

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



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BRIEFLY

LG Sinha congratulates J&K Police personnel for bagging gallantry awards

SRINAGAR, Aug 14 (Agencies): Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha Wednesday congratulated J&K Police personnel who have been selected for gallantry awards that will be presented on the occasion of Independence Day.

The LG said that entire nation is proud on your courage, grit and selfless service. Taking to micro-blogging site X (formerly twitter) LG Manoj Sinha said: "Congratulations to all the @JmuKmrPolice personnel who have been awarded the Medal for Gallantry, President's Medal for Distinguished Service, and Medal for Meritorious Service on the occasion of Independence Day 2024. The nation is proud of your courage, grit & selfless service".

Notably J&K Police has bagged 50 medals for gallantry medals for their meritorious services on the eve of 78th Independence Day. The list of awardees has been announced by the Union Home Ministry.

ADGP Nitish Kumar among 6 awarded JKPMMS

JAMMU, Aug 14 (Agencies): Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Nitish Kumar and Deputy Inspector Generals (DIGs) of Police Shakti Kumar Pathak and Ajeet Singh are among the six police personnel who have been awarded the Jammu and Kashmir Police Medal for Meritorious Service on the occasion of Independence Day.

Poonch youth drowns while taking bath in Kangan

SRINAGAR, Aug 14 (Agencies): A 26-year-old youth drowned while taking a bath in Wangath Nallah of Babanagri area of Kangan, reports said Wednesday.

The youth, identified as Muhammad Mustafa Gojar, 26, son of Muhammad Iqbal, resident of Dharandasfi Mendhar, Poonch drowned while taking a bath on Tuesday, sources said.

His body was **Turn to page 9**

Army Captain Martyred, Four militants believed to be gunned down in Doda encounter

JAMMU, Aug 14 (Agencies): An Army captain was Martyred and four militants are believed to be gunned down in an ongoing operation in the higher reaches of Jammu region's Doda district on Wednesday, officials said.

A civilian was also injured in the encounter that broke out a day ahead of Independence Day and is the latest in a series of incidents in Jammu region that has witnessed a spike in violence.



Bullets rang out in a thickly forested area during a cordon and search operation

(CASO) launched by a joint team to track down a group of foreign terrorists hiding in the Shivgarh-Assar belt,

officials said. The young captain was critically injured and shifted to a military hospital where he breathed his last, they said.

Four blood-soaked rucksacks were recovered from the site, leading officials to believe that four terrorists were killed. M-4 carbines were also found, the officials said.

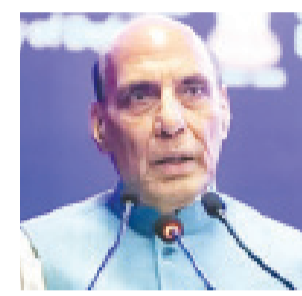
The militants are holed up near a river in Assar, an official said.

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Defence Minister Rajnath Singh holds important meet on security in J-K; NSA, Army Chief present

NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (Agencies): Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday convened an important meeting on the "rising" terror-related incidents in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday.

As per officials, Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane, National Security Advisor, Ajit Doval, Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi, Director General of Mil-



tary Operations-Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma and heads of the security-related agencies were present in the meeting. The

meeting is being held at South Block. The development comes a day ahead of Independence Day on August 15.

Meanwhile, security forces across Jammu and Kashmir have been placed on high alert ahead of Independence Day to ensure public safety.

Earlier on August 10, at least two soldiers and a civilian were killed during a gunfight between the **Turn to page 9**

High alert, Multi-Tier security in J&K ahead of Independence Day



SRINAGAR, Aug 14 (Agencies): A multi-layered security system based on human and

technical surveillance has been put in place in Jammu and Kashmir to ensure smooth, peace-

ful and incident-free 78th Independence Day celebrations, said officials here on Wednesday.

An in-depth review of the security blueprint around August 15 was chaired by the Director General of Police (DGP) R.R. Swain here on Tuesday.

Securing the main Independence Day function being held at **Turn to page 9**

Jammu Kashmir Drug Trade: 4,536 arrested, 3,190 cases registered since 2023

JAMMU, Aug 14 (Agencies): Since 2023, 4,536 individuals have been arrested in Jammu and Kashmir for involvement in the drug trade, with 3,190 cases registered during this period, the tribune reported.

A young lady caught in the whirlpool of life. An art work: Malik Kaisar

The law enforcement agencies, have intensified their crackdown on illegal narcotics net-



works, leading to significant seizures and the detention of key figures under the PIT NDPS Act. In the last 18 months, 463 detention orders have been issued

against drug kingpins.

In 2023 alone, authorities intercepted and seized 319 instances of commercial quantities of drugs, with 110 such seizures reported in 2024 up to June. The seized narcotics are swiftly disposed of through court-ordered incineration to prevent pilferage. Last year, 29,306 kg of drugs and 74,179 pharmaceuticals were destroyed, **Turn to page 9**

LG Sinha Pays Tributes to Partition Victims



JAMMU, Aug 14 (Agencies): Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha paid tributes to the victims of partition on Wednesday, on the occasion of Partition Horrors Remembrance Day.

In a post on X, LG Sinha wrote, "On #PartitionHorrorsRemembranceDay, homage to the resilience and courage of those who were displaced and those who lost their lives and loved ones during the Partition. Their pain, suffering, and sacrifices will never be forgotten."

J&K Police gets 50 medals for gallantry, meritorious service on eve of I-Day

JAMMU, Aug 14 (Agencies): J&K Police has bagged 50 medals for gallantry and meritorious services on the eve of 78th Independence Day.

According to the full list of awardees announced by the Union Home Ministry on Wednesday, a total of 50 personnel from J&K Police figure in the list of awardees.

As per details, two officers have been chosen for the President's Medal for Distinguished Services.

As per details, Imtiyaz Hussain Mir (SSP) and Joginder Singh **Turn to page 9**

Unemployment 'Biggest Curse' under Modi Govt: Kharge

NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (Agencies): Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday accused the Modi government of using "dubious employment data for PR", and said no amount of "whitewashing" can change the truth that lakhs of job aspirants have to daily struggle on the road with very few jobs.

Kharge shared a media report on X which claimed

that for 1,257 vacancies for the post of woman constables and woman constable drivers, the Mumbai Police received 1.11 lakh applications from across the state.

"Unemployment has been the biggest curse under Modi government," Kharge said.

"The Modi government is using dubious employment data which is grossly inflated by counting 'unpaid labour'



and 'one-hour work per week', as a ridiculous PR exercise!"

he said in his post on X.

In Maharashtra, where 1.11 lakh women applied for a mere 1,257 Mumbai Police constable posts, many of them forced to spend the night on the pavement with toddlers, is a grim reminder of the grave unemployment situation, he said.

"A suicide helpline number launched on July 15 by the Diamond Workers Union Gujarat has received more than 1,600

distress calls from those who either lost their jobs or were struggling with reduced wages that crippled their household finances," Kharge said.

Surat's famed diamond industry is facing recession, with firms announcing a "10-day vacation" for their 50,000 employees, he said.

"Last month, we witnessed how over 25,000 job seekers had turned **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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“Chhari Mubarak” leaves for cave shrine of Amarnath

SRINAGAR, Aug 14 (Agencies): The ‘Chhari Mubarak’ the holy mace of Lord Shiv-left for the Amarnath cave shrine from here today as the end of this year’s yatra is drawing near.

The ‘Charri Mubarak’ left early in the morning from Dashnami Akhara Temple, Srinagar, amid tight security and chanting of slogans.

Mahant Deependra Giri, the custodian of the ‘Charri Mubarak’, said the “Charri Mubarak” will



reach Pahalgam in south Kashmir this evening and stay there for the night

before it would be taken to Chandanwari, Sheshnag, and Panchtarni with

one each night stay at these places for performing pooja.

He said the Charri Mubarak will reach the holy cave on August 19 on the occasion of Sharvan Purnima, coinciding with Raksha Bandhan Day, and the final pooja will be held at the Cave shrine of Amarnath to culminate this year’s yatra.

“Today is the shravan shukh prakash dashnami, and we left from Shri Dashnami Akhara Srinagar for the yatra purpose to per-

form the last rituals at the holy cave shrine of Amarnath,” Mahant Giri said. “This is the final ritual of this year’s Amarnath yatra,” Mahant Giri said.

The annual 52-day-long holy Amarnath Yatra commenced on June 29 from the twin routes to Baltal in Ganderbal and Nunwan Pahalgam in south Kashmir.

A record of over 5 lakh devotees paid obeisance at the holy cave shrine of Amarnath in the Kashmir Himalayas this year.

NGO ARSH brings joy & support at Blind School Roop Nagar



Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: The “ARSH” NGO, led by Dr. Shreyansh Kumar Jain, State Yoga Commissioner and President of Vichar Kranti Manch International, brought joy and support to the Louis Braille Memorial (LBM) Residential School for Sightedless Girls in Roop Nagar.

Founded by social activist Shikha Jain and supported by dedicated members including Dr. Priya Dutta, Sheetal Patil, Arun Patil, Megha Saini, Dipti, Shefali, Tanya, Sangeeta, Priya, Simi, Saloni, and Arun Pachranda, the NGO made a significant impact during their visit to the school recognized by the School Education Department J & K.

The visit was part of ARSH’s ongoing commitment to the well-being and education of visually

impaired children. Volunteers spent quality time with the students, engaging them in conversation and learning about their experiences.

The distribution of snacks and other edible items was a highlight of the visit, met with enthusiasm and appreciation from the students who expressed their gratitude with heartwarming smiles and words of thanks.

The day also featured celebrations for the birthdays of social activist Arun Panchnanda and Sheetal Patil’s son, Saksham, adding to the joy of the occasion.

Dr. Jain and Arun Panchnanda, spokespersons for the NGO, emphasized the importance of community support and the personal connections made during the visit. They highlighted the resilience and positivity of the students, which inspired the volunteers to

continue their efforts in supporting their growth and well-being. The staff at LBM, including Aparajita, the warden, and Anju, shared insights into the students’ achievements and the innovative methods used to facilitate their learning and development. Ms. Aparajita expressed gratitude for the visit and the generosity of the NGO.

This visit was not the first of its kind for ARSH NGO. Similar acts of kindness have been conducted in the past, including the distribution of snacks and edibles to children in the cancer ward of SMGS Hospital on Shalimar Road. Dr. Sanjeev Digra, in charge of the Children’s Cancer Ward, Dinakshi, and Dr. Rishika Jerath from Cuddles Foundation in Bombay also supported the NGO’s cause and expressed their gratitude for their efforts.

Manjit Singh concerned over slow pace of development in Vijaypur

Says unplanned highway widening work poses threat to commuters, pedestrians



Top News Report

SAMBA, AUG 14: Apni Party Provincial President, Jammu and former Minister, Manjit Singh has expressed concern over slow pace of developmental activities in Vijaypur that has affected the business activities in the town, and its adjoining villages.

As per a press release, the former Minister Manjit Singh chaired a meeting in which various issues of the people from Vijaypur were discussed.

During the meeting, it came to fore that the people are largely concerned over the slow pace of ongoing NHAI’s highway widening work that is passing through Vijaypur up to Bari Brahmana.

“The stretch from Vijaypur to Bari Brahmana is in very bad shape and

often leads to road mishaps. The situation is alarming, and the authorities should deploy its manpower to handle the traffic movement to avoid any kind of road mishap,” he added.

He further said that the chaotic situation in Vijaypur chowk and its crossing points at various areas along the highway has also become dangerous points for the two-wheeled and the pedestrians.

“The shopkeepers are complaining about the losses due to the constant bad condition of the road and dust in the area that has created health related issues,” he said.

On the other hand, he complained about the slow pace of development in the towns, and villages of Samba District, particularly Vijaypur

where no heed is being given to the concerns of the people.

“The authorities do not give any kind of attention to the development related concerns of the people. Hence, the roads and lanes remain underdeveloped for years,” he said.

Meanwhile, he asked the people to prepare for the elections for the legislative assembly so that the elected Govt can replace the present form of system that is working against the will of the people.

“The bureaucracy is working on its own whim, and does not meet the people in their respective Govt offices even after forcing the people to wait for hours together,” he said, raising concern over no accountability of the officials in the Govt Department.

Congress seeks suggestions from Bar, Chamber, PCJ for manifesto

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Congress has written to different organizations and invited suggestions for the party manifesto from Jammu Chamber of commerce and industry, Bar Association Jammu and Press Club Jammu besides several other organizations.

In separate letters to the President Jammu Chamber Arun Gupta, President Bar Association Jammu Vikram Sharma and President Press Club, Jammu Sanjeev Pargal, the party’s Senior Vice President

and Chief Spokesperson JKPCC Ravinder Sharma who is also Co-Chairman of Manifesto Committee for Jammu, has requested them to forward their suggestions at the earliest.

Sharma has said that Committee has contacted several stake holders and other sections and received suggestions regarding issues of general public for the manifesto.

The Committee shall finalize its report shortly for preparing the party manifesto for the assembly elections at the earliest, he added.

Abhay Bakaya condemns authorities for inability to supply drinking water, electricity in TRT Nagrota, Jagti camps

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Apni Party General Secretary Youth Wing, and Spokesperson, Abhay Bakaya has condemned the authorities for irregular clean drinking water supply and unscheduled power cuts at Jagti Camp and TRT Nagrota.

As per a press release, the migrant Kashmiri Pandits, inhabitants of these camps, have been holding continuous protests against the Jal

Shakti Department and JPDCCL for their inability to ensure the supply system of drinking water and electricity.

“The long unscheduled power cuts have affected the normal life in these camps of migrant Kashmiri Pandits as well as the water supply system has been collapsed with no option to supply water through the water tanks of the Jal Shakti Department,” he said, extending support to the protesters in these camps.

He said that it appears that the Relief and Rehabilitation Department is paralyzed to resolve the issues raised by the migrant Kashmiri Pandits in the above cited camps.

“The Relief and Rehabilitation Department should have responded immediately by convening a meeting with the respective departments, and worked out the problem so that the camps could be supplied the drinking water as well as

the uninterrupted electricity,” he added.

He warned that if the situation did not improve, the Apni Party would be

compelled to join the protests, and the authorities would be responsible for the public response to their failure.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
Sr.DEE/G/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders (www.reps.gov.in) against below titled Tenders. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revise bids up to closing date and time only.
Tender No. 251-Elect-T-34-2024-25 Name of Work Provision of New Pre-cooling Battery charging points with battery charger & allied work over Firuzpur division. App. Cost. (in Rs.) 1,68,90,298.73 Earnest Money (in Rs.) 2,34,500.00 Completion period 06 Month Opening of tender 04.09.2024 after 15:00 Hrs. Website Particulars www.reps.gov.in
251-Elect/T.Notic No. 26-Elect/2024-25
Dated:- 13.08.2024 2512/2024
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Shop Association, Movement Kalki holds protest march against atrocities on Bangladeshi Hindus

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: A protest march was organized in Jammu by Movement Kalki in collaboration with the Pacca Danga Shop Association to stand against the ongoing atrocities and genocide against Hindu minorities in Bangladesh.

The march was held in solidarity with the Bangladeshi Hindu community, calling for immediate government intervention to provide assistance to those suffering in Bangladesh.

The protest march, which began at Pacca Danga, saw participants holding placards and raising slogans, expressing their outrage over the brutalities faced by the Hindu minorities in Bangladesh. The



event was widely covered by the media, where the protesters conveyed their message to the public.

Leading the march were Movement Kalki members Thakur Arjun Singh, Sanjeev Dubey, and

Vikram Mahajan, who also addressed the press, urging the government to take swift action and extend necessary support to the Hindu community in Bangladesh during this critical time.

The protest highlighted the urgent need for international attention and humanitarian aid to prevent further atrocities and to protect the rights and lives of the Hindu minorities in Bangladesh.

DC Kishtwar organizes Anti-Corruption Rally

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Aug 14: Government Degree College (GDC) Kishtwar on Wednesday organized a fervent anti-corruption rally.

The event, centered on the theme “Day of Resolution for Freedom from Corruption,” witnessed enthusiastic participation from approximately 250 students and NSS volunteers.

Under the guidance of

Principal Prof. Basharat Iqbal and the supervision of Dr. Sehrish Gazal (Nodal Officer), the rally aimed to cultivate a strong anti-corruption ethos among students and the local community. Participants raised slogans emphasizing the imperative of a corruption-free India, urging people to embrace honesty and transparency.

“Bharat ko Bachana Hai, Bharshtachar Mitana Hai” (Save India, Eradicate Corruption) was the

primary slogan chanted during the rally, reflecting the college’s resolute stance against corruption. The event garnered widespread acclaim from the local populace. Principal Prof. Basharat Iqbal lauded the organizing committee for their efforts in creating a platform to inculcate a sense of responsibility towards a corruption-free society among students and staff. The rally was graced by the presence of eminent faculty mem-

bers, including Prof. Umar Din Rather, Prof. N.K. Manhas, Prof. Satish Kumar, Prof. Prithvi Raj, Dr. Yasar Ahmed, Prof. Akhter Rasool Malik, Dr. Vijay Kumar, Prof. Ajeet Kumar, Dr. Zahoor Din, Prof. Waseem Rasheed, Prof. Jaideep Kumar, Prof. Esarul Ayub, Prof. Sonika Sen, Prof. Asma Javid, Dr. Tabassum Saleem, Prof. Sheikh Mohd Usman, and Prof. Om Raj, along with non-teaching staff members.

Department of Wildlife Protection J&K Government
Office of the Wildlife Warden, Jammu
Manda Hills, Near Hotel Ashok Jammu.
Email: wlujammu@gmail.com

TENDERING

Tender Notice : e-NIT No.:- 42/WLWJ of 2024-25 dated: 12-08-2024

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

Name of work	Adv. Cost (in lacs)	Class of Contractor	Cost of Tender Document (in Rs.)	Time of completion	Receiving/Opening Authority
Mesh Wire Fencing with every PCC Post Concrete in Co. 1/P (Lakar Mandi Jammu) of Ramnagar Wildlife Sanctuary	20.00 lacs.	A, B & C	1000	60 days	Tender opening committee

EMD (2% of advertised amount):- Rs 40,000/-

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

AA No. & Date	193 of 2024 (CWLW J&K) dated 10-08-2024
TS No. & Date	102 of 2024-25 (RWLWJ) dated 09-08-2024
Position of Funds	Approved under CAMPA

Publishing Date	12-08-2024
Download Start Date	13-08-2024
Bid Submission Start Date	13-08-2024
Bid submission End Date	03-09-2024 up to 02:00 PM
Date of opening of Technical Bid	04-09-2024 at 12:00 PM (In the Office of Regional Wildlife Warden, Jammu, Manda Hills, Jammu)
Date of opening of Financial Bid.	04-09-2024

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

No.: WLWJ/ Dated: 12-08-2024
DIP/J-4346/24
(Vijay Kumar, SFS)
Wildlife Warden
Jammu

EDITORIAL

OTT Impact
on Youth

The rise of Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms has significantly transformed media consumption, particularly among the youth. As traditional media such as television and cinema face increased competition from streaming services, the impact on young audiences has been profound and multifaceted. This transformation has shaped entertainment, social behavior, and even personal development in diverse ways.

OTT platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+ offer unprecedented access to a vast array of content. For the youth, this means a treasure trove of movies, TV shows, documentaries, and original series available on-demand. This accessibility has democratized content consumption, allowing young viewers to explore a wide range of genres and cultures without the constraints of traditional broadcasting schedules. The ability to binge-watch series and access content from different countries has broadened their perspectives and exposure to global cultures.

The immediacy and personalization of OTT platforms have influenced youth preferences and trends. Algorithms recommend content based on viewing history, which can both enhance the viewing experience and limit exposure to diverse perspectives. Popular shows and movies often become cultural phenomena, setting trends in fashion, language, and lifestyle. For instance, series like "Stranger Things" have influenced fashion trends and social behaviors among young viewers.

OTT platforms also affect how youth interact and build communities. Online discussions, fan clubs, and social media groups centered around specific shows or movies foster a sense of community and shared interest. These platforms often serve as conversation starters and social connectors, allowing young people to engage in discussions and form friendships based on their favorite content. However, this can also lead to echo chambers where exposure to diverse viewpoints is limited.

Many OTT platforms have expanded their content offerings to include educational and informational material. Platforms like CuriosityStream and even YouTube offer documentaries and educational series on a range of topics. This accessibility supports self-directed learning and helps students and young professionals acquire knowledge and skills outside traditional educational settings. The convenience of learning through streaming can complement formal education and provide additional resources for personal growth.

While OTT platforms offer numerous benefits, they also pose challenges, particularly concerning mental health and screen time. Prolonged use can lead to issues such as binge-watching, which may disrupt sleep patterns and contribute to a sedentary lifestyle. The constant exposure to idealized portrayals of life and body images can also impact self-esteem and mental well-being. It is essential for young people to balance screen time with other activities and practice digital wellness.

The shift to OTT consumption has economic implications for the entertainment industry and youth. Traditional media companies face competition from streaming services, leading to shifts in advertising revenue and content production. For young audiences, subscription costs and in-app purchases can add up, impacting their financial habits. Additionally, the rise of influencer-driven content on platforms like YouTube and Instagram offers new career paths and economic opportunities for youth, changing the landscape of employment and entrepreneurship.

OTT platforms have a significant impact on cultural and social dynamics. They promote diversity by providing a platform for underrepresented voices and niche genres that may not find a place in mainstream media. This exposure fosters a greater appreciation for cultural diversity and inclusivity. However, the dominance of global streaming services can also overshadow local content, potentially affecting the cultural identity and media consumption habits of young people.

The impact of OTT platforms on youth is extensive and multifaceted, shaping their media consumption, social interactions, and personal development. While these platforms offer unparalleled access to diverse content and new opportunities for engagement and learning, they also present challenges related to screen time, mental health, and economic implications. As the media landscape continues to evolve, it is crucial for young people to navigate these changes mindfully, balancing the benefits of OTT platforms with their potential drawbacks to foster a healthy and well-rounded digital experience.

SEBI-Hindenburg-Adani row shows mishandling of credibility crisis

By: Sucheta Dalal
(Senior Journalist)

THE manner in which India's market regulator, the Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI), has gone about investigating the astounding rise in share prices of the Adani Group has been troubling for independent observers, even before Hindenburg Research released its explosive report in January 2023. This harks back to the tenure of another chairperson who is now associated with the industry group, but it was always assumed that SEBI's reluctance was primarily due to political compulsions.

Having ignored the inexplicable price run-up, SEBI, under the present chief, framed its post-Hindenburg investigation primarily on short-selling activities. Even a novice investor understands that short-selling opportunities emerge only when stock prices soar far beyond a company's fundamentals or future prospects. The explosive new 'whistle-blower' documents released by Hindenburg Research on August 10 give a new twist to the issue and have led to a full-blown credibility crisis at the market regulator. They question chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch's (MPB) integrity and disclosure with a set of facts and documents.

As one of the top five capital markets in the world and a key resource mobiliser for the Indian economy, restoring confidence in the independence of our regulatory mechanism is of paramount importance today. What we are witnessing instead is a textbook example of how not to handle such a situation. In the 36 hours since Hindenburg released its sensational allegations, there has been silence from the govern-

ment and the finance ministry, which oversees SEBI. Instead, we have seen a series of statements from those involved, which raise more questions than they answer.

Late on Sunday night, SEBI decided that Hindenburg's allegations "warrant an appropriate response". When serious allegations are made against the chairperson and the regulator, an appropriate response cannot be anonymous. It is unclear who is taking responsibility for the press release or whether the issue was even discussed by the board or with the ministry. Exhibiting a complete lack of understanding of the situation, SEBI issued an unsigned press release listing its actions in the Adani matter and defending the chairperson without any semblance of inquiry. It claims that MPB had "recused herself in matters of potential conflicts of interest"; whether she did so in the Adani investigation is not answered.

Meanwhile, there seems to be a concerted attempt to question Hindenburg's credibility and silence or discredit anyone attempting a serious analysis. Unless the government comes up with a nuanced response, these actions will only harm India's credibility.

Despite the clarifications offered by various parties, many issues require further scrutiny. It is now an indisputable fact that MPB and her husband had investments in an offshore entity (Global Dynamic Opportunities Fund Ltd), which was part of the same nested entities used by Vinod Adani (Gautam Adani's brother) that were under SEBI's investigation. This warranted a clear disclosure.

SEBI has a precedent of the chairperson (CB Bhave) being ring-fenced from issues, even when they did not involve personal investments. Even if

the investment was redeemed, MPB ought to have recused herself and created a board-monitored committee, perhaps comprising the three whole-time members, to handle the Adani investigation, in consultation with the government. Since this did not happen, it raises questions about MPB's two meetings with Gautam Adani while the investigations were ongoing. No disclosure or recusal happened even when the matter reached the Supreme Court and an expert committee was appointed, specifically to examine if there were regulatory lapses in investigating the Adani Group.

MPB's dealings with Trident Trust Company are perplexing. On the one hand, a letter from her husband Dhaval Buch states that their "accounts be registered solely in his name", yet the email registered to the account remains that of MPB, who continues to receive investment details. Why did she send a redemption request from her email in 2018 when the funds were solely held by Dhaval? In India, this would have fallen foul of compliance requirements and attracted penal action by SEBI. It now raises red flags about the real ownership of funds.

MPB and her husband have confirmed their holdings in two separate consultancy companies. MPB says she transferred her entire holding in the Singapore entity, Agora Partners, to her husband, who became a 100 per cent shareholder in March 2022. This was two weeks after being appointed chairperson in her second stint at SEBI. She continues to hold a 99 per cent stake in the India-registered Agora Advisory Pvt Ltd. While the couple says the two entities "became immediately dormant on her appointment with SEBI" in 2017, Hindenburg has released documents showing

that the Indian entity is active and generating revenue.

The clarificatory statement by MPB and Dhaval itself seems contradictory. It says that Dhaval started his own consultancy practice through these companies after retiring from Unilever. This confirms that the company is not dormant, so it is unclear if 'prominent clients in the Indian industry' that it does business with are SEBI-regulated entities, since the SEBI chairperson remains a 99 per cent owner of the firm.

Another disclosure by 360 One Wam Ltd (formerly IIFL Wealth Management) revealed investment details of MPB and her husband, raising a crucial question posed by MP Mahua Moitra: if foreign portfolio investment records down to the last natural person were made available so quickly by one entity, why did SEBI "hit a wall" in its investigation, as noted by the Supreme Court?

An independent, time-bound investigation leading to credible action, one way or another, alone will restore SEBI's credibility. Rather than a politically motivated joint parliamentary committee, a suggestion by former Revenue Secretary EAS Sarma seems a better option. Since the apex court has not yet closed the Adani cases, Sarma suggests that the Chief Justice could nominate a senior member of the judiciary to head an inquiry commission under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952.

India's national interest is not served by defending one business group. With a market capitalisation of several lakh crores of rupees and the savings of countless ordinary people riding on the market, it is imperative that SEBI remains credible and is seen to adhere to the rules and compliance standards it imposes on all stakeholders.

India must invest more in regional integration

By: MANOJ JOSHI

EVEN as India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy has suffered a huge blow with the meltdown of the Sheikh Hasina regime in Bangladesh, it has managed a significant turnaround with a smaller but important neighbour, Maldives. The process is an indicator as to how India is seeking to readjust its neighbourhood policy from its earlier over-emphasis on security.

To be fair, both sides can take credit for this. India refused to get rattled by the initial anti-Indian moves of the Muizzu government and continued to maintain an even tenor in ties. Yet by a not-so-subtle call to boycott Maldivian tourism in January that nearly halved Indian tourist inflow into the country, New Delhi ensured that Male got the message.

Muizzu changed course in March this year following his visit to China. In an interview to the local media, he spoke of the importance of India to his country and that India would "continue to remain Maldives' closest ally." He acknowledged India's role in Maldives and the importance of ongoing projects facilitated by India and expressed gratitude for their contribution.

One factor in this development was the fact that Maldives is indebted to India to the tune of nearly \$0.5 billion and the new Maldivian Government has been looking for leniency in repayment terms. Muizzu

could not but have seen how New Delhi had bailed out Sri Lanka in 2022 when the country was hit by a major economic crisis and at a time when China had dithered. New Delhi came through for Maldives as well when, in May, the State Bank of India deferred the repayment of \$50 million by a year.

But it is not just the Indian debt that worries Muizzu. As Aditya Gowdara Shivamurthy of the Observer Research Foundation has pointed out, the nation's economy is undergoing "a severe crisis and is struggling to stay afloat". Borrowing by past governments have saddled the country with a debt-to-GDP ratio of 110 per cent and its reserves are rapidly depleting.

But none of these clouds were visible in the recently concluded three-day visit of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar to the Maldives, the first high-level trip to the country by an Indian minister after President Muizzu assumed power in November 2023. This was a signal that India-Maldives relations were once again on an even track. Jaishankar held meetings with Muizzu, Foreign Minister Moosa Zameer, Defence Minister Ghassan Maumoon and the ministers of finance, economic development and trade.

Jaishankar visited several of the projects India is involved in. Several of them are funded through India's Lines of Credit. Among the key projects are the Greater Male Connectivity Project, the Addu Reclamation and Shore Project and a major four-lane bridge proj-

ect to develop it as a regional hub whose centrepiece will be the Gan International Airport. Also being developed with Indian help is the Hanimaadhoo International Airport expansion project, whose foundation stone was laid by Jaishankar in January 2023.

Relations between the two countries came under severe strain when Muizzu came to power on an 'India Out' platform and immediately pushed for the removal of all of the small number of Indian military personnel stationed in the islands to service Indian-supplied helicopters and aircraft for search and rescue operations.

He pointedly made his first visit to Turkey and then to China where he signed a slew of agreements seeking to end the island nation's dependence on food imports and healthcare from India. His first meeting with Prime Minister Modi was at the sidelines of the COP28 climate summit in Dubai in December 2023. His first official visit took place in June when he visited New Delhi to attend the swearing-in of PM Modi's third government.

In the past, China has made major inroads into the Maldives by promoting a range of mega-infrastructure projects and providing liberal aid and loans. The big Indian concern is of Chinese maritime activities in the Maldives. A Chinese company has been given the lease of Feydhoo Finolhu island, located close to Male and there have been periodic reports about the sale to China of the Gadhoon island, next

to the Gan airport, in the southern part of the country. Indian objections led to the scrapping of plans to build a Joint Ocean Observation Station in its western most atoll of Makunudhoo.

As the record shows, India has moved beyond its 'security first' approach and is willing to engage neighbours through an all-round policy emphasising trade and development along with security. In the case of the Maldives, India has, however, taken the precaution of developing a new base in the Minicoy island that is closest to the Maldives, and shoring up its naval presence in Lakshadweep.

But on a long-term basis, India needs to put serious money and effort into promoting regional integration. BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) has not really worked, and the Bangladesh uncertainty makes it less likely that it will do so soon. There is a need to go back to SAARC and its South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) project. No doubt this involves even trickier diplomacy, especially in dealing with Pakistan, but India needs to look ahead instead of backwards. It should be clear by now that even though India is an island of economic growth and stability in the region, its path forward lies through a stable and secure neighbourhood. An integrated South Asian region provides this option and can also be the basis of common security and prosperity.

SP Rural, AJKPC President flag off rally for Sanskrit promotion, Drug De-Addiction

Top News Report

JINDRAH, Aug 14: Under the guidance of former MLA of Nagrota Assembly and BJP leader Devendra Singh Rana, the Shri Kailakh Jyotish avim Vedic sanshan Trust organized a grand awareness rally from Government Degree College Jindrah to promote Sanskrit and drug de-addiction.

The rally aimed to encourage society to stay away from drugs and emphasize the importance of Sanskrit. The event began with tree planting and distribution. The chief guest at the rally was SP Rural Jammu, Brijesh Sharma, and the guest of honor was Anil Sharma, President of the All India Jammu and Kashmir Panchayat Conference.

Participants, including students, prepared



several slogans promoting drug-free living and the importance of Sanskrit, which they carried on placards as they marched through Jindrah, spreading awareness among the people.

On this occasion, Brijesh Sharma stated that the trust's president, Mahant Rohit Shastri, is playing a crucial role in promoting Sanskrit in the region. Today, a grand awareness rally was held to

promote Sanskrit and raise awareness about drug de-addiction. He added that addiction is a vice that can destroy our entire lives. A person addicted to drugs becomes a burden on both family and society. It is essential to impart knowledge of Sanskrit to children, as it instills good values in them.

Anil Sharma praised Mahant Rohit Shastri's efforts, noting that he is not only promoting San-

skrit but also working on large-scale projects related to tree plantation, cyber security, and drug de-addiction. This is their fourth rally in the Nagrota Assembly. Drug addiction is a significant issue that affects many individuals in society. It can endanger health, family, and economic well-being. Addiction often leads to a sense of isolation and detachment. Drug use can result in severe diseases like oral cancer, liver failure, lung cancer, heart disease, etc. Education, awareness, and proper guidance are essential for drug de-addiction.

Mahant Rohit Shastri mentioned that these programs are being held as part of Sanskrit Month. Everyone should have knowledge of Sanskrit, as "Sanskrit is our priceless cultural heritage, which is now being

appreciated globally."

Dil Bahadur Singh Jamwal explained that drug de-addiction means freeing an individual or society from addiction, which involves preventing drug use or working to eliminate addiction. It also involves prioritizing healthy and positive lifestyles for individuals or communities and protecting them from the harmful effects of addiction. He expressed his gratitude to the local residents and students for their large turnout, which enhanced the event's significance.

Students from Government Degree College Jindrah, Government Higher Secondary School Jindrah, college principals, school principals, former Sarpanch, former Panch, and other prominent citizens were present on this occasion.

J&K Police organizes Tiranga rally in Kishtwar town

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Aug 14: As part of the ongoing series of events District Police Kishtwar organized a Tiranga March from Police Station Kishtwar to Chowgan Ground Kishtwar.

The rally was flagged off by SSP Kishtwar, Abdul Qayoom, and it culminated after covering the whole town.

Officers and officials of District Police, CAPF, along with students from various schools in Kishtwar town, participated in the event.

In his message SSP Kishtwar, expressed his appreciation to all participants and volunteers.

He highlighted the importance of such events in fostering unity and patriotism within the community. The march was not only a tribute to the bravery of the nation's heroes but also served to inspire a collective sense of national pride among the younger



generation.

This rally was part of a larger initiative to instill patriotism and honor the nation's heroes who have made selfless sacrifices for the country's progress. The enthusiastic participa-

tion of students, teachers, and police personnel demonstrated their love for the nation and their deep respect for those who have contributed to India's freedom and development.

Five-day long Outreach Programme & Multimedia Exhibition by CBC at Padder concludes



Top News Report

PADDER, Aug 14: Amid the on-going Machail Yatra, five Day Multimedia Exhibition & outreach Programme on Flagship Schemes at Padder concludes today on Wednesday.

M.L. Manhas, ex-PRI member of Gulabgarh, presided over the concluding function of the 5-Day Multimedia Exhibition organized at Padder today by Central Bureau of Communication, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India, Field office Doda.

Manhas appreciated CBC in generating awareness about the schemes of government through these outreach programmes and urged to organise more such events in other rural areas of Padder.

Speakers from forest

department, Mubashir Lateef Khateeb and Shakir Iqbal spoke on the Mission LIFE. They jointly urged all that we must strive to adopt the model of sustainable development to protect the environment.

Both stressed upon one and all for judicial use of Natural resources, switch off the appliances when not in use and plant more trees.

The concluding day of the outreach program was dedicated for awareness about the various Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Forest department and Education department.

Khursheed Yousuf, Field Publicity Officer, CBC Udhampur in his welcome cum introductory address briefed the audience about the functions and mandate of CBC. He also presented an overview of New Criminal Laws 2023

which came into force from 1st July, 2024.

Narben Singh, from Govt. Higher Secondary School, Atholi, delivered expert lecture on Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat (EBSB).

Singh said, EBSB launched in 2015 fosters National Unity in diversity, Strengthen & showcases the rich cultural heritage, Customs & traditions, Art, Language and appeals for oneness.

Gurnam Singh, CBC Udhampur compared the whole event. He also delivered address on Partition Horrors Remembrance Day and said that this day is observed to remind the sacrifices during the Partition.

Amjad Hussain Malik, Chief Agriculture Officer, Kishtwar presided over the proceedings during the 4th day of the exhibition on Tuesday.

Besides students, teachers, locals, officials of various Department, attended, the concluding day of the event.

Vikram Uppal, I/c CBC Doda presented vote of thanks. Nagani Troupe performed the cultural programmes with focus on local folk. Felicitations were done at the end.

NILM J&K holds drug abuse awareness program at RP High School



Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: National Incredible Literacy Mission, Jammu held a drug abuse awareness programme among students of Raja Public High school Bantalab Jammu in collaboration with Directorate of School Education Jammu. The programme against drug abuse is aimed to keep students away from drugs and make them aware of drug abuse and the laws of the land against narcotics use.

Kavita Bali Secretary NILM, J&K emphasized the importance of education and selfless service in the fight against drug abuse.

"Selfless service would

surely go a long way in changing our perception regarding drugs. Follow one's ethics, be informed with proper knowledge, value oneself as a resource and take responsibility to keep the school clean and prevent drug abuse," she said.

During the programme guest speakers on Drug abuse from NILM including Sheetal Devi, Pooja Sahu and others gave detailed lecture over the ill effects of drug abuse. School staff including Priya Manhas Principal of Raja Public High School along with Pooja Manhas Vice Principal, Omesh Manhas coordinator and Imran Katoch actively participated during the programme.

If have courage then send your cowardly eunuch soldiers to fight from front: Chandel warns Pakistan

Top News Report

NEW DELHI/JAMMU, Aug 14: BJP senior leader Raju Chandel made a series of strong assertions about the relationship between India and Pakistan, particularly regarding military capabilities and historical conflicts.

Chandel references the 1971 Indo-Pak war, which resulted in a decisive victory for India and led to the creation of Bangladesh.

He highlighted the surrender of Pakistani soldiers, suggesting it is a testament to the bravery and strength of Indian forces.

Chandel accused Pakistan of continuously promoting terrorism in Kashmir. He claims that Pakistan uses "hired terrorists" and engages in covert attacks against Indian soldiers.

He referred to Pakistan's military tactics as cowardly, alleging that they rely on surprise attacks



rather than engaging in direct combat.

Chandel described Pakistani soldiers as "eunuch," implying a lack of courage and strength.

Chandel challenged Pakistan to engage in open warfare rather than resorting to secretive attacks. He asserted that if Pakistan were to engage directly, it would face a defeat similar to that of 1971.

Chandel expressed pride in the Indian military, which he describes as the fourth largest in the world in terms of technical strength. He implied that India's military

capabilities are superior and sufficient to defend against any threats, even if faced with combined forces from Pakistan and China.

Chandel accused Pakistan of seeking support from China, whom he describes as "cunning." He suggested that Pakistan's reliance on China is a sign of its weakness and fear of confronting India alone.

Such rhetoric can contribute to heightened tensions between India and Pakistan, potentially exacerbating existing conflicts and hindering diplomatic efforts.

The statement reflected a strong nationalistic tone, emphasizing pride in the nation's military and historical achievements.

While the statement asserts a position of strength, it does not offer pathways for peaceful resolution or dialogue, which are essential for long-term stability in the region.

ITI Kishtwar organizes plantation drive under Swachh Pakhwada



Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Aug 14: In a commendable effort to contribute towards environmental sustainability, ITI Kishtwar successfully organized a plantation drive under the "Swachh Pakhwada" initiative.

The event saw enthusiastic participation from both staff members and trainees, reflecting the institute's commitment to promoting a cleaner and greener environment.

During the drive, participants planted a variety of saplings in and around the ITI Kishtwar campus. The Principal of ITI

Kishtwar emphasized the critical importance of planting trees as a proactive measure to combat the growing threat of global warming.

The Principal highlighted that the effects of climate change are increasingly evident, even in regions like Kishtwar, making such initiatives all the more crucial.

"Planting trees is not just an act of beautification; it is a necessary step towards ensuring a sustainable future.

The impact of global warming is something we all are experiencing,

and it is our collective responsibility to mitigate these effects for future generations," the Principal stated.

The event was part of a broader effort under the Swachh Pakhwada initiative, which aims to raise awareness and drive action towards cleanliness, hygiene, and environmental conservation across the country.

The plantation drive at ITI Kishtwar serves as a reminder of the small yet significant actions that individuals and communities can take to contribute to the global fight against climate change.

NSS Units of GDC Udhampur organize Tiranga Rally



Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Aug 14: As part of Swantrata Pakhwara, the Government Degree College (GDC) Udhampur, hosted a grand Tiranga Rally on Wednesday.

This event was a key initiative in celebrating India's 77th Independence Day and aimed to instill a deep sense of national pride among the students and the local community.

The rally was meticulously organized by the NSS Unit of GDC Udhampur. The event kicked off with great enthusiasm as NSS volunteers, faculty members, and students gathered at the college premises.

The rally was flagged off by the Principal of GDC Udhampur, Dr Sanjay Kumar Verma. Although confined within the college campus, the rally was a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made by

freedom fighters and the importance of upholding the values of democracy, liberty, and justice. The event served as an opportunity for the college community to come together in celebration of the nation's independence, reinforcing the bonds of unity and patriotism among students and faculty alike.

The rally concluded with a gathering where the Principal, along with the NCC and NSS officers, addressed the participants. Dr. Sanjay Kumar Verma commended their enthusiasm and dedication, stressing the need to continue fostering such patriotic activities in the future.

The Tiranga Rally at GDC Udhampur was a resounding success, leaving a lasting impression on all involved, and serving as a meaningful celebration of India's independence within the college community.

Shradhanjali Samaroh organizes to pay tributes to supercentenarian Veero Devi

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: A Shradhanjali Samaroh was organised KC Colony here on Wednesday to pay tributes to supercentenarian Veero Devi.

While paying tribute, R.L. Kaith said, "Born in Pakistan and after the partition of India in 1947, Veero Devi along with her husband Anant Ram Kaith relocated in Jammu's Channi Kamala. Veero Devi was very polite, kind, respectful and compassionate and was always giving love and affection to everyone. In every step, she supported and encouraged her son Des Raj



Kaith. Whether day or night she was always there for him no matter what the condition was. Furthermore, her every work, persistence, devotion, dedication, conduct was an inspiration for him".

Among others who paid tributes to Smt. Veero Devi and spoke on her included Dr Kuldeep Motan, Hans Raj Loria,

Hony Captain Girdhari Lal Kaith, Subedar Bachan Lal Kaith (Retd), Subedar Baldev Chand Sandhu (Retd), Subedar Darshan Lal (Retd), Inspector retired Darshan Lal Motan, Sub Inspector retired Darshan Kumar Basso, Jagdish Raj Mandi, Tilak Raj Basso, Naresh Kumar Kaith, Ramesh Chand Chanjotra and Jagdish Raj Kaith.

Airtel becomes first service provider to provide connectivity to Phobrang

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Bharti Airtel ("Airtel"), one of India's leading telecommunications service providers, today, announced the launch of its network in Phobrang village on the Indo-China border.

Despite having to endure challenges like traveling through tough terrains, braving severe climatic conditions, and

passing through highly sensitive zones, Airtel's network roll-out team endured until they had successfully executed the deployment.

As part of this pioneering effort, Airtel ensured that both residents and visitors in this furthest of regions were provided with essential network access, once again underscoring Airtel's role in fostering connectivity in challenging terrains. This expansion will enable connectivity access to 2000 households allowing them to stay connected and enjoy the value-added benefits of Airtel.

Phobrang is one of the remotest villages on the border and is home to India's highest herbal garden, which is located at an altitude of 15,000 feet above sea level.

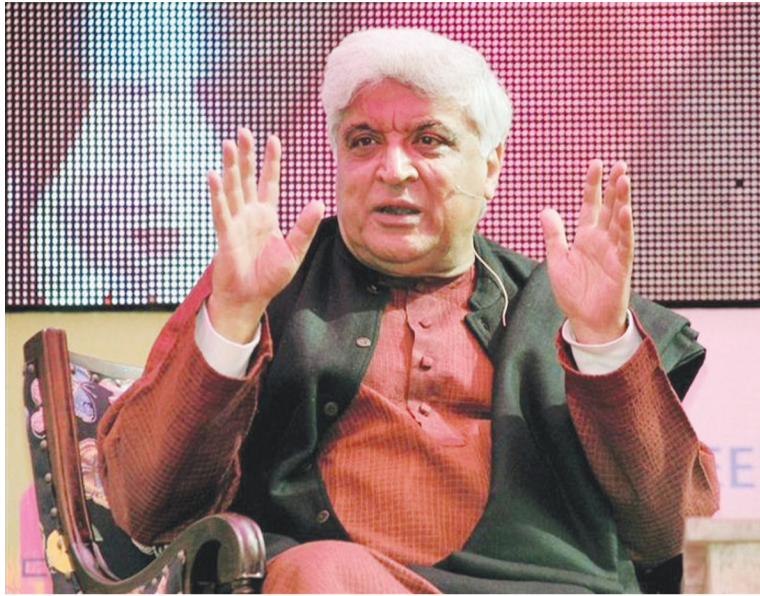
Javed Akhtar announces new collaboration with Salim Khan: 'We will write one more film together'

Salim-Javed, the legendary screenwriters who revolutionised Indian cinema in the 1970s with films such as 'Zanjeer', 'Sholay' and 'Deewar', will reunite to pen a new feature project, Javed Akhtar, one-half of the duo, announced on Tuesday.

The industry stalwart made the announcement during the trailer launch of the upcoming Prime Video docuseries 'Angry Young Men', which explores the formidable creative partnership and legacy of Salim Khan and Akhtar.

"Now, let me tell you that we are going to write. I've spoken to him (Salim Khan). 'Bas ek aur picture hum likhenge saath mein' (We will write just one more film together).

"Uss zamane mein bhi humari price zyada thi, iss zamane mein toh bohot zyada hogi, woh dekh lijiyega (In the earlier days,



we used to charge a premium price for our work. It will be even higher in today's time, so please see to it)," Akhtar told reporters here.

Salim-Javed are credited for reinventing the Bollywood block-

buster format through their films, playing to the gallery but also chronicling the angst of their times. The duo was also noted for being the first Indian screenwriters to achieve star status.

After collaborating on 22 Hindi

films and two Kannada movies, the duo decided to end their partnership in 1982.

The title of the docuseries, 'Angry Young Men', refers to the angry young man hero-type they created in the '70s, which became a cinematic representation of the era and also gave birth to Amitabh Bachchan's stardom.

The three-part series will stream on Prime Video on August 20.

'Angry Young Men' is a joint venture produced by superstar Salman Khan's Salman Khan Films; Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani's Excel Entertainment; and Zoya Akhtar and Reema Kagti's 'Tiger Baby Films'.

Namrata Rao, known for her work as an editor on movies such as 'Oye Lucky! Lucky Oye!', 'Ishqiya', 'Band Baaja Baaraat' and 'Kahaani', is the director.

Khatron Ke Khiladi 14: Tiger Shroff's sister Krishna Shroff still has a chance to win the show post eviction?



The latest episode of Rohit Shetty's Khatron Ke Khiladi 14 was disappointing for Tiger Shroff's sister Krishna Shroff, who participated in the same as a promising contestant. Although she started the show on a high note, acing almost all the stunts, she had a rather bad week in the recent episode, which got her eliminated. However, everything may not be lost for her as she still might have a chance to win the show.

Regarding the same, Krishna Shroff struggled

during most of the stunts in the latest episode. She was also seen trying to avoid some of the difficult stunts, making Rohit Shetty pull her leg. Shroff first failed to perform well in a snake-based stunt opposite Niyati Fatnani. Furthermore, she struggled in a fiery car-based stunt when partnered with Sumona Chakravarti. Regarding the final elimination stunt, Krishna went against Sumona in an electricity-based stunt. She could not complete the same and sadly was

evicted from the show. Rohit also could not help but tell her that he had a lot of expectations from her. However, her fans might not get upset because she might have second innings on the show.

According to rumors, Krishna Shroff might return on Khatron Ke Khiladi 14 as a wild card contestant. Also, she might have a golden run once she re-enters the show. A page on X called Bigg Boss Tak reported in July this year that Krishna, Gashmeer Mahijani, and Karanveer Mehra will emerge as the top 3 finalists of the show. Yes, you heard it right! Talk about an excellent redemption arc. Krishna will not only get a chance to return to the show but also become one of the top 3 contestants to go to the finale. It will be interesting to see whether this news turns out to be true.

Meanwhile, Khatron Ke Khiladi 14 has been grabbing several eyeballs ever since its inception. Asim Riaz was evicted from the show after getting into a nasty verbal spat with some of the co-contestants and the crew members of the show. Bigg Boss 11 winner Shilpa Shinde was also eliminated from the show, but not before getting into loggerheads with some of the contestants.

Tabla beats and soulful vocal recital marked the Baithak programme of Pracheen Kala Kendra

The Monthly Baithak Programme of Pracheen Kala Kendra was a treat for music lovers as Gautam Pal, noted tabla player from Jaipur, and Gunjan Channa, a promising vocalist from Shimla, presented their compositions at ML Koser Indoor Auditorium.

Pal, a talented tabla player, represents the glorious tradition of Farukhabad Gharana. Gautam started playing the tabla at an early age under the guidance of Shib Shankar Karmakar, who is a disciple of Ustad Keramatullah Khan. Later, he became gandhabandh sagrid of renowned tabla maestro Pt Shankar Ghosh.

Pal commenced his programme with traditional uthan followed by peshkar based on teen taal of Farukhabad Gharana. Then he moved on to present kayda, rela and palta. He also performed farmaishi and kamali chakradar, tukde, rele and tihaari in a well-composed manner. He concluded his recital with traditional bandishes. He was accompanied by Gurpreet Singh Moga on the harmonium.

After the beats of tabla, it was the turn for Gunjan Channa's vocal recital. He started with Raag Bihag. After alaap, he presented a composition Kaise Sukh Soye in Vilambit khayal followed by two compositions Balam



Re and Baje Re Mori Payal in Madhya Laya Teen Taal, which were well received by the audience. He was accompanied by Rajesh Brahmhatt on the tabla and Madan Kashyap on the harmonium.

"My film work is suffering": Kangana Ranaut breaks silence on political duties clashing with her career

Kangana Ranaut, the actress who is also a member of parliament for Mandi in Himachal Pradesh, is finding it challenging to balance her political duties with her acting career.

In a recent interview with Variety, Kangana Ranaut discussed the difficulties of managing both roles. "Being a parliamentarian is very demanding," she said. "Especially in my area, we've had floods, so I am constantly on the move. I need to go to Himachal and ensure that everything is being managed properly."

The recent floods have further complicated her already busy schedule, making it hard for her to keep up with her film projects. Kangana admitted that her film work is suffering because of her political commitments. "My film work is suffering. My projects are on hold. I can't start my shoots," she explained. Her parliamentary duties affect her availability, causing delays in her film work. She is waiting for parliamentary sessions, like the winter session, to adjust her filming schedule.

Despite these challenges, Kangana Ranaut remains committed to both her political and acting careers. She said she is open to whichever role needs her more and will follow the path that feels right. "I'm very open, and whatever needs me more and engages me as a person, eventually, I'll choose that route," she noted. "But right now, it's



just way too much happening in my life."

On the film side, fans are eagerly awaiting the third movie in the popular Tanu Weds Manu series, where Kangana plays a key role. Kangana confirmed her participation in the project last year. However, director Aanand L. Rai recently provided an update, stating that the story for Tanu Weds Manu 3 is still not finalized. "With Tanu Weds Manu Returns, we introduced a new character, Datto. All the characters are asking for a third part. As soon as we have a great story that fits Tanu, Manu, and Datto, we'll move forward with it," Rai said.

Nisha Luthra's poetry book Uns, which has been translated in multiple languages, highlights the rich tapestry of linguistic and poetic diversity in India

Hindi poetry book Uns, written by city-based Nisha Luthra, who is a poet, theatre and film director and also founder-director of The Narrators Performing Arts Society, was unveiled in multiple languages at the Government Museum and Art Gallery's Auditorium, Sector 10, Chandigarh.

The launch commenced on a musical note with a sitar recital by Nishant and who was accompanied on tabla by Dinesh Kumar, which added a captivating musical dimension to the occasion.

The launch was organised by The Narrators Performing Arts Society in collaboration with The Om Puri Foundation, Chandigarh Sangeet Natak Academy, Punjabi Lekhak Sabha, Haryana Sahitya and Sanskriti Academy (Urdu Cell), The Wise Owl and Abhishek



Publications. Originally launched in 2022, Uns has now been translated in Punjabi, Urdu, Assamese, English and French.

Sharing her thoughts, Nandita Puri, founder, Om Puri Foundation, who is a screenplay writer and has authored many books, said, "I am

honoured to unveil these translations of Nisha's Hindi poetry book Uns in five different languages. The reach of the book will increase manifold. The occasion was also a celebration of the rich tapestry of linguistic and poetic diversity that India boasts of."

Nisha Luthra said, "Poetry has always been a subtle way to heal. Uns is a silhouette of mellowed rhythms consisting of my emotions. Uns was launched in March, 2022.

After which I got a chance to meet the late Surjit Patar, the legendary Punjabi poet and writer. He was the force that motivated me to get Uns' Punjabi translation rolling. As luck would have it I kept on meeting and working with people who chartered the emotions and longings in their intimate tones. All the translators rendered my poems a sensitive

transcendence. It took us two years to complete five translations of the books."

During the unveiling ceremony a tribute was also paid to legendary Surjit Patar, who wrote the foreword for the Punjabi translation of Uns and was a steadfast supporter of Nisha Luthra's poetry. In a heartfelt tribute, Luthra recalled Patar's inspiring words, "A Punjabi should also write in Punjabi." Nisha added, "Patar ji's encouragement was a guiding light in my poetic journey."

The team of translators Charanjit Singh (Punjabi), Anwar Anjum (Urdu), Ranjit Dutta (Assamese), Sonia Chauhan (English) and Roopam Singh (French) was also present. The audience enjoyed a selection of poems from all translations alongside readings from the original Hindi text.

Kylie Jenner speaks out about battling postpartum depression: 'I felt like such a failure that I couldn't...'

Kylie Jenner shared her experience of being a mom in her 20s in a recent interview with the British Vogue. She shares two children, Stormi and Aire, with her ex, Travis Scott. Jenner got candid about her experience with postpartum depression which lasted almost a year after both the births.

Kylie Jenner's struggles with postpartum depression

Jenner reflected on her life so far after both of her babies' births. She said, "I'm going to be 27, and I'm finally feeling like myself again. And [looking back] I think, being pregnant, I wore sweatpants every

day, I didn't have time to figure out even some of the little things in my life, and then postpartum lasted a year." She added, "Mentally, it's really hard. Hormonally, it's really hard." She revealed the symptoms of postpartum depression were stronger the second time around and gave her "major baby blues."

The Keeping Up With the Kardashians star shared she had a difficult time coming up with a name for his son with the baby blues and the symptoms and was very emotional during that time. She said, "On the phone with my mom all day hysterically crying, saying, 'I can't



figure out his name." as reported by People.

She revealed her advice to all her pregnant friends is to "pick the name before because when the hormones hit you can't make decisions. You can't."

Kylie reveals she 'felt like a failure'

The 26-year-old billionaire revealed she felt like a failure when she was unable to come up with a name for her son. She said, "I felt like such a failure that I couldn't name him. He deserved so much more than that. It just really triggered me."

She also shared that for the longest time, her secondborn was named Knight and Stormi brings it up now and then to tease her but also is a fan of the name. He was also named Wolf Jaques for a brief time. Later the mom of two shared an Instagram story where she announced his son's name "isn't Wolf anymore." She wrote, "We just really didn't feel like it was him. Just wanted to share because I keep seeing Wolf everywhere."

Finally, in January 2023, she posted several pictures of her son and revealed his name in the caption, "Aire."

PM Modi, Amit Shah pay tributes to victims of 1947 Partition

NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to the victims of Partition on 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day' on Wednesday, highlighting the importance of honouring their courage, which symbolises the resilience of the human spirit.

In a message shared on the social media platform X, PM Modi stated, "On Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, we recall the countless people who were impacted and greatly suffered due to the horrors of Partition. It is also a day to pay tributes to their courage, which illustrates the power of human resilience. A lot of those impacted by Partition went on to rebuild their lives and attain immense success. Today, we also reiterate our commitment to always protect the bonds of unity and brotherhood in our nation".

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also paid homage, saying, "On Partition Horrors Remembrance Day my homage to the millions who suffered inhumane pains, lost lives, turned home-



less during this most hideous episode of our history. Only a nation that remembers its history can build its future and emerge as a powerful entity. Observing this day is a foundational exercise in the process of nation building under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi".

Uttarakhand's Chief Minister reflected on the day's significance, recalling that in 1947, the nation was divided based on religion. He wrote on X, "On Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, I pay tribute to the countless families who endured the pain of Partition and faced

unimaginable hardships. This day in 1947 saw our country divided along religious lines, leading to the displacement of countless brothers and sisters and the loss of thousands of lives."

Union Ministers Sarbananda Sonowal and Dr Jitendra Singh also took to X to honor those who suffered during Partition and to pay their respects.

Sarbananda Sonowal remarked, "Solemn tributes to the victims of Partition and salutations to all those who survived, on Vibhajan Vibhishika Smriti Diwas. The tragic period

of Partition is a saga of sacrifices, grit, and resilience. Let us pledge to end divisiveness and hatred in society."

Dr Jitendra Singh added, "On this Partition Remembrance Day, let us pay our respects on August 14th to the struggles and sacrifices of countless individuals who lost their lives due to the Partition in 1947".

Partition Horrors Remembrance Day is observed on August 14 to honour the memory of those who endured the traumatic and violent events surrounding the Partition of India in 1947. This day serves as a solemn reminder of the immense suffering, displacement, and loss of life experienced by millions as the country was divided along religious lines, leading to one of the largest migrations in human history.

The day also emphasises the resilience and courage of those who rebuilt their lives in the aftermath, while underscoring the importance of fostering unity, peace, and brotherhood in the nation.

AAP leader Manish Sisodia's 'padyatra' postponed to August 16

'Padyatra' will cover all areas of Delhi



NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (Agencies): The AAP on Wednesday postponed senior leader Manish Sisodia's 'padyatra' to August 16 following a Delhi Police advice against holding it on the eve of Independence Day due to security reasons.

AAP leader and Delhi Cabinet Minister Saubrah Bharadwaj told a

press conference here they found the Delhi Police advice genuine.

"The padyatra of Manish Sisodia was supposed to begin from today at 5 pm.

Delhi Police suggested we postpone it owing to security reasons since it is the eve of Independence Day.

We found their advice genuine and decided to

postpone it to August 16. We did not want a confrontation on the occasion," he added.

Bharadwaj said it is probably a "nature's" plan that the padyatra will now be beginning from August 16, which happens to be Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's birthday.

"According to Hindi calendar, his birthday is on Janmashtami but according to English calendar, it falls on August 16.

Whatever happens happens for good. Maybe it was nature's plan that the padyatra begins on Kejriwal's birthday," he added.

He said the 'padyatra' will cover all areas of Delhi.

Excise policy 'scam': Supreme Court refuses interim bail to Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal

NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to release Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on interim bail even as it asked the CBI to respond to his petitions seeking bail and challenging his arrest in a corruption case linked to the excise policy 'scam'.

"We are not granting any interim bail. We will issue notice," a Bench of Justice Surya Kant and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan told senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who represented Kejriwal, and posted the matter for further hearing on August 23.

Kejriwal has challenged the Delhi High Court's August 5 order upholding his arrest by the CBI in a corruption case linked to the excise policy 'scam'.

The high court had said there was no malice in the acts of the CBI which demonstrated how the AAP supremo could influence witnesses who could muster the

courage to depose only after his arrest. It had asked him to move the trial court for regular bail in the CBI case.

On July 12, the Supreme Court had granted interim bail to him in the money laundering case linked to the excise 'scam'. The top court had restrained from visiting the Chief Minister's Office and Delhi Secretariat and directed him not to sign official files unless it's required and necessary for obtaining clearance/approval of the Delhi L-G. It also restrained him from commenting on his role in the money-laundering case against him and asked him not to interact with witnesses and/or have access to official files connected with the case.

Arrested on March 21 by the ED, the AAP National Convenor was released on a 21-day interim bail by the top court on May 10 to enable him to campaign in the Lok Sabha polls. He surrendered on June 2.

Delhi Vacation Judge Niyay Bindu had on June 20 ordered Kejriwal's release, saying the ED failed to give any direct evidence linking him to the proceeds of the crime and that the probe agency failed to show that co-accused Vijay Nair was acting on his behalf. She had also said that the ED was acting with bias against the Delhi chief minister.

However, the Delhi High Court stayed the bail granted to Kejriwal the very next day. Later, in a detailed judgment, the high court termed Bindu's order "perverse".

On June 26, Kejriwal was arrested by the CBI in a corruption case linked to the excise policy scam.

Kejriwal's bail plea has come before the top court days after senior AAP leader and former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia was granted bail in the same case by the Supreme Court after spending 17 months in jail.

SC allows states to recover royalties on minerals from Centre and mining firms from April 2005

States can seek refunds from the Centre and mining firms for past dues; payments to be spread over 12 years starting April 2026

NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Wednesday rejected the Centre's plea for prospective effect of its July 25 verdict, which upheld the power of states to levy tax on mineral rights and mineral-bearing land, and allowed them to seek refund of royalty from April 1, 2005 onwards, from Centre and mining lease holders.

This order of the top court would give a financial impetus to the mineral rich states.

At the same time, the apex court clarified and said in its verdict that the tax arrears can be paid to states by Centre over a staggered period of 12 years from April 1, 2026.

While affirming legislative competence of states to levy tax and royalty on minerals, apart from Central levies, the apex court said that the mineral rich States should not



impose penalties or tax for past dues.

On July 25, in a significant ruling, the 9-Judge bench of the Supreme Court, had held that states have competence and power to levy tax on mineral bearing lands.

The majority judgment -- 8:1 -- authored by the Chief Justice led bench D Y Chandrachud, said that the payments made to the government cannot be deemed to be a tax merely because a statute provides for its recovery in arrears.

"Royalty is not in the nature of tax. We conclude that the observa-

tion in India Cements judgment stating that royalty is tax is incorrect. Payments made to the government cannot be deemed to be a tax merely because a statute provides for its recovery in arrears. ruled that royalty on extracted mineral is not a tax," the apex court's nine-judge bench had ruled on July 25.

The other judges, who also were unanimous and agreed to the CJ's views were; Justices Hrishikesh Roy, Abhay S Oka, J B Pardiwala, Manoj Misra, Ujjal Bhuyan, Satish Chan-

dra C Sharma and A G Masih. The only judge who was dissenting was Justice B V Nagarathna, who had a different view on the issue.

"I hold royalty is in nature of the tax. States have no legislative competence to impose any tax or fee on mineral rights. Entry 49 is not related to mineral-bearing lands. I hold India cement decision was correctly decided," Justice Nagarathna said.

"The legislative power to tax mineral rights lies with the State legislature and the Parliament does not have the legislative competence to tax mineral rights," the top court said in its ruling.

The SC also made it clear that the Parliament could not use its residuary power regarding this subject matter. So the State legislature has the legislative competence under Article 246 read with Entry 49 of List 2 to tax mineral bearing lands.

The Supreme Court had on March 14 reserved its verdict on the controversial issue of whether the royalty payable on minerals is a tax under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, and if only the Centre is vested with the power to levy such exaction or states also have the authority to impose levies on mineral bearing land in their territory.

The nine-judge bench of the top court, headed by CJI Chandrachud heard the matter on eight days, while dealing with a batch of 86 appeals filed by different state governments, mining companies and public sector undertakings.

During the hearing, the top court had said the Constitution vests the power to impose tax on mineral rights not in Parliament alone but also the states and underlined that such authority should not be diluted.

Supreme Court to hear CBI's plea against Nithari killer Surendra Koli's acquittal

NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (Agencies): The Supreme Court today agreed to hear a fresh plea filed by the CBI challenging the Allahabad High Court's verdict that acquitted Surendra Koli in the sensational 2006 Nithari serial killings case.

A bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan tagged the CBI's plea with some other petitions pending in the top court against the high court order of October 16, 2024.

On July 19, the top court had agreed to hear separate pleas filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Uttar Pradesh government against the high court verdict. It had also issued a notice and sought a response from Koli on the petitions.

The top court had in May agreed to hear a plea filed by the father of one of the victims challenging the high court's verdict acquitting Koli in one of the cases.

In this case, Moninder Singh Pandher was acquitted by the sessions court while Koli was



awarded the death penalty on September 28, 2010.

The high court had acquitted domestic help Pandher and his employer Koli in the case in which they were facing a death sentence, holding that the prosecution failed to prove the guilt "beyond reasonable doubt" and that the investigation was "botched up".

Reversing the death sentence given to Koli in 12 cases and Pandher in two cases, the high court had noted that the prosecution had failed to prove

the guilt of both the accused "beyond reasonable doubt, on the settled parameters of a case based on circumstantial evidence" and the probe was "nothing short of a betrayal of public trust by responsible agencies".

Pandher and Koli were charged with rape and murder and sentenced to death in the killings that horrified the nation with their details of sexual assault, brutal murder and hints of possible cannibalism.

The high court had allowed multiple appeals filed by Koli and

Pandher, who had challenged the death sentence awarded by a Central Bureau of Investigation court in Ghaziabad.

In all, 19 cases had been lodged against Pandher and Koli in 2007. The CBI had filed closure reports in three cases due to lack of evidence. In the remaining 16 cases, Koli was earlier acquitted in three and his death sentence in one was commuted to life.

The sensational killings came to light with the discovery of the skeletal remains of eight children from a drain behind Pandher's house at Nithari in Noida, bordering the national capital, on December 29, 2006.

Further digging and searches of drains in the area around the house led to the recovery more skeletal remains. Most of these remains were those of poor children and young women who had gone missing from the area.

Within 10 days, the CBI had taken over the case and its search resulted in the recovery of more remains.

Assam hospital cancels advisory asking women doctors to avoid isolated places at night

GUWAHATI, Aug 14 (Agencies): The Silchar Medical College and Hospital in Assam on Wednesday cancelled its advisory to women doctors and other staffers asking them to avoid going alone to isolated places at night.

SMCH's Principal-cum-Chief Superintendent Dr Bhaskar Gupta had issued the advisory, following the recent rape and murder of a trainee doctor at the R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.

"The advisory issued earlier stands cancelled and a new advisory will be issued soon in this regard," Gupta said. It was cancelled following protests from students who demanded enhanced security measures in the hospital.

Gupta said that the advisory was issued to enhance the safety and security of women doctors, students and all healthcare workers on the campus.

According to it, women doctors, students and staffers should generally avoid 'isolated, poorly lit and sparsely populated areas'. They should avoid situations, as much as possible, where they are 'alone', the advisory said.

The authorities also urged them to 'refrain from leaving hostels or lodging rooms during night hours, unless absolutely necessary without prior information to the concerned authority'.

They were also asked to "avoid going off-campus during late or odd hours, to avoid associating with unknown individuals and to ensure that they can make emergency contact in case of urgent situations".

The advisory also stated that while on duty "you should be well composed emotionally, remain alert about the surroundings and should graciously interact with the public so that you don't attract unnecessary attention from unscrupulous people".

Any issue or grievance should be immediately communicated to the chairman/ members of the gender harassment committee and anti-ragging and disciplinary panels, the advisory stated.

The students, however, protested against the advisory and demanded that the security on the campus be improved. Junior Doctors' Association (JDA) president Salman Choudhury said they were 'deeply saddened and ashamed'. The advisory fails to address the key issues, pertaining to SMCH and is outrageous," he said.

Choudhury urged the authorities to ensure proper functioning of lighting in the hospital area, enhanced security measures, dedicated washroom facilities, security in doctors' rooms and installation of CCTV cameras.

Japan's Fumio Kishida announces he will not run in September, paving way for new prime minister

He is stung by his party's corruption scandals and suffers dwindling support ratings that have dipped below 20 per cent

TOKYO, Aug 14 (Agencies): Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, in a surprise move on Wednesday, announced he will not run in the upcoming party leadership vote in September, paving the way for Japan to have a new prime minister.

Kishida was elected president of his governing Liberal Democratic Party in 2021 and his three-year term expires in September.

His drop out of the race means a new leader who wins the party vote will succeed him as prime minister because the LDP controls both houses of parliament.

Kishida, stung by his party's corruption scandals, has suffered dwindling support ratings that have dipped below 20 per



cent.

He announced he will not run in the September vote, allowing for a fresh leader in an effort to show that his party is changing for the better. Kishida will sup-

port a new leader, he said.

Local election losses earlier in the year eroded his clout, and LDP lawmakers have voiced the need for a fresh face ahead of the next general election.

Since the corruption scandal broke, Kishida has removed a number of Cabinet ministers and others from party executive posts, dissolved party factions that were criticised as the source of money-for-favour politics, and passed a law tightening political funds control law. But support for his government has dwindled.

The scandal centres on unreported political funds raised through tickets sold for party events. It involved more than 80 LDP lawmakers, mostly belonging to a major party faction previously led by assassinated former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. 10 people — lawmakers and their aides — were indicted in January.

Thai Prime Minister Srettha is removed from office by a court order over an ethics violation



BANGKOK, Aug 14 (Agencies): A court in Thailand on Wednesday removed Prime Minister Srettha Thavasin from office over an ethical violation, further shaking up Thai politics after the court-ordered dissolution of the main opposition party a week ago.

The case for which the Constitutional Court judged Srettha involved his appointment of a Cabinet member who had been imprisoned over an alleged attempt to bribe a court official.

The court voted 5:4 against Srettha and the ruling removed him from office immediately.

The Cabinet will remain in place on a caretaker basis until Parliament approves a new prime minister. There is no time limit for Parliament to fill the position.

Srettha had appointed Pichit Chuenban as a minister of the Prime Minister's Office in a Cabinet reshuffle in April. Pichit was jailed for six months in 2008 on contempt of court charges after he allegedly tried to bribe a

judge with 2 million baht (\$55,000) in cash in a grocery bag over a case involving former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Pichit resigned from the post weeks after being appointed when controversy over the incident was revived.

The court said that although Pichit has already served his jail term, his behavior — as ruled by the Supreme Court — was dishonest.

Srettha as prime minister has sole responsibility for vetting the qualifications of his Cabinet nominations, the court ruled. It said he knew about Pichit's past but still nominated him, and therefore they ruled that he violated the ethics codes.

The petition against Srettha was initiated by former members of the military-installed Senate who had refused to approve Move Forward's prime ministerial candidate when the party was attempting to form a government after its election victory.

The petition against

Srettha was seen as a move favoring a pro-military political party in his coalition government.

Thailand's courts, especially the Constitutional Court, are considered a bulwark of the country's royalist establishment, which has used them and nominally independent state agencies such as the Election Commission to issue rulings to cripple or sink political opponents.

Srettha became prime minister in August last year, despite his Pheu Thai party finishing second in the general election. After Move Forward was denied power by the Senate whose term ended in May, Pheu Thai — then the biggest partner of Move Forward — excluded it from the coalition and joined hands with parties affiliated with the previous military-controlled government to gather enough support from other parties and the Senate to approve a new prime minister.

The Constitutional Court last week ordered the dissolution of the progressive Move Forward Party — which won the most seats in the 2023 election but failed to take power — over an accusation that the party violated the constitution by proposing an amendment to a law against defaming the country's royal family. The party has already regrouped as the People's Party.

High doses of narcotic drug found in sweets handed out by New Zealand charity

WELLINGTON, Aug 14 (Agencies): Pineapple sweets dished out by a New Zealand charity have tested positive for potentially lethal amounts of methamphetamine, police said Wednesday, sparking an urgent race to remove them from the streets.

Anti-poverty charity the Auckland City Mission raised the alarm after discovering a batch of the sweets was contaminated with the highly addictive and illegal narcotic, police said.

"An investigation is under way and police are treating the matter

as a priority given the risk to the public."

The New Zealand Drug Foundation said a test sample of an innocuous-looking piece of white candy in a bright yellow wrapper indicated it contained methamphetamine.

Foundation spokeswoman Sarah Helm said the tested sweet contained approximately three grams of meth — hundreds of times greater than the common dose taken by users.

"Swallowing that much methamphetamine is extremely dangerous and could result in death."

Helm urged people

who had received confectionaries from the Auckland charity not to consume them.

"We don't know how widespread it is."

The candy was donated anonymously by a member of the public, the charity said, in a sealed branded package. The sweets were then distributed into food parcels.

"There is a potential for New Zealand that there is a lethal substance dressed up as a lolly (sweet)," Helen Robinson from Auckland City Mission told reporters.

"We have to work on the assumption that this was a kind of batch."

The charity believes up to 400 people could have received the affected sweets in a food package.

Robinson said so far eight separate families had been affected, but no one had yet been hospitalised.

She knew of an instance where a parent gave one of the candies to her child, who immediately spat it out.

Robinson said she had been told the potent contaminated sweets tasted "acrid and revolting".

"You could have only a very small touch or lick of the substance and still be deeply affected," she warned.

A contaminated sweet was taken for testing when a person felt strange after starting to eat it and noticed a bitter taste.

Methamphetamine can cause chest pain, racing heart, seizures, delirium and loss of consciousness, the drug foundation warned.

Helm told Radio New Zealand it is common for drug smugglers to hide illegal narcotics in food form.

"We suspect somebody hasn't intentionally sought to poison children. It will be up to police to determine," she added in the interview.

Taliban celebrate three years since takeover of Afghanistan

BAGRAM, Aug 14 (Agencies): Taliban authorities kicked off celebrations of the third anniversary of their rule over Afghanistan on Wednesday at the former US Bagram air base.

Hundreds of people, including Chinese and Iranian diplomats, gathered at the base, around 40 kilometres (25 miles) outside Kabul, for speeches and a military parade.

The Taliban government has "the responsibility to maintain Islamic rule, protect property, people's lives and the respect of our nation", Prime Minister Mohammad Hassan Akhund, who was not present, said in a statement read by his chief of staff.

Helicopters had carried senior Taliban officials to the event at Afghanistan's biggest air base, which served as the linchpin of US-led operations in the country for two decades.

Taliban forces seized the capital Kabul on August 15, 2021, after the US-backed government collapsed and its leaders fled into exile. The anniversary is marked a day earlier on the Afghan calendar.

"On this date, Allah granted the Mujahid nation of Afghanistan a decisive victory over an international arrogant and occupying force," Akhund said in a statement on Tuesday.

Extra security was deployed in the capital and the Taliban's spiritual home of Kandahar ahead of the "day of



victory", with Islamic State group attacks a continued threat in the country.

In the three years since they ended their 20-year insurgency, the Taliban government has consolidated its grip on the country, implementing laws based on its strict interpretation of Islam.

The government remains unrecognised by any other state, with restrictions on women, who bear the brunt of policies the United Nations has called "gender apartheid", remaining a key sticking point.

Banners, flags and poetry

The days before the celebrations, workers were busy putting up banners and billboards reading "Congratulations" with the anniversary date around Kabul.

Vendors selling flags of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan — the Taliban government's formal name for the country — dotted the city, the white and black standard also fluttering over streets.

Celebrations featuring athletes and poetry readings were due to be held at a stadium in the capital.

Heavy security and

decorations also went up in the southern city of Kandahar — the birthplace of the Taliban movement and home to the reclusive leader Hibatullah Akhundzada, who rules through religious edict.

Security has been a key priority for Taliban authorities, and while many Afghans express relief at the end of 40 years of successive conflicts, the economy remains in crisis and the population mired in a worsening humanitarian crisis.

A joint statement from international non-governmental groups warned of the growing aid funding gap, with 23.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) reiterated calls for pressure on the Taliban government to lift restrictions on women, who have been squeezed from public life and banned from secondary and higher education.

"The third anniversary of the Taliban's takeover is a grim reminder of Afghanistan's human rights crisis, but it should also be a call for action," said Fereshta Abbasi, Afghanistan researcher for HRW.

Ukraine claims new advances in Russia, Belgorod declares emergency

KYIV, Aug 14 (Agencies): Ukraine on Wednesday pressed its surprise offensive in Russian territory and bombarded the neighbouring border region of Belgorod, where the governor has declared a state of emergency.

Ukrainian forces entered Kursk region last Tuesday and have taken dozens of settlements in the biggest attack by a foreign army on Russian soil since World War II.

President Volodymyr Zelensky on Tuesday evening posted footage of a video call with his military chief Oleksandr Syrsky, who said that "as of today, our troops have advanced in some areas by one to three kilometres."

Over the last day, Syrsky added, "control over 40 square kilometres of territory has been taken" and "74 settlements are under our control".

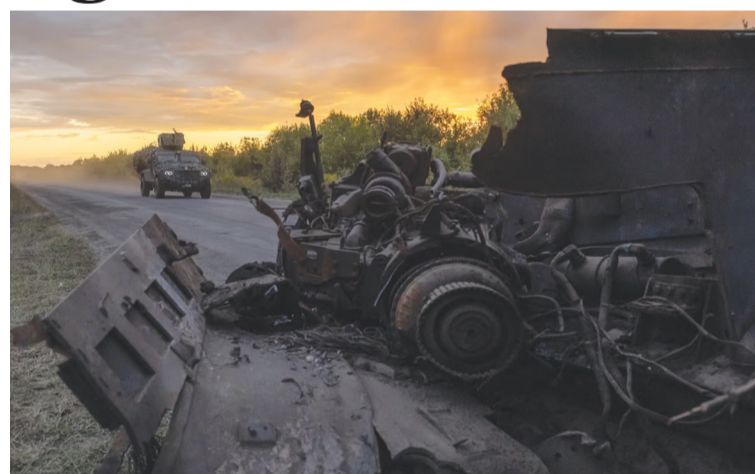
The head of neighbouring Belgorod declared a state of emergency on Wednesday, saying the situation was "extremely difficult" in the Russian border region under Ukrainian bombardment.

"The situation in our Belgorod region remains extremely difficult and tense due to shellings from the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Houses are destroyed, civilians died and were injured," governor Vyacheslav Gladkov said on Telegram.

Belgorod, which borders Ukraine's Kharkiv region, had also come under drone attack, he said.

After a week of the Ukrainian advance, Syrsky said Monday that his troops controlled about 1,000 square kilometres (386 square miles) of Russian territory.

Kursk regional governor Alexei Smirnov said Monday that 28 settlements had been



captured and Ukrainian forces had penetrated at least 12 kilometres deep.

An agency analysis of data provided by the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) indicated that Ukrainian troops had advanced over an area of at least 800 square kilometres of Russian territory as of Monday.

Joe Biden on Tuesday said the incursion was giving Russia's President Vladimir Putin a "real dilemma," in the US leader's first comments on Kyiv's surprise attack.

Russia's defence ministry said Tuesday its troops "continue to repel" Ukrainian assaults and had "foiled" attacks by "mobile groups in armoured vehicles". Ukraine said it would not hold on to Russian territory it had captured and offered to stop raids if Moscow agreed a "just peace".

Foreign ministry spokesman Georgiy Tykhy said Kyiv was not interested in "taking over" Russian territory and defended Ukraine's actions as "absolutely legitimate".

"The sooner Russia agrees to restore a just peace... the sooner the raids by the Ukrainian defence forces into Russia will stop," he told reporters.

More than 120,000 Russians have fled their homes in border

areas of Kursk region.

Ukraine said it was imposing movement restrictions in the Sumy region along the border due to an "increase in the intensity of hostilities" and "sabotage" activities.

Since launching its invasion in February 2022, Russia has captured territory in southern and eastern Ukraine and subjected Ukrainian cities to missile and drone barrages.

Blindfolded POWs

Ukraine has found itself outmanned and outgunned and has struggled after some early successes in pushing Russian forces back in 2022.

The current offensive into Kursk region, which caught Russia off guard, is by far the biggest cross-border action since the invasion.

On the Ukraine side of a border crossing into Kursk, agency reporters saw toppled concrete fortifications and caved-in remains of security and customs buildings revealing the intensity of the fighting that swept through the area.

On the road, around 10 blindfolded and bound men in Russian military fatigues were being driven in a military vehicle away from the border crossing in the direction of the city of Sumy.

"They didn't protect the

border," a Ukrainian serviceman who took part in the offensive and identified himself as Ruzhkyk told agency in Sumy region.

"They only had anti-personnel mines scattered around trees at the side of the road and a few mines that they managed to quickly throw along the highways," he said.

Another serviceman said that his unit of military engineers went in to clear the mines before Ukrainian tanks entered.

"But when our guys came in, the Russians ran away. They didn't have time to press the detonate buttons."

A 27-year-old squad leader, who identified himself as Faraon, was sparing but direct in his description of battles in Kursk.

"I saw a lot of death in the first few days. It was terrifying at first but then we got used to it," he told agency.

"There have been many deaths," he repeated, standing next to a forest road leading to the frontier, without elaborating.

'Sow discord'
Putin has vowed to "dislodge" Ukrainian troops. He told a televised meeting with officials on Monday that "one of the obvious goals of the enemy is to sow discord" and "destroy the unity and cohesion of Russian society".

Putin also said Ukraine wanted to "improve its negotiating position" for any future talks with Moscow.

A Ukrainian security official told agency, on condition of anonymity, at the weekend, that Ukraine sought to "stretch the positions of the enemy, to inflict maximum losses and to destabilise the situation in Russia as they are unable to protect their own border".

The Ukrainian official said thousands of Ukrainian troops were involved in the operation.

GGM Science College organizes mega plantation drive

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: GGM Science College, in collaboration with the Department of Social Forestry, Jammu, organized a mega plantation drive in college campus.

The initiative was part of the "Swachhta Pakhwada" program under the directive of the Government of India, aimed at promoting cleanliness and environmental sustainability.

The plantation drive saw the active participation of the college Principal, Prof. Dr. Romesh Kumar Gupta, Regional Director of Social Forestry, Jammu, Ravinder Singh Gloria, Director State Forest Corporation Mohinder Kumar Gupta and Divisional Forest Officers of Social Forestry, Jammu.



The event also witnessed enthusiastic involvement from the staff, NSS and NCC Units of the college.

Speaking on the occasion, Principal Prof. Dr. Romesh Kumar Gupta highlighted the importance of such initiatives in fostering a sense of environmental responsibility among the youth.

He emphasized the critical role of educational institutions in promoting sustainable practices and contributing to the national agenda of environmental conservation.

Ravinder Singh, Regional Director, Social Forestry Jammu, who is also the Alumnus of the GGM Sc. college, commended the collaborative efforts of the college and the Department of Social Forestry.

He reiterated the department's commitment to supporting initiatives that promote greenery and environmental awareness in the region.

NSS Program Officers, Dr. Neha Sharma and Dr. Rahul Kait, along with NCC Associate

NCC Officers (ANOs) Lt. Dr. Devinder Kumar Sharma and Dr. Shafia Saleem, and Convener Prof Harmeet Kour along with the members of Eco club of college coordinated the efforts of students and staff in planting 200 saplings of various species.

The diverse selection of plants aims to enhance the local biodiversity and contribute to the ecological balance in the region.

Govt. Polytechnic for Women organizes Cultural activities, Tiranga Rally



Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Govt. Polytechnic for Women, Jammu under the supervision of Er. Suket Gupta, Principal today organized Cultural activities and Tiranga Rally under Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan. Faculty members and students of this Institution took part in this event with

great enthusiasm. Er. Suket Gupta, Principal while speaking on this occasion appreciate the students for participating and demonstrating their patriotic spirit. The event was marked by a strong sense of national unity, with participants proudly waving the National Flag. The rally was alive with patriotic fervor as chants

of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" filled the air. The cultural activities organized during the fortnight as per the directions of the Administration concluded today. The participants were facilitated by giving them the Certificates of Participation in a function held today in the Conference Hall of this Institution.

Partition Horar Remembrance Day observed in Central Sanskrit University



Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Partition Horar Remembrance Day was organized in the Vani Vilas Auditorium of Shri Ranbir Campus of Central Sanskrit University (CSU) on Wednesday under the joint aegis of Central Sanskrit University, Shri Ranbir Campus, Jammu and Regional Center of IGNOU, Jammu.

The program was inaugurated by lighting the lamp by Chief Guest Dr. Jaiprakash Verma, Regional Director of IGNOU Centre Jammu alongwith other guests present on the occasion.

In his address, Dr. Jaiprakash Verma said that "today is the day which reminds the horrors of partition. From the historical point of view, on this day we remember the tragic partition that took place when we got

independence." He paid tribute to the martyrs of the motherland and salute their sacrifices. He further said that the partition of the country in 1947 is an unfortunate truth. It is our sad history. We should continuously strive towards making our country progressive and strong economically as well as socially in every way.

On this occasion, a short Drama depicting the Tragedy and Horrors of Partition was screened for the audience. Special Guest of the occasion, Professor Satish Kumar Kapoor addressed the students and the faculty and highlighted the after-maths of the partition.

After that, a panel discussion was held in which the Director of Central Sanskrit University, Prof. Shridhar Mishra along with Head of Sahitya Vidyashakha, Prof. Satish

Kumar Kapoor, Dr. D. Dayanath, Dr. Sarvesh Tripathi, Dr. Praveen Mani Tripathi, Dr. Pradeep Kumar Mishra, Regional Director of IGNOU, Dr. Jaiprakash Verma, Assistant Regional Director Dr. Sandeep Gupta, Dr. Asha Upadhyay, and Dr. Vikram were present. The guests were duly honored by the Campus Director.

Dr. Gopal Verma of the English Department welcomed the guests as well as the audience. The vote of thanks was presented by the Coordinator of the program, Dr. D. Dayanath. On this occasion, the students of the campus along with Dr. Rishiraj, Dr. Rajkumar Mishra, Dr. Ratan Kumar Pandey, Dr. Madan Singh, Dr. Neetu Sharma, Dr. Shweta Sood, Dr. Anoop Pandey were present. The stage was conducted by Dr. Pawan Kumar Singh.

Parents worried over students presence at Independence Day celebrations: Shiv Sena

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu-Kashmir unit has strongly objected to the instructions for students and teachers of government and private schools to be present at the main venue of the celebrations, Maulana Azad Stadium, to gather crowds during the Independence Day celebrations.

According to a press release issued from the party's state central office in Jammu, state chief Manish Sahni said that



in view of the increasing terrorist activities in Jammu division, parents are worried about the above instructions of the education administration. He said that without any

consent from the parents, instructions have been issued to 50-200 students from every government and private schools, including teachers, to reach the main venue of the celebrations to gather crowds in the spectator gallery due to which parents are worried about their children.

Sahni has demanded from the Education Department to celebrate Independence Day at school level and to provide relief to students and parents by withdrawing the above orders.

KDP Wing of DPAP greets people on 78th Independence Day

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: The Kashmiri Displaced People Wing (KDP) of the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) has issued a heartfelt greeting to the people of India on the eve of the 78th Independence Day.

In a joint statement by the KDP Wing, led by President Sanjay Dhar, Chairman Piaray Lal Pandita, General Secretary Raj Kumar Ticku, Roop Krishen Koul (Vice President), Gawhar Wani (Spokesperson), Mahila President Daizy Dhar, Mahila Working President Renu Razdan, Anjali Pandita (Mahila Unit President, Jagti), Amrita Bhat (Vice President), Charanjeet Singh (Publicity Secretary), Naveen Gosien (Youth President), Vijay Karihalu (Vice President, Kashmir), Avtar Krishen Ladhoo (Unit President, Jagti), Ramesh Raina (Vice President, Jagti), Rahul Raina (Youth Vice President), Vinkle Ji (Unit President, TRT Nagrota), Sandeep Bhat (Youth General Secretary), Ashok Kumar (Secretary), Ravender Singh (Secretary), and other leaders, they extended

their best wishes to the people of India, particularly the displaced Kashmiri community. The leaders expressed their hopes that this significant day would bring peace and development to the country, especially to Jammu and Kashmir.

They emphasized the importance of communal harmony and appealed to the Government of India to implement a comprehensive resettlement and rehabilitation policy for the Kashmiri displaced people, allowing the community to overcome the 34 years of suffering due to the genocidal exodus. The leaders are optimistic that the next Independence Day will see the Kashmiri community celebrating in their ancestral homes in the Valley.

They also encouraged the people of India to adorn their homes and surroundings with the national flag and to pray for unity and harmony throughout the country. In addition, the leaders extended their greetings to DPAP Chairman Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad, wishing him success in his endeavors to serve the nation and the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

GDC Thannamandi elects Dr. Shiraz Ahmed as Staff Secretary

Top News Report

THANNAMANDI, Aug 14: The Teaching faculty of Government Degree College (GDC) Thannamandi unanimously elected Dr. Shiraz Ahmed, Head Department of Zoology as staff secretary of the college for the session 2024-25.

Dr. Shiraz in his address thanked the staff for reposing faith in him and assured to work for betterment of the College and Staff. The entire election process was carried

out under the supervision of the Election Commissioner, Dr. Nassem Ahmed Malik and under the overall guidance of senior faculty members Dr. Nazakat Hussain.

The new staff secretary was greeted and felicitated with a bouquet of Flowers by staff of the college. The contribution of Ex. Staff Secretary Asif Ajaz Lone, Head Department of Physics also highlighted and appreciated.

Dr. Farooq Ahmed, Principal, GDC Thanna-

mandi congratulated the staff secretary and other office bearers on their unanimous election and hoped that the elected team shall work for the betterment of the College.

Prominent among others present on the occasion were Dr. Ashaq Malik, Dr. Abdul Haque Naimi, Rakesh Puri, Dr. Nazir Ul Islam, Dr. Junaid Ahmed, Dr. Gulshan Rashid Bhat, Anuj Bali, Dr. Ather Aziz Raina, Prof Romy Dar, Dr. Nagina Kouser and Prof Rizwana Kouser.

FROM PAGE 1

Army Captain Martyred, Four militants believed to be gunned down in Doda encounter

The Army, however, maintained on its official X handle that an officer was injured. "Search for the terrorists continues amidst heavy firefight. One officer has been injured while leading the search party. War like stores have been recovered as operations continue," the White Knight Corps said in a post.

The militants crossed into Doda from a forest near Patnitop in adjacent Udhampur district after a brief exchange of fire between security forces and terrorists there, officials said.

According to officials, security forces established contact with the militants around 6 pm in Udhampur on Tuesday. The encounter began about half an hour later and continued intermittently until both sides paused. A cordon was established overnight.

The search was resumed at daylight. At about 7.30 am today, there was a renewed exchange of fire, officials said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh holds important meet on security in J-K; NSA, Army Chief present

terrorists and the security forces in Anantnag.

The encounter broke out during a joint operation launched by the Indian Army, Jammu and Kashmir Police and CRPF in the general area of Kokernag in Anantnag.

Havildar Dipak Kumar Yadav and Lance Naik Praveen Sharma laid down their lives in the line of duty in Anantnag.

Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi and all ranks of the Indian Army paid tribute to Havildar Dipak Kumar Yadav and Lance Naik Praveen Sharma, who lost their lives during the encounter.

In recent months, Jammu has seen an increase in terror attacks, including an assault on an army convoy in Kathua and skirmishes in Doda and Udhampur.

In July, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) reported to the Lok Sabha that 28 people, including civilians and security personnel, were killed in 11 terror-related incidents and 24 counter-terror operations up to July 21 this year.

Last month, Indian Army troops foiled an attack by the Pakistan Border Action Team (BAT) along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kupwara district's Machchal sector. The skirmish resulted in the death of one Pakistani intruder and one Indian Army soldier, while four others, including a major-rank officer, were injured.

High alert, Multi-Tier security in J&K ahead of Independence Day

the Bakshi Stadium in Srinagar city and all other 19 districts of the union territory is a major challenge for the security forces in light of the recent terror attacks mostly in the Jammu division, but also in Anantnag district of Kashmir just four days back.

Security forces are on 24/7 alert and the main focus of police and the forces is the Bakshi Stadium in Srinagar where Lt Governor Manoj Sinha will unfurl the national flag and take a salute at the parade.

All the high-rise structures around the Bakshi Stadium have been taken over

by sharpshooters of police who are using electronic equipment, including drones, access control equipment combined with human intelligence to secure the venue of the main function.

A full dress rehearsal was held on Tuesday at the Bakshi Stadium where Inspector General of Police, Kashmir Zone, V.K. Birdi took the salute at the parade. Contingents of police, security forces and school children took part in the parade.

The IGP Kashmir told reporters that a multi-tier security set has been put in place at Bakshi stadium, the venue of the main Independence Day function in the UT while regulatory barricades have been established at several places as part of the security drill.

"We have made foolproof security arrangements for Independence Day celebrations. We keep all possibilities in mind while drafting a security plan to ensure that everything remains peaceful," he said.

The IGP said the enemy may try to carry out subversive activity, but the security grid has prepared a calibrated plan to ensure that inimical elements do not succeed.

Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, V.K. Bhiduri said that the enthusiasm among the general populace was high ahead of the Independence Day celebrations.

Security forces are conducting surprise checks, and vehicles entering Srinagar are being checked at the 'Nakas' (Checkpost) established on the city outskirts.

In Jammu, the main function is going to be held at the Maulana Azad Stadium where Lt Governor's advisor, R.R. Bhatnagar will take the salute.

Security has been tightened in Jammu for the peaceful celebrations. Vigil is being maintained on the Jammu-Pathankot National Highway to thwart any plans of terrorists to disrupt the celebrations.

Barricades have been set up at many

places, especially at the entry points leading to the Maulana Azad Stadium.

The security agencies are already on alert and have an augmented security grid along the International Border and the LoC.

All the vehicles entering or leaving Jammu city are being frisked, suspicious activities are being monitored and additional Quick Reaction Teams have been deployed on all the vulnerable routes in view of the sensitivity of the situation.

The BSF is on alert along the International Border from Kathua to Akhnoor. Special pickets have come up along the banks of the Tawi River where search and fog lights have been installed to maintain vigil.

Jammu Kashmir Drug Trade: 4,536 arrested, 3,190 cases registered since 2023

while 4,365 kg of drugs and 26,772 pharmaceuticals were incinerated in the first half of 2024.

The government has also targeted the nexus between narcotics and terrorism, resulting in the arrest of 39 individuals linked to narco-terror networks in 19 cases over the past year and a half. To financially disrupt drug trafficking operations, the JK Police have attached properties, including residential houses, land, and vehicles, worth Rs 10.36 crore in 43 NDPS cases since 2023.

The 10th UT-level Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD) meeting recently emphasised intelligence sharing, strict enforcement, and effective investigation to combat drug trafficking. Law enforcement agencies have been urged to leverage information from the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the NIDAAN portal to enhance their

efforts.

Unemployment 'Biggest Curse' under Modi Govt: Kharge

up for 2,216 vacancies for the post of loaders at Mumbai airport. Similar stampede-like scenes were witnessed in Gujarat's Bharuch, where 1,800 people turned up for 10 openings at a private company," he said.

"No amount of whitewashing by the Modi government can change the truth that lakhs of job aspirants have to daily struggle on the road with very few jobs!" the Congress chief said. The BJP's "jumla" of 2 crore jobs per year signifies shameless betrayal to every Indian, Kharge said.

J&K Police gets 50 medals for gallantry, meritorious service on eve of I-Day

(SSP) have been awarded the President's Medal for Distinguished Services. According to details, 31 J&K Police personnel will be awarded medals for gallantry and 17 medals for meritorious services.

Poonch youth drowns while taking bath in Kangan

retrieved and shifted to SDH Kangan where doctors declared him brought dead, reported news agency KNC.

After completing the medico legal formalities, his body was handed over to the family for last rites.

Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner releases patriotic song "Bharat He Hai Mera Watan"

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: On the eve of Independence Day, a new patriotic song titled "Bharat He Hai Mera Watan" was released, featuring lyrics and vocals by Kanwal Peshin, with music composed by Ravi Bhan and recreated by Rajesh Khar Kong Posh.

The song was directed and edited by Abhimanyu Peshin and produced by the Athrot Cultural Foundation, an organization dedicated to preserving and promoting language and culture.

The release was officiated by Dr. Arvind Karwani, the Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner of Jammu and



Kashmir, along with Dr. Rohit Koul, Director and CEO of People's Hut Foundation, Kanwal Peshin, an eminent writer and actor, and Mukesh Yogi, a renowned social activist.

During the event, Dr. Arvind Karwani was

honored by the Athrot Cultural Foundation for his successful organization of this year's Tulmull yatra, where he was presented with a pratima of Mata Kheerbhawani. In his speech, Dr. Karwani lauded the Athrot Cultural Foundation for

its efforts in preserving culture and language among the displaced community and commended Kanwal Peshin for the beautifully written and performed song. He highlighted the song as a tribute from the Kashmiri Pandit community to the

martyrs who fought for the country's independence and as a celebration of the contributions of farmers, security personnel, and the spirit of communal harmony.

The song, with its brilliant video presentation directed by Abhimanyu Peshin, was made available on the Athrot Productions YouTube channel and The Modern Kashmiri Pandits Facebook page, where it was watched live by the audience, including chief guest Dr. Arvind Karwani, at the Canal Head office. The event concluded with a vote of thanks presented by Abhimanyu Peshin, Director of the Athrot Cultural Foundation.

JKRCEA criticizes Govt for handling of issues related to SC, ST, OBC communities

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: The Jammu and Kashmir Reserved Categories Employees Association (JKRCEA) held a press conference to criticize both the central and Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory (JKUT) governments for their handling of issues related to SC, ST, and OBC communities.

The organization accused the ruling dispensation, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, of undermining constitutional rights and benefits for these communities.

JKRCEA leaders condemned the government's policies, highlighting issues such as the erosion of reservation rights, privatization without SC ST OBC representation, and the failure to address their demands for reservation in promotions and proper implementation of various welfare schemes.

They emphasized the lack of response to their demands for a white paper on the supposed benefits claimed by the government.

Prof. G.L. Thapa, Working President of JKRCEA, criticized the ruling party for systematically weakening SCSTOBC communities by ignoring their demands and undermining established rights. He pointed out that recent changes to direct recruitment rosters have made it difficult for SCs to secure positions and promotions. He also accused SCSTOBC leaders of failing



to advocate effectively for their communities and instead supporting unconstitutional decisions.

Mohinder Bhagat, Working General Secretary, added that the BJP's promises to SCSTOBC communities have not been fulfilled over the past decade.

He highlighted issues such as the Supreme Court's advisory on sub-classification and the implementation of the Mandal Commission report. He also criticized the lack of action on reservation in promotions and the vacant position of a Scheduled Caste PSC member.

Sham Bassan, another leader, argued that the current LG government in JKUT and the central government have failed to deliver justice for SCSTOBC communities. He accused the LG administration of poor treatment of SCSTOBCs and warned that further anti-SCSTOBC policies would lead to political repercussions in future elections.

The press conference concluded with a set of demands, including restoration and safeguarding of

reservation in employment and education, including reservations in promotions, reversion of direct recruitment rosters to the previous format, full implementation of the Mandal Commission report and initiation of a caste-based census in JKUT, proper enforcement of the SCST Atrocities Act and protection of land ownership rights, implementation of the SC Component Plan and protection of SCSTOBC employees in their service matters, allocation of land/plots to SCSTOBCs and fixed percentages of housing in government projects, immediate withdrawal of S.O 305 of 2024, which negatively affects the SC community by altering the recruitment roster.

The leaders also expressed their support for the Bharat Bandh call on August 21, 2024, to protest against the sub-classification and creamy layer provisions among SCSTs.

The press conference was attended by several prominent figures, including Prof. Kali Dass, Er. R.C. Bhasin, Er. Pawan Bhagat, and many others.

Priya Sethi releases "Aarti Chandi Mata Machail"



Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Priya Sethi, the former Education Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, on Wednesday, released the "Aarti Chandi Mata Machail" at the Press Club Jammu.

The event was organized by NanKes Vri Productions and featured Priya Sethi as the Chief Guest.

The program was also graced by Tarun Sharma, an actor, director, and President of Nat Manch as well as Head of Cultural Publicity for BJP Jammu & Kashmir; Dharmesh Nargotra, a renowned vocalist; and

Reema Padha, General Secretary of BJP Mahila Morcha J&K, who were the Guests of Honour.

The "Aarti Chandi Mata Machail" was performed by Sooraj Sharma and Nidhi Singh, with music arranged by R. K. Parwana and direction by Rahul Dutta and Tarun Sharma. The lyrics were penned by Krishan Lal Pandita, known for his previous work "Laaj Rakh Deviye Chandi Mata Meriye."

Priya Sethi congratulated Mr. Sooraj Sharma and his team for their commendable work in promoting deities and religious services through their art. She also praised

NanKes Vri Productions and Sharma's previous projects, including "Jai Jai Kaar," "Nar Sewa Narayan Sewa," "Asen Jaana Machail Gran," and "Sarthal Wali Maa," all available on YouTube.

Sanjay Shatri, who attended the event, also acknowledged Sharma's significant contributions to religious upliftment and the arts.

The program was beautifully compared by Nandini Sharma, who also delivered a vote of thanks. The event saw participation from Girdhari Lal, Geeta Rani, Keshav, Vrrishank, and others.

Farooq, Omar conveyed condolences

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah and Vice President Omar Abdullah expressed grief over the passing away of Shah Bibi, wife of Ch. Rehmat Ali former BDC Chairman Nagrota and mother in law of Shamim Begum DDC Member Dansal and conveyed condolences to the bereaved family.

In their messages, Dr Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah prayed for peace to the departed soul and expressed solidarity with other members of the family.

In the condolence message, General Secretary Haji Ali Mohammed Sagar, Dr Sheikh Mustafa Kamaal, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra Additional General Secretaries, Rattan Lal Gupta Provincial President Jammu Province, Sheikh Bashir Ahmed former MLC and Provincial Secretary,

Ayub Malik, Pardeep

Bali Provincial Secretaries, Ajaz Jan former MLA and Provincial President YNC, Babu Rampal former minister and Central Zone President, Bimla Luthra former MLA, Satwant Kour Dogra Provincial President Jammu Women wing, Ankush Abrol Joint Secretary Jammu Province, Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Abdul Gani Teli Chairman OBC Cell, Rakesh Singh Raka, Rita Gupta, Dilshad Malik Vice Presidents Central Zone, Chander Mohan Sharma District President Central Zone, Ragbir Singh Manhas District President Jammu Rural A, Nar Singh President Labor Wing, Harshvardhan Singh President NCSU, Tejinder Singh District President Jammu Urban YNC, Rakesh Sharma Phalwan District President Jammu Rural A YNC, Kuldeep Sharma, Thoru Ram Block President Nagrota, Siraj Din Block President Dansal.

AAI Jammu observes Partition Horrors Remembrance Day

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Airports Authority of India (AAI), Jammu, observed Partition Horrors Remembrance Day today, to commemorate the struggles and sacrifices of those affected by the partition.

The event was graced by the presence of Dr. S. P. Varma, Padma Shri, as the Chief Guest. Dr. Verma addressed the gathering, sharing his insights and reflections on the significance of this day.

Dr. S. P. Varma, Padma Shri and Sanjeev Kumar Garg, Airport Director inaugurated a special exhibition showcasing the history and impact of the partition. The exhibition



aims to raise awareness and promote understanding of this pivotal event in Indian history.

Speaking on the occasion, Sanjeev Kumar Garg emphasized the importance of remembering and learning from the past. He appreciated the efforts of AAI Jammu in organizing this meaningful event and

thanks to Padma Shri Dr. S. P. Varma for sparing his valuable time for this Partition Horrors Remembrance Day.

The event was attended by AAI officials, CISF, JKP, Airlines and stakeholders, who came together to pay tribute to those who suffered during the partition.

SRS condoles death of Army Officer in Doda encounter

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Shri Ram Sena (SRS) UT President, Rajiv Mahajan, expressed his deep condolences on the tragic death of an army officer who was martyred in an encounter in Doda. He paid tribute to the brave soldier, acknowledging

the sacrifice made for the nation, and offered his sympathies to the bereaved family during this difficult time.

Mahajan emphasized the importance of supporting the armed forces and reiterated his commitment to standing with them in their efforts to maintain peace and security in the region.

Excise Range Central Kashmir raids three brick kilns

Top News Report

BUDGAM, Aug 14: On the directions of Excise Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma and under the supervision of Dy Excise Commissioner Executive Kashmir Tazayun Mukhtar and Excise & Taxation Officer Central Kashmir, the officials of Excise Range Central Kashmir raided three brick kilns at Chattergam and Dooniwara in Tehsil B.K. Pora Distt. Budgam.

During the raid, the team recovered 15 litres

of Lahan adjacent to one of the Brick Kilns which was destroyed on spot.

The owners of all the brick kilns were informed about the legal consequences of illicit distillation.

Furthermore, the senior citizens of the locality were also sensitised about the social and health impacts of illicit liquor and were requested that such instances of illicit distillation be brought to the immediate notice of officials of Excise Department.

Central University of Jammu celebrates Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: In a spirited display of national pride and unity, the Central University of Jammu under the patronage of Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Vice Chancellor has actively participated in the Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan, a significant initiative under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. This nationwide campaign, aimed at celebrating India's 78th Independence Day on August 15, 2024, highlights the importance of national unity and the spirit of freedom.

Dr. Ritu Bakshi, Dean Student's welfare, Dr. Sujata Kundan, NSS



Coordinator; Dr. Kiran PO 1 NSS; and Dr. Rajan Badyal, Public Relations Officer, Central University of Jammu, led a dynamic team of NSS volunteers to distribute the national flag (Tiranga) in the nearby village of Suchani today. The initiative was warmly received by the local community, with enthusiastic participation in displaying the national

flag at their homes. The campaign underscores the collective pride and commitment to the nation's values, encouraging every household to join in the Independence Day celebrations. By fostering a deeper connection to the nation's history and freedom fighters, this initiative serves as a tribute to their sacrifices and contributions.

BJP is voice of people. We don't sell sentiments but work for people's welfare: Andrabi

Top News Report

BARAMULLA, Aug 14: BJP National Executive Committee Member & Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board Chairperson Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi today chaired the party convention at Dak Bunglow Baramulla. Manifesto Outreach Committee for Baramulla district met twenty nine delegations from varied spheres of life who gave their feedback

to the Party for upcoming Election Manifesto. North Kashmir Prabhari of the party Mohammad Anwar Khan, Ex MLC Surinder Ambaradar, DDC Member Er Ajiaz Hussain, Prabhari Baramulla M M War, District President BJP Baramulla Raja Waqar, General Secretary Farooq Ahmad & other Morcha Incharges were present on the occasion.

"BJP, unlike other political parties, believes in the power of

people and this mega exercise of getting inputs for party's election document is the endorsement of this spirit of grass root connections and beliefs of the party. Kashmir is enthusiastically participating in this mega reach out," said Dr Darakhshan Andrabi in her address.

She said that BJP's preparedness for upcoming polls is energizing. "BJP is the voice of people. We don't sell sentiments but work

for people's welfare. The dynastic politics has ruined J&K," said BJP leader Dr Andrabi. She said that she was surprised to listen to the rhetoric of the dynasts about resolution of public problems.

"Those parties who are the problem creators in J&K are talking about the solutions now. But BJP has always offered solutions and freed the people of J&K from the politics of bloodshed and exploitation," said Dr Darakhshan.

Khatana listens to Grievances of NYC, Saakshar Bharat Employees, and Unemployed Youth

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: After attentively hearing the demands of unemployed youth and calls for the regularization of NYC and Saakshar Bharat Mission employees, Senior BJP leader and Member of Parliament Er. Gulam Ali Khatana assured the delegations that he would address their concerns with the relevant authorities to seek constructive solutions.

The MP reaffirmed the Modi Government's commitment, stating that he would do his utmost to address the issues raised. "Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji and Home Minister Shri Amit Shah Ji, the NDA government is fully dedicated to serving its citizens. I assure you that your concerns will not go unheard," the MP told the deputations.

On Wednesday, a deputation of unemployed youth met MP Khatana, with a primary demand for age relaxation in the recruitment process for Jammu and Kashmir Police (JKP) Constables and Sub-Inspectors. The deputation highlighted that there has been a considerable gap in the recruitment drives for constable's post, leading to a situation where many aspirants have now exceeded the age limit set by the J&K Government.

The youth expressed their frustration over the lack of recruitment opportunities over the years, emphasizing that many of them had been preparing rigorously for these positions, only to find themselves disqualified due to age constraints. "We have been waiting for years for recruitment to open up, and now, when it finally does, we find ourselves overage. We



urge the government to provide age relaxation for us," one of the deputation members stated.

In a parallel meeting, another deputation comprising members of the National Youth Corps (NYC) sought the regularization of their services. The NYC members, who were engaged on a merit basis back in 2010, stressed that their contributions over the years merit formal recognition through regularization.

The deputation reminded MP Khatana of the support the BJP had extended to their cause when it was in the opposition. "A decade ago, the BJP stood by us during our protests, even at Jantar Mantar. Now that the party is in power, we believe our demand for regularization should be fulfilled without further delay," a deputation member remarked.

The NYC members underscored the critical role they have played in various developmental initiatives and social programs, asserting that their regularization would not only be a just reward for their service but would also bring stability to their lives.

Similarly, employees engaged under the Saakshar Bharat Mission, a Government of India initiative aimed at promoting literacy among non-literate adults, also met MP Khatana to voice their concerns. The deputation demanded the immediate release of their pending

wages and the regularization of their services. Launched in 2009, the Saakshar Bharat Mission, a centrally sponsored scheme under the UPA government, focused on enhancing literacy rates across the country. The employees lamented the delay in the release of their salaries, which has put many of them in financial distress. They also pushed for the regularization of their services, arguing that their work has been instrumental in achieving the mission's goals and should be recognized with formal employment status.

During the meetings, MP Gulam Ali Khatana listened to the concerns and demands of the deputations with keen interest. He assured them that their issues would be taken up with the appropriate authorities for prompt resolution. "Your concerns are valid, and I will ensure that they are brought to the notice of the relevant officials. We will work towards finding a solution that is both fair and timely," the MP assured.

In addition to the organized deputations, numerous individuals also approached MP Khatana to seek his support for their personal grievances. The MP reiterated his commitment to addressing the issues faced by his constituents, promising to advocate for their rights and welfare at the highest levels.

OTD: 17-year-old Sachin Tendulkar announces arrival with maiden India century

On This Day: Sachin Tendulkar scored his maiden century for India back in August 1990 in a Test match against England at the Old Trafford in Manchester.

NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (Agencies): Back in August 1990, Sachin Tendulkar announced his arrival to international cricket after scoring his maiden hundred for India. The Master Blaster, who was only 17 years old back then, played a spectacular knock against England in the second Test of the three-match series at Old Trafford in Manchester. Facing the likes of Devon Malcolm, Angus Fraser and Eddie Hemmings did not bother him.

After losing the opening Test by 247 runs at the Lord's, India found themselves under immense pressure. Tendulkar did not have the best of outings at the Home of Cricket after getting scores of 10 and 27. In the Manchester Test, India again



got into trouble as England scored 519 in their first innings after opting to bat first.

Tendulkar came to their rescue this time around. He scored 68 in the first innings, although India ended up conceding a lead of 87 runs. Chasing a mammoth target of 408, India had to

put in a special effort to avoid going 0-2 down. Sachin put his hands up in crisis and got to his hundred. Batting at No.6, the then youngster scored 119 runs from 189 balls with the help of 17 fours.

India were staring down the barrel with their score at 183

for six following Kapil Dev's dismissal. From there on, Sachin and Manoj Prabhakar put on a partnership of 160 runs for the seventh wicket to save the day for the Indian team. He got support from Prabhakar, who made 67 runs off 128 balls with the help of eight fours.

India went on to lose the series 0-1 after the third Test at the Kennington Oval in London also ended in a draw. Tendulkar had a memorable series after he scored 245 runs from five innings at an average of 61.25 and a strike-rate of 55.80.

23 years later in 2013, Sachin became the first cricketer to play 200 Test matches. Even after 11 years following his retirement, he remains the leading run-scorer in Tests.

Manu hungry for 'many more' medals



NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (Agencies): Ace Indian pistol shooter Manu Bhaker has set her sights on winning multiple medals at the Olympics in the future following her historic feat at the Paris Games.

The 22-year-old scripted history to become the first Indian athlete in post-independence era to win two medals in a single edition of the Games.

Bhaker won a bronze each in the women's 10m air pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team event — in which she had paired with Sarabjot Singh.

She also came close to winning a third bronze in 25m pistol before finishing a

creditable fourth in Paris. No Indian athlete has won more than two individual medals at the Olympics.

"I think we all work hard to win medals. But if that happens (winning more than two individual medals at Olympics) then that would be great. The aim is to work hard and better this performance in the future," Bhaker said.

"(I am) aiming to win many more Olympics medals for India," added Bhaker, who returned to the country after participating in the closing ceremony.

Bhaker had the honour of being India's flagbearer alongside veteran hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh at the closing ceremony.

"Being the flagbearer was the opportunity of a lifetime, I am grateful that I got this opportunity and will cherish this for a lifetime," she said.

"I have a very friendly bond with Sreejesh. I have known him since I was a young kid. He is always very friendly, helpful and kind. He made it a lot easier for me in the closing ceremony."

Bhaker had returned to India last week but had flown back to Paris for the closing ceremony.

Hockey India retires No. 16 jersey in honour of PR Sreejesh

NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (Agencies): Hockey India announced on Wednesday that they would retire the jersey number of legendary goalkeeper P.R. Sreejesh, following his retirement after playing a crucial role in securing India's second consecutive Olympic bronze at the recently concluded Paris Games. The No. 16 jersey, which Sreejesh proudly wore for nearly two decades, will be retired for the senior national team.

Hockey India's Secretary General, Bholu Nath Singh, also revealed that the 36-year-old Sreejesh would be the junior national coach. However, the No. 16 jersey will still be available for junior players. "Sreejesh will groom the next Sreejesh in the junior team, who will wear the No. 16 jersey," Singh remarked during a ceremony honoring the veteran goalkeeper.

Sreejesh, a long-time hero for India, has set an eight-year timeline for himself before con-



sidering a role as the national team coach. He also expressed his ambition to lead India as a coach in the 2036 Olympics. "I want to become a coach. That was always my plan but now there is a question of when. After retirement, family comes first. I need to talk with them if they are OK with this. Now you have to listen to your wife a little bit," Sreejesh told agency.

"The way I wanted is start with the juniors, and Rahul Dravid is an example. It's like you develop a bunch of players, get them into the senior team and let

them follow you," he said.

"I start this year, next in 2025, we have the junior World Cup and in another two years, the senior team will be playing the World Cup. So may be, by 2028, I can produce 20 or 40 players and by 2029, I can have 15-20 players into the senior team and by 2030 almost like 30-35 players in the senior side.

"And 2032, I will be ready for the chief coach's position. If India gets to host the 2036 Olympic Games, I want to be the India coach," Sreejesh added.

Border-Gavaskar Trophy: Can India get a hat-trick in Oz?

Former captain Ponting doesn't think so, saying Australia will avenge two series defeats

DUBAI, Aug 14 (Agencies): Ricky Ponting believes Australia will have a "point to prove" after two straight Test series defeats at home against India and backed the Pat Cummins-led side to win the five-match Border-Gavaskar Trophy 3-1 come November-December.

India, who have returned victorious in both their previous Test assignments Down Under with identical margins of 2-1, will take on the world No. 1 Australia in a five-Test series starting on November 22.

"It's going to be a competitive series. Australia has got a bit of a point to prove against India in Australia on the back of what happened the last the last two series here," Ponting said.

"We are back to (having) five Tests as well, which is the other really important thing about this series. It has only been four Tests the last couple of time. (To have) five Tests, everyone is really excited by that and I don't know if there'd be too many drawn games. I'm obviously going to tip Australia to win and I'm never going to tip against Australia. There will be a draw somewhere and there will be some bad weather some-



where, so I'm going to say 3-1 to Australia," he added.

India and Australia have not played a five-Test series after their bilateral affairs came to be known as the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Before that, in 1991-92, India had toured Australia for a five-Test series.

The former Australia skipper hoped both teams will be deploying full-fledged bowling attacks. "(Mohammed) Shami will be back fit by then, (Mohammed) Siraj we know will be thereabouts somewhere and obviously (Jasprit) Bumrah is going nowhere. Both teams are going to line up really, really strongly," he said.

Ponting backed left-arm seamer Khaleel Ahmed, whom he coached in the IPL at Delhi Capitals, to be a part of India's touring party.

"Someone like Khaleel Ahmed, I think, could find himself on the Test tour. He has just been over in Zimbabwe recently and played that (T20) series over there, but a left-arter would be ideal for them to have in their touring squad," Ponting said.

Fierce rivalry Ponting said the competitiveness between the two teams is quite close to the Ashes rivalry between Australia and England.

"I was a part of it when that really started to grow, when the

rivalry really started to grow, it was right at the back end of my career," Ponting said.

"I've said for the last couple of years now, Australia have always had a fierce rivalry with England, obviously, and a very strong rivalry with South Africa. But I think India is now sitting right on the back of what an Ashes clash is like and probably overtaken the rivalry with South Africa," he added.

Ponting said while Australia's squad looks more or less settled, it remains to be seen if Steve Smith would like to persist being at the opening slot.

"Australia will pretty much pick itself. Probably, the only one question there might be with Australia again, is if (Steve) Smith's the right man to be opening the batting," he said.

"That would be the only query that I can see there. But that was all about obviously bringing Cameron Green back into the side. So I'll rephrase it, not whether Smith's the right man to open the batting but whether he thinks it's the right spot for him. Because if he doesn't think it's the right spot, then they'll make a change and get someone else back up there," Ponting added.

Vinesh Phogat Olympic medal case: why repeated deferring of verdict by court may be good



PARIS, Aug 14 (Agencies): Vinesh Phogat's wait just got longer. The Indian star wrestler had appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) after she was disqualified from the Paris Olympics 2024 women's 50kg wrestling final as she was 100 grams overweight. Vinesh's appeal to CAS was that she was within the permissible weight limit when she qualified for the final and hence was eligible for a shared silver medal. However, the verdict date for the case has been deferred a couple of times now.

On Wednesday, wrestler Vinesh Phogat's Olympic silver medal verdict date was deferred by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) yet again. While earlier it was said that the verdict would come before the Paris Olympics 2024 ended, it has now been deferred for the second time.

The first possible CAS verdict date was August 10, which was then moved

to August 13. Now, the new verdict date is August 16.

Vinesh's legal team has French lawyers Joelle Monlouis, Estelle Ivanova, Habbine Estelle Kim, and Charles Amson who helped her and the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) during the filing of the application. They have been provided to her by the Paris Bar and are handling the case pro bono.

In addition, senior counsels Harish Salve and Vidushpat Singhania were also roped in to help her in the case.

Ahead of the August 13 verdict date for the case, Singhania had explained why the lengthy deliberation by CAS is good news.

"We all believe. Yes, the ad-hoc panel of the CAS has a time limit of 24 hours. The fact that they have extended the verdict deadline more than once means they are thinking about his matter seriously. If the Arbitrator madam is thinking about it, it's good for us," Vidushpat Singhania told agency.

He was honest enough to add that cases in CAS often do not return with positive result.

"I have fought many cases at the CAS in the past. The success rate at CAS is very low. In this matter, we are asking for a landmark decision from the arbitrator. It's a little difficult, but let's hope something big happens," he added.

"Let's all pray for Vinesh. Let's hope she gets a medal. Even if she doesn't get it, she is a champion," Singhania said.

Pakistan Cricket Board to host second Test against Bangladesh without spectators

KARACHI, Aug 14 (Agencies): In a decision reminiscent of the COVID-19 days, the Pakistan Cricket Board has decided to host the second Test against Bangladesh at the National Stadium in Karachi behind closed doors. The PCB said the difficult decision had been taken due to the ongoing construction work at the venue in preparation for the ICC Champions Trophy early next year. "We understand the vital role that our passionate spectators play in cricket, providing inspiration and motivation to our players. However, the health and safety of our fans is our utmost priority," the board said in a statement.

"After careful consideration of all available options, we have decided that the safest course of action is to hold the second Test in front of an empty stadium." The board said as a result of

the decision, ticket sales have been suspended with immediate effect for the second Test which would be played from August 30 to September 3.

"Fans who have already purchased tickets will receive a full refund automatically, with the amount credited to the account details provided at the time of purchase," the board said.

"While we deeply regret any inconvenience this may cause, we want to assure our valued fans that the ongoing stadium upgrades are aimed at enhancing their experience. The renovations are part of our commitment to making the venue more spectator-friendly and preparing it for the Champions Trophy." Pakistan will play two Tests against Bangladesh with the opening match scheduled in Rawalpindi from August 21.

No Jasprit Bumrah in India vs Bangladesh Test series? Report claims big reason



NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (Agencies): After a lengthy break post the Sri Lanka, the Indian cricket team will again assemble next month for the Bangladesh Test series. It is rare for Indian cricketers to get such a long break. But after months of hectic cricket action, the break will be more than welcome for the seniors. The two-Test series against Bangladesh will start a rigorous period of successive Test matches for the Indian cricket team before their big Tour of Australia.

However, according to a report in agency, India's premier fast bowler Jasprit may not be included in the side that will face Bangladesh. The reason being given is the hectic schedule that the Indian team has going ahead. Also, the Bangladesh series is likely to be dominated by spin. Add to it the fact that Mohammed Shami might make a comeback in this series. So, the BCCI selectors may want to give Jasprit Bumrah some extra rest.

Bumrah has often taken breaks in near past due to injury. He even under-

went a surgery in March 2023 for a stress fracture at the back after being out of action since September 2022.

Meanwhile, with some of the India regulars, except pacer Jasprit Bumrah and senior spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, likely to appear in the first round of the Duleep Trophy, the BCCI has decided to shift one of the opening matches from Anantapur to Bengaluru. Senior batters Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma also might get an exemption, and the choice of appearing in the tournament is entirely on them.

The Duleep Trophy was earlier scheduled to kick-off with two sets of first round matches at Anantapur in Andhra Pradesh from September 5, but now one of those games has been shifted to the M Chinnaswamy Stadium here to reduce the logistical inconveniences.

Anantapur is approximately 230 kms away from Bengaluru and the city is not connected via flight.

"The decision has been made to accommodate some of the top players, so that they get a feel of the red-ball cricket ahead of the (Test) series against Bangladesh," a source close to the development told agency.

India are slated to play two Test matches against Bangladesh — from September 19 at Chennai and from September 27 at Kanpur.

While it is up to Rohit and Kohli to play in the event, some other prominent players such as Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, KL Rahul, Shubman Gill, Shreyas Iyer Kuldeep Yadav etc are expected to be available for this tournament fully or partially.

78th Independence Day commemorated at Rich Harvest School

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Rich Harvest School Bari Brahmana Management, Staff and Students celebrated the 78th Independence Day with joy, mirth and dignity. The School Campus adorned with tricolour decorations vibrated with the feelings of patriotism.

The students sang patriotic songs, danced



and presented thought provoking role plays highlighting the Indian Freedom Struggle.

Rich Harvest remains committed to installing the values of patriotism, unity and dedication in its students ensuring that they grow up to be responsible citizens of the nation.

The celebration culminated with the National Anthem.

Har Ghar Tiranga campaign begins in Leh

Top News Report

LEH, Aug 14: The Har Ghar Tiranga campaign was officially launched in Leh by the Chairman/CEC of LAHDC Leh, Tashi Gyalson in the presence of Dy. Chairman, LAHDC Leh, Tsering Angchuk; Deputy Commissioner/CEO, LAHDC Leh, Santosh Sukhadeve; and Senior Superintendent of Police, Shruti Arora. The launch was marked by a symbolic bike rally aimed at encouraging widespread participation in the Har Ghar Tiranga initiative.



Following the rally, the dignitaries joined a vibrant Tiranga Rally with numerous school children and enthusiastic volunteers. The event celebrated the 78th Independence Day and emphasized the importance of the Har

Ghar Tiranga campaign, which runs from August 13 to August 15.

This campaign seeks to inspire every household in Leh Ladakh to display the national flag, fostering unity and patriotism throughout the region.

Chairman LAHDC conducts visit to Dibring village



Top News Report

LEH, Aug 14: The Chairman/Chief Executive Councillor of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Leh, Tashi Gyalson, conducted a one-day visit to Dibring village in the Changthang region. He was accompanied by Secretary Power, Vikram Singh Malik, Deputy Commissioner/CEO LAHDC Leh, Santosh Sukhadeve, and Senior Superintendent of Police, Shruti Arora.

The primary objective of the visit was to engage with key stakeholders regarding the proposed

13 GW Solar Power Project at Dibring, Pang, in the Changthang region.

This ambitious project is aimed at sustainable energy development, potentially transforming the region into a leader in renewable energy production. Councillor, Korzok Constituency, Karma Namdak; Chief Engineer, PDD, Tsewang Paljor; Assistant Commissioner, Revenue Leh, SDM, Nyoma, Senior General Manager PGCIL, Representative from MNRE and all the concerned HoDs were present during the visits.

During the tour, CEC Gyalson convened a

meeting with the concerned stakeholders including local community and had a detailed discussion on the 13 GW Solar Power Project at Dibring, Pang. He emphasized the benefits these projects would bring to the region.

CEC Gyalson also visited the villages and proposed sites to personally assess the location and to check all the pertaining issues and developmental work of the area. All the villagers of Changthang region accorded warm welcomes to all the officials.

In addition to that, CEC visited Samad village and interacted with the public gatherings and gave a patient hearing to all the issues put forth by the villagers.

Assessing the grievances raised by the villagers, CEC instructed all the concerned officials to look into the matter and further assured his assistance to address the demands.

"Har Ghar Tiranga" Campaign in Jammu West

BJP leaders installs Tiranga at Houses of Booth Presidents

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Under the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign, BJP leaders installed the Tiranga at the homes of Booth Presidents in Ward No. 29, Jammu West.

Leading the initiative were Braham Jyot Satti (Incharge BJP OBC Morcha Jammu Kashmir), Bawa Sharma (Senior Leader), Surinder Choudhary (Former Councillor), Kewal Verma (State Secretary OBC), Sanjay Verma (Mandal President OBC), Renu Choudhary (Incharge Har Ghar Tiranga), Kamal Kishore Pammi (Booth President), Tarun Sharma (Booth President), and



other notable figures.

The rally, a pedestrian march through the streets of Ward 29, saw a massive turnout. Participants chanted slogans in support of India and the BJP, emphasizing the party's commitment to national

development and security.

Leaders spoke about the BJP's numerous development projects in Jammu and Kashmir, attributing them to the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. They

highlighted that under his leadership, Jammu and Kashmir is experiencing new developmental milestones.

Braham Jyot reiterated the BJP's "Nation First" ideology, describing it as the best policy for India and its citizens. He stated, "Tiranga is our pride, and we can do anything for its safe keeping with full valor." He also emphasized the party's dedication to the welfare of the public and the importance of various central government schemes, urging people to take full advantage of these initiatives.

In his address, he declared, "The BJP is a party of patriots. Many of

our great leaders have sacrificed their lives for our motherland, India. We regularly organize social programs infused with patriotic sentiment." He reassured attendees that the BJP is committed to the public's betterment and is ready to assist all segments of society. "If anyone needs help, they can contact us, and we will provide the necessary support," he said.

The rally concluded with the assertion that the BJP remains the only political party that actively promotes national slogans like "Vande Mataram" and "Bharat Mata ki Jai," and consistently works in the nation's interest.

Sayash Bhagat of DPS Jammu wins gold medal in District Rifle Shooting C'ship

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Sayash Bhagat (IV-C), a student of Delhi Public School (DPS) Jammu brought laurels to the school and his parents by winning gold medal and securing 1st position in 13th Jammu District Rifle Shooting Championship organized by Jammu District Rifle Association held at AIM 10X Shooting Academy, Jammu from 13-14 July,



2024. Sayash participated in 177 Air Pistol Sub-Youth category. He has also received merit cum

participation certificate.

The management of DPS Jammu under the esteemed leadership of Hon'ble President-RCT, Ajatshatru Singh, Pro VC-Ritu Singh, Director-S.S. Sodhi along with Principal-DPS Jammu, Ruchi Chabra and staff congratulated Sayash and his parents for the achievement.

They also extended their best wishes to him for all his future endeavours.

Bharat Vikas Parishad facilitates Budha Amarnath Yatra devotees at Kameshwar temple in Akhnoor

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: On the seventh day of the Budha Amarnath Yatra 2024, the Bharat Vikas Parishad Kameshwar Shakha Akhnoor facilitated the Yatra devotees at the Kameshwar temple in Akhnoor.

The event included distributing prasad in the form of fruit and organizing a medical camp in collaboration with the Ayurvedic Medical College Akhnoor and Sub District Hospital Akhnoor.

Over 400 Yatra devotees received prasad, and nearly 400 devotees were provided with first aid and basic medicines. The program was organized under the supervision of Romesh Sharma (Orga-

nizing Secretary of Prant) and Dr. Tilak Raj Gupta (President Kameshwar Shakha Akhnoor), along with other key members, including Rakesh Gupta (Treasurer), Vijay Kumar Sharma (Secretary), and Sat Pal Sharma (Chief Patron). Respected citizens of Akhnoor, such as Pawan Sharma, Ashok Sharma, Ved Kumar, Raman Gupta, and Ashok Gupta, were also present.

The initiative was supported by the contributions of the Bharat Vikas Parishad Kameshwar Shakha Akhnoor members, who collectively ensured the success of this seva activity, highlighting the community's dedication to the spiritual journey of the pilgrims.

GDC R S Pura hosts Intra-College Rangoli Competition

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 14: Imagination is the spark that ignites the fire of creativity. Rangoli is a traditional form that brightens up any occasion.

In order to provide a platform to the students of the college the NSS unit in collaboration with Cultural Committee of the college conducted a Rangoli competition as part of the Fifteen days long Independence Day celebration under the Patronage of Prof. (Dr.) Preetpal Kour, Principal of the college.

Students of the college participated actively and created beautiful patterns on the floor on the theme of Independence Day. They enthusiastically competed in groups



and designed the theme that was in honor of our Independence Day. Their designs ranged from peacocks, flowers to the maps. The judges had a tough time picking the best.

In the said competition Team A secured first position, Team B and D clinched second position and Team C bagged third

position.

Prof. (Dr.) Preetpal Kour, Principal of the college appreciated the efforts of the students and said, "This Rangoli competition was a great way to remember and celebrate our Independence Day, and also a great chance for students to explore different elements of creativity.

She further added that organizing such events help students to remain in close touch with their culture and also express their ideas of nationalism. The event motivated our students to work in groups and reach a common creative goal.

The observers of the event were Dr. Neena Gupta, HOD English,

Prof. Shifali Abrol, Associate Professor Zoology and Dr. Kiran Pathania, Assistant Professor English. The faculty members who Co-ordinate the event were Dr. Hari Singh, Prof. Jai Mala Takhur, Prof. Vijeeta Anand, Dr. Sunil Kumar Mangoch and Dr. Rakesh Kalotra.

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