aggrieved students are seeking a fair resolution, but the path is fraught with challenges. Opinions are divided: some students advocate for a re-examination, while others are firmly opposed, and both sides have made some valid points. Cancelling the exam and ordering a retake would impose additional stress on students who genuinely prepared and performed well, subjecting them to further hardship. However, given the malpractices that compromised the exam's integrity, the results cannot be deemed valid for selecting candidates. This situation presents a classic Hegelian dilemma, where the courts must choose between two justifiable yet conflicting options. Deciding without causing harm to one party will be a difficult task for the judiciary.

On the other hand, student organisations like NSUI, AISF, and AISA are intensifying their protests. Their anger is natural and spontaneous. Interestingly, even the ABVP, affiliated with the ruling BJP, has raised concerns. Some organisations demand scrapping the National Testing Agency (NTA), while others have called for the Union education minister's resignation. While the minister's resignation might be seen as a political move, it is up to the minister to decide on moral grounds.

The call to disband the NTA is more significant due to its ongoing controversies. As the investigations continue, doubts about the exam's reliability and the NTA's role are only mounting. For instance, the retest results for 813 out of 1,563 candidates, where no one achieved full marks, highlight systemic corruption. This casts doubt on the NTA's practices since its inception in 2017 and questions past candidate selection. Sadly, public faith in the NTA is waning. An opinion poll showed only 18 per cent of 857 respondents have confidence in the NTA, while 77 per cent believe it should no longer conduct exams.

One of the major problems contributing to the NTA's current predicament is the overwhelming volume of work it has been assigned. A brand-new organisation with inadequate and under-qualified staff to meet millions of aspirants' needs to compete in top-notch exams was a sure recipe for disaster. Lord Acton's words ring true: "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Such an outcome was almost inevitable. Compounding the issue, several officials responsible for maintaining the integrity of the exam process have also fallen prey to greed and corruption. The arrest of a school principal and district coordinator of Neet exams in Hazaribagh, Jharkhand, has further eroded public confidence.

The silver lining in these troubling events is the government's acknowledgment that not all is well with Neet and the NTA, prompting the initiation of reforms. A seven-member expert committee, led by K. Radhakrishnan, former chairman of the Indian Space Research

Organisation (Isro), is expected to submit its recommendations in two months. While it is unlikely that the committee will recommend abolishing the NTA -- indicating the government's continued commitment to its "one nation, one exam" approach -- the focus will be on reforms in the examination process, improvements in data security protocols, and the overall structure and functioning of the NTA.

However, importantly, the committee should consider regional realities and the perspectives of state governments, many of which advocate for education to be returned to the State List from the Concurrent List. It is commendable that the committee has invited feedback from various stakeholders, but it would be worthwhile to include opinions from state representatives as well.

In this regard, closely examining the A.K. Rajan committee report on Neet could provide valuable insights for Dr Radhakrishnan and his team. The solutions proposed by the committee need to be enduring rather than mere knee-jerk reactions. Understanding the negative impacts of a centralised approach, its effects on different sections of society, and how a "one-size-fits-all" method undermines equality and social justice is absolutely essential. Any proposed solutions will likely be superficial and cosmetic without sincerely addressing these concerns in the recommendations. The committee's work must ensure that the reforms lead to substantial, long-lasting improvements in the examination system while simultaneously avoiding disparity and discrimination and ensuring fairness and equity to all.



## INTACH Kathua conducts Natural Heritage cleanliness drive at Badnota Waterfall

### Top News Report

KATHUA, July 5: Members of the INTACH Kathua Subchapter visited the Badnota Waterfall in the Lohai Malhar block of Kathua district. Situated approximately 20 kilometers from Machchedi and accessible via a 4-kilometer trek, the waterfall is recognized as one of the largest and most stunning natural attractions in the Union Territory, with significant potential to draw tourists from across India.

The visiting team, comprising of Ankush Sharma, Devinder Kumar, Deep Kumar



Sharma, Raman Sharma and Ayush Sharma aimed to catalog and explore the natural heritage

of the Kathua district. Squadron Leader Sumit Sharma had also joined them. Upon reaching the waterfall, the team was disheartened to find the site littered with plastic bags, food packets, and alcohol bottles, detracting from its natural beauty.

In response, the team immediately initiated a cleanliness drive, using the resources available to them. Members and volunteers collected the scattered garbage, though their efforts were interrupted by a sudden rainfall. To further discourage littering, they inscribed a message on a stone, urging visitors

to keep the area clean. Additionally, the team engaged with local villagers to raise awareness about the environmental impact of littering.

Ankush Sharma, head of the INTACH Kathua Subchapter, emphasized the importance of developing Badnota Waterfall as a tourist destination while addressing the environmental challenges it faces. "The beauty of Badnota Waterfall holds immense potential for tourism," Sharma stated. "However, it is crucial that we address the environmental threats to preserve its natural heritage for future generations."

## Army empowers poor women by sponsoring Stitching and Tailoring course

### Top News Report

RAMBAN, July 5: Not only protecting our nation from anti-national elements but our Army is also engaged in shaping the future of poor masses as well to raise their lifestyle.

Continuing its efforts to strengthen the status of women in rural areas by empowering them with skills to become self-reliant, Army's Rashtriya Rifles based at Banihal has sponsored 'Stitching and Tailoring Course' for the women from remote areas of Banihal in District Ramban.

The project is aligned with the government's "Skill India" and "Digital

India" initiatives.

A total of 12 women were selected for this three months program considering their economic condition and zeal to learn.

The course is being conducted at ACSA Centre Banihal, which is a government approved vocational training center as per standards of National Skill Development Corporation located in Banihal Market.

According to Army Spokesperson, it has a comprehensive course that will educate women about basic fundamentals of the needlework crafts to fashion designing of clothes required in daily routine. The

women undertaking this course will gain in-depth knowledge of designing, stitching and other related skills by the end of course.

After completion of the course, each candidate will receive a certificate of "Stitching and Tailoring Course" experts.

The event was attended by Govt officials, opinion makers, trainees and family members of sponsored students.

The community at large, including trainees, families, praised this effort of Army for aiding needy women and providing them the tools to alleviate poverty and become economically independent in this competitive era.

## Internship program in Physics commences at Govt. Polytechnic for Women



### Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: On the directions of the Director Skill Development Department, J&K a 10 days/60 hrs. internship program for the students of Govt. College for Women, Gandhi Nagar, started on Friday in this institution.

The students undergoing B.Sc.(Hons) course under NEP 2020 in Physics in Govt. college for Women, Gandhi Nagar have enrolled for the program that focuses on skill enhancement based on Basic Electricity and Electronics, Electrical Wiring and Domestic Appliances, Electrical Machine and switches etc. It will be conducted in 3 modules of 20 hrs. each (Total 60 hrs.)

The inaugural function was held today in the Conference hall of the institution.

Er. Suket Gupta, Principal of the institution was the chief guest on the occasion. During his interaction, he welcomed the students and faculty for Govt. college for Women, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu and exhorted upon the interns to work in coordination with the instructors/ faculty to achieve the objectives of the internship as it will bridge the gap between the actual world of work and academics as envisaged in NEP 2020.

Er. Naresh Gupta, HODE&C and coordinator of the program, while interacting, deliberated upon conduct of such programs so as to bring

the academia and skill development institution on platform for holistic development of the competencies of the students.

Prof. Prabhjeet Kour, HOD Physics Govt. College for Women Gandhi Nagar, while interacting, thanked Principal Govt. Polytechnic for Women, Jammu for promptly agreeing to conduct the program for the benefit of the students.

Among those present on the occasion included Dr. Rawan Kumar, Associate Prof. Govt. College for Women, Dr. Iqbal Quasim Assistant Prof. Govt. College for Women, Prof. Rajinder Kumar, Assistant Prof Govt. College for women, faculty and staff of Department of Electronics & Communication Engineering.

## 15 vehicles seized for illegal mining in Kulgam

### Top News Report

KULGAM, July 5: As many as fifteen vehicles involved in illegal mining were seized in Kulgam district from last Two days.

An official told that a team of officials from the Geology and Mining Department Kulgam led by District Mineral Officer (DMO) Murtaza Bashir laid a major crackdown with the assistance of Kulgam police at several locations including Manzgam, Damhall, Mirbazar and Devser of the district.

He said during the raids 15 vehicles including, 01 Tipper, 14 Tractors, were found engaged in illegal mining and transportation of raw materials.

He said the vehicles seized during the raids have been handed over to police.

Meanwhile, District Mineral Officer (DMO) Kulgam said that they will



act tough against illegal miners.

"Only mining through legal process will be allowed, illegal mining will not be allowed," he said, adding they raid whenever they receive reports about illegal mining.

He also warned the legal miners for involving illegal mining during night hours, asked them to desist from such doings or to face action.

## People eagerly waiting for assembly elections to teach lesson to BJP: Rajesh

### Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) General Secretary and media head Rajesh Gupta on Friday accused the BJP of misrule over the past one decade, asserting that the BJP has not only failed to fulfill its promises but has also exacerbated the difficulties faced by the common People.

While addressing to media, here today, the BSP leader said that people's miseries have increased manifold in the last 10 years under BJP rule, emphasizing the government's inability to deliver on its commitments.

Rajesh Gupta said that the people are waiting eagerly for assembly elections to teach a lesson to the BJP for failing to fulfil the promises made before coming to

power at the Centre and in J&K.

He said that people should elect those who will ensure that their voice is heard. "People of J&K want a credible voice to represent their aspirations and BSP is the only credible voice of all the regions of J&K," he added.

"The people of J&K remember BJP for unleashing countless miseries on the UT and its people. People still recount the numerous instances of BJP and its leaders committed from time to time.

The treacherous role played by the BJP and its leadership is an open secret," he said, adding, now the responsibility rests on people to choose between forces inimical to UT's integrity. In the end, it is the people whose resolve will prevail," he said.

## Authorities in Kulgam identified land for main campus of GHSS Waltangoo

### Top News Report

KULGAM, July 5: In a significant development, the authorities in Kulgam district has identified land at Waltangoo for establishing main campus of Govt higher secondary school at Waltangoo.

An official said that on the direction of Deputy commissioner Kulgam, Athar Amir Khan, a

team of revenue officials headed by Tehsildar Devsar Raqib Ahmad Ganie identified/demarcated land for the construction of main campus of Govt. Higher Secondary School Waltangoo.

He said that this was a long pending demand of Kund villagers as the higher secondary was facing space crunch for which students were suffering badly.

## GGM SC College organizes plantation drive



### Top News Report

JAMMU July 5: The NSS Units of GGM Science College, Jammu, organized a grand plantation drive to mark the celebration of "Van Mahotsav 2024: with the theme 'Ek Paudha Maa Kay Naam'." The event was held to emphasize the importance of tree plantation and to encourage the protection and preservation of the environment.

Van Mahotsav, also known as the Festival of Trees, is celebrated every year in the first week of July. This week-long festival was initiated in 1950 by K.M. Munshi, the then Union Minister for Agriculture and Food, to create enthusiasm among masses for forest conservation and planting trees. It aims to spread awareness about the environmental benefits of trees, such as improving air quality, providing habitats for wildlife, and combating climate change.

Dr. Romesh Kumar Gupta, Principal of GGM Science College,

addressed the gathering and highlighted the significance of Van Mahotsav. He emphasized the crucial role of trees in sustaining life on Earth and urged everyone to take active participation in tree plantation activities. Dr. Gupta also appreciated the efforts of the NSS units in organizing such an impactful event.

Dr. R.K. Bhat, in his speech, talked about the urgent need to combat deforestation and the role of educational institutions in promoting environmental sustainability. He encouraged the students to become ambassadors of green initiatives and to involve their families and communities in tree plantation drives.

The event was graced by esteemed Professors including Dr. Narinder Kumar, Prof. Lekh Raj, Dr. M.S. Saini, and Dr. Sunil Dutt. Each of them shared insights on the importance of conserving nature and applauded the college's initiative in celebrating Van Mahotsav.

Dr. Rahul Kait and Dr. Neha Sharma, the pro-

gram officers, played a pivotal role in orchestrating the event. Their dedication and hard work were acknowledged by the Principal, Dr. Romesh Kumar Gupta, who lauded their efforts in making the plantation drive a success. He also praised the NSS volunteers and staff for their enthusiasm and active participation.

The plantation drive saw the enthusiastic involvement of NSS volunteers and staff, who were very happy to contribute to this noble cause. They planted various species of trees in and around the college campus, ensuring a greener and healthier environment for future generations.

The celebration of Van Mahotsav at GGM Science College, Jammu, was a resounding success, fostering a sense of responsibility towards the environment among students and staff alike. The event not only highlighted the significance of trees but also reinforced the college's commitment to environmental sustainability.

## Bharat Vikas Parishad organizes plantation drive at Chhani Himmat



### Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: To commemorate the 103rd Birth Anniversary of Dr. Suraj Prakash Gupta, the founder of Bharat Vikas Parishad, the Shivalik Branch organized a plantation drive in Green Belt Park, Chhani Himmat. This event was part of a series of programs arranged by Bharat Vikas Parishad across India.

Dr. Gautam Mehngi, a social activist and State Sanchalak of RSS, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, while Vikram Randhawa, former MLC, presided over the function. Neena Gupta, Ex-Corporator of JMC, was also a special invitee.

The plantation drive aimed to address various environmental issues such as deforestation, soil erosion, desertifica-

tion in semi-arid areas, and global warming.

Trees play a crucial role in enhancing the beauty and environmental balance by absorbing harmful gases and increasing oxygen supply.

Ashok Khajuria, Secretary of the Shivalik Branch, conducted the proceedings of the programme. H.C. Vaid, Branch President, welcomed the guests and participants, emphasizing the importance of plantation for all living organisms.

A total of 80 shady and herbal plants were planted during the drive, with support from Ashwini Kumar Mittal, DFO, and his team.

Dr. Shreyansh Kumar Jain, State Convener (Yoga) of Bharat Vikas Parishad and State Yoga Commissioner, recited a song highlighting the purpose of tree plantation to

protect the environment and enrich human life.

Anju Bansal, Project Incharge and Branch Bal Vikas and Mahila Pramukh, also contributed with a song on tree plantation. The event was graced by prominent citizens of Chhani Himmat. State President BB Sharma, General Secretary Shivram Sharma, and National Executive Members Arun Sharma and Ashok Gupta participated actively.

Jagdish Singh Ishwar, State Coordinator Environment, shared insights on the importance of tree plantation, while blessings were given by Dr. Gautam Mehngi and BB Sharma. The event concluded with Ashok Gupta delivering a vote of thanks, highlighting the collective effort to promote environmental stewardship through such initiatives.

## Altaf Bukhari reviews preparedness of Apni Party ahead of Assembly Elections in J&K



### Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: Apni Party President, Altaf Bukhari today reviewed the preparedness of the Party in Jammu region ahead of the proposed Assembly Elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

Altaf Bukhari chaired an important provincial level meeting here at the office of the Apni Party at Gandhi Nagar in Jammu District.

The meeting was attended by State General Secretary, Vijay Bakaya, Provincial President, Jammu, S. Manjit Singh, and other senior leadership from across the region, all district

presidents, and frontal heads.

In this meeting, a review of the Apni Party's performance in the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections of 2024 was also taken.

Accordingly, the Party leaders shared assembly wise details to the Party President and informed him about their working and public contact program in Jammu region.

The Party President, Altaf Bukhari directed the Party leaders to speed-up the public outreach program and educate people about the equitable developmental policy, and welfare programs of the Party that would be

implemented, if the Party forms Govt in Jammu and Kashmir.

In this regard, he reviewed the Party's preparedness ahead of the proposed Assembly Elections in Jammu and Kashmir. He directed the Party leaders to hold continuous meetings with the people in every nook and corner of the region.

Similarly, the Party leaders were asked to hold regular review meetings and gear up the election campaign.

He directed the leaders to put up a fight in favour of all the sections of society, particularly the economically weaker section.



## Anant Ambani-Radhika Merchant wedding: Pop sensation Justin Bieber arrives in Mumbai

After Rihanna and Katy Perry's performances at Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant's pre-wedding festivities, now it's Canadian singer-songwriter Justin Bieber who seems to be on the list to enthral guests at the much-awaited wedding.

The Canadian pop star landed with his entourage at the Mumbai airport in the early hours of Friday.

Clad in a pink sweatshirt, blue loose pants and a red bucket hat, Bieber was seen exiting the airport and leaving in a car.

Bieber, who is known for chartbusters like 'Baby', 'Sorry', and 'Never Say Never', among others, reportedly will be performing at the sangeet ceremony of Anant and Radhika.

Sangeet celebrations of Anant and Radhika are scheduled to be held on Friday, July 5.

The couple are set to tie the knot at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai on July 12.

Bieber's first concert in India was held in 2017. He was supposed to return to the country in 2022 but the tour was cancelled due to the singer's bad health.



As part of the wedding celebrations Mukesh Ambani and Nita Ambani organised a mass wedding for the underprivileged on July 2 at Swami Vivekanand Vidyamandir in Palghar.

On July 3, Ambanis organised a spectacular Mameru ceremony- a Gujarati wedding tradition where the maternal uncle (mama) of the bride visits her with sweets and gifts.

The wedding festivities are meticulously planned, adhering to traditional Hindu Vedic customs. The main ceremonies will commence on Friday, July 12, with the auspicious Shubh

Vivah, or wedding function and according to sources, guests are encouraged to embrace the spirit of the occasion by dressing in traditional Indian attire.

The celebrations will continue on Saturday, July 13, with Shubh Aashirwad. The final event, Mangal Utsav or the wedding reception, is scheduled for Sunday, July 14. For this grand occasion, guests have been asked to dress in 'Indian chic.'

Radhika Merchant, daughter of Encore Healthcare CEO Viren Merchant and entrepreneur Shaila Merchant, is set to join the Ambani family, marking a

union of two prominent industrialist families.

Earlier this year, the couple hosted a series of pre-wedding festivities in Jamnagar, which saw a star-studded guest list from around the globe.

Business leaders, heads of state, and celebrities from Hollywood and Bollywood graced the occasion.

Among the distinguished guests were Meta founder Mark Zuckerberg and his wife Priscilla Chan, Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates, and Ivanka Trump. The highlight of the pre-wedding celebrations was an electrifying performance by pop sensation Rihanna, marking her debut performance in India.

The three-day extravaganza also featured the world-renowned illusionist David Blaine, who left guests spellbound with his incredible feats.

Bollywood stars and family members joined in the sangeet performances, with a special appearance by actor-singer Diljit Dosanjh, captivating the audience.

## Anant Ambani, Radhika Merchant celebrate Mosalu ceremony



Ahead of their big fat wedding, stunning visuals from Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant's Mosalu ceremony have been released.

The family organised the spectacular event at their Mumbai residence, Antilia. Visuals from the event show stunning decorations and happy moments shared by all.

Antilia was beautifully adorned with colourful lights, flowers, golden decorations and much more.

The bright colours and sparkling lights created a festive and joyful atmosphere, making the ceremony all the more special for everyone.

Mosalu is a special ceremony in Gujarati culture that happens a few days before the wedding. The marriage is set to take place on July 12 in Mumbai.

## Disha Patani's Gratitude Note For Team Kalki 2898 AD: "Grateful To Be A Part Of This Beautiful Journey"

As Nag Ashwin's dystopian sci-fi epic Kalki 2898 AD continues to rule over the box office, actor Disha Patani, who plays the role of Roxie in the film, has written a gratitude note for the team, thanking the director for leading the "legendary cast" to success.

The actor took to her Instagram to share a heartwarming note for the whole team of the film. Disha wrote, "Thank you @nag\_ashwin for creating this crazy sci-fi world in the most beautiful way, integrating Indian history and science, you're truly a creative genius sharing conversations with you about anime was my highlight of being on your set. Thank you @bhairava @actorprabhas for being the sweetest co-star ever and taking care of everyone. Shout out to the women in charge @priyankadutt @swapnaduttchalasani for bringing it to life, you guys are inspirational



@djordjevia you're a magician (sic)."

She added, "Honoured to be a part of such a legendary cast, hats off to the whole team who worked sleepless nights to create this spectacle. And lastly, thanks to my team D who worked so hard to bring Roxie to life I'm grateful to be a part of this beautiful journey. let's goo #kalki-

2898ad."

Kalki 2898 AD features a dystopian world.

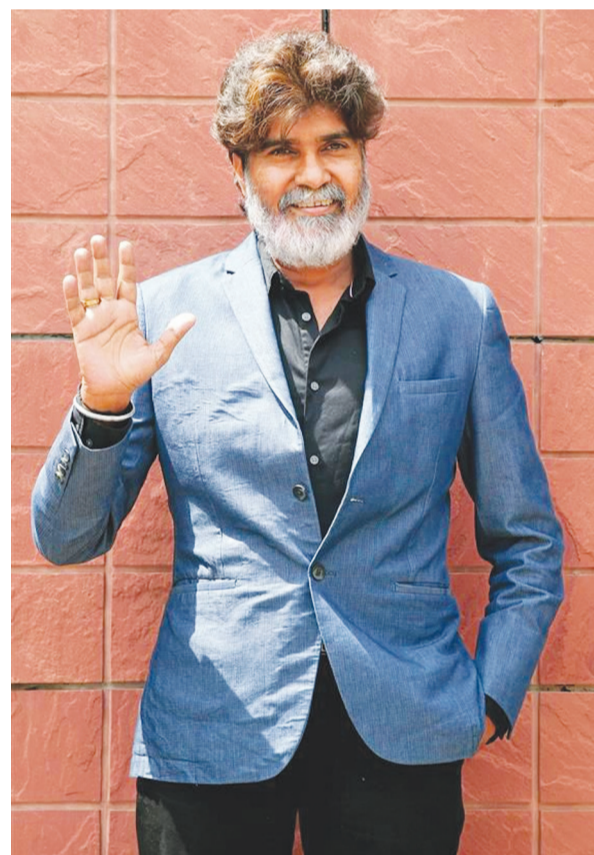
The post-apocalyptic film is inspired by Hindu scriptures and is set in the year 2898 AD.

The film is directed by Nag Ashwin and stars Prabhas, Amitabh Bachchan, Deepika Padukone, Kamal Haasan and Disha Patani in lead roles.

## For Suviner Vicky, who shot to fame with Kohrra and Bhaiyya Ji, stardom came at 50 but he is not complaining. He says his grounding in theatre has taught him sabr

From a struggling actor to walking the Cannes red carpet (in 2016 for Chauthi Koot), from cameos to parallel leads in not one but two back-to-back series (CAT and Kohrra in 2023), Suviner Vicky's journey is the stuff dreams are made of. More recently seen in Manoj Bajpayee-starrer Bhaiyya Ji as an antagonist, critics may not have been happy with the film, but the gifted actor from City Beautiful is glad he was part of the movie, which found reasonable commercial success.

Busy shooting in Gurgaon for yet another film, details of which Vicky is right now not at liberty to divulge, he takes us into the making of an actor as well as the breakout star that Kohrra has made him. Stardom at 50 may seem rather belated but tastes sweeter. Says Vicky, "When fame knocks at your doors at a mature age, your feet remain firmly



affixed on the ground." Though Kohrra made him a household name, he considers Gurdvinder Singh's Chauthi Koot the real turning point in his career. The film catapulted

him to Cannes stage, the significance of which he didn't know back in time. Appreciation for Chauthi Koot did not translate into instant fame or work. But then another mile-

stone beckoned. Ghalib of Meel Pathar, directed by Ivan Ayr, reaffirmed his acting prowess and brought him many laurels, including the Best Performer Award in the Asian feature film category at the Singapore International Film Festival.

More honours like the Critics Choice Award 2024 (for Kohrra) were in store. Actually 2023 was the real game-changer. He recalls the day he landed the plum part in Kohrra, "As I walked into producer's meeting room, I saw the story board which had only one photograph, mine, on it. While the showrunner Sudeep Sharma was briefing me on the story, I was only staring at my photo." Post-Kohrra the world noticed him. And how, what with bigwigs like Karan Johar lauding him, 'his silences can launch a million scripts.'

So, how does he get into those parts with every single inflection

and nuance mirrored in his body language and face? This 'certified actor' from Punjab University, Patiala shares his preparation for Sehtab of CAT. "The moment I was offered CAT, I began to see YouTube videos of police officers, started noticing the gait of cops around me. But soon I realised this would not lead me anywhere, I had to find Sehtab in myself." For Kohrra's Balbir once again he looked inwards and his relationship with his own daughter.

Needless to say, Vicky's own grounding in theatre too comes in handy. Among many other things theatre has taught him is sabr. And its patience that has held him in good stead in days when the going was not so smooth.

A star might be born on OTT every other day, but unlike mercurial film industry stardom in this long format, he believes, 'is here to stay'. So is he... touch wood!

## Samantha Ruth Prabhu issues clarification on nebuliser post after backlash

Samantha Ruth Prabhu has issued a clarification after doctors slammed her for propagating dangerous medical practices. She recommended hydrogen peroxide nebulisation to treat viral infections and shared a picture of herself taking the treatment.

Her post caught the attention of Dr Cyriac Abby Philips aka "The Liver Doc". He said that this technique has adverse effects on health and slammed the actor, calling her "health and science illiterate".

Samantha's clarification

"Over the last couple of years, I've had to take many different types of medicines. I've tried everything I was strongly advised to take. As advised by highly qualified professionals and after doing as much self research as is possible

for a lay person like me. "Many of these treatments were also very very expensive. I would always keep thinking about how fortunate I am that I could afford it and about all those who cannot. And for the longest time, conventional treatments weren't making me better. There's a good chance it was just me and am sure they will work very well for others.

"These two factors led me to also read up on alternate therapies and treatments. And after trial and error, I found treatments that worked wonderfully for me. Treatments that also cost a fraction of what I was spending on conventional healthcare."

On Liver Doc's 'attack' She added, "I am not naive enough to go about strongly advocating a treatment. I merely suggested with good

intention because of all that I have faced and learnt in the last couple of years. Especially that treatments can be financially draining and many may not be able to afford them. End of the day, we all depend on educated doctors to guide us. This treatment was suggested to me by a highly qualified doctor who is an MD, who has served DRDO for 25 years. He, after all his education in conventional medicine, chose to advocate an alternate therapy.

"A certain gentleman has attacked my post and my intentions with rather strong words. Said gentleman is a Doctor too. I have no doubt that he knows more than I do. And I am quite sure his intentions were noble. It would have been kind and compassionate of him had he not been so provocative with his words.



Especially the bit where he suggests I should be thrown in prison. Never

mind. I suppose it goes with the territory of being a celebrity. I posted as

someone who needs medical treatments and not as a celebrity. And I certainly am not making any money from the post nor endorsing anyone. I was merely suggesting a treatment as an option after undergoing it myself, for others who may be looking for options because conventional medicine isn't working for them. Especially more affordable options."

On her medical ideas Samantha said it would have been better had The Liver Doc debated the same with her doctor rather than targeting her. "We cannot just give up when medicines aren't working. I certainly wasn't ready to give up... Coming back to the topic of the said gentleman Doctor, it would have been nice had he politely invited my Doctor, whom I have tagged in my post, rather

than go after me. I would have loved to have learnt from that debate and discussion between two highly qualified professionals.

"And as far as sharing information about the treatments that have helped my health, I shall be more careful as my intentions are only to help others. Not to harm anyone. I've had so many well meaning people suggesting ayurveda, homeopathy, acupuncture, Tibetan medicine, pranik healing etc. I heard them all out. I was merely doing something similar. Sharing something that worked for me, as an option. And I know many of us dealing with health issues need that help, especially given how overwhelming it is when every option has qualified people who are so certainly sure of their polar opposite

opinions. Both sides, for and against every treatment, are both so sure and persuasive. It's difficult to navigate these and find good help," she added.

In an interview with agency, Dr Rituja Ugalmugle, Internal Medicine, Wockhardt Hospitals, Mumbai, said, "Both hydrogen peroxide and distilled water nebulization come with potential risks. Hydrogen peroxide is generally not recommended for nebulization due to its potential to cause oxidative stress, mucosal irritation, and other serious respiratory issues. Distilled water, while safer than hydrogen peroxide, can still pose risks if used inappropriately. Normal saline remains the preferred choice for nebulization due to its safety profile and compatibility with the body's electrolyte balance."



## India's defence production hits record high of nearly Rs 1.27 lakh crore in 2023-24: Defence Ministry

Defence exports also touched record high of Rs 21,083 crore in FY 2023-24, reflecting a growth of 32.5 per cent

NEW DELHI, Jul 5 (Agencies): India's annual defence production has hit a record high of approximately Rs 1.27 lakh crore in 2023-24, with the Make in India programme crossing new milestones, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Friday.

The value of defence production in FY 2023-24 was Rs 1,08,684 crore, it added.

In a post on X, Singh also said that the government is committed to creating a more conducive regime for developing India as a leading global defence manufacturing hub.

"The Ministry of Defence has achieved the highest-ever growth in indigenous defence production in value terms during financial year (FY) 2023-24, on the back of successful implementation of the policies and initiatives of the government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, focussing on achieving 'Aatmanirbharta'," the defence ministry said in a statement on Friday.

The annual defence production has hit a record high of approximately Rs 1.27 lakh crore in 2023-24, it said.

"As per the data received



from all Defence Public Sector undertakings (DPSUs), other PSUs manufacturing defence items and private companies, the value of defence production in the country has gone up to a record-high figure, i.e., Rs 1,26,887 crore, reflecting a growth of 16.7 per cent over the defence production of the previous financial year," the statement said.

Singh congratulated the Indian industry, including defence public sector undertakings and other public sector undertakings manufacturing defence items, and the private industry for the feat.

"The Make in India programme is crossing new milestones, year after year, under the leadership of PM Shri @narendramodi," he said.

"India has registered the highest ever growth in the value of defence production in 2023-24. The value of production has reached to Rs. 1,26,887 crore in 2023-24 which is 16.8 per cent higher than the value of production of previous financial year," he wrote on X.

The Defence Ministry said that of "the total value of production (VoP) in 2023-24, about 79.2 per cent has been contributed by DPSUs/other PSUs and 20.8

per cent by the private sector".

The data shows that in terms of absolute value, both DPSUs/PSUs and private sector have recorded a steady growth in defence production, the statement said.

The feat has been achieved due to the policy reforms and initiatives and ease of doing business brought in by the government in the last 10 years with focus on attaining self-reliance, the ministry said.

"The indigenisation efforts have been pursued aggressively on a sustained basis, that resulted in the highest ever VoP. Moreover, the spiralling defence exports have contributed tremendously to the overall growth in the indigenous defence production," the statement said.

Defence exports touched a record high of Rs 21,083 crore in FY 2023-24, reflecting a growth of 32.5 per cent over the last fiscal when the figure was Rs 15,920 crore, it added.

In the last five years (since 2019-20), the value of defence production has been increasing steadily, and grown by over 60 per cent, the statement said and also shared year-wise data in this period.

## Rahul Gandhi meets family members of stampede victims in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras



HATHRAS/ALIGARH (UP), Jul 5 (Agencies): Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Friday met the family members of the victims of the stampede that killed over 100 people in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras.

Before meeting family members in Hathras, Gandhi made a stop at Aligarh and met the kin of victims from the district.

Gandhi left from Delhi early morning on Friday by road for Hathras and was accompanied by state Congress chief Ajay Rai, state Congress in-charge Avinash Pande, party spokesperson Supriya Shrinete and other office bearers.

A total of 121 people,

mostly women, died in a stampede at self-styled godman Baba Bhole's satsang in Hathras on Tuesday.

In Aligarh, the Congress leader was seen interacting with the family members of the victims of the Hathras stampede.

Rai told agency that Gandhi left Delhi around 5.10 am. He reached Pilakhna village in Aligarh around 7.15 am.

Earlier, Rai told agency that Rahul Gandhi will first make a condolence visit at Pilakhna in Aligarh and will later meet the families of the victims at Green Park and Vibhav Nagar near Navipur Khurd in Hathras.

Monu, a family member of the deceased, when

asked about's Gandhi visit, said, "He also said that he will try his best to help (us), and will talk to the government as his party is not in power."

Khusboo, who had lost her mother, said that she would get help.

Another woman who lost her sister-in-law in the stampede told reporters, "He (Rahul Gandhi) told us that the (Congress) party will help us, and assured us help. He also inquired from us how it (the incident) took place."

She also said that there was laxity in treatment given to the victims, and added that they could have survived.

Congress MP from Saharanpur Imran Masood were also present where Gandhi met the families of victims.

The Uttar Pradesh government on Wednesday formed a three-member judicial commission headed by a retired high court judge to probe the Hathras tragedy, looking also into the possibility that a conspiracy was behind the stampede.

## BJP flays TMC MP Mahua Moitra over her remarks against NCW chief

NEW DELHI, Jul 5 (Agencies): The BJP on Friday flayed TMC MP Mahua Moitra over her comments against NCW chief Rekha Sharma and demanded that she be "sacked" from her party.

This came a day after the TMC, commenting on a video posted on X showing the NCW chairperson's arrival at the site of a stampede that recently took place in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras, wrote, "She is too busy holding up her boss's pajamas".

Reacting sharply, BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla termed Moitra's comment on the microblogging site as "extremely indecent, objectionable and shameful", and said this is the "true face" of the TMC and the opposition parties' INDIA bloc.

"MP Mahua Moitra who justified and remained silent during Sandeshkhali, Chopra Talibani flogging, silent on Swati Maliwal now makes a disgusting comment at a woman that too the NCW Chief," he charged.

Posting a screenshot of Moitra's comment on X against the NCW chief, the BJP spokesperson demanded that she should be sacked by the TMC.

The BJP spokesperson also targeted the Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) over the TMC MP's comment and asked, "Will Priyanka Vadra, Rahul Gandhi, (Mallikarjun) Kharge ji, Sonia Gandhi, Priyanka Chaturvedi, AAP call this out?"

"Will Mamata Didi act on her? Nope, just like they remained silent on Sandeshkhali and (flogging of a couple) in Chopra (West Bengal)," he added.

## CM Chandrababu Naidu meets FM Sitharaman, seeks financial aid for debt-ridden Andhra Pradesh

NEW DELHI, Jul 5 (Agencies): Ahead of the Union Budget presentation, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Friday met Union Finance Minister Nirmla Sitharaman, pressing for enhanced financial support to the debt-burdened state.

Sources said Naidu, during the meeting in North Block, highlighted various ongoing projects in Andhra Pradesh that require urgent central assistance.

"The CM presented a detailed memorandum outlining the state's financial requirements and the rationale behind the demand for increased allocation," the sources added.

TDP ministers at the Centre were present during the meeting.

According to the state govern-



ment data, the public debt of Andhra Pradesh has increased from 31.02 per cent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) in 2019-20 to 33.32 per cent in 2023-24 fiscal, indicating deterioration in the fiscal health of the state in the last five years.

Key among Naidu's demands

were funds for the Polavaram irrigation project, special assistance for backward regions, and support for the development of the new capital, Amaravati.

The chief minister also sought resolution of pending issues stemming from the bifurcation of the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh.

The meeting assumes significance as it comes just weeks before the presentation of the Union Budget 2024-25.

The sources indicated that Sitharaman gave a patient hearing to Naidu's concerns and gave an assurance that she will look into Andhra Pradesh's demands within the broader fiscal constraints.

Naidu has been vocal about the state's financial distress and sought increased central support to tide over the fiscal challenges, when he met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several Union Ministers on Thursday.

The Naidu-led Telugu Desam Party is a crucial partner of the NDA with its 16 Lok Sabha MPs supporting the Narendra Modi-led government.

## 'Education Ministry sabotaging education of children': Congress slams Centre over delay in publishing Class 6 textbooks

NEW DELHI, Jul 5 (Agencies): The Congress on Friday slammed the Centre over the delay in publishing new Class 6 textbooks, alleging the Education Ministry is "sabotaging" the education of children.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh hit out at the government over the issue, saying that either the "rot runs deep", or the incompetence scales new heights everyday.

In a post on X, he said, "After sabotaging the examination process through the incompetent National Testing Authority, the non-biological PM's Education Ministry is sabotaging the education of our children."

"Even as the school year has begun, the NCERT - the National (read Nagpur) Council of Educational Research and Training - has failed to publish new textbooks for Science, Mathematics, and Social Sciences for Class 6 students," Ramesh said.

The textbooks themselves have not been finalised by the National Syllabus and Teaching Learning Material Committee (NSTC), he said.

Ramesh pointed out that printing will take another 10 to 15 days.

Officials expect a delay of two months before they can make new books available to students, he claimed.

"Either the rot runs deep, or the incom-



petence scales new heights everyday!" Ramesh said.

His remarks come a day after Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan reviewed the development of school textbooks in accordance with the New Curriculum Framework (NCF) at a meeting here.

The meeting came in the backdrop of a delay in the publication of Class 6 textbooks that

were supposed to be taught from April and are yet to hit the market.

The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) had earlier announced that new textbooks for Classes 3 and 6 will be introduced from the 2024-25 academic session.

"For the academic year 2024-25, new and engaging textbooks will be introduced in Classes

3 and 6. The textbook development work is in the final phase and nine textbooks for Grades 3 and 6 are already available. The remaining eight will be available very soon," a senior Ministry of Education (MoE) official said.

The NCERT had an initial aim of releasing the new textbooks based on the NCF 2023 only for Classes 3 and 6 this year. While the textbooks for Class 3 are available in the market, those for Class 6 have been delayed.

It was only this week that the NCERT released new English and Hindi textbooks for Class 6 in the middle of the academic session.

## Man, two sons among 5 dead after inhaling suspected toxic gas inside well in Chhattisgarh's Janjgir-Champa

JANJGIR-CHAMPA, Jul 5 (Agencies): Five people, including a man and his two sons, died due to suspected inhalation of poisonous gas inside a well in Chhattisgarh's Janjgir-Champa district on Friday, police said.

The incident occurred in the morning in Kikirda village under the Birra police station area. A team from the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) has been engaged to fish out the bodies from the well, they said.

The deceased have been identified as Ramchandra Jaiswal (60), Ramesh Patel (50), his two sons Rajendra Patel (20) and Jitendra Patel (25), and Tikeswar Chandra (25), Inspector General of Police (Bilaspur Range) Sanjeev Shukla said.

As per preliminary information, Jaiswal entered the well on the premises of his house to take out a wooden strip after it fell into it. When he fainted, his wife shouted for help following which three others from the Patel family in the neighbourhood entered the water

body, he said. When none came out, Chandra entered the well but he also became unconscious, prompting locals to alert the police, the official said.

The "ring" well appears to be deep and has water at the bottom. The SDRF team is trying to take out the bodies, another police official said.

Prima facie it seems that they died after inhaling some poisonous gas inside the well. However, a forensic team has reached the spot and the exact cause of death will be known once the bodies are retrieved from the well, he said, adding that a probe is under way.

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai expressed grief over the incident.

In a post in Hindi on X, CM Sai wrote, "The news of the death of 5 villagers in an accident in a well in Kikirda village of Janjgir is extremely tragic. I pray to God to rest the departed souls in peace and give strength to the bereaved families to bear this immense loss. Om Shanti."

## Rajasthan family kills woman, burns her body for marrying against their wish

JHALAWAR, Jul 5 (Agencies): A 24-year-old woman in Rajasthan's Jhalawar was killed by her own family for marrying a man of her choice.

According to the details, the woman was abducted by her family members in front of her husband.

She was later killed, and her body was burnt at a cremation ground. Investigations into the case revealed the woman had married one Ravi Bheel against her family's wishes.

The couple stayed at different locations to escape the wrath of



their family members.

The woman was abducted after her family members received information that the couple would be visiting a bank in a Madhya Pradesh village.

Her body was burnt while her husband approached the police to

file a complaint.

The woman's body was more than 80 per cent burnt by the time the police reached the spot.

Her family members fled the spot. The woman's burnt remains were sent to the forensics for further investigation.



## Keir Starmer to be new UK PM; Rishi Sunak says 'he's sorry for defeat'

*A glum Sunak conceded defeat and said he had called Starmer to congratulate him on his victory.*

LONDON, Jul 5 (Agencies): Keir Starmer vowed to bring change to Britain as its next prime minister after his Labour Party surged to a landslide victory in a parliamentary election on Friday, ending 14 years of often tumultuous Conservative government.

The centre-left Labour won a massive majority in the 650-seat parliament with Rishi Sunak's Conservatives suffering the worst performance in the party's long history as voters punished them for a cost of living crisis, failing public services, and a series of scandals.

"We did it," Starmer said in a victory speech. "Change begins now ... We said we would end the chaos, and we will, we said we would turn the page, and we have. Today, we start the next chapter, begin the work of change, the mission of national renewal and start to rebuild our country." With about a dozen results still to come, Labour had won 410 seats, the Conservatives 117 and the centrist Liberal Democrats 70 - their best ever performance.

About 250 Conservative lawmakers were ousted in the crushing defeat, including a record number of senior ministers and former Prime Minister Liz Truss.

A glum Sunak conceded defeat and said he had called Starmer to congratulate him on his victory.

"Today power will change hands in a peaceful and orderly manner, with goodwill on all sides," Sunak said. "There is much to learn and reflect on and I take responsibility for the loss to the many good hardworking Conservative candidates ... I am sorry."

Despite his convincing victory, polls have suggested there is little enthusiasm for Starmer or his party. Thanks to the quirk of Britain's first past the post system, Labour's triumph looked set to be achieved with



fewer votes than in both 2017 and 2019 - the latter its worst electoral showing for 84 years.

Starmer also comes to power at a time when the country is facing a series of daunting challenges.

Britain's tax burden is set to hit its highest since just after World War Two, net debt is almost equivalent to annual economic output, living standards have fallen, and public services are creaking, especially the much cherished National Health Service which has been dogged by strikes.

He has already had to scale back some of Labour's more ambitious plans, such as its flagship green spending pledges, while he has promised not to raise taxes for "working people".

"I don't promise you it will be easy," Starmer said. "Changing a country is not like flicking a switch. It's hard work. Patient, determined, work, and we will have to get moving immediately."

### RISE OF REFORM

Much of the heavy damage to the Conservative support was inflicted by the right-wing Reform UK party, headed by Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage, who had campaigned strongly on curbing immigration.

Starmer has promised to scrap the Conservative's controversial policy of sending asylum seekers to Rwanda, but with migration a key electoral issue, he will be under pressure himself to find a way to stop tens of thou-

sands of people arriving across the Channel from France on small boats.

Within the Conservative Party, the recriminations and debate over its future direction began immediately, with some saying its failure stemmed from abandoning the centre ground while others argued Reform had won over voters who felt the party had deserted its roots.

Reform has captured four seats, with Farage himself finally being elected to parliament at his eighth attempt, and won more than 4 million votes, often taking more than the Conservatives across swathes of the country.

"There is a massive gap on the centre right of British politics and my job is to fill it, and that's exactly what I'm going to do," a triumphant Farage said. "Believe me folks, this is just the first step of something that is going to stun all of you."

The growth in support for a right-wing alternative echoed recent similar results in Europe, where the far right have been surging.

But, unlike France where Marine Le Pen's National Rally party made historic gains in an election last Sunday, overall the British public has plumped for a centre-left party to bring about change.

Starmer has promised to improve relations with the European Union to resolve issues created by Britain's split from the bloc.

However, despite opposing Brexit, rejoining the EU is not on the table.

He may also have to work with Donald Trump in the United States if he wins November's presidential election. Trump has already sent congratulations to his friend and supporter Farage, via his social media platform Truth Social.

While he has promised to bring change domestically, Starmer has vowed to continue London's unequivocal support for Ukraine in its war against Russia. On many foreign issues, his policies are similar to Sunak's.

### TURNAROUND

The election victory represents an incredible turnaround for Starmer and Labour, which critics and supporters said was facing an existential crisis just three years ago when it appeared to have lost its way after its 2019 drubbing.

A series of Conservative scandals - most notably revelations of parties in Downing Street during COVID lockdowns - undermined then prime minister Boris Johnson and its commanding poll lead evaporated.

Truss' disastrous six-week premiership, which followed Johnson being forced out at the end of 2022, cemented the decline, and Sunak was unable to make any dent in Labour's now commanding poll lead.

Sunak stunned Westminster and many in his own party by calling the election earlier than he needed to while trailing badly in the polls, and his campaign then proved a disaster.

"We deserved to lose. The Conservative Party just appears exhausted and out of ideas," Ed Costello, the chairman of the Grassroots Conservatives organisation, which represents rank-and-file members, told agency.

"But it is not all Rishi Sunak's fault. It is Boris Johnson and Liz Truss that have led the party to disaster. Rishi Sunak is just the fall guy."

## Iran votes in Presidential runoff amidst public apathy, regional tensions



DUBAI, Jul 5 (Agencies): Iranians began voting Friday in a runoff election to replace the late President Ebrahim Raisi, killed in a helicopter crash last month, as public apathy has become pervasive in the Islamic Republic after years of economic woes, mass protests and tensions in the Middle East.

Voters face a choice between the hard-line former nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili and Masoud Pezeshkian, a heart surgeon and longtime parliament member who has allied himself with moderates and reformists within Iran's Shiite theocracy.

An initial round of voting on June 28 saw no candidate get over 50% of the vote, forcing the runoff. It also saw the lowest turnout ever for an Iranian election, leaving turnout Friday a major question.

There have been calls for a boycott, including from imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize laureate Narges Mohammadi, though potential voters in Iran appear to have made the decision not to participate last week on their own as there's no widely accepted opposition movement operating within or outside of the country.

State television broadcast images of modest lines at select polling places around the country as polls opened Friday.

As has been the case since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, women and those calling for radical change have been barred from the ballot while the vote itself will have no oversight from internationally recognized monitors.

The voting comes as wider tensions have gripped the Middle East over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. In April, Iran launched its first-ever direct attack on Israel over the war in Gaza, while militia groups that Tehran arms in the region — such as the Lebanese Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthis rebels — are engaged in the fighting and have escalated their attacks.

Meanwhile, Iran continues to enrich uranium at near weapons-grade levels and maintains a stockpile large enough to build — should it choose to do so — several nuclear weapons. Its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, reached by officials now backing

Pezeshkian, collapsed in 2018 after then-President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from the accord. In the time since hard-liners have taken control of all levers of power within Iran's government.

While Iran's 85-year-old Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has the final say on all matters of state, presidents can bend the country's policies toward confrontation or negotiation with the West.

Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi, who is in charge of overseeing the election, announced all the polls had opened at 8 a.m. local time.

Khamenei cast one of the election's first votes from his residence, and television cameras and photographers captured him dropping the ballot into the box.

"I have heard that people's enthusiasm is more than before," Khamenei said. "God willing, people vote and choose the best" candidate.

However, Khamenei on Wednesday said that those who didn't vote last week weren't against the country's Shiite theocracy.

"There are reasons behind this matter which should be examined by sociologists and those involved in politics," he said.

More than 61 million Iranians over the age of 18 are eligible to vote, with about 18 million of them between 18 to 30. Elections are scheduled to end at 6 p.m. local but traditionally get extended until midnight to boost participation.

Friday's election marks only Iran's second presidential runoff since 1979. The first came in 2005 when hard-liner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad bested former President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. Under Ahmadinejad, Iran faced international sanctions over its advancing nuclear program, as well as the 2009 Green Movement protests and the crackdown that smashed them.

Pezeshkian's supporters have been warning Jalili will bring a "Taliban"-style government to Tehran, while Jalili has criticised Pezeshkian for running a campaign of fear-mongering.

The 63-year-old Raisi died in the May 19 helicopter crash that also killed the country's foreign minister and others. He was seen as a protégé of Khamenei and a potential successor as supreme leader. Still, many knew him for his involvement in the mass executions that Iran conducted in 1988, and for his role in the bloody crackdowns on dissent that followed protests over the 2022 death of Mahsa Amini, a young woman detained by police over allegedly improperly wearing the mandatory headscarf, or hijab.

## Liz Truss, former UK Prime Minister, loses her seat in general elections

LONDON, Jul 5 (Agencies): Former British prime minister Liz Truss, who became the country's shortest-serving leader ever when she sparked a bond market meltdown and a collapse in sterling, lost her parliamentary seat in the election on Friday.

Truss secured 11,217 votes in her South West Norfolk constituency in eastern England, behind 11,847 votes for Labour candidate Terry Jermy.

Taking over from the scandal-ridden premiership of Boris Johnson, Truss, 48, was forced to announce her resignation after just 44 days when her unfunded tax



cuts sparked financial market turmoil, raising the cost of mortgages for homeowners already in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis.

Lampooned in the media - one tabloid newspaper asked in the dying days of her premiership whether she

would last longer than a supermarket lettuce - Truss had become synonymous for many voters with the chaos and failures of Conservative government.

She has, however, remained an influential voice among right-wing lawmakers in the party.

## Pakistan's Punjab to ban social media platforms for 6 days during Muharram to control 'hate material'

LAHORE, Jul 5 (Agencies): After blocking X, formerly Twitter, for over four months, the government in Pakistan's Punjab province is now set to ban all social media platforms -- YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok -- for six days between July 13 and 18, citing the need to control "hate material" during the Islamic month of Muharram.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's cabinet committee on law and order has recommended banning of all social media platforms -- YouTube, X, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and



TikTok, among others -- during 6th to 11th day of Muharram (July 13-18) in Punjab, a province of over 120 million people, to "control hate

material, misinformation to avoid sectarian violence", according to a notification issued here late Thursday night.

The Punjab govern-

ment of Maryam Nawaz has also requested her uncle Shehbaz Sharif's government at the Centre to notify the suspension of all social media platforms on internet for six days (July 13-18).

Pakistan Army Chief Gen Asim Munir has already declared social media a "vicious media" and underscored the need to fight what he called "digital terrorism".

Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, who also holds the portfolio of foreign minister, recently called for placing a complete ban on social media.

The Shehbaz govern-

ment had shut down X in last February following allegations of change of general election results by the Election Commission of Pakistan, apparently on the order of the military establishment to stop Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's jailed founder Imran Khan from coming to power.

Both the military and the government were receiving backlash on social media since the ouster of former prime minister Imran Khan through a no-confidence motion in April 2022.

The government has arrested dozens of social media activists of Khan's party since then.

## Taiwan Urges China To Avoid Escalation Amid Renewed Military Activity

TAIPEI, Jul 5 (Agencies): Taiwan on Friday reported renewed Chinese military activity nearby with another "combat patrol" as the government called on Beijing not to escalate tensions after the seizure of a Taiwanese fishing boat.

China, which views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, has stepped up its pressure over the past four years, both militarily and politically.

On Tuesday, Chinese officials boarded and detained a Taiwanese fishing boat for ille-

gally operating in the country's waters, in what a senior Taiwan official said may be an act of psychological warfare.

Taiwan's defence ministry said that starting just before 7 a.m. (2300 GMT) on Friday, it had detected 26 Chinese military aircraft, including J-16 fighters, carrying out a "joint combat readiness patrol" with Chinese warships.

The Chinese aircraft flew into airspace to the north, centre and southern part of Taiwan, the ministry said.

Taiwan has detected at least

127 Chinese military aircraft operating near the island since the start of this month.

China's defence ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Speaking to reporters earlier on Friday, Taiwan Premier Cho Jung-tai said fishermen should raise their alert level and not do anything that could be considered illegal.

"At the same time, I also want to ask the Chinese side not to escalate with any the use of any excessive measures, because

this can easily cause tension and unnecessary confrontation which is extremely unnecessary," he added.

China says the root cause of its problems with Taiwan is what Beijing views as the "separatist" views of new President Lai Ching-te.

China staged war games shortly after Lai took office in May, and has rebuffed his repeated calls for talks.

Lai rejects China's sovereignty claims, saying only Taiwan's people can decide their future.

## Nestle's French Unit Faces Charges In Pizza Contamination Case



PARIS, Jul 5 (Agencies): Nestle's French subsidiary has been charged in a case involving contaminated pizzas that are suspected of having led to

the death of two children, the company said Friday.

The unit that manages the factory in the north of France that made the Buitoni-branded pizzas

as well as Nestle France were indicted this week, the company said in a statement, without providing details of the charges.

French investigative magistrates opened a probe in May 2022 for involuntary manslaughter and unintentional injuries after several customers fell sick from eating pizzas containing E.coli bacteria.



## SSP Kishtwar reviews security scenario, holds PCPG meeting

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, July 5: SSP Kishtwar, Abdul Qayoom, visited Palmar on Friday to review the security scenario and conduct comprehensive security arrangements for maintaining peace and security in the region. As part of the visit, a Police-Community Partnership Group (PCPG) meeting was held at Govt. Higher Secondary School Bhata. This initiative aimed to strengthen collaboration between the police and the community, with the participation of school staff, DDC members, prominent



citizens, and public representatives. In a significant gesture, SSP Kishtwar distributed 50 chairs to the school under the J&K Police's

Civic Action Programme. This effort is designed to enhance the educational infrastructure and foster positive relations between the community

and the police.

During the meeting, SSP Kishtwar engaged with local residents, addressing their concerns and assuring them that issues related to police will be prioritized, while matters concerning civil administration will be taken up with the relevant departments for prompt resolution. In his address, SSP Kishtwar encouraged students to set clear goals and work diligently to achieve them. He emphasized the J&K Police's commitment to providing career counseling and support, especially for students

from remote areas. He also urged students to use social media constructively and to avoid drug use. SSP Kishtwar advised the public and students, including the school staff, to avoid involvement in criminal or subversive activities. He assured them of the District Police Kishtwar's ongoing support whenever needed. The community expressed appreciation for the initiative and requested more such events, particularly in remote areas, to foster stronger relationships between the police and the public.

## DIG Jammu flags off Bharat Darshan tour of Samba students

Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: The Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG), JKS Range, Dr. Sunil Gupta, on Friday flagged off the Bharat Darshan Tour for 75 students from various parts of District Samba this morning at Gulshan Ground, Jammu. This tour has been organized by the Zonal Police Headquarters, Jammu, under the Civic Action Programme (CAP). The students, accompanied by two caretakers from District Samba, will

embark on an enriching journey from Jammu to Delhi, and then from Delhi to Mumbai by air. The Bharat Darshan Tour Programme is scheduled from July 5 to 9, 2024. Speaking at the flag-off ceremony, Dr. Sunil Gupta emphasized the significance of the Civic Action Programme, which aims to bridge the gap between the police and the public, especially the youth, by engaging them in constructive activities. This initiative reflects the commitment of the

Jammu and Kashmir Police to the welfare and development of the younger generation, he said. The tour promises to be an educational and memorable experience for the participants, providing them with a unique opportunity to explore the rich cultural tapestry of the nation, DIG said. During the flag off ceremony SSP Jammu Vinod Kumar, S.O to ADGP Jammu Zone Vishal Manhas, and other officers were present on the occasion.

## Vishal Khatri Sabha organizes 23rd Bhandara to mark Ashadha Amavasya

Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: Known as Amvasai, Ashadha Amavasya today celebrated on the new moon day of the Hindu month of Ashadha dedicated to honouring and remembering ancestors through sacred rituals. To mark the occasion, Vishal Khatri Sabha on Friday organized 23rd Bhandara at Utterveni. On this day, devotees traditionally take holy dips in revered water bodies to purify themselves. They also perform rites to pay homage to their forebears. Apart from this, Ashadha Amavasya is an auspicious occasion for worshipping deities such as Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva. Speaking on the significance of day, Vishal Khatri Sabha J&K President Devender Seth said that this day marks special significance for Hindus to honour ancestors. Under this, devotees perform various rituals including Pitru Tarpan, Pind Daan, and organizing Gayatri Path for the salvation of departed souls. It is considered ideal time to take a holy bath in the Ganga river. Devotees often invite



priests and Brahmins to their homes, offering them sattvik food, clothes, and dakshina in the name of their ancestors. Various religious and spiritual activities are performed on Ashadha Amavasya. It is believed that worshipping and performing rituals on this day brings immense benefits. Performing rituals and donating to Brahmins and needy people on Ashadha Amavasya is believed to liberate ancestors from the cycle of birth and death and grant them salvation, added Seth.

Seth observed that in Sanatan Dharma, the tradition of donation has been practiced for centuries. Religious texts and scriptures emphasize the importance of donation as an integral part of human life. People donate on special days for mental peace, fulfillment of desires, earning virtues, overcoming planetary defects, and receiving the blessings of God. However, the virtue of donation is attained only when it is given to a deserving person at the right time and with a sincere heart, added Seth.

## ACD, CPO, SDM attend NITI Aayog's Sampoornta Abhiyan

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, July 5: The Sampoornta Abhiyan, observed from July 4 to September 30 as part of the Aspirational Block Programme (ABP) under the aegis of the NITI Aayog, was launched in District Kishtwar's far flung Marwah CD block, on Thursday with a high note under the overall supervision of Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Dr. Devansh Yadav. An impressive inaugural event was organized by the District and Local Administration under the close guidance of Nodal Officer, Sampoornta Abhiyan, ACD Kishtwar Phulail Singh here at HSS Yourdu of Aspirational Block (AB) Marwah which witnessed the participation of Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Kishtwar Shahnawaz Bali, SDM Marwah Mohd Ashraf, Consultant from NITI Aayog, block level officers of RDD, Health, Education, ICDS, Agriculture & Allied sectors, the general public, and other stakeholders. The inaugural ceremony started with the administration of Sampoornta pledge to the officers, officials and participants by the consultant from



NITI Aayog. During the event, the Officers inspected Sampoornta stalls, erected by concerned departments at the venue disseminating awareness among the masses about the Aspirational Block Programme and the saturation of the various key performance indicators (KPIs) under Smpoornta Abhiyan focussed to bridge the gap in development in rural areas. A mega marathon was also organized by the Health Department to inform the public about the campaign and aware masses about health sectors initiatives including the targets under the nutritional deficiencies among children and women and early detection of life threatening diseases. A free medical and screening camp for hypertension and diabetes besides the free test

camp were also organised during the programme at the Venue. About 3000 Free Sanitary pads were distributed among the Adult girl students of HSS Yourdu and other schools in spirit with the physical hygiene of girls under the KPI. Officers and resource persons of NITI Aayog and the stakeholder departments organized performances to create awareness about the programme. Also the Anganwadi workers ASHAs, and SHG members were sensitized to the action plan to achieve saturation of KPIs. The participants were given a detailed outline about the 3 month long programme, designed to ensure intensive and focused attainment of six key performance indicators across health, agriculture, social development, and nutrition in the

aspirational block within three months. At the inaugural event ACD Kishtwar, CPO Kishtwar and SDM Marwah urged the concerned departments, PRI members, and the public to coordinate and cooperate for 100 percent saturation of the six key performance indicators. The CPO, ACD and SDM also visited various schools in the AB Marwah to assess their condition. As part of the launch programme, a special gram sabha was organized to deliberate on the challenges, targets, and action plans to be pursued by all concerned and monitored at all levels. A resolution was passed by the Gram Sabha, with the CPO, ACD Kishtwar and SDM Marwah and other concerned officials attending the event. ACD Kishtwar/Nodal

Officer spoke about the ABP, emphasizing a three-tier model of convergence, collaboration, and competition. He stated, "Initiated by NITI Aayog, campaign will focus on achieving saturation in few selected indicators across targeted districts and blocks. By converging existing schemes, defining clear outcomes, and implementing constant monitoring, the Sampoornta Abhiyan aims to bridge developmental gaps and bring about transformative changes, ensuring a brighter future for the nation's aspirational districts and blocks. The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) under 5 broad socio-economic themes are Health & Nutrition Education, Agriculture & Water Resources, Financial Inclusion, Skill Development and Infrastructure." He sought cooperation from the concerned departments/agencies and the public to achieve the set target of saturation by September 30. The launch programme concluded with a coordination meeting of all block-level officials to outline the detailed action plan for effective evaluation and monitoring.

## Saroori Urges Government to Conduct Overdue Census to Address Youth Grievances

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, July 5: Ghulam Mohammad Saroori, Vice Chairman of the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP), met with several deputations to address their grievances. During

the meeting, Saroori emphasized the urgent need for the government to conduct the overdue census, which was supposed to be completed in 2021. He pointed out that the lack of a recent census has left several families without essen-

tial ration cards and job cards. Saroori expressed concern over the last 13 years of government inaction, which has failed to provide justice to the young generation. He stressed that without the updated census, many

eligible young individuals have been unable to benefit from government schemes. Saroori mentioned specific programs like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and ration

provisions from the Consumer Affairs, Public Distribution (CAPD) department, which are crucial for the livelihood of many. He asserted, "With the census, lakhs of young people who fall under the criteria will be able to benefit from several government-launched

schemes." Saroori's call for action is rooted in the belief that updated demographic data will ensure that government resources and benefits reach those in need. Saroori urged the government to take concrete steps to address



the issues faced by the people, particularly the youth. He highlighted the importance of a proactive approach in resolving these matters to ensure equitable access to government schemes and resources for all eligible citizens.

### FROM PAGE 1

## Out on parole, Amritpal Singh, Engineer Rashid take oath as LS Members

source said. Singh, 31, and Rashid, 56, won the recent Lok Sabha elections from Khadoor Sahib in Punjab and Baramulla in Jammu and Kashmir, respectively, as independents while being incarcerated. They could not take oath as members of the 18th Lok Sabha on June 24 and 25 along with the other winning candidates. For taking oath, Rashid was granted a two-hour custody parole, excluding the travel time from Tihar to Parliament, and Singh a four-day custody parole, beginning July 5, in view of the travel from Assam to Delhi and back. Their parole orders stated that during their period of temporary release, they can neither speak to or address the media on any issue or make any statements. Their family members also cannot make a statement in any form of media. While Singh, a Khalistani sympathiser who heads the 'Waris Punjab De' outfit, has been allowed to meet his family in Delhi, Rashid's family had permission only to attend his oath taking. The parole for Rashid, who has been in jail since 2019 after his arrest in 2017, was granted by a court in Delhi and that of Singh by the district magistrate of Amritsar from where he was arrested in April 2023 for barging into a police station in February and clashing with police personnel in a bid to free

one of his aides from custody. Both Singh and Rashid are to be accompanied by security personnel at all times during their parole periods, the orders stated. The Delhi Police and Punjab Police were directed to coordinate with the secretary general of the Lok Sabha for procedures inside the Parliament complex. The name of Rashid, a former MLA, cropped up during the investigation of Kashmiri businessman Zahoor Watali, who the NIA had arrested for allegedly funding terrorist groups and separatists in the Kashmir valley. The NIA had filed a charge sheet against several individuals, including Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik, Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed and Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin in the case. Malik was awarded life imprisonment by a trial court in 2022 after he pleaded guilty to the charges. Singh styled himself after slain Khalistani militant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and is in jail along with nine of his associates under the National Security Act. **Speedy oil tanker falls into Jhelum river in Bandipora** The sleuths from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and Police have launched a search operation to trace the duo and get the tanker out from the river. However, it was not yet confirmed whether the oil of the tanker spilled into the river Jhelum also.

## New dates announced for NEET-PG 2024, exam to be held on August 11

Several meetings since then have been held with officials from the Union Health Ministry, National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS) along with its technical partner Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), National Medical Commission (NMC) and Cyber Cell officials to evaluate the "robustness" of the system for the conduct of the exam, sources said. The Ministry of Health had decided to undertake a thorough assessment of the robustness of processes of the NEET-PG entrance examination. The National Eligibility Entrance Test-Postgraduate (NEET-PG) entrance examination is conducted by NBEMS along with its technical partner TCS for medical students. **Srinagar ex-Mayor Junaid Mattu takes break from politics** years from 2018. In the recently concluded general elections, Apni Party candidates not only forfeited their deposits but also failed to secure a lead in any of the 36 Assembly segments in the two Lok Sabha seats. After the election debacle, Apni Party led by Altaf Bukhari, dissolved its frontal organisations, including youth and women's wings, last week.

## In fake encounter, former cop gets bail after 18 years in custody

His counsel told the Court that he has been in judicial custody for the past 18 years and has never come out on bail except for a few months. Considering the circumstances, the Court allowed the bail and said Lal be released immediately. "The applicant is to be released on bail forthwith upon furnishing personal bond of 50,000 and one surety of the like amount to the satisfaction of the Registrar Judicial," ordered the Court. The case against Lal and other police officials was initially registered at Sumbal Police Station in Kashmir valley where the alleged fake encounter took place in 2006. The trial against the cops was shifted to Jammu last year after the State did not "seriously oppose" the joint petition moved before the High Court by four accused including Lal. Senior Advocate Sunil Seth and advocate Shanum Gupta represented the accused. Deputy Advocate General PD Singh represented the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. **Begin preparations now for Assembly Polls: NC to Party Cadre** The reliable sources further revealed that the leaders were asked to start preparations for the upcoming assembly polls and they

were told not to wait for the formal notification with regard to the polls. Besides, the eight-member committee formed for preparing the manifesto for assembly polls have been asked to submit their report at the shortest possible time. "All the leaders present on the occasion put forth their views and demands with regard to their constituencies which they wanted to be mentioned in the manifesto," they said. The next meeting is expected to take place after two months in which the demands and suggestions raised will be given the final nod. **PW(R&B) deptt reshuffles incharge XENS** Division, Chatroo, while Shabir Ahmad Tak moves from PMGSY Division, Ganderbal, to PW(R&B) Division, Kulgam, where he will also hold the charge of Executive Engineer, PMGSY. **Hemant Soren, out on bail in money laundering case, takes oath as Jharkhand CM** Kalpana Soren, the Gandey MLA and wife of Soren, was also part of the delegation. Soren quit as the chief minister on January 31 shortly before his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate in the money laundering case. He walked out of jail on June 28 after the Jharkhand High Court granted him bail.



## What happened to Koo? Understanding the reasons behind untimely shutdown of X rival

NEW DELHI, July 5 (Agencies): Microblogging and social networking service Koo, which was touted as a desi alternative to X (Twitter), recently announced that it is discontinuing its services.

Co-founded by entrepreneurs Aprameya Radhakrishna and Mayank Bidawatka, Koo was launched in 2020 amid much fanfare and gained quick fame in the wake of a standoff between the Union government and X (then Twitter) over the platform's refusal to remove certain contents and block certain accounts. A slew of cabinet ministers, BJP leaders and Bollywood celebrities then joined Koo, giving the platform a much-needed push and increased visibility.

However, four years after it was launched, the founders announced that



they were shutting down Koo. The founders were forced to shut down the platform due to the funding winter. According to them, they needed five to six years of aggressive, long term and patient capital to make Koo a huge success.

Despite winning the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat App Innovation Challenge' in the Social category in 2020, and being ranked among the top 3 social media products in the

Asia-Pacific (APAC) region, Kood had been assailed by funding troubles. The company was forced to lay off 30 per cent of its workforce in April 2023 amid the fund crunch.

"It takes a lot to euthanize something you built with so much love," the founders said in a LinkedIn post, adding, "may be next time". They said they can and they will try to challenge global giants at their game.

Hesitant investors

According to the founders, they explored partnerships with multiple large internet companies, conglomerates and media houses, but these talks did not yield the desired results.

They said most of these organisations did not want to deal with user-generated content and "the wild nature of a social media company."

"While we would've liked to keep the app running, the cost of technology services to keep a social media app running is high and we've had to take this tough decision," they said.

They claimed that they were just months away from beating X in India in 2022 and "could have doubled down on that short term goal" if they had enough funding. The founders said they were hit by a prolonged fund-

ing winter, forcing them to tone down on their growth trajectory.

Koo could have become successful internationally if the market was favourable and they had enough funds.

"The funding winter got the better of us," they said.

"Social media is probably one of the toughest companies to build even with all resources available as you need to grow users to a significant scale before one thinks of revenue," they said.

The founders said they intended to democratize expression and help people connect with each other in their local languages, and built a product that was globally scalable in a fraction of the time that X did. They noted that X had superior systems algorithms and strong stakeholder-first philosophies.

## Randhawa plants saplings of fruit trees, advocates 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' as top priority

Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: Former Legislator and senior Bharatiya Janata Party leader Vikram Randhawa planted the saplings of fruit trees and also advocated 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' as top priority.

He planted the saplings in his industrial unit at Panchayat Khandwal in RS Pura Jammu South Assembly segment.

Residents and many others people were present on the occasion.

Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam, flagged during the Environment Day celebrations, urges people of the country and across the world to plant trees in the name of their mothers to celebrate both motherhood and the environment. The campaign also calls on mothers to post photographs of sowing the saplings along with their children on social media to spread awareness.

Prime Minister's Modi's latest 'Mann ki Baat' address where he spoke about the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam. "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam campaign flagged off by the Prime Minister recently will definitely be the main focus of my daily schedule," Randhawa said.

He lauded the PM for launching this meaningful campaign, which seeks to involve every citizen in environmental conservation efforts.

Randhawa said he would focus on taking forward the Prime Minister's initiative.

He emphasized that tree planting not only contributes to environmental preservation but also supports afforestation efforts.

Randhawa urged all residents of the state to join the 'Vriksharopan Mahabhiyan' and plant a tree in their mother's name. "I appeal to everyone to join this

campaign. Take a selfie with your family, including your mother. If your mother is not there, you can plant a sapling and take a selfie with her picture. Pictures can also be uploaded on the website designated under the campaign. This will inspire other people", Randhawa added.

He outlined the extensive campaign, which will involve planting various types of saplings across village panchayats, municipal bodies, parks, alongside roads, and in vacant spaces.

"This extensive campaign will involve carrying out plantations in village panchayats, municipal bodies, parks, alongside road. He also emphasized the importance of protecting the Trees after planting.

He assured that the government is fully committed to the campaign, which will proceed as planned.

## Tariff hikes on Chinese goods and Red Sea crisis are fuelling container shortages, impacting exporters

NEW DELHI, July 5 (Agencies): As European Union's 37.6 per cent tariffs on imports of Chinese Electric Vehicles (EVs) kick in from Friday, barely a month before US tariffs are slated to come into effect, India exporters as well as traders globally are hit by unprecedented container shortages.

At a review meeting in the Commerce Ministry last month, exporters brought up concerns of a sudden shortage of containers, pointing at structural weakness that has been hurting Indian goods exports since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shortages have also resurfaced as voyage time of ships has increased amid the ongoing Red Sea crisis and fresh trade tensions between the US and China. The Indian Express explains why Indian exporters are facing repeated shortages of basic infrastructure for trade.

Indian exporters are finding fewer containers for exports amid an increased demand for the steel boxes. This is primarily on account of the demand from Chinese exporters in the backdrop of fresh US and EU tariffs on products from China. In order to beat the steep US and EU tariffs, which in case of the US go up to as high as 100 per cent on Electric Vehicles (EVs) and 50 per cent on semiconductors that are set to come into effect on August 1, exporters are scrambling to ship as many items as possible. Due to the scale of trade between the US and China, container demand has gone

up leaving Indian exporters with fewer containers for exports. This has added to the already short supply due to the Red Sea crisis.

The Red Sea shipping route is still under blockade amid near-daily attacks targeting commercial vessels by Yemen's Houthis rebels that has slashed traffic through the route by 90 per cent compared to December last year as per US Defence Intelligence Agency report. Last month, a bulk carrier reportedly sank indicating escalation of tensions in the crucial maritime route. This has resulted in more ships taking the longer route via the Cape of Good Hope route and spending more time on the sea blocking a higher number of containers for reuse. The Red Sea crisis has also increased port congestion. Reuters reported that global port congestion has reached an 18-month high, with 60 per cent of ships waiting at anchor located in Asia.

Tariffs hikes have been a part and parcel of trade between the US and China for several years, especially beginning in the Donald Trump administration but shipping routes and containers did not have the impact as they are seen this time. One reason is that the US under Joe Biden not only kept the Trump era tariffs unchanged, he has targeted EV, the fastest growing traded item as per World Trade Organization (WTO). This urgency is displayed by Chinese traders also in the backdrop of significant over capacity of

EV items in China. But China is set to lose out on two major markets: the US and the European Union. To make matters worse, Canada is also mulling higher duty on Chinese EVs. Indonesia has also announced an import tariff of up to 200 per cent on a range of Chinese goods.

While the reasons for the ongoing container crunch may be different this time around, the root cause of such repeated concerns is India's limited capacity for container manufacturing and complete dependence on China for the steel boxes crucial for global goods trade. China is the largest exporter of containers and makes up for 95 per cent of the large steel boxes production globally. Much of the container manufacturing in China is done by a handful of highly subsidized state owned enterprises that has sparked security concerns in the US, EU as well as in India. Realizing high dependence on China for crucial port operation calls for domestic manufacturing of containers began after COVID-19. The US has initiated plans to de-risk its ports from over reliance on Chinese containers and cranes. India also began production after 2021.

The Indian Express had reported in 2021 that state-owned wagon manufacturer Braithwaite, and engineering major Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited had received an order from Container Corporation of India (CONCOR) to develop and produce 1000 containers each.

## BLKS presents mega musical play "Bam Bam Bhole"

Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: To promote the rich traditional culture of J&K & Sangam Tru art Production of Bhartiya Lok Sangeet Kala Sansthan presented Mega Cultural Performances for Amarnath pilgrims at, Durga Bhawan Jammu in its 440th Friday Series Musical Play "Bam Bam Bhole" in close coordination with Sangam



Tru Art production. The Program was inaugurated by the Chief Guest Dr. Anju Kumari Dogra, Govt. Health Department Jammu. Among the Guest of Honor present were Dr. Tara Singh Charak, Former Deputy Director, Health Department J&K Government. Among the Guest of Honor, Sh. V.K. Magotra, former Regional Director, Directorate of Field Publicity, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Romesh Chander, Advisor, Shavshat Art Gallery, & Mr. Mukesh Singh Senior Media Person. The Traditional folk culture of Jammu province and specially awareness items prepared on the theme on "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" & "Swatch Bharat", "Meri Matti Mera Desh" & "G-20" were presented. The items sung by the artists were "Shiv Satuti", "Shiv Nath Teri Mahima teen log gaye", "Kali Mata Bawe Basi", "Japu Tero Naam Japu Tero Naam", "Jai Jai Shiv Shanker", "Sukh Mai na koi mere Ram", "Mera Bholo Na Mane", "Shaher Shaher aur Gaon-Gaon main sab nain chhapat uthai hai", "Swachh Bharat Ho Swasth Bharat", etc. More than 2000 pilgrims came from the various parts of the country witnessed the program and highly appreciate. The above mentioned songs written by the Dr. M.L. Dogra Chairman and composed by Raju Bajgal, Music Instructor. The Song & Skits was recorded & uploaded online on Social Media for benefit of the peoples.

Earlier in his address of Dr. M.L. Dogra, chairman,

BLSKS welcome Amarnath Yatries at Jammu & highlighted the story of Amar Katha, the cave which was chosen by Bhole Shankar for narrating the secrets of immortality and creation of Universe to Maa Parvati ji. The story goes like this century ago Maa Parvati asked Shiv ji to let her know why and when He started wearing the beads of heads (Mund Mala). Bhole Shankar

replied whenever you are born I add one more head in my beads. Maa Parvati said, "my lord, my body is destroyed every time and I die again and again, but you are immortal. Please let me know the secret of this." Bhole Shankar replied that it is due to Amar Katha. Goddess Parvati listening to the story and she fell asleep, whose Shiva did not know. Lord Shiva continued to tell the story of being immortal. At that time, two white pigeons were listening to the story from Shivaji and were shouting groans in between. Shiva felt that Mata Parvati was listening to the story and the hunk was full of between. In this way both pigeons heard the whole story of being immortal. When the story ended, Shiva's attention turned towards Parvati, who was asleep and pigeons were benefited for Amar Katha.

Welcoming the dignitaries Mahesh Chander Kotwal, Secty BLSKS explained aims & objectives of the programme which have been assigned to the Sansthan for betterment of society in his key note address highlighted the various publicity and entertainment aspects of the song and drama division programs. The singers, musician and actors who performed were K.K. Joshi, Raju Bajgal, Mukesh Singh, Rajni Gupta, Afroz aalam, Kamla Devi, Rajeev Salotra, Sanjeev Kumar Sodhi, Kuldeep Raj, Naiya Digra, Renu Bala many others presented the enthralled performance at last of the programme, Deepak Kumar Dogra presented vote of thanks for successful conduction of the programs.

## The digital transformation of India's kiranas: What next?

NEW DELHI, July 5 (Agencies): Local neighbourhood stores (mom-and-pop stores) have always been an important hub for community exchanges in India. With nearly 1.5 crore corner stores, locally known as Kiranas, across the country, they account for about three-fourths of India's consumer goods market as per various estimates. Local stores, often family-run, are a haven for Indian shoppers as they meet their emergency, fill-in, and stock-up requirements. They also evoke a sense of nostalgia and a yearning for familiarity.

Until a few years ago, and even today, a standard local store would be cramped with endless assortment of consumer goods. The store manager would pull down the shutters sharply at midnight and, after that, spend hours tallying the day's sales scribbled in his khata, or ledger. But things have changed, it is not uncommon to see pencils from the back of the ear disappear and compact POS machines taking their place; handwritten receipts are quickly giving way to printed ones and digital notifications.

When the pandemic hit, the world around us turned upside down. Amidst on-ground restrictions, a lot of shutters were down, but a transition was at work with lakhs of local stores thinking of going digital—by selling online or taking orders on social media apps, organising deliveries and taking payments through digital instruments. We saw tens of thousands of local stores from across India come online on Amazon to sustain and grow their business and they continue to do so. While many may have hesitated to pivot from the conventional ways of business at first, the situation accelerated a shift that would have arrived eventually.

In parallel, the digital payments landscape has undergone a dramatic transformation. The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has been a game-changer for digital payments in India and a precedent-setting innovation for the global fintech sector. According to the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), UPI transactions hit a staggering Rs 18.41 lakh crore in January 2024, marking a 42 per cent increase

year-on-year. In 2023, the platform saw 11,765 crore transactions worth Rs 182.25 lakh crore, reflecting a 59 per cent increase in volume and 45 per cent in value compared to 2022. The way customers shop and make shopping decisions has also transformed dramatically. They expect a seamless transition from one channel to the other with an experience that is personalised for them. To address this evolving customer behaviour, local stores—big and small—are already looking at a range of tech solutions. The government and other stakeholders are helping create an enabling ecosystem for technology adoption by local stores. By paying closer attention to customer behaviour, local stores can use digital tools to craft strategies that better cater to growing customer needs. And this is by no means a question of offline vs online. It is about the digitisation of dukaans in a way that they can operate across channels.

While the benefits of digitisation for local stores are well documented, the need to mesh physical experience with digital convenience cannot be exaggerated. Strengthening all customer touchpoints and breaking geographical barriers will help retailers meaningfully connect with customers, forge lasting relationships to build customer loyalty, and acquire new customers. By investing in systems where customers can order via the Internet, social media, or through an app, local stores can provide their customers with multiple avenues to return.

I was at a couple of retail industry events recently, and interestingly, the question on how to create the best strategies to serve customers in the world of online and offline in both the forums had the same answer—a combination of the two.



of India becoming a \$1 trillion digital economy by 2030. The retail sector itself is pegged to double to \$2 trillion in the next 8-10 years and notably, a lot of this growth will be powered by digitisation, whether it is e-commerce or integration of technology in stores. This means that local stores will need to be equipped to leverage technology and turn it into actionable insights.

Ultimately, it will be all about delivering better customer experiences. To help local stores trade confidently, there are ready-to-roll tech solutions available for inventory procurement, inventory management, credit access, payments, etc. They can choose to invest in either one or a host of these tech solutions to better manage cash flow. Many store owners have already taken the first step towards digitisation by adopting UPI or digital wallets.

So what next? Local stores must think holistically about their digital transformation journey. They can start by identifying business functions that have significant pain points that are critical for their survival and growth. While going online can be the starting point, focusing on emotional intelligence, and investing in plug-and-play tech can help them identify and solve customer concerns. These stores have the advantage of knowing their customers more deeply, and if they leverage technology to serve their customers and grow their business more, that will perhaps be the secret sauce.

In a nation of shopkeepers, local stores are the true unsung heroes of the Indian neighbourhood. To lean into the brave new world of digitisation, the customers will still be centre stage, and so will embracing technology. The big lesson? Think seamless customer experience, adopt digitisation.

Ab Digital Dukaan ka time hai!

The government of India has set a vision

## Truck drivers, co-drivers, helpers registration on E-shram portal held in Rajouri

Top News Report

RAJOURI, July 5: Office of the Assistant Labour Commissioner, Rajouri organized three days on spot registration and awareness camps at different locations of district Rajouri for registration of Truck drivers and allied workers on e-shram portal.

The initiative was taken on the directions of Labour Commissioner, Charandeep Singh and aims at safeguarding the rights and promoting welfare of the truck drivers.

The camps were held on 3rd, 4th and 5th of July

2024 at Bus stand Salani, ARTO Rajouri and Old Bus Stand Rajouri in compliance with the advisory issued by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

The camp was organized under the overall supervision of Assistant Labour Commissioner, Rajouri Pradyot Gupta who urged the drivers, cleaners and helpers of commercial vehicle registered in district Rajouri to get registered on e-shram portal either through self registration or through any CSC and take benefits of the registration.

He further stressed the

drivers that the registration on e-shram portal will facilitate the government in ensuring that unorganized workers including truck drivers can avail benefits of social security schemes such as Pardon Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojna (PM-JJB), Pardon Mantri Surkasha Bima Yojna (PM-SYM) etc. "Truck drivers are vulnerable section of the labour class and registration under e-shram will provide direct life insurance cover of Rs. 2 lakh and upto Rs. 1 lakh cover for temporary disability to the e-shram card holders as proposed", he added.



## 'Your inputs will help 2036 bid': PM Modi asks athletes to share observations on conduct of Paris Olympics

The upcoming Games will be held in France from July 26 to August 11

NEW DELHI, Jul 5 (Agencies): Confident that India's bid to host the 2036 Olympics will be successful, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has urged athletes bound for this month's Paris Games to share their views on the arrangements in the French capital to help the country's ambitious push to bring the showpiece here.

In an interaction with Paris-bound athletes, conducted both in person and online on Thursday, Modi said those travelling to the French capital would do the country a huge service by providing inputs



from their experience. "We are hoping to host the Olympics in 2036, it will help in creating a sporting atmosphere. Work is in progress to prepare infrastructure for it," he said in the

interaction, which was attended by the national men's hockey team, the shooting contingent, boxers and track-and-field stars such as Neeraj Chopra.

The interaction's com-

plete video was shared by Prime Minister's Office on Friday.

"I won't ask you to do anything in the middle of your events but when you are free, I would urge you to observe

the arrangements. Your inputs will help our bid for 2036. We will have an understanding on how to make sure that we are better-prepared," he added.

The upcoming Games will be held from July 26 to August 11 and India would be hoping to better its best ever tally of seven medals, including Chopra's historic javelin throw gold, achieved in the Tokyo Games. Over 100 Indian sportspersons have qualified for the Games, including an unprecedented 21 shooters, who would be aiming to end the medal drought of last two editions.

## T20 World Cup-winning captain Rohit Sharma's mother showers son with hugs and kisses in Mumbai; heart-warming video goes viral



MUMBAI, Jul 5 (Agencies): India's cricket captain Rohit Sharma was greeted by his parents, Gurunath and Purnima Sharma, upon his return to Mumbai on Thursday.

His mother could not contain her emotions. She repeatedly kissed and hugged her son in a moment that was beautifully captured by the media.

The touching reunion followed India's historic 2024 T20 World Cup win on July 4. After leading the team to victory, Rohit and the rest of the squad

found themselves stuck in Barbados due to a cyclone. They finally landed in Delhi to a rousing reception as several cricket fanatics came to the airport in the wee hours to get a glimpse of the World Champions. The celebratory atmosphere continued with a special breakfast meet hosted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. After the meeting, the Men in Blue boarded a special flight to Mumbai for an open bus victory parade, where fans lined the streets to cheer for their heroes.

## "No Place In Team If...": Ex-Pakistan Captain's Fires Ultimatum To Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan

ISLAMABAD, Jul 5 (Agencies): Adapt or perish. Former Pakistan captain Rashid Latif has fired an ultimatum to star batters Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan following the side's T20 World Cup disappointment. Babar and Rizwan have been out of touch for more than a year, and there lack of form was evident during the recently-concluded T20 World Cup in the West Indies and USA. Pakistan crashed out of the tournament in the group stage, and the team has come under heavy criticism as a result. During a recent interaction, Latif didn't shy away from expressing his concerns and offering solutions for the betterment of Pakistan cricket.

Latif suggested that Babar made a huge mistake by accepting the captaincy offer from

PCB, especially after he himself resigned from the position last year.

"See, after that World Cup that happened in India, things shouldn't have gone like this. It's their own thinking that they removed Babar, and Shaheen came forward, but then again, Babar became weak as a captain. Because whoever comes to lead should lead with confidence and it's my opinion that Babar Azam's biggest mistake was to accept the captaincy again. If he continues as captain, that will be an even bigger mistake by him. Pakistan has found a great batsman after so many years who is dominating the world; he shouldn't get involved in this politics," Latif told agency.

Latif also urged Babar and Rizwan to change their batting approach, or else leave the team

for good. He gave the examples of India veteran Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, with the duo announcing their retirement from the format after winning the World Cup last week.

"I would give examples of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli to show how they changed themselves. Rohit has changed himself 190 degrees; change is possible because he has become a role model. His IPL strike rate used to be 130-140, but this year it went up to 160. He changed himself. Virat Kohli did the same thing. If these two batsmen can change, then anyone can. I would give Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan 5 matches to change their batting approach in T20s, and if they won't, then there should be no place in the team for them," he added.

## A Mumbai matinee: Metropolis halts to salute Team India's victory parade

MUMBAI, Jul 5 (Agencies): A sea of blue greeted the victory parade of the T20 World Cup-winning Indian team at South Mumbai's Marine Drive as thousands of passionate fans gathered to catch a glimpse of their favourite stars, bringing the traffic to a complete standstill.

The two-hour open bus parade, which was delayed by two hours, started from the National Centre for Performing Arts at Nariman Point at 7:30pm and finished at the Wankhede Stadium.

The distance is covered usually in five minutes but it took more than an hour as the players savoured the evening of their lives all drenched — not in rain but unconditional love from their diehard fans.

Chants of "Mumbaicha Raja Kaun? Rohit Sharma (Who's the King of Mumbai? Rohit Sharma)" reverberated through the roads. "This (crowd) tells that the desperation we had to win was similar to the desperation which the fans had. The win has brought smiles on faces of crores of people. This is a special team and this trophy belongs to the nation," Rohit said while addressing the fans



inside the stadium. Emotions run high Virat Kohli revealed to the packed Wankhede crowd that

he had never seen Rohit show "so much emotion" in their decade-and-a-half old association till the India captain hugged

him with welled-up eyes after the T20 World Cup triumph.

"This is the first time in 15 years that I have seen Rohit show so much emotion. When we were climbing those steps (at Kensington Oval) he was crying and I was crying," Kohli said.

On this very ground, a 21-year-old Kohli had seen Sachin Tendulkar, Harbhajan Singh and Yuvraj Singh teary-eyed and soaked in emotions after winning the 2011 World Cup. "I couldn't connect with the emotions of the senior players who cried that night but now I do," he said.

Earlier, the team could only fly from New Delhi around 3:40pm after their meeting with the PM. The Wankhede Stadium here was thrown open to fans, who filled up the stands within minutes to celebrate the team's title triumph.

After landing in the city, their aircraft got the famous 'Water Salute' at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport's Terminal 2.

The players walked out of the airport with a horde of fans and media waiting for them for several hours.

## Enter gen-next: New look India start their journey without Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma against Zimbabwe

Five-match series against Zimbabwe starts on Saturday

HARARE, Jul 5 (Agencies): A new-look Indian T20 team would embark on a journey of self-discovery without their constant talismans, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, hoping to unearth their mainstays for the future in a five-match series against Zimbabwe starting here on Saturday.

Even as the euphoria of T20 World Cup triumph sweeps through the length and breadth of India, Shubman Gill, who was a reserve in that squad, will hit a refresh button along with a bunch of IPL performers.

All the fresh faces are expected to make their international debut during the series scheduled to be played entirely in the Zimbabwean capital.

Two young men, who are lined for debut could be Punjab's Abhishek Sharma, who had a stupendous IPL for Sunrisers Hyderabad and the young Assamese lad Riyan Parag, who has given ample demonstration of his capabilities as a competent T20 batter.

Both of them tick all the boxes for this format.

While over the past few years, Rohit and Kohli have skipped a lot of bilateral series, especially in the shortest format, their international retirement from the format is bound to be felt more strongly.

The skills and quality that the two modern greats brought to the table will be hard to replicate but as it is the order of nature, the old guard has to make way for the new one.

Zimbabwe certainly isn't the most formidable opposition but in T20 format, the gulf between sides is comparatively lesser than the other two traditional forms of the game.

The hosts, led by the gutsy Sikandar Raza, who played for Punjab Kings in the IPL recently, could prove to be a handful on nippy afternoons at the Harare Sports Club where the ball will jag around during the afternoon starts.

Some solid performances in this series will keep these youngsters



in contention for future when the first team players of the world champion side are back on national duty.

Shivam Dube, Sanju Samson, and Yashasvi Jaiswal will be available from the third match onwards and some of the young men would only get a couple of games to prove their mettle.

In future, the likes of T20 captain-in-waiting Hardik Pandya, his likely deputy Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant, Axar Patel, Arshdeep Singh and Kuldeep Yadav will also be back playing the format.

In case Abhishek opens, Gaikwad could come in at number three or swap positions

with the Punjab southpaw. Parag's chances of a debut are brighter compared to Abhishek as he can bat at num in the first match, a slot he made his own for the Royals.

Rinku Singh, the designated finisher of the Indian T20 team for years to come, is expected to arrive at number five in this new look line-up while one among Jitesh Sharma or Dhruv Jurel will bat at number six while donning the big gloves.

If one looks at selection pattern, Jurel was the second keeper behind Sanju Samson for this series and Jitesh was a late entrant because of the unavailability of the World Cup squad members.

Hence Jurel, who made an impressive Test debut against England is likely play in the first two games before Samson arrives.

In the bowling department, Avesh Khan and Khaleel Ahmed, the two standbys during the T20 World Cup are certainties and Mukesh Kumar, who is a very steady

death bowler could be the third seamer pipping Harshit Rana, who is a better slogger with the willow.

Washington Sundar with his all-round abilities will hold his place till Dube arrives while leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi is expected to play all games.

India (first 2 games): Shubman Gill ©, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Abhishek Sharma, Rinku Singh, Dhruv Jurel (wk), Riyan Parag, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Avesh Khan, Khaleel Ahmed, Mukesh Kumar, Tushar Deshpande, Sai Sudharsan, Jitesh Sharma (wk), Harshit Rana.

Zimbabwe: Sikandar Raza (captain), Faraz Akram, Brian Bennett, Johnathan Campbell, Tendai Chatara, Luke Jongwe, Innocent Kaia, Clive Madande, Wessly Madhevere, Tadiwanashe Marumani, Wellington Masakadza, Brandon Mavuta, Blessing Muzarabani, Dion Myers, Antum Naqvi, Richard Ngarava, Milton Shumba.

## Fan, Who Trolled Hardik Pandya During IPL 2024, Apologises To World Cup Winner On Live TV

MUMBAI, Jul 5 (Agencies): Team India vice-captain Hardik Pandya had a mentally draining couple of months during the Indian Premier League (IPL) earlier this year. The star all-rounder was trolled and booed by fans after he took charge of the Mumbai Indians, replacing Rohit Sharma as captain. MI's decision to sack Rohit as captain didn't go down well with the fans. As a result, Hardik was continuously targeted by fans across stadiums. However, Hardik managed to re-earn the respect of the fans by playing an instrumental role in India's T20 World Cup success.

He defended 16 runs in the final over of the final as India beat South Africa by 7 runs to win the title.

Now, a female fan has apologised to Hardik on live television for trolling the India vice-captain during the IPL.

"First and foremost, I want to say sorry to Hardik Pandya for all the trolling. I don't know why I trolled him in the first place. I am very sorry. Thank you so much. The last over was amazing. And I want to say sorry. Why did I even say anything wrong about you? I don't know," the female fan told India Today during a live interaction.

During Team India's victory celebrations at the Wankhede Stadium, India captain Rohit praised Hardik for his heroics in the last over. "Hardik was bowling the final over for us. Hats off to him for bowling that last over. You know, no matter how many runs you need, there is always so much pressure to bowl that over. But hats off to him," the 37-year-old concluded.

The all-rounder, who made a big contribution in the final with the crucial wickets of Heinrich Klaassen and David Miller, had a good tournament with bat and ball and became the first Indian man to reach No. 1 in the category.

Hardik Pandya made impactful cameos down the order with the bat and made breakthroughs with the ball when the team needed him to. He finished with 144 runs at a batting strike rate of over 150 and also took 11 wickets.

Guessing by Rohit's remarks, it seems that he and Hardik have set their past differences aside, which eventually helped India end an 11-year wait to lift an ICC title.



# Shiv Sena (UBT) resolves to provide 300 units electricity, 30000 Itrs free water

Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: The people of the water-rich state Jammu and Kashmir are entitled to free electricity and water, which we pledge to fulfill, stated by Manish Sahni, President Shiv Sena (UBT) J&K.

In a program organized today at the Press Club of Jammu, state chief Manish Sahni released a poster calling free electricity and water a legitimate right of the people and pledge was taken to make the people aware and fulfill it.

Sahni said that the people of Jammu-Kashmir, rich in water resources, should be given at least 300 units of electricity and up to 30 thousand



sand liters of free water.

Along with this, taking strong cognizance of the increasing power cuts and decreasing water supply in the scorching heat, he said that 'the government cannot provide electricity and water is useless'. He said that for decades, the National Hydro-Power Corpora-

tion (NHPC) has earned crores of rupees by operating hydro-electric projects on the land of Jammu and Kashmir. But the people of Jammu and Kashmir are not able to overcome the crisis of electricity and water. He said that the tax money of the public has been wasted a lot due to the

power infrastructure and frequent change of meters.

Even after 77 years of independence, the public has not been able to get freedom from power and water cuts. Sahni said that the people of Jammu and Kashmir have the first right on the hydro-electric projects operat-

ing on our land.

He demanded that the projects operated by NHPC be handed over to Jammu and Kashmir, along with this, providing electricity to Rajasthan from the Ratle power project of Chenab Valley is said to be a plunder of the resources of Jammu and Kashmir.

Sahni said that free electricity and water is the legitimate right of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and Shiv Sena vows to ensure that they get this right.

On this occasion, President Women's Wing Meenakshi Chhibber, General Secretary Vikas Bakshi, Vice President Balwant Singh, Sanjeev Kohli were present.

# Inaugural batch of iLEAD Lagjung's Sawavalamban-LEAP Project celebrates their graduation

Top News Report

LEH, July 5: The picturesque village of Tigger in Diskit, Nubra, witnessed a momentous occasion, the other day, as the inaugural batch of iLEAD Lagjung's Sawavalamban-LEAP Project celebrated their graduation in a grand convocation ceremony. The event marked a significant milestone in the journey towards empowering local communities through agro-based entrepreneurship, with a special focus on Sea Buckthorn cultivation and processing.

The ceremony was graced by esteemed guests, including S.R. Meena, General Manager of SIDBI, and Dr. Aishwarya Mahajan, Managing Trustee and President of M3M Foundation. The local community was honored by the presence of Lundup, the Local Councillor of Diskit. These distinguished guests presented certificates to the graduates, recognizing their dedication and achievements in the program.

In his address, S.R. Meena lauded the efforts of the students and emphasized the importance of sustainable agro-based entre-

preneurship in fostering economic growth in the region. Dr. Aishwarya Mahajan highlighted the collaborative spirit of the project and the crucial role of community participation in achieving its objectives.

The convocation also featured the importance of a well-equipped laboratory for Sea Buckthorn processing established in the Lakzjung Village, providing the youth with advanced facilities to enhance their skills and productivity. This state-of-the-art lab will play a pivotal role in the efficient conversion of Sea Buckthorn into high-value products, contributing significantly to the local economy.

The participants, dressed in their graduation suits, were visibly joyous as they received their certificates. Their happiness and pride in their accomplishments were evident, reflecting the positive impact of the program on their lives.

Adding to the cultural vibrancy of the event, the local community showcased traditional performances, celebrating the rich heritage of Nubra Valley. These cultural activities not only entertained the attendees but also highlighted

the deep-rooted cultural ties that strengthen the community.

Dr. Payal Kanodia, Chairperson and Trustee M3M Foundation, expressed her happiness on this occasion and expressed her commitment for the development of this region and promised for all the support for the same.

Aide et Action's CEO, P.B. Sajeev, delivered the vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to all those who contributed to the success of the program and the event. His heartfelt words underscored the collaborative effort that made this initiative possible.

Supported by SIDBI and M3M Foundation and implemented by Aide et Action, an international development organization, the project is dedicated to nurturing agro-based entrepreneurship prospects within Leh, Ladakh, focusing on sustainable development and economic advancement. With the enthusiastic support of the local community and the backing of our state-of-the-art facility, this groundbreaking initiative is poised to serve as a cornerstone in promoting enduring sustainability in the region.

# ABDPS Samiti's Bhandara for Amarnath pilgrims enters day 6



Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: The Akhil Bhartiya Dharam Prachar Sewa Samiti in Jammu and Kashmir has been hosting a continuous Bhandara for Baba Amarnathji Yatris at the Railway Station in Jammu since June 30, 2024.

This effort is driven by their mission of public service, aiming to provide pure and healthy meals day and night to pilgrims and devotees who come from all cor-

ners of India to seek darshan of Baba Amarnath.

Today marks the 6th day of this Bhandara, which was inaugurated by Mahant Narinder Dass ji Maharaj in the presence of Sunil Sharma, the National Coordinator of the Samiti. Mahant Narinder Dass ji Maharaj commended the volunteers of the Samiti for their dedicated efforts in arranging meals for yatris from different states of India and abroad.

Sunil Sharma, the

National Coordinator, highlighted that a large number of yatris from various states availed themselves of the meals provided today and praised the Samiti for its sustained effort over such a prolonged period. The meals are prepared following the teachings of Bhrahmgyani Guroji, emphasizing hygiene, nutrition, and suitability for pilgrims' dietary needs, including special arrangements for those observing fasts on occasions like Ekadashi and other festivals.

The initiative is supported by a dedicated team including Vishal Sharma, Amrit Bhiyani, Ajay Kumar, and Raman Kumar, who ensure that yatris are served day and night in the best possible manner.

Noteworthy attendees at today's Bhandara included Vishal Sharma, Swatantar Bakshi, Vikram Sharma, Raja Mankotia, Anil Kumar, Tarachand, and others, underscoring the community spirit and collaborative effort involved in this noble endeavor.

# Innerwheel Club organizes Annapurna day at Rly Stn Jammu

Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: The Innerwheel Club Samprarak Jammu organized a significant event called Annapurna Day at the Railway Station in Jammu. This event was marked by a Bhandara, where a lavish lunch was provided to pilgrims, especially those visiting

This ceremony not only marks the beginning of the new president's tenure but also sets the tone for the club's yearly projects.

Furthermore, the club honored several doctors, including Dr. Anju, Dr. Nirmal Raina, Dr. Vinay, Dr. Sapna, Dr. Neha, and Dr. Lavanaya, by presenting them with bouquets



the holy cave of Baba Burfani during their journey to Amarnathji.

Additionally, it seems that there is a tradition within the club where the new president initiates their term by donating food items to a hand-capped home on Annapurna Day.

and flower pots.

The presence and active participation of club members like President Anila Mengi, Past President Reva Raina, retired Principal Rattan Prabha, Anuradha Singh, Sonia, Usha, Asha Kabu, Sushma, and others were also noted during the Bhandara.

# Abrol expresses concern over power, drinking water crisis

Top News Report

JAMMU, July 5: Expressing grave concern over the perpetual power and drinking water crisis in Jammu, especially during the summer months, Provincial Joint Secretary, JKNC Ankush Abrol on Friday called for creating a universal approach and administrative plan to meet the crisis like situation that keeps disrupting normal life time and again.

He was addressing a meeting at Old Janipur Ward No 34 where scores of youth joined NC. The meeting was organized by Rajinder Kumar.

Ankush Abrol alleged that state Administration has completely failed to provide drinking water and power to Jammu Kashmir especially in Jammu Municipal Corporation areas like Tali Morh, Rehari, Sarwal, New Plot, Subash Nagar, Paloura, Janipur, Roop Nagar, Muthi, Bantalab, Gandhi Nagar, Bahu Fort, Trikuta Nagar and



Nanak Nagar.

The people are getting drinking water after three four days and also facing unprecedented and unscheduled power cuts in this scorching heat. It is unfortunate people are facing hardships and there is nobody who listens to them.

He said that short-term and adhoc strategies were not enough to surmount the problem and the government must come up with a pragmatic plan for tackling the issues, put this in public domain, seek suggestions of stakeholders and implement it on a war footing basis, as these basic utility services are of paramount importance for the public.

He further said that the power and drinking water irritants are more pronounced and frequent in the semi urban and rural areas of the Jammu region, which have not been addressed so far.

He hoped that these basic utility services will be on top priority of the government for earnest redressal.

Dr. Vikas Sharma Zonal Secretary & Coordinator Jammu District (Urban) JKNC also addressed the youth and lashed out at Centre for playing with the future of youth by imposing ill-conceived policies on them.

He also raised the issue of bungling in recruitment process and also pointed finger towards the ever

increasing rate of fees in govt as well private educational institutions.

He also said the erratic electricity supply has been disrupting daily life, affecting businesses, and putting vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and those with medical conditions, at greater risk.

The failure of the Double Engine Sarkar to address the basic necessities of the common man i.e. drinking water and power, he said, and called for urgent remedial measures to rectify the situation and restore the confidence of the public by providing them basic minimum necessities.

In fact, he said that the power and drinking water schemes should have been formed much before drum beatings of the much hyped Smart City project which was launched with pump and show amidst state Administration painting a rosy picture about everything in the city getting smarter.

Rajinder Kumar while speaking on the occasion

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