

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 01, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



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BRIEFLY

Pampore resident found dead in Nowgam Investigation underway: Officials

SRINAGAR, Dec 1 (Agencies): The body of a man, hailing from Pampore was found near the riverbanks at Nowgam area of central Kashmir's Srinagar district on Sunday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the body of a man was spotted by passersby, who then informed the police accordingly.

He said a police team rushed to the scene and took the body into custody. The deceased was identified as Mudasir Ashraf Dar, son of Mohammad Ashraf Dar of Nambalbal, Pampore.

Moreover, the investigations have been initiated.

Two drug peddlers arrested in Srinagar with contraband substances

SRINAGAR, Dec 1 (Agencies): Continuing its relentless efforts to curb the menace of drugs, Police in Srinagar have arrested two drug peddlers and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

A Spokesperson said that Police at a checkpoint established at Barthana, a vehicle (Alto) bearing registration number JK01J 7081 was intercepted with two persons on board. They have been identified Arif Ahmad Sheikh son of Lateef Ahmad Sheikh resident of Barthana Qamarwari and Asif Ahmad Sheikh son of Ab Razaq Sheikh resident of Babapora Barthana. During search, 628 grams of Charas and 650 grams of Cannabis Powder were recovered from their possession. Subsequently, they have been arrested and the vehicle used in the commission of crime has also been seized.

"Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 136/2024 has been registered at PS Parimpora and investigation has been initiated", he said.

We urge the common masses that if you witness drug peddling or any other crime anywhere near you, feel free to contact the

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BSF soldiers safeguarded the honor, ambitions of Bharat: Amit Shah

NEW DELHI, Dec 1 (Agencies): Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday greeted the Border Security Force (BSF) on its raising day and said that the soldiers of the Central Armed Police Force stand as a resolute shield, safeguarding the honour and aspirations of India with unwavering determination.

Shah took to X to share his wishes to the border guarding force, which is responsible for guarding 3,323 km of India-



Pakistan and 4,096 km of India-Bangladesh border, on the event pointing that the courage, selflessness, and willingness of BSF personnel to make the

ultimate sacrifice epitomize the spirit of service to the nation.

Shah said that the indomitable valour and sacrifices of BSF personnel have not only

fortified India's borders but also inspired generations of patriots to uphold the ideals of a flourishing and secure nation.

"Raising day greetings to the personnel of the BSF and their families. The soldiers of the @BSF_India have safeguarded the honor and the ambitions of Bharat with the fiercest determination, never thinking twice to lay down their lives for it. Their valor and sacrifices are

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BJP appoints Tarun Chugh as Supervisor for 'Sangthan Parv' in Five South Indian States



NEW DELHI, Dec 1 (Agencies): The Bharatiya Janata Party has appointed National General Secretary Tarun Chugh as the supervisor for the 'Sangthan Parv'

in five key South Indian states.

The states include Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, and Lakshadweep to complete the party's mem-

bership campaign and conduct elections from the Mandal level up to the state level.

Following a three-day tour of Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh, Chugh arrived in Kerala to begin his responsibilities.

He has been entrusted with overseeing the organizational activities in these states, ensuring the effective implementation of the membership drive and the smooth conduct of internal

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Preparations underway for Ice Skating Season in Sonamarg



SRINAGAR, Dec 1 (Agencies): Preparations for the upcoming ice skating season are in full swing in the Sonamarg area of Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. Under the lead-

ership of Gh. Mohammad Bhat (JKAS), CEO of the Sonamarg Development Authority (SDA), efforts are being made to create an unforgettable winter experience for both locals and tourists.

This initiative, which aims to promote ice skating as a winter sport, builds on the success of last year's inaugural ice skating event organized by the SDA. The event marked Sonamarg's debut in the world of ice skating, with a special focus on training local youth, particularly boys, to engage in this exciting sport.

The positive impact of the initiative has been widely felt in the local community. Many residents are thrilled at the growing opportunities ice skating is bringing to

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Commercial LPG cylinder prices hiked by Rs 16.5, domestic remained unchanged

NEW DELHI, Dec 1 (Agencies): Oil marketing companies have raised the prices of commercial LPG gas cylinders with immediate effect.

The rate of 19 KG commercial LPG gas cylinders has been increased by Rs 16.50 with effect from today.



In Delhi, the retail sale price of a 19 kg commercial LPG cylinder is Rs 1,818.50 from today. Prices of 5 KG Free Trade LPG cylinders have also increased by Rs 4.

Prices of 14.2 KG domestic cylinders remain unchanged.

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Nearly 3,500 projects completed under PMGSY in J&K

JAMMU, Dec 1 (Agencies): Nearly 3,500 projects, including 217 bridges, have been completed under the centrally sponsored Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) over the past two decades in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Sunday.

The information was given at a meeting chaired by Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Amit Shukla here to conduct

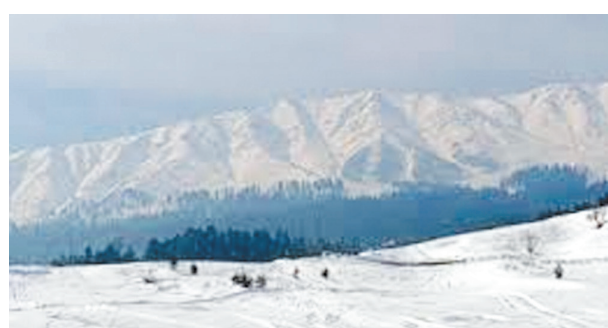


a comprehensive review of the implementation of the PMGSY in the Union territory. The review focused

on expediting project completion, ensuring adherence to quality standards and

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Snowfall intensifies cold in Kashmir



SRINAGAR, Dec 1 (Agencies): After snowfall on higher reaches the night temperature dropped significantly and triggered cold weather conditions across the Kashmir valley on Sunday, officials said.

The accumulation of snow has also shut the strategic Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumri road connecting Ladakh, Gurez-Bandipora and Sinthan roads temporarily, traffic officials said. They said the snow clearance opera-

tion is under way to make these roads traffic worthy.

The Meteorological Centre predicted the weather will remain partly cloudy on Sunday with the possibility of light rain/light Snow over the higher reaches and at the isolated places of Jammu and Kashmir.

It said a weak Western disturbance (WD) is likely to hit and can cause light rain and light snow over the higher reaches and at the scattered places towards late evening of

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Gupshup
Restaurant & Homestay / Guest House
Air-Conditioner Rooms with attach Bathroom
Location like Dalhousie

Room No: 1

Room No: 2

Room No: 3

Room No: 4

RESTAURANT

Situated at Ban, Bantalab, Old National Highway Road Nagrota, Jammu.
Contact for Kitty Parties, Birthday Parties and other parties
Contact: 9086072548. Email: gupshupjammu@gmail.com

Mehbooba raises concern over rising communal tensions, neglect of developmental priorities

JAMMU, Dec 1 (Agencies): People's Democratic Party (PDP) president and former chief minister J&K, Mehbooba Mufti on Sunday expressed concerns over rising communal tensions and the neglect of developmental priorities.

Drawing parallels with 1947, she accused the government of fostering division, alleging attempts to demolish mosques to search for temples and communalizing spaces like Ajmer Sharif Dargah.



She criticized the lack of jobs, poor infrastructure, and questioned electoral integrity, citing discrepancies in voting percentages and results. Comparing India's treatment of minorities to Ban-

gladesh, she warned against compromising the nation's secular fabric. Mufti's remarks have sparked sharp political reactions across the spectrum.

KPDCL working on revised power curtailment schedule, says Div Com Kashmir

SRINAGAR, Dec 1 (Agencies): Amid unending unscheduled power cuts in valley in the ongoing winter season, the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri said on Sunday that dry water sources have affected power supply in Kashmir region and authorities at KPDCL are working upon revised power curtailment schedule to deal with the crisis.



working on a revised curtailment schedule to ensure minimal disruptions. He said the power cuts will be fewer in the ongoing winter season than the previous year. "A harsh winter is expected this year, and we are requesting consumers to cooperate with us, especially during transformer

breakdowns, and crude instruments shouldn't be used," he said. He said the administration has improved power supply for this winter while extensive preparations in anticipation of La Niña conditions are in place. He said they had already an idea that La Niña was coming and that preparations have been better since last year. "We already had an idea that La Niña was coming, and our preparations have been good since last year," Divisional Commissioner Kashmir said.

Police book 10 notorious drug peddlers under NDPS Act in Srinagar

SRINAGAR, Dec 1 (Agencies): Continuing its crackdown against the drug trafficking, Police in Srinagar booked and arrested ten notorious drug peddlers under the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (PIT-NDPS Act).

"The notorious drug peddlers namely Rizwan Bashir Dhobi, son of Bashir Ahmad Dhobi, resident of Sakidafar Safakadal (at present Grid Colony Srinagar); Parvaiz Ahmad Bhat, son of Noor Mohammad Bhat, resident of Karnabal Takanwari Pora; Owais Hussain Mir, son of Sajad Hussain Mir, resident of Tangbagh, Nawpora; Nadeem Hussain Bhat, son of Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat, resident of Batwara; Sheikh Jibrin Nisar, son of Nisar Ahmad Sheikh, resident of Batawara; Raqib Lateef Bhat, alias Amir son of Mohammad Lateef Bhat, resident of Bhat Mohalla, Aloochoibagh; Abdul Ahad Bhat, son of Mohammad Sultan Bhat, resident of Banpora, Batamalo; Moin Khan alias Moin, son of Ghulam Hassan Khan alias Mama, resident of Tengpora Bypass; Sajad Ahmad Beigh alias Boya, son of Late Abdul Hamid Beigh, resident of Madeena Colony,

Aloochoibagh Sector B; and Arshid Ahmad Mir, son of Nazir Ahmad Mir, resident of Baghi Jogi Lanker, Rainawari; have been booked under PIT-NDPS Act after obtaining the formal detention orders from Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir on the basis of dossiers prepared by Srinagar police against them," reads a statement. It reads, consequently, these drug peddlers were detained and subsequently lodged in Central Jail Kot-Balwal, Jammu and District Jails of Bhaderwah, Udhampur and Kathua. "Pertinent to mention here that these drug peddlers have been involved in the peddling of narcotics among the youth of Srinagar on an alarming scale. Besides, they were also involved in several NDPS Act cases of various police stations of Srinagar. Despite several NDPS Act cases registered against them, they didn't mend their ways after getting bailed out from courts and were brazenly promoting drugs among the youth of the valley, especially in Srinagar, through their illegal narcotics network. Police have also set into motion the process to attach their properties under the provisions of PIT-NDPS Act," it reads further.

Dr Varun Suthra appointed as FIVB Commission member

SRINAGAR, Dec 1 (Agencies): Marking India's rising global presence in sports administration, Dr. Varun Suthra has been appointed as a member of the prestigious FIVB Communications Commission. This appointment was approved by the FIVB Board of Administration during its first meeting for the 2024-2028 Olympic cycle, following the 39th FIVB World Congress.

The Fédération Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB), the apex governing body for volleyball worldwide, represents 222 member countries and plays a pivotal role in the global development of the sport. The FIVB's commissions and councils provide guidance in critical areas such as coaching, legal frameworks, medical science, and communication strategies. Dr. Suthra's

appointment to the Communications Commission underscores his exceptional skills and commitment to fostering international collaboration in the realm of sports. Expressing his gratitude on this occasion, Dr. Suthra acknowledged the invaluable guidance and support of Dr. Achyuta Samanta, the former president of the Volleyball Federation of India. He stated, "This achievement would not have been possible without the inspiration and encouragement of Dr. Achyuta Samanta. His vision and unwavering support have shaped my journey and enabled me to contribute meaningfully to the global volleyball movement. I am deeply grateful for his trust and mentorship." In his official appointment letter, FIVB Presi-

Authorities must engage with stakeholders before proceeding with a railway line to Pahalgam: Altaf Bukhari

SRINAGAR, Dec 1 (Agencies): Jammu & Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP) president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari on Sunday urged the authorities to engage with all stakeholders regarding the proposed Anantnag-Bijbehara-Pahalgam rail project. Jammu and Kashmir tourism



land—mostly orchards and agricultural plots—are small landowners." He added, "Experts have also raised concerns about the environmental impact of the project, as it involves laying the railway line through fertile farmland and forested areas.

Above all, there has never been a public demand for a railway line to Pahalgam. The concerned authorities must engage with all stakeholders before making any decisions regarding this matter. No decision should be imposed on the people."

He stated that the affected individuals, who stand to lose their land due to this project, are dissatisfied, while environmental experts have also raised concerns as the project passes through fertile lands and forested areas.

Bukhari wrote on his X handle: "People whose land falls under the proposed Anantnag-Bijbehara-Pahalgam (77.5 km) rail project are unhappy and have resorted to protests. Concerns have grown, particularly since the tender for the Final Location Survey (FLS) for this railway line was issued. Most of the affected farmers, who stand to lose their

DC Srinagar flags-off JK Divyang Women's Cricket Team for Umang Cricket Tournament in Bhopal

SRINAGAR, Dec 1: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat today flagged-off JK Divyang Women's Cricket Team for their participation in the Umang Cricket Tournament organized by Gauravdeep Welfare Society under the Divyang Cricket Control Board of India (DCCBI) in Bhopal from December 4 to 6, 2024.

Speaking on the flagging-off ceremony, the DC lauded the efforts of the Chotay Taray Foundation for organising the event symbolizing their dedication to fostering opportunities for Divyang women in sports. While interacting with the players, the DC extended his best wishes to the team for their success in the tournament. He said that such events provide an opportunity to the participant players to showcase their talent, determination and sportsmanship.

The JK Divyang Women's Cricket Team has been sponsored by Chotay Taray Foundation to empowering persons with special abilities through sports and inclusivity. Arjumand Makhdoomi Founder of the Chotay Taray Foundation and other concerned were present on the occasion.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA UNION TERRITORY JAMMU & KASHMIR
Office of Executive Engineer, Mechanical Division, Rajouri
Tele-fax: +91-1962-295093, Email: eemedrajouri@gmail.com

Notice Inviting Tender

On behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K, Bids are invited by Executive Engineer, Mechanical Division Rajouri e- Tendering mode from reputed firms/ contractors for undertaking the work as per SBD/BOQ:

S. No	e-NIT No	Description of work	Cost of tender document(Rs)	Time of completion	Tender opening authority
1.	MHDR/Tech/2024-25/39 Dated: 27-11-2024 Due on:03-12-2024	Fencing of G.I Wire Mesh Infront Of Sub Divisional Office Of Mechanical & Hospital Sub Division II Poonch (River Side).	500.00	20 days	Executive Engineer Mechanical And Hospital Division Rajouri.

The e-NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, terms & conditions, Bill of Quantities can be seen / downloaded from the J&K Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in

All other information regarding the e-NIT can be had from the office of the undersigned on any working day during the working hours before due date.

DIP/J-7564/24

Sd/
Executive engineer
Mechanical and Hospital Division
Rajouri

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL IRRIGATION CONST. DIVISION
KRISHNA NAGAR, JAMMU. Email: xenmiedjmu@gmail.com
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
e-NIT NO. MICD/J/ 50 Dated:28/11/2024 Due on:5/12/2024

Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Construction Division Krishna Nagar, Jammu, on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K UT, invites tenders by e-tendering mode from registered firms/ reputed workshop owners doing similar nature of works having valid PAN No. and GST No. for below mentioned work. The bidding process shall be completed online in two covers viz. Cover 'A' -Tender fee and Bid Security Declaration Form, fulfillment of prequalification criteria, technical specifications and acceptance to terms and conditions of the tender. Cover 'B' - Financial Bid in the prescribed BOQ.

S.no.	Name of Work	EMD	Performance Security	Cost of tender document	Period of completion	Validity of Rates
1.	Restoration of Electrical machinery of LIS Langar Nowshera damaged due to flooding in month of August 2024 with allied works	Rs 7500.00	3% of the contract value of L1	Rs.200.00	10 Days	120 days

Key points of tender

- Bidding documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website <http://www.jktenders.gov.in> from 28/11/2024 (05.00PM onwards).
- The Bid shall be deposited on the web site <http://www.jktenders.gov.in> from 28/11/2024 (05.00PM onwards) to 05/12/2024 (Upto 12.00PM).
- The cover "A" containing Tender fee, Bid Security Declaration Form & prequalification/ technical bids shall be opened online on 05/12/2024 (02.00PM) in the Office of the Executive Engineer Mechanical Irrigation Construction Division, Jammu. In case of holiday or if the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of Cover 'A' the same shall be opened on the next working day or any other convenient day.
- Cover B containing the financial bids in the prescribed BOQ shall be opened after evaluation of the opened technical bids.
- Bids must be accompanied with EMD that should be pledged in favour of Executive Engineer Mechanical Irrigation construction Division Jammu in the form of CDR/FDR and shall have to be valid for 120 days along with copy of the cost of tender document as mentioned in the e NIT (Notice Inviting Tender). The cost of downloaded tender document shall be in the form of treasury challan favouring Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Construction Division, Jammu by crediting the requisite charge to MH: 0702 (Revenue). The firm claiming any discount/rebate shall attach the relevant supporting document/certificate to the effect. Moreover, all the participating bidders must send EMD, tender fee and other tender documents in original before/on due date i.e.5/12/2024, by hand, post or courier, failing which the bidder/bidders may be barred for participating further in tendering process.
- The complete bidding process will be ONLINE.
- Lowest bidder will submit the performance security in the shape of Bank Guarantee/CDR/FDR of any scheduled bank equal to 3% of the contract value in addition to the EMD amount along with Tender fee and other relevant documents after opening of financial bid online within 3 days. No separate intimation about opening of financial bids will be sent by this office, case the original documents are not submitted by the lowest bidders after opening of financial bid, the bidder will not be allowed to participate in any further tendering process in the division.
- The original documents submitted by the L1 should be the same as uploaded online (scanned copies).
- The bids shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids. If any bidder/tenderer withdraws his bid/tender before the said period, makes any modification in the terms and conditions of the bid the earnest money shall stand forfeited.
- All other terms and conditions can be downloaded from the website <http://www.jktenders.gov.in>.
- The bidder is advised to visit the site. The bidder should be well versed with the site conditions, distance, head load and other related difficulties to be faced during execution of work.

No: MICD/J/1241-43
Dated:28/11/2024

DIP/J-7513/24

Sd/
Executive Engineer
Mechanical Irrigation Construction
Division Jammu

EDITORIAL

DISASTER
PREPAREDNESS

Disaster preparedness is a critical aspect of managing potential hazards, minimizing damage, and ensuring the safety and well-being of individuals, communities, and entire regions. It involves proactive planning, resource allocation, and public education to effectively respond to emergencies, be they natural or human-made. By strengthening disaster preparedness, societies can mitigate the adverse effects of disasters, reduce loss of life, and recover swiftly when disasters strike.

A disaster is any event or series of events that cause widespread disruption, destruction, and distress to a community. Disasters can be classified into natural and human-made categories. Natural disasters include hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, wildfires, droughts, and tsunamis, while human-made disasters include industrial accidents, chemical spills, nuclear accidents, and acts of terrorism.

Disaster preparedness involves a set of actions aimed at reducing the impact of these events. It focuses on three main stages: prevention, response, and recovery. Prevention involves efforts to reduce the likelihood of disasters occurring, response encompasses immediate actions taken to mitigate their effects, and recovery refers to the long-term process of rebuilding communities after a disaster.

The first step in disaster preparedness is understanding the risks faced by a community. A comprehensive risk assessment evaluates the potential hazards in a specific region and considers factors like geography, climate, infrastructure, and population density. For example, communities in coastal areas may need to prepare for hurricanes or tsunamis, while those in earthquake-prone zones must develop earthquake-resistant structures and evacuation plans. Once the risks are identified, disaster preparedness plans should be developed at local, regional, and national levels. These plans should outline procedures for evacuation, communication, resource management, and medical care. Plans must be regularly updated to reflect new risks and advancements in technology.

Building resilient infrastructure is a crucial aspect of disaster preparedness. This includes constructing buildings that can withstand earthquakes, floods, or high winds, ensuring proper drainage systems to prevent flooding, and establishing emergency shelters. Moreover, local authorities must stockpile essential resources such as food, water, medicines, and first-aid supplies. Efficient transport networks are vital to facilitate evacuation and the delivery of emergency supplies. In addition to physical infrastructure, technological resources such as early warning systems, emergency communication networks, and disaster management software are indispensable for providing timely information during a crisis.

One of the most effective ways to mitigate the impact of a disaster is through public awareness and education. Communities should be regularly educated about the risks they face and how to respond to different types of disasters. This can be achieved through workshops, school programs, public service announcements, and social media campaigns. People should be trained in first-aid, fire safety, and basic survival techniques, such as how to evacuate a building or find shelter during a storm. In addition, individuals and families should have emergency plans in place, including designated meeting spots, communication methods, and supply kits.

Regular training and simulation exercises are crucial for testing the effectiveness of disaster preparedness plans. These exercises allow first responders, emergency services, and community members to practice their roles in a controlled environment, improving coordination and efficiency during actual disasters. Simulated scenarios—such as earthquake drills or flood evacuations—can identify gaps in response strategies and highlight areas that need improvement. By simulating the impact of disasters, communities can be better prepared to handle real-world events and reduce chaos during an emergency.

Disaster preparedness requires collaboration between multiple stakeholders, including local governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community groups, and the private sector. Emergency services must work together to provide timely assistance, while NGOs play a critical role in offering relief and recovery support. International cooperation may also be necessary in the event of large-scale disasters, as seen in the aftermath of events like the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami or the 2010 Haiti earthquake. Governments must establish clear coordination mechanisms to ensure that resources are used effectively and that the response is organized and efficient.

Disaster preparedness should also be viewed through the lens of sustainable development. By integrating disaster risk reduction into long-term planning, societies can create environments that are more resilient to future disasters. This includes making informed decisions about land use, urban planning, and environmental conservation. For instance, protecting forests and wetlands can reduce the severity of floods, while building homes in safer areas can minimize the risk of damage from earthquakes or landslides.

(World AIDS Day December 1): Prevention from AIDS is possible only with information

By: Avnish longowal

World AIDS Day is celebrated every year on 1 December. The purpose of celebrating this day is to make people aware of HIV and AIDS so that they can avoid infection of this dangerous disease. According to a report of the World Health Organization, 37.9 people around the world are suffering from AIDS, according to the AIDS Society of India, the total number of AIDS patients in India is around 2.35 million. The number of AIDS patients is increasing every day. This day is celebrated on 1 December to make people aware about AIDS infection and disease globally. Theme of World AIDS Day 2024

in the year 2024 its theme is "Adopt the right path", which highlights the

important role of protecting and promoting human rights in the fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The World Health Organization had announced to celebrate World AIDS Day at national and international level in the year 1988. During this time, about 85,000 to 1.5 lakh people are suffering from HIV, which was the biggest cause of AIDS. Within decades, this disease increased rapidly and about 34 million people were affected by HIV. It came in the year 1981, during this time about 25 people lost their lives due to the disease, keeping this in mind, the World Health Organization had announced to celebrate AIDS Day on 1 December every year to make people aware about this dreadful disease, educate them and protect them from this disease. AIDS Day is celebrated every

year at the international level, in the last few years the number of AIDS patients has decreased which is a good news, symptoms of AIDS

If we talk about the symptoms of AIDS, then some signs are seen shortly after this virus enters your body. Initially, symptoms like high fever, sweating in the body, fatigue, vomiting, diarrhea, itching in the body etc. are seen in the infected person. If it is not treated in time, then it takes its serious form, due to which people also lose their lives. In such a situation, if you have ever had unprotected sex or have been hospitalized due to any disease and these symptoms are seen in your body, then you should immediately get tested for AIDS. Success of Red Ribbon

The government established the National AIDS Control Program

(NACP) to deal with HIV/AIDS in India. The Red Ribbon Club has been largely successful in creating awareness about AIDS through its awareness campaign. Institutions, schools and colleges are playing a leading role in this by becoming part of various campaigns from time to time to create awareness among the society.

Jai hind
Avnish longowal
State awardee
District Barnala
Punjab
7888346465

Don't Search Shivling beneath every mosque?

By: Omkar Dattatray

The title of this write up has not been selected and given by this author but by no less a man than RRS chief called in Saffron terminology as Sarsangchalak Shri Mohan Bhagwat Ji. His words matter more and has great importance and influence among Hindus. And mind this appeal to majority community of Hindus at this juncture and socio-political scenario is most apt as well as relevant. Tolerance and Sarva Dharam Sambhava is the cardinal doctrine and principle of this land and its culture and it has in independent India found expression in what is called in constitution as secularism whose incorporation in Indian constitution in 1976 by 42 amendment to constitution has now been upheld by the Supreme Court of India, though one can opine that there was no need to have word secular in the preamble of the constitution as India was already more than secular as the religious scriptures of Bharat talked of equal respect to all religions and so even if there would not have been explicit incorporation of word secular in constitution, our country still will be a secular and plural land with tenets of tolerance and equal respect to all religious faiths. Mohan Bhagwat recently stated that there is no need to search for a Shivling in every mosque. RSS chief stated it in Nagpur the head office of RSS. He said there is no need to rake up more controversies over places of worship. He stressed that even the Gyanvapi mosque issue can be resolved amicably by Hindus and Muslims. Bhagwat made this important and most relevant observation while addressing RSS workers passing out from their third training course which takes place in Nagpur annually. He said that the RSS had taken part in the Ayodhya temple campaign due to

certain very important reasons. It was also made clear that RSS would not be part of any more new movements. There is no need to raise fresh disputes every day. It is a historical fact that invaders took to breaking down temples to crush the morale of Hindus and also create impression among newly converted Muslims. Bhagwat said Muslims of India are the descendants of Hindus and even Kshatras, who were converted to a different faith. He also said that Hindus while raising any such issues should understand that Muslims are their own people whose faith changed. Bhagwat said that the Gyanvapi dispute involves some issues of faith and the court's decision on it should be accepted by all, but also there was no need to find a Shivling in every mosque and start a new dispute every day. Parliament of India in 1991 had passed an important act called places of worship Act 1991 and this law has great bearing on the Hindu-Muslim unity and communal harmony and amity. The fundamental objective of the act is to preserve the religious character of any place of worship as it was on August 15, 1947, when India attained freedom at least political. This implies an end on converting any place of worship from one religion to another. The Places of Worship Act 1991 was enacted to freeze the status of religious places as they existed on August 15, 1947, and prohibits the conversion of any place of worship. The law was passed by parliament when Congress was in power at the centre. This law seems loaded against Hindu majority as it is their places of worship which had been demolished in the past by Muslim invaders and at their place erected mosques at hundreds of places. But it is also true that if new and new issues are raked and raised by the Hindus, it will create animosity between Hindus and Muslims. It may also give rise to disintegration

of the country and will also lead to civil war like conditions in the country and hence the majority community should not know rake and raise new claims over the mosques across the country. Nation first is the appropriate slogan of our beloved prime minister Narendra Modi. It means that nation should be the first priority of any Indian belonging to any faith and religion. We should protect the unity, social cohesion, inter-faith unity and mutual brotherhood at any cost and also work for strengthening it further as it is badly needed for the unity of the nation. Therefore no new issues regarding places of worship should be raked and raised every new day and if it is done, it will be detrimental for the social cohesion and national unity. Both the communities—Hindus as well as Muslims should show utmost restraint and patience. Muslims should show magnanimity and offer Gyanvapi structure at Kashi & mosque at Krishna Janambooni to Hindus and the Hindus on their part should promise to not lay claim on any other mosque across the country. Thus both Muslims and the big brother Hindus should show broadmindedness and sagacity and show utmost restraint and do nothing which will create animosity between the two communities. There is a wrong impression in the society and among Muslims that RSS is a communal and extremist organization and now it has become crystal clear that it is not communal as its chief has asked Hindus not to search Shivling beneath every mosque. Besides, RSS involves itself in social work and voluntary help to the countrymen irrespective of the religious affiliation and it makes no discrimination while offering any aid in emergencies and natural calamities. However the Places of Worship Act, 1991 is a piece of Indian law that has been the subject of various controversy since its introduction. The Act, enacted in the aftermath of Ayodhya controversy

,intended to avoid repeated religious confrontations over places of worship. The fundamental objective of this act is to preserve the religious character of any place of worship as it was on August 15, 1947, when India attained freedom. This implies an end on converting any place of worship from one religion to another. The act also prohibits court interventions in problems concerning the religious nature of such places. The Act has been a subject of much debate and criticism. Hindu proponents oppose the law and they argue it unfairly restricts the rights of Hindus, Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs to reclaim their places that were allegedly converted to other religions after independence. Secularists and minority groups support and favor this law, asserting that it prevents communal tensions and ensures religious harmony. They view it as a safeguard against attempts to change the religious character of places of worship through legal or extra-legal means. It can be said that it balances religious rights and social harmony and in fact strengthens secularism in the country. In short the words of wisdom and caution by Mohan Bhagwat that Hindus should not search Shivling in every mosque is worth appreciating and most relevant and need of the time as it will create inter-faith harmony and give goodbye to communalism and this observation will be triumph of pluralism, secularism and Hindu-Muslim unity. Therefore the Hindu community should support and practice it in the country for keeping the nation united and so nation first should be the top priority of the countrymen.

(The author is a columnist, social and KP activist)

How is India's outdated exam obsession affecting the future of students?

By: Vijay GarG

India's deep-rooted obsession with exams is a cultural and societal phenomenon that has long impacted students, families, and educational systems. This "exam obsession" has roots in the belief that exams are the most reliable measure of academic and personal success.

India's exam-centric education system limits students' personal growth, career choices, and adaptability to global demands.

A significant number of students across India are preparing for multiple competitive exams, with the pressure increasing sharply. In a country where success in entrance exams like CAT, NEET, and JEE often seems to define one's future, this moment feels like an all-or-nothing gamble. For too many, failure in these exams equates to failure in life.

Each year, over 10 lakh students register for the JEE Main exam, while NEET attracts even more aspirants, with 23.8 lakh registrations in 2024—female candidates significantly outnumbering males. These exams, meant to shape careers, have become major stressors, with students starting preparation as early as 14 or 15 under immense societal and family pressure.

The intense competition and uncertainty, exacerbated by controversies like NEET 2024, have led to a worrying mental health crisis. In 2022, over 13,000 student suicides were reported, accounting for 7.6 percent of all such deaths, highlighting the urgent need for reform.

But is it time to rethink this narrative? India's 'exam culture' has long been

criticised for its intense focus on testing, often at the expense of emotional well-being and broader skill development. Despite the rise of alternative educational routes and industry-led learning, the belief persists that excelling in exams is the only path to a prosperous career. This is not only untrue but harmful—it not only impacts the mental health of students but gives them a misguided view of how the real world works.

THE PRICE OF EXAM PRESSURE

In cities like Kota, often dubbed the 'coaching capital' of India, thousands of students migrate each year, seeking the golden ticket that promises entry into elite institutions. According to recent reports, 200,000 students arrive in Kota annually, fuelling a coaching industry that rakes in over Rs 600 billion. Yet behind this booming business lies a stark reality: students, some as young as 16, endure immense pressure, often at the cost of their mental health.

A recent report revealed that 30% of students preparing for competitive exams report severe anxiety, with some falling into cycles of depression. The numbers paint a grim picture, but the underlying issue is even more alarming: an overwhelming number of students believe that failing an exam means the end of their future.

This could not be further from the truth. "We have created a culture where success is narrowly defined by exam scores, and that's incredibly damaging. Exams are just one avenue, not the only path. There are countless ways to build meaningful and successful careers without scoring top marks in these competitive tests."

LACK OF FOCUS

It's not that preparing for exams is a bad thing. It does instill qualities of

hard work, discipline and resilience. But there are more skills which are also needed to become successful in the real world. According to a report by the World Economic Forum, 75% of Indian employers now prioritise skills like problem-solving, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence over mere academic credentials.

"We are seeing more, and more companies focus on what candidates can do rather than which exams they've ace. The problem is, many students aren't aware of this shift because the system keeps telling them that exams are everything."

It is this misconception that continues to fuel the coaching frenzy. What is overlooked is that nearly half of all Indian graduates feel unprepared for the jobs they are applying for, despite their seemingly impressive academic qualifications.

MOVING BEYOND SYSTEMS OF THE PAST

India's education system is notorious for focusing heavily on theoretical knowledge. Many students, despite excelling in school exams, find themselves struggling in entrance tests due to the different question patterns and analytical demands. Those who succeed in these exams may still find themselves struggling in the workplace. "There's a disconnect between academic learning and industry requirements," "Many institutions continue to focus on rote learning and theory, while employers are asking for real-world problem-solving skills. This mismatch leaves students feeling unprepared and leads to the explosion of coaching centres. Programmes that encourage internships, project-based learning, and industry exposure are key to bridging

this divide."

"Even beyond that, there are so many opportunities to build industry-relevant skills that students can start no matter where they are. Taking multiple drop years just doesn't make sense. Students should definitely prepare for these exams, but I always tell them that don't stop your life for it. Pick up an internship, build an Instagram page, help your local businesses, pick up a practical course, and really build optionality for yourself."

Despite the deep-rooted belief in India's exam culture, a growing number of voices are calling for a shift in focus. The National Education Policy (NEP) has taken multiple steps forward to address these gaps by promoting holistic development, practical skills and entrepreneurial education. But for the thousands of students feeling the weight of upcoming exams, this reform can't come soon enough.

CONCLUSION

"Success is not a one-size-fits-all journey. Whether it is through exams, skills, or a combination of both, students have countless opportunities to build fulfilling careers. It is time we started celebrating those alternative routes just as much as we celebrate top exam scores." The path to success in India must be widened beyond traditional exams. While tests like CAT, NEET, and JEE will continue to play an important role, they should not be viewed as the only option.

(Vijay GarG Retired principal Educational Columnist Street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab)

'Demand for freedom of Hindu temples from govt control, spend donations on welfare of Hindus'

Havan-Yagya for prosperity, peace and elimination of terrorism organised



Top News Report

KATRA, Dec 1: With the wish of peace and complete elimination of the demon of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, the country and the world, Havan-Yagya organized at Shri Rajmata Ashram Shani Mandir located near Bhumika Mandir in Katra, prayers were offered for public welfare and world peace by giving Purnahuti with Sarva Mangal Mantra Ucharan in the Havan Yagya.

Shri Rajmata Jhandewalan Mandir Group's Paradhya Ksha Swami Rajeshwaranand Ji Maharaj and Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu and Kashmir unit chief Manish Sahni said in their address at the Havan-Yagya that the demand for freedom of Hindu temples and monasteries from gov-

ernment control and to spend the donations on the welfare of Hindus was raised from all corner in the UT.

Along with this, a demand was also made to make the complete details of the offerings and expenditure public. Swami Rajeshwaranand Ji Maharaj said that the poor Sanatani Sadhak saves every penny by cutting his stomach and donates to God in the temple according to his faith, why should that money be spent on those people who are anti-national along with Sanatan instead of developing the temples.

Swami Rajeshwaranand Ji said that the donations offered by the cow protectors are being spent for the comforts of cow eaters and anti-Hindu people, which is absolutely intolerable.

Sahni said that in most of the Hindu temples

under government control, there is no service spirit but business is being done in the name of religion. Government control over Hindu temples has been continuing since the pre-independence era.

Sahni said that there are about 15 lakh Hindu temples in the country, about 4 lakh temples are under government control. Sahni has demanded to free the religious places of Hindus from government control and the donation amount offered by Hindus should be spent only on the upliftment and development of Hindus. After the Aarti of Gurudev Ji along with the Satsang Yagya, Bhandara was distributed.

On this occasion Ram Vohra, Rahul, Mahesh Kohli, Jai Suri, Sarla Tiwari, Vijay, Swaminath were present.

Senior NC Leader Ajeet Bhagat appeals to CM for compensation to Kishtwar Saffron Farmers

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Dec 1: Ajeet Bhagat, Senior National Conference leader and spokesperson for the Chenab Valley, has urged Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to provide financial assistance to saffron farmers in Kishtwar district, citing significant losses due to insufficient rainfall.

In a press statement, Bhagat highlighted the plight of farmers in the Halqa Pochhal area, renowned globally for producing a unique variety of saffron. This year's unfavorable weather conditions have led to an alarmingly low yield, leaving farmers in dire economic straits.

"Saffron growers here have suffered massive losses and are desperate for help," Bhagat said. "The Chief Minister must intervene and provide compensation to alleviate their suffering."

Bhagat criticized the Agriculture and Saffron Development Departments in Kishtwar, alleging negligence and a lack of initiatives to support farmers in the mountainous region. "The departments have consistently failed to address the needs of the farming community. Their inaction is a form of criminal negligence, especially when so many people depend on agriculture for their livelihoods," he stated.

The leader also pointed out that farmers bur-

dened with loans under the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme are struggling to repay their debts. He called for immediate measures such as loan waivers or reduced interest rates to ease their financial burden.

Another pressing issue raised by Bhagat was the absence of a fixed market rate for saffron. "The failure to set a stable price for saffron has further compounded the farmers' challenges. This casual approach is disheartening growers and could lead to the decline of saffron cultivation in the Chenab Valley," he warned.

Bhagat emphasized that Kishtwar is the only region in the Chenab Valley cultivating saffron, a cash crop critical to the local economy. He urged the government to take immediate steps to support farmers, fix saffron prices, and enhance farming facilities to sustain the industry.

"The farmers of Kishtwar deserve justice. Their hard work and unique contribution to the saffron industry must not go unnoticed," Bhagat concluded, expressing hope that the government would act swiftly to address the crisis.

The appeal comes as the region faces increasing challenges in maintaining its agricultural heritage and ensuring the economic well-being of its people.

Natrang stages 'Lamhon Ki Khatah' to mark World AIDS Day



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 1: Natrang presented an impactful Hindi play titled 'Lamhon Ki Khatah' at Rani Park, Jammu, as part of its acclaimed Sunday Theatre series. Written and directed by Neeraj Kant, the play was staged to commemorate World AIDS Day, delivering a powerful message on HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

The play opened with a group of young individuals disseminating crucial information about the AIDS virus, aiming to break prevalent myths surrounding its origin, transmission, and societal impact. The characters explained the primary ways HIV spreads, such as unprotected sexual contact, sharing unsterilized needles, transfusions of untested blood, and lack of HIV testing during pregnancy. They also debunked misconceptions, clarifying that HIV does not spread through casual contact, including handshakes, hugs, sharing meals, using the same toilet, or

mosquito bites. The audience was reminded of the importance of knowledge and prevention, with further assistance available through the toll-free helpline 1097.

A symbolic character named "Virus" emerged to confront misconceptions, emphasizing the need for awareness and responsible behavior. Another character introduced the audience to vital resources like the Integrated Counseling and Testing Centre (ICTC) and Antiretroviral Therapy (ART), which enhances the immune system and helps manage the disease.

In a poignant turn of events, the play depicted the struggles of a well-informed individual advocating for HIV/AIDS awareness who becomes personally affected by the virus. The character's life spirals into turmoil as his wife tests positive for HIV, their daughter is expelled from school, and he faces job loss due to societal stigma. However, this sequence is revealed to be a dream, serving as a

cautionary narrative highlighting the devastating effects of misinformation and prejudice.

The play also shed light on the HIV and AIDS (Prevention and Control) Act, 2017, which protects the rights of HIV-positive individuals against discrimination. The concluding scenes delivered a hopeful and inspiring message, advocating for dignity, inclusivity, and the empowerment of individuals living with HIV.

The production featured a talented cast, including Brijesh Avtar Sharma, Mihir Gujral, Vrinda Gujral, Gopi Sharma, Vansh Pandotra, Aryan Sharma, Kushal Bhat, Palshin Dutta, and Mehak Chib. The play was coordinated by Mohd. Yaseen, who ensured the seamless execution of the performance.

Natrang's 'Lamhon Ki Khatah' not only captivated the audience but also served as a call to action, urging society to combat stigma with empathy, awareness, and legal safeguards, paving the way for a more inclusive future.

Sadguru Shri Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj preaches the path to spiritual liberation



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 1: During a Satsang held at Sungal Road, Akhnoor, Jammu, Sadguru Shri Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj shared profound spiritual insights with the devotees. Reflecting on the state of spiritual discourse today, Maharaj Ji remarked that he once observed 724 spiritual leaders regularly featured on Bhakti channels. Despite their presence, the essence of true spiritual knowledge seemed absent. Over time, controversies surrounding some spiritual figures caused a decline in public trust and interest in these channels, further alienating people from the path of genuine spirituality.

Maharaj Ji highlighted that the core of spiritual practice, as taught by ancient sages like Vashishtha Muni, is the conquest of the mind.

He recalled how Vashishtha Ji advised Lord Ram that the soul's true nature could only be realized by mastering the mind. Maharaj Ji emphasized that this fundamental teaching is missing from modern spiritual discourse.

Expounding on the teachings of Sahib, Maharaj Ji explained five key principles critical to spiritual liberation. Sahib spoke of the supreme being residing in Amar Lok, a realm beyond the comprehension of Vedas and scriptures, referred to as Begumpur.

The necessity of controlling the mind as the gateway to spiritual realization. The illusions of the material world that bind the soul.

A unique, living name that cannot be spoken or written and is known only to enlightened saints who have attained Amar Lok. The

guidance of a Sadguru is essential for imparting this secret name and leading the soul to liberation.

Maharaj Ji reiterated that salvation cannot be achieved through the countless names chanted across the world. Only the secret name, which the Sadguru retrieves from the supreme realm and implants in the disciple, has the power to conquer the mind and lead the soul across the ocean of worldly existence.

In his closing message, Maharaj Ji emphasized that the mind's vastness has even challenged great sages, but the power of the true name can subdue it, bringing peace and ultimate liberation. This timeless teaching, he said, is the true essence of spirituality, urging devotees to seek a Sadguru who can reveal the secret path to Amar Lok.

Aryans Nursing students participates in rally, rangoli, debate, poster presentation

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 1: With the aim to encourage everyone to eliminate the disparities and inequities that create barriers to Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) testing, prevention, and access to HIV care, Aryans Institute of Nursing, Rajpura, Near Chandigarh organised a seminar on World's AIDS Day on this year's theme "Take the Rights Path: My Health, My Right".

While interacting with the students, Dr. Renuka Silas said that Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is one of the

deadliest pandemics in history. Despite the virus only being discovered in 1984, it has claimed the lives of almost 35 million people. Today, there are laws protecting those living with HIV, there have been scientific improvements in HIV therapy, and we know a lot more about the disease. Despite this, many individuals are diagnosed with HIV each year while many others living with the disease still experience stigma and prejudice, she said.

On the occasion all faculty & students wore Red Ribbon & participated in various com-

petitions including Rally, Debate, Speech, Poster Presentation etc & were given appreciation certificates & medals. Principal, Aryans Institute of Nursing made the students take the oath for their participation in raising the awareness about AIDS in society.

It is to be mentioned that World AIDS Day is observed on December 1st every year around the world. It is celebrated to show support for the people who are infected with HIV and to give tribute to AIDS patients. In 1988, World AIDS Day was established as the first international health day.

BJP working for Viksit Bharat, transforming J&K : Slathia

Top News Report

SAMBA, Dec 1: MLA Samba Mr Surjeet Singh Slathia today described the Congress led INDI Alliance as an amalgam of self seekers and opportunists coming together for their inherent hate for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and sabotaging his mission of Viksit Bharat.

"The fundamental difference between the BJP and INDI Alliance is that the former believes in the 'Nation First', party second and self-last while the later believes in self-first, family second, party third and the Nation last", Mr Slathia said while addressing a Public Rally At Village Sarna Block Nud

Samba. He said the BJP's focus on Jammu and Kashmir has not only transformed the Union Territory but made it a proud and equal partner in the country's growth story.

Slathia, who is also BJP Pradesh President, said the philosophy of 'Nation First' is a guiding principle for national security and social harmony, which is an eyesore for those who have been struggling to show some semblance of relevance in national politics. But for the lust of power, the INDI Alliance has nothing in common. To achieve their sinister political objectives, the alliance of opportunists have not even been hesitating in compromising with the

honour and pride of the nation, he added.

Slathia said the track record of the BJP since its inception as Jana Sangh, especially during the past nearly ten years, stands testimony to its pledge of 'Nation First', as the party has placed national interest at the forefront in an era where ideologies and priorities differ.

The pledge 'Nation First' is an intent and commitment to the inclusive growth of the society as per cherished objective of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas besides progress of all, regardless of caste, creed or region. The Prime Minister has translated this vision

as reality on ground, which is why India is seen as a vibrant country across the world, he said, adding that every Indian feels a sense of pride across the continents for the stature the nation has achieved in the comity of nations.

Surjeet Singh Slathia referred to the path-breaking initiatives taken under the visionary leadership of Yashasvi Narendra Modi during the past ten years, saying the focus has been on building a resilient nation that can overcome obstacles and emerge stronger. Alongside development, technological advancement, economic reliance, the BJP has been successfully striving for fostering a sense of patriotism and

pride among citizens, encouraging active participation in the nation's development. This is the mantra for Atamirbhar-Viksit Bharat and making India a developed nation by 2047, he added.

Prominent among those present on the occasion included DDC Ramesh Chander, Women President BJP Samba Sonia Thakur, Mandal President Karan Singh, Ex Sarpanch Puran Chand Sharma, Suman Lata, Sunil Choudhary, Surinder Singh and others.

Earlier, MLA Slathia kick started the macadamization of Link Road at Village Nankay Chak under City Town Scheme at an estimated cost RS 25 Lakhs.

JKBS' members offer Chadar at Mazaar of Nau-gaza-Pir in border village Rangpur Trewa

Top News Report

ARNIA, Dec 1: The Jammu and Kashmir Batwal Sabha members offered Chadar at the Mazaar of Pir Roshan Ali Shah in border village Rangpur Trewa, and prayed for the peace and prosperity of all human beings.

While paying obeisance, R.L.Kaith mentioned to members that Pir Roshan Ali Shah's original name was Jalal Uddin Jamal Noorani Mecci (R.A) but he is commonly known as Pir Roshan Ali Shah. This again was forgotten and he came to be called as the Nau-gaza-pir (nine yards long saint). Pir Roshan Ali Shah arrived at Jammu in the 17th century.

When he felt the approaching death, he reached the site near Gumat gate, laid down on the ground and covered his body with a sheet. His devotees observed no movement in his body. They tried to wake him and remove the sheet. Then only did they find him dead. The then Raja Sarpala-Dhar, who was his devotee, was informed. He came and laid Pir to rest with full honour. He ordered the con-



struction of the grave in stone and mud.

Maharaja Ranbir built it pucca and raised a mosque in the vicinity. The patronage of the court made Pir Roshan Ali Shah extremely popular with the people.

Pir Roshan Ali Shah once said to Raja Sarpala-Dhar, "If you or your descendants in times of

difficulty offer sharbat and lit lamps on my tomb, you shall be relieved of them." People offer sharbat and lit lamps on the grave for the fulfillment of their wishes.

Among others who paid obeisance to Pir were US Doctor Sewa Mortan, RTI India News Editor-in-chief Sansar Singh Motan, Journalist Tejinder Singh,

TV Artist Rahul Motan, Music Director Vicky Kaith, Subedar Baldev Chand Sandhu (Retd), Subedar Mewa Ram Motan (Retd), Sub Inspector Retired Darshan Kumar Bassa, Havildar Des Raj Kaith, Hans Raj Loria, Jagdish Raj Kaith, Mewa Ram Motan, Veerpan Motan, Sat Pal Sargotra, Nishan Singh. Gourav Nandan and Mukesh Nandan.

Script-writing most difficult part of film-making: Prakash Jha

Dehradun, Noted filmmaker Prakash Jha said that writing the script of a film is the most difficult part of filmmaking.

Once a film's script is ready, making it becomes easy, Jha said at the inaugural session of the second edition of the Crime Literature Festival of India.

He said it took him eight years to write the script of Gangaajal and six to write Rajneeti during which their drafts were written several times over.

"Writing the script of a movie is a time-taking process but I enjoy it thoroughly. It took me eight years to write the script of Gangaajal. I wrote it 13 times. It took me six years to write Rajneeti," said Jha, famous for making socially and politically relevant films like Gangaajal, Apharan, Rajneeti and Arakshan.

Describing the crime literature festival as a unique event since it was dedicated to one single genre of crime literature, Jha said crime comes naturally to humans and without crime the best of our epics like the Rama-



yana or the Mahabharata could not have been written.

It is the wrongs done by the characters of these epics that take their stories forward and make them acquire their epic scale, he said.

"I am basically a story teller and I feel 'kahaniyan ghatnaon se nahin durghatnao se banti hain'," he said.

Referring in a lighter vein to

chief guest Mata Shri Mangla's speech in which she spoke highly about a crime-free society, Jha said, "I wonder from where I would bring my stories if there was no crime in society."

"Crime comes from within us. If there was no crime there would have been no policing. We all have criminal instincts. Why do children tend to do things they are forbidden to do," he said.

Describing crime as a complex subject, he said those who commit crime are not necessarily bad people.

Citing the example of one of his films Pariksha released on OTT during the Covid pandemic, he said it is about a rickshaw puller who begins to steal things and sell them to fund the education of his son who is good at his studies.

"Would you call him a criminal?"

Chairman of the festival and former Uttarakhand DGP Ashok Kumar said the idea to hold an event like this came to him as he wanted to bust the myths about the police force.

"The prevailing notion was that like the typical Bollywood movie scene, police arrives in the end when the crime has been committed and the criminals have fled. I wanted to tell people about the rigours and pressures of the job and the professional triumphs of police personnel which often go unnoticed," he said.

Aditi Sharma living her childhood dream through the show Apollena – Sapno Ki Unchi Udann



Aditi Sharma is no stranger to trying new things, pushing boundaries and stepping into roles that challenge her both as an actor and as a person. From playing a college girl in one

show to experimenting with complex characters in others, she's always been about stretching her limits. And now, in her latest role as Apollena in Colors' Apollena – Sapno Ki Unchi

Udann, she's taking her passion for exploring new roles to the next level, literally! As an astronaut, Aditi is not just acting, she's living her childhood dream. The show chronicles the journey of Apollena, a young woman determined to fulfill her father's dream of reaching the stars, clear his name, and shed the tag of gaddar ki beti by becoming India's first female astronaut.

Aditi shares, "This character feels incredibly personal to me—it's not just acting, it's like I'm channeling a part of my own dreams and journey. As a child, I would gaze at the stars, imagining myself among them. Playing Apollena is my way of living that dream. For me, she represents not only her own aspirations but also the dreams of countless girls who dare to chase the impossible."

Zoya Akhtar joins fellow jury members at Marrakech Film Festival

Filmmaker Zoya Akhtar, who is a part of the jury of the 21st Marrakech Film Festival, walked the red carpet alongside panel head, director Luca Guadagnino, and Hollywood stars Andrew Garfield and Jacob Elordi.

In a video shared on the official X page of the festival, Akhtar was spotted posing for the shutterbugs at opening ceremony of the gala in Marrakech, Morocco.

Iranian filmmaker Ali Abbasi, Hollywood actor Patricia Arquette, Argentine director Santiago Mitre, Belgian-French actor Virginie Efira and Moroccan actor Nadia Kounda were also a part of the panel.

"The jury of the 21st edition competition, presided by Luca Guadagnino, and joined by Ali Abbasi, Zoya Akhtar, Patricia Arquette, Virginie Efira, Jacob Elordi, Andrew Garfield, Nadia Kounda, and Santiago Mitre. Opening Ceremony of the #Marrakechfestival," read the caption of the post shared by Marrakech Film Festival.

According to the festival's website, its main aim was to promote and develop the art of cinema and the film industry in Morocco.

Marrakech Film Festival opened with "The Order", directed by Justin Kurzel,



who returned to the gala after winning the Jury Award in 2011 for "Snowtown".

The gala will come to a close on December 7. Akhtar's last directed film was "The Archies", which was released on Netflix last year.

Patralekhaa was 'super upset' after getting rejected for Pyaar Ka Punchnama

Actor Patralekhaa, who made her debut with CityLights in 2014, gave an audition for Pyaar Ka Punchnama. Now, in a new interview, she has revealed that director Luv Ranjan rejected her.

Patralekhaa looks back

In an interview with agency, Patralekhaa looked back at her experience and how she handled the rejection.

Patralekhaa said, "Before CityLights, I was auditioning for Pyaar Ka Punchnama 2. Luv sir was taking the auditions, and his auditions are always very elaborate. There was Nushratt, Kartik, Omkar, Sunny, and many other girls. These three-four people were finalised, and they wanted 2 more new faces. I auditioned, and felt that I will get this role. Then later on, I was in the gym, and Luv Ranjan called me.



Phone tab aata hai jab aapko milta hai (You get a call when you bag the role). He asked me to come over and I felt so excited. I took a shower and wore my best clothes to head over to his office".

Patralekhaa was initially upset about the rejection.

She added, "He sat me down and no one was there, it was just me and him. In my mind, I thought that he will break the good news and people will come in with flowers, chocolates, and cakes. He said, 'Yaar, yeh jaane de (Let this one go)'. At that moment, I felt really bad and thought, 'How can he just call me and say no to my face, its not cool'. I came out and was super upset. I went back home and it dawned upon me later that he gave me so much respect as an

artist and actor. He calls me to his office and says, 'Beta nahi hopaaya, but hum aage jaake kaam kareng na (Child, it couldn't work out this time, but we'll work together in the future)'. That's a lot, and I think that's why I got Wild Wild Punjab".

Pyaar ka Punchnama was released in 2011, and worked well at the box office. Pyaar Ka Punchnama featured Kartik Aaryan, Nushratt Bharuchcha, Sunny Singh, Divyendru, Omkar Kapoor, Ishita Raj Sharma, and Son-nalli Seygall.

About Patralekhaa Patralekhaa made her web debut with Bose: Dead/Alive (2017). She has featured in projects such as Love Games, Nanu Ki Jaanu, Badnaam Gali, Wild Wild Punjab, Cheers, Teerandaz and IC 814: The Kandahar Hijack.

Has Rashmika Mandanna become India's highest-paid actress after Pushpa 2?

Rumours have popped up that Rashmika Mandanna has become the highest-paid actress in India, surpassing her peers, after starring in Pushpa 2: The Rule. Now, the actor has shed light on the truth behind her remuneration, ending the speculation.

Rashmika breaks her silence Earlier this week, Rashmika attended the closing ceremony of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2024 in Goa. At the event, the actor spoke about the rumours circulating about her being the costliest female actor after her upcoming film, Pushpa 2, according to agency.

At the event, she was questioned by the media about the buzz. To which, Rashmika responded, "That I don't agree with at all, because that is not true." Several reports suggested that Rashmika

received a ₹10 crore paycheck for the film, which is a significant jump compared to her fee for the first part. It is believed that she took home ₹2 crore for the first part.

At the event, she also spoke about the absence of Pushpa 2: The Rule co-star Allu Arjun and director Sukumar from the promotions. She said that they were busy with the film's final edits, which is the reason why they could not attend the event. She was also asked whether she anticipates winning a National Award for Pushpa 2 following Allu Arjun's victory, Rashmika smiled and said, "Hope so".

About Pushpa 2 Pushpa 2: The Rule is a sequel to the 2021 pan-India hit Pushpa: The Rise. Pushpa 2 is produced by Mythri Movie Makers and Sukumar Writings. The film will be released in



theatres on December 5. Billed as one of the biggest and most-anticipated Indian films of recent times, the buzz around the film is very big.

Apart from Pushpa 2,

Rashmika will also star in Kubera with Dhannush and Nagarjuna Akkineni, the period drama Chhaava alongside Vicky Kaushal, and Sikandar with Salman Khan.

Kalki Koechlin says she is a lot less successful than people think: 'I just make ends meet'

Kalki Koechlin is a popular actor who has appeared in several superhit films. While she agrees that she may not be an A-lister, the actor is well-known among fans. But Kalki says the irony is that she leads a simple life and often just makes enough to make ends meet.

Kalki on her success In an interview on AfterHours with All About Eve YouTube channel, Kalki talked about how she has an image of a successful film star when the reality is quite different. "I'm a lot less successful than people think I am. In the sense that I am famous, but I live a very simple life. I spend a lot of time not working, being at home, and now living in Goa and raising a child. It's a choice. I do a lot of theatre, and I produce theatre, which is not a very business-oriented approach. It's very much art for the sake of art.



People know me, and everyone is really familiar with me, but they are really surprised to see me on public transport, for instance. They're

like, 'How can you not be with bodyguards?'. Somehow, I have an image bigger than who I really am," the actor said.

Kalki on earning from theatre

Over the course of a career that began in 2008, Kalki has appeared in box office hits like Yeh Jawani Hai Deewani, Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara, and Gully Boy.

However, the actor also works in theatre regularly. She agreed that it is not financially rewarding, though. "You get paid for travel, and it's very basic. I produce theatre, so I know. I am a celebrity, I manage to sell the tickets most of the times. I get full houses. But I still just make ends meet. I just manage to pay my actors a little bit, pay for my production costs and then I'm done. There is no profit," Kalki added.

Kalki was last seen on screen in a supporting role in the 2023 Netflix film Gaye Hum Kahan. The same year, she had a special dance number in Sam Bahadur.

“BSF stands as critical line of defence, embodying courage, dedication, exceptional service”: PM Modi on Raising Day

NEW DELHI, Dec 1 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended greetings on the occasion of Border Security Force Raising Day on Sunday and said that their vigilance and courage contribute to the safety and security of our nation.

“Warm wishes to the Border Security Force on their Raising Day! The BSF stands as a critical line of defence, embodying courage, dedication and exceptional service. Their vigilance and courage contribute to the safety and security of our nation,” PM Modi said in a post on X.

The BSF, which is the largest border guarding force in the world with a strength of nearly 2.65 lakh personnel, celebrates its Raising Day every year on December 1.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha also extended his greetings to BSF India personnel and their families.

“On BSF Raising Day, I extend my greetings to BSF India



personnel and their families. Guided by the motto “jivn pryNtt krtvy”, the BSF safeguards the sovereignty and security of our nation with unmatched courage and dedication. Salute to their sacrifice and unwavering commitment,” LG Manoj Sinha posted on X.

Mandated to guard the India-Pakistan and India-Bangladesh borders, the BSF is the only force of the nation with a distinctly defined wartime as well as peace-time role.

The force has successfully

proved its mettle in accomplishing every task assigned to it in times of war and peace situation while ensuring peace and tranquillity on the border.

The BSF troops, deployed in the most challenging terrain and remote locations, have been serving as the guardians of India’s borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Till 1965, India’s border with Pakistan was manned by the State Armed Police Battalion. On April 9, 1965, Pakistan attacked Sardar Post, Chhar

Bet and Beria Bet in Kutch.

This exposed the inadequacy of the State Armed Police to cope with armed aggression, due to which the Government of India felt the need for a specialised, centrally controlled Border Security Force that would be armed and trained to man the international border with Pakistan.

As a result of the recommendations of the Committee of Secretaries, the Border Security Force came into existence on December 1, 1965.

Initially, in 1965, BSF was raised with 25 battalions and, with the passage of time, was expanded as per the requirement of the nation to fight against militancy in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and the Northeast region.

The BSF, with a sanctioned strength of over 2,65,000 personnel spread across 192 battalions, is responsible for securing India’s borders stretching over 6,386.36 kilometres with Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Maharashtra CM to be decided by BJP; will have my support: Shinde



MUMBAI, Dec 1 (Agencies): Maharashtra’s caretaker Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Sunday said the BJP will decide on the state’s new CM who will have his full support, and asserted there were no differences among Mahayuti partners on government formation. Talking to reporters at his native Dare village in Satara district, Shinde also said talks were underway on government formation and all decisions will be taken through a consensus by the three Mahayuti allies - Shiv Sena, BJP and NCP.

Shinde also said he comes to his village regularly and wondered why should there be any confusion (over his visit) when he cleared his stand on the CM’s post last week.

The Shiv Sena leader, who headed to his native village on Friday amid speculation that he was not happy with

ernment, was the front-runner for the post.

Shinde last week said the Shiv Sena would support the decisions of PM Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah to name the next Maharashtra CM.

Talking to reporters on Sunday, Shinde said, “I always come to my village. Why should there be any confusion when I have already made my stand clear last week. I have already said the decision on CM’s post taken by the BJP leadership will be acceptable to me and Shiv Sena and will have my full backing.”

To a query on his health, the Shiv Sena leader said he was fine now and had come to his native village to rest.

“We will provide a government that people want. Our responsibility has now grown because of the massive mandate given by people as reciprocation of our work in the last two-and-a-half years,” he said.

On speculation that his son and Lok Sabha member Shrikant Shinde will be the deputy CM, Shinde said talks were on.

“One meeting took place in Delhi last week with (Union minister) Amit Shah and now we three alliance partners will discuss the nitty-gritty of government formation,” he said.

the way the new government was shaping up, had taken ill and will return to Mumbai on Sunday evening, an aide said earlier in the day.

The Mahayuti alliance of the BJP, Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar’s NCP retained power with a landslide victory in the Assembly elections, the results of which were announced on November 23.

The oath-taking ceremony of the new Mahayuti government will take place on December 5 evening at the Azad Maidan in south Mumbai and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend it, state Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) chief Chandrashekhar Bawankule said on Saturday.

While there was no announcement yet on who would be the chief minister, BJP sources said Devendra Fadnis, who has been chief minister twice and was deputy CM in the last Eknath Shinde-led gov-

Our fight is for the spirit of our country, says Priyanka Gandhi

WAYANAD, Dec 1 (Agencies): Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday launched a scathing attack against the BJP-led Centre, saying today the fight is against the force that is weakening the rights of the people, and handing over them to a few businessmen friends.

Addressing a meeting in Mananthavady here, she said, “Today we are fighting for the spirit of our nation, soul of India.”

Beginning the second day of her visit to the hill constituency, she said, “We are fighting against a force that is doing everything in its power to destroy the institutions upon which our country was built.”

She promised to be with the people of Wayanad, fighting shoulder to shoulder for their needs.

According to the schedule, Priyanka will also address gatherings at Sulthan Bathery at

12:15 pm, and Kalpetta at 1:30 pm.

Priyanka, who is on a two-day Wayanad visit, accompanied by Rahul Gandhi, participated in public meetings at Mukkam in Thiruvambadi, Kaulai in Nikambur, Wandoor and Edavanna in Kozhikode and Malappuram districts which falls under the Wayanad Lok Sabha segment on Saturday.

Priyanka had scored her maiden electoral victory by winning the Way-



anad Lok Sabha bypoll with a huge margin of 4,10,931 votes, which is bigger than the lead her brother Rahul secured

when he won from the constituency during the Lok Sabha general elections held early this year.

Cyclone Fengal: Unprecedented rainfall paralyses life in Puducherry

PUDUCHERRY, Dec 1 (Agencies): Normal life was crippled in Puducherry on Sunday due to heavy rains that lashed the union territory in the wake of Cyclone Fengal, which crossed the coast here on November 30 night.

According to India Meteorological Department, Puducherry recorded 46 cm rainfall during the last 24 hours ending 9 am today.

Cyclone Fengal triggered heavy rainfall leading to inundation of all residential areas on the outskirts of boulevard limits. Trees were uprooted at various places under the impact of the cyclonic

storm. Power outage was reported in most of the localities since 11 pm on Saturday.

Many housing colonies were waterlogged and residents could not step out of the dwellings for hours together. Two-wheelers and cars parked on roads partially submerged in rainwater that entered several houses here, residents said.

All shops and business establishments remained closed and the government set up relief centers to accommodate people evacuated from low-lying areas.

Senior citizens opined that such fury of nature was witnessed over



three decades ago in the union territory.

Main thoroughfares and arterial roads were waterlogged disrupting daily life. Farmlands with standing crops bore the brunt of the heavy rain.

Transport services were hit and voluntary organisations like Pondicherry Heritage Round Table 167 volunteered

to supplement the efforts of the government to supply food packets to people staying in relief camps.

Officials said rescue operations are under way in multiple affected areas and hundreds of residents were evacuated from flood-hit areas.

The operations have been conducted effi-

ciently with the coordinated efforts of the local administration, police forces, Army and specialised rescue teams.

Efforts are ongoing in Jeeva Nagar and other vulnerable areas to evacuate people and provide necessary relief, they said.

Meanwhile, operations at the Chennai airport, which had been suspended on Sunday, resumed past midnight but many flights suffered cancellations and delays, officials said.

As many as 24 domestic services were cancelled and 26 international flights, both arriving and departing were delayed, they said.

Bihar: Four girls killed as earth collapses on them while digging

BUXAR, Dec 1 (Agencies): Four girls were killed after a mound of earth collapsed on them in Bihar’s Buxar district on Sunday morning, police said.

The incident happened in Sarenja village in Rajpur police station area when six girls were digging earth to get mud for setting up a kuchcha house, they said.

The deceased were identified as Shivani Kumari (6), Sanju Kumari (11), Naintara

Kumari (12) and Sarita Kumari (11), they added. One girl was also injured in the incident, and she was admitted to a nearby hospital, police said.

“It’s a very tragic incident. A financial assistance of Rs 20,000 is being provided to the next of kin of each deceased. Besides, ex-gratia of Rs 4 lakh each will also be provided by the authorities concerned,” SP Shubham Arya said.

Raised law and order issues hoping for action from Centre but I was attacked instead: Kejriwal

NEW DELHI, Dec 1 (Agencies): AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday targeted the BJP-led central government for alleged inaction on law and order issues here, claiming that instead of taking action against criminals, an attack was orchestrated on him during his November 30 padyatra in Malviya Nagar.

The BJP has yet to respond to the allegations.

Speaking at a press conference, Kejriwal



said, “The liquid thrown on me was harmless, but it could have been dangerous. This is the third attack on me in the last 35 days.” The former chief minister also accused Union Home Minister Amit Shah of sending the

message that complainants, rather than offenders, will face arrest.

Kejriwal also criticised the arrest of AAP MLA Naresh Balyan, who had earlier filed a complaint about extortion by gangsters.

“Instead of arrest-

ing criminals, they are targeting our MLAs,” the AAP chief alleged, demanding action against the real offenders to ensure the safety of Delhi’s residents.

In a security scare on Saturday, a man splashed some liquid on Kejriwal during his ‘padyatra’ in south Delhi’s Malviya Nagar.

Targeting the BJP, the AAP leader alleged that the BJP was resorting to dishonest means as it fears a third consecutive defeat in the upcoming Delhi assembly polls.

Worker dead, two injured as section of tunnel collapses in Kota

KOTA, Dec 1 (Agencies): A worker died and two other people were injured when a section of an under-construction tunnel collapsed in Kota district of Rajasthan, police said on Sunday.

Superintendent of Police, Kota Rural, Sujit Shankar said the tunnel is part of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway.

A portion of it collapsed on Saturday night in the Modak area

of Ramganj Mandi, he added.

The workers who got trapped under the debris were rescued and rushed to a hospital, where Shamsher Singh (33) was pronounced dead. The injured are undergoing treatment, Shankar said.

Police and National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) officials reached the spot after the incident.

Israeli strikes on Gaza kill 6, including 2 children

Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip have killed at least six people overnight, including two young children who died in the tent where their family was sheltering

DEIR AL-BALAH, Dec 1 (Agencies): Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip killed at least six people overnight, including two young children who died in the tent where their family was sheltering, medical officials said Sunday.

The strike in the Muwasi area, a sprawling tent camp housing hundreds of thousands of displaced people, also wounded the children's mother and their sibling, according to the nearby Nasser Hospital. An Associated Press reporter at the hospital saw the bodies.

A separate strike in the southern city of Rafah, on the border with Egypt, killed four men, according to hospital records.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military. Israel says it only targets militants and tries to avoid harming civilians, but its daily strikes across Gaza often kill women and children.

In a separate development, a projectile fired by Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen set off air raid sirens in central Israel. The Israeli military said it intercepted the projectile before it entered Israeli territory.

A former top Israeli general and defense minister has accused the government of ethnic cleansing in northern Gaza, where Israeli forces have been waging the latest in a series of offensives against Hamas since early October.

The army has sealed off the northern towns of Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahiya, and the Jabali-



ya refugee camp, and allowed almost no humanitarian aid to enter. Tens of thousands of people have fled, while the United Nations estimates up to 75,000 remain and experts have warned of famine.

Moshe Yaalon, who served as defense minister under Benjamin Netanyahu before quitting in 2016 and emerging as a fierce critic of the prime minister, said the current far-right government is determined to "occupy, to annex, to ethnically cleanse."

Pressed by an interviewer with a local news outlet on Saturday, he said: "There is no Beit Lahiya. No Beit Hanoun. (They are) operating now in Jabalya, and (they) are actually cleaning the territory of Arabs."

Yaalon doubled down on the remarks Sunday in an interview with Israeli radio, saying "war crimes are being committed here."

Netanyahu's Likud party criticized his earlier remarks, accusing him of making "false

statements" that are "a prize for the International Criminal Court and the camp of Israel haters."

The ICC has issued arrest warrants against Netanyahu, another former defense minister, Yoav Gallant, and a Hamas commander, accusing them of crimes against humanity. The International Court of Justice is investigating allegations of genocide against Israel.

Israel rejects the allegations and says both courts are biased against it.

The war in Gaza began when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking around 250 hostages. Some 100 captives are still being held inside Gaza, around two-thirds of whom are believed to be alive.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 44,000 Palestinians, more than half of them women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry,

which does not say how many of the dead were combatants. Israel says it has killed over 17,000 militants, without providing evidence.

The war has destroyed vast areas of the coastal enclave and displaced 90% of the population of 2.3 million, often multiple times. Hundreds of thousands have crammed into squalid tent camps, where conditions have worsened as the cold, wet winter sets in.

Israel reached a ceasefire with Lebanon's Hezbollah militants last week that has largely held, but that agreement, brokered by the United States and France, did not address the ongoing war in Gaza. Iran — which supports Hezbollah, Hamas, the Houthis and armed groups in Syria and Iraq — has exchanged fire with Israel twice this year.

The United States, Qatar and Egypt have spent much of the past year trying to broker a ceasefire in Gaza and the release of the remaining hostages, but those efforts stalled as Israel rejected Hamas' demand for a complete withdrawal from the territory. The Biden administration has said it will make another push for a deal in its final weeks in office.

U.S. President-elect Donald Trump has vowed to end the wars in the Middle East, without saying how. He was a staunch defender of Israel and its policies toward the Palestinians during his previous term.

"Elon Musk pushing agenda for X": Australia's Anthony Albanese amid under-16 ban criticism



SYDNEY, Dec 1 (Agencies): Australia Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said on Sunday that criticism by Elon Musk of Australia's social media ban on children under 16 was the X owner pushing an agenda for the social platform, while indicating he was open to talk to the billionaire about the ban, legislated this week.

Australia approved the social media ban for children late on Thursday after an emotive debate that has gripped the nation, setting a benchmark for jurisdictions around the world

with one of the toughest regulations targeting Big Tech.

The ban, which the centre-left government says is world-leading, could strain Australia's relationship with key ally the United States, where Musk, a central figure in the administration of president-elect Donald Trump, said in a post this month it seemed a "backdoor way to control access to the Internet by all Australians."

Albanese, asked on Sunday if he was prepared to talk to Musk about the social media ban said: "We'll talk to

anyone."

"With regard to Elon Musk, he has an agenda, he's entitled to push that as the owner of X, formerly known as Twitter," Albanese added in remarks on Australian Broadcasting Corp. television.

The law forces tech giants from Instagram and Facebook owner Meta, to TikTok to stop minors logging in or face fines of up to A\$49.5 million (\$32 million). A trial of enforcement methods starts in January with the ban to take effect in a year.

"We are determined to get this done, the parliament has overwhelmingly passed this legislation," Albanese told the broadcaster.

X did not immediately reply to a Reuters request for comment outside of business hours.

Albanese's Labor party won crucial support from the opposition conservatives for the bill that was fast-tracked through the country's parliament as part of 31 bills pushed through in a chaotic final day of parliament for the year.

New York City paying \$220 million to a Pakistan owned hotel in Big Apple, claims author

WASHINGTON, Dec 1 (Agencies): The City of New York pays USD220 million to rent a hotel owned by the Government of Pakistan to house illegal immigrants, a report claimed.

Vivek Ramaswamy described the purported revelation as "Nuts."

"A taxpayer-funded hotel for illegal migrants is owned by the Pakistani government which means NYC taxpayers are effectively paying a foreign government to house illegals in our own country. This is nuts," Ramaswamy, a Republican, said in a social media post.

Ramaswamy along with Tesla Owner Elon Musk have been tasked by President-elect Donald Trump to improve government efficiency and remove wasteful expenditure under a Department of



Government Efficiency built for the purpose.

The Indian American let out his outburst after author John LeFevre reported about it on X.

"The city of New York pays \$220 million to rent the entire Roosevelt Hotel in Manhattan to house illegal migrants," he said.

The Roosevelt Hotel is owned by Pakistan International Airlines, a Pakistani government-owned airline.

"The hotel is owned by the government of Pakistan, and the deal was part of a \$1.1 billion IMF bailout package to help

Pakistan avoid defaulting on their international debt," LeFevre said.

"Prior to this sweetheart deal, the hotel had been closed since 2020, having long-struggled with occupancy and in dire need of renovation," he wrote.

Named after former US president Theodore Roosevelt, the 19-story hotel now is rented by New York City to provide shelter to illegal immigrants. It has over 1,200 rooms. The hotel was shut down for renovation, before it was rented out by New York City.

Japan's popular Princess Aiko turns 23 with her future as a royal in doubt

TOKYO, Dec 1 (Agencies): Japan's popular Princess Aiko turned 23 on Sunday, as she takes on more official duties even while her future in the imperial family remains in doubt.

Aiko, the only child of Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, graduated from university earlier this year and has since been participating in official duties and palace rituals while working at the Red Cross Society, according to the Imperial Household Agency. But Japanese law requires her to renounce her royal status and leave the family if she marries outside the imperial family.

The vast majority of Japan's public supports changing the law to allow her to remain a royal and become emperor, but conservatives in the governing



party insist on keeping male-only succession. Japan's rapidly dwindling imperial family has only 16 members, including four men.

Aiko was to mark her birthday with her parents at the imperial palace in Tokyo. The IHA also released several photos of Aiko, including one of her standing by a persimmon tree at a palace garden. Another showed her holding pieces of traditional hand-crafted washi paper that she made at a workshop during her first solo official trip in October to the

National Sports Festival in Japan's southwestern prefecture of Saga.

The 1947 Imperial House Law, which largely preserves conservative prewar family values, allows only males to take the throne and forces female royals who marry outside the family to give up their status.

With only one young male member, that puts the survival of the 2,000-year-old monarchy in jeopardy.

The youngest male member of the imperial family, Prince Hisahito

— Aiko's 18-year-old cousin — is currently the last heir apparent, posing a major problem for the system.

The government is looking for a way to keep the succession stable without relying on women, such as allowing the family to adopt new male members from former noble families that lost their status after World War II.

Aiko's own views on the topic are unknown. She's only had one full news conference, when she reached adulthood.

Last month, the United Nations women's rights committee in Geneva issued a report that called for the Japanese government to allow a female emperor, among other issues hindering gender equality in the country.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi

dismissed the report "regrettable" and "inappropriate." He said the imperial succession is a matter of fundamental national identity and that it is not covered by constitutional basic rights.

Crown Prince Akishino, Aiko's uncle, was asked about the succession debate at a news conference marking his 59th birthday, and replied that members of the royal family are "living humans" and that the palace officials who support their daily lives should know how it affects them.

At her work at the Japanese Red Cross Society, Aiko is assigned to volunteer training program, the IHA said. On weekends, it said, the princess enjoys taking walks with her parents and playing volleyball, tennis and badminton with palace officials.

Romanians cast ballots in parliamentary election as turmoil in presidential race grips the nation

BUCHAREST, Dec 1 (Agencies): Romanians are casting ballots in a parliamentary election on Sunday sandwiched between a two-round presidential race, the first round of which has plunged the European Union and NATO member country into unprecedented turmoil following allegations of electoral violations and Russian interference.

Sunday's vote will elect a new government and prime minister and determine the formation of the country's 466-seat legislature. Romanians who are abroad have been able to vote since Saturday.

The legislative vote comes a week after the first round of a presidential race that saw a controversial far-right populist who was polling in single digits win the most votes. Calin Georgescu, 62, is due to face reformist Elena Lasconi of the Save Romania Union party, orUSR, in a Dec. 8 runoff. Georgescu's success, which many have attributed to his rapid rise in popularity on the social media platform TikTok, has triggered nightly protests throughout Romania by those who oppose his past remarks praising Romanian fascist leaders and Russian President Vladimir Putin and view him as a threat to democracy. Many observers believe the presidential outcome indicates a sharp shift from Romania's mainstream parties to more populist anti-establishment parties, whose voices have found fertile ground amid high inflation, high cost of living and a

sluggish economy.

Alexandru Rizescu, a 24-year-old medical student, says he was surprised by the result in the first-round presidential ballot and that it's an "obvious sign" Europe at large is shifting toward far-right populism.

"Most of us are sick of these big parties, but now we have to think about the ... lesser evil," he said. "If Georgescu becomes president, with a favorable parliament, it's going to be wild."

According to a report by Expert Forum, a Bucharest-based think tank, Georgescu's TikTok account before last week's vote saw an explosion of engagement, which it said appeared "sudden and artificial, similar to his polling results." Without naming Georgescu, who declared zero campaign spending, Romania's top defense body said Thursday that "a presidential candidate benefited from massive exposure due to preferential treatment" granted by TikTok. Romania has become a "priority target for hostile actions" by Russia, it added. The Kremlin denies it is meddling.

The same day, the Constitutional Court requested a recount of all 9.4 million votes after a presidential candidate who obtained 1% filed a complaint alleging the USR had violated electoral laws against campaign activities on polling day. The Central Election Bureau approved the request and said scanned reports were due to be sent in by Sunday night. On Friday, the court

postponed a decision until Monday on whether to annul the vote. Cristian Andrei, a political consultant based in Bucharest, predicted the general election could also be reshaped by Georgescu's success, with far-right parties possibly obtaining record highs.

"The impact of the surprise in last Sunday's presidential election will be significant, and we are going to wake up in a new political reality," he told The Associated Press. "Georgescu voters will speak again and will reshape how we look at the political Romanian spectrum from now on and probably forever."

"The most probable scenario will be a difficult-to-build majority in the parliament to support and endorse a new government," he added. Despite historically being Romania's two main opposition parties that have dominated post-communist politics, the Social Democratic Party, PSD, and the National Liberal Party, PNL, formed an unlikely coalition in 2021 which has become increasingly strained. A small ethnic Hungarian party exited the Cabinet last year after a power-sharing dispute. After casting his ballot on Sunday, incumbent Prime Minister Marcel Ciolacu told the media that Romanians "have to choose between stability and chaos."

"Today is a very important day for all of us Romanians to stay on our European and North Atlantic path," he said. "This is the most important choice we have to

make today."

While the presidential role in Romania has significant decision-making powers in areas such as national security and foreign policy, the prime minister is the head of the nation's government.

Recent surveys have suggested the top three parties in Sunday's race will be the PSD, the far-right Alliance for the Unity of Romanians and the PNL. After rising to the political scene eight years ago on an anti-corruption ticket, the USR's popularity has diminished in recent years, but could garner the next most votes.

More minor parties that may not pass the 5% threshold to enter parliament include the pro-EU reformist REPER party and the liberal-conservative Force of the Right. Some have predicted that the far-right nationalist S.O.S Romania party, and the recently formed and little-known Party of Young People, which has backed Georgescu, could pass the threshold.

Silviu Safta, a 30-year-old retail manager in Bucharest, said that Georgescu topping the polls was "a surprise for everyone, except for the 2 million people that voted for him," and that he's skeptical whether Sunday's parliamentary vote will follow the same populist tilt. "I think Romanians will be more informed about their elections and ... their candidates," he said. "I'm a little bit skeptical about the results, but I hope that democracy will win."

CS reviews disaster preparedness of J&K Also assessed implementation of welfare measures for various migrant categories



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 1: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today held a detailed meeting of the Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction (DMRR&R) to take assessment of its measures taken for disaster mitigation in J&K.

Those who attended include Principal Secretary, Home and DMRR&R Departments; Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir/Jammu; Relief Commissioner and other concerned officers and officials of the Department.

Dulloo took this occasion to impress upon the Department to further gear up for making the action plans regarding different disasters the UT is vulnerable to. He urged them to make the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) functional by the end of

this fiscal as it has added role at the time of disasters.

He even emphasised upon the expeditions carried out to study Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) by visiting different mountainous lakes here. He called for training students and other volunteers for enhancing their ability to play their role during relief activities.

The Principal Secretary, DMRR&R, Chandraker Bharti informed the meeting about different activities and achievements including strengthening of UT, Divisional and District level disaster management authorities by deploying necessary manpower there.

He also revealed that DDMPs for the year 2024-25 of all 20 districts had been updated. Other hazards specific plans like Heat Wave Action Plan, Flood Management Action Plan pre-

pared, Cold wave Action Plan had been prepared with Development of Landslide Management Plan under process.

It was added that an EOC has temporarily been established at Srinagar with its permanent campus coming up at Ompura, Budgam.

Further the Department has also launched Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) with a toll free number of 112 for receiving the disaster response calls over it.

Other initiatives and activities of the Department that were discussed here includes Common Alert Protocol (CAP) by integrating alert generating agencies

IMD, CWC, INCOIS, DGRE, FSI) and disseminating these alerts about disasters through TSPs, TV, Radio, Cable TV, Social media, Indian Railways, Coastal Sirens etc. A Total of

118 alerts have been disseminated till date, the meeting was apprised.

Earlier a presentation was also made about the benefits and plans devised for welfare of different categories of migrants from Kashmir and Jammu divisions.

The location wise status of 6000 transit accommodations for Kashmiri Pandit (PM Package) employees were discussed threadbare along with that of the recruitment of rest of the designated posts.

In addition it was revealed that these migrants are being covered under NFSA to extend different social security benefits like old age, widow pensions to them as well as covering the eligible under PM Kisan, Ayushman Bharat and other self employment and skilling opportunities.

The meeting also took note of the progress made on outreach campaigns made to cover PoJK and other West Pakistani Refugees (WPRs) under the Rehabilitation Package meant for them.

Other developmental activities like establishment of 'PoJK Bhawan' at Suketar, Community Hall at Jagti and other relief activities carried out for the displaced persons were taken appraisal of by the Chief Secretary for obtaining desired results out of them.

Two Day North Zone-I Regional Conference on Court Dockets concludes in Sgr



Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Dec 1: Two Days North Zone-I Regional Conference on "Court Dockets: Explosion & Exclusion" organized by National Judicial Academy, Bhopal and hosted by the High court of J&K and Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir Judicial Academy concluded today at SKICC, Srinagar.

The second day of the Two-days North Zone Regional Conference witnessed two technical sessions. In the first technical session of the day, Justice Rajesh Bindal, Judge, Supreme Court of India alongwith Justice A. Muhamed Mustaque, Judge, High Court of Kerala, resource persons of the session, discussed on the e-Courts Project, emphasizing strategies to bridge the digital divide.

Justice Bindal highlighted that inadequate equipment and infrastructure are persistent issues affecting all judicial stakeholders including judges, lawyers and litigants. He emphasized that it is imperative to consider robust internal regulations for three primary stakeholders: judges, lawyers and litigants. It should address unequal access to devices and technological infrastructure, issues related to bandwidth and connectivity, and varying levels of proficiency and familiarity with technology so that the delivery of justice is equitable in the true sense of the term.

Justice Mustaque

through a Power point presentation discussed bridging the digital divide and role of e-services. He underscored the importance of inclusivity and accessibility in leveraging technology for a robust justice delivery system. He further stressed that the amalgamation of technology with the judicial processes promises to enhance efficiency, capability, accessibility, and transparency in the journey of justice.

Digital Courts can fasten up the backlog of cases, thereby, reinforcing public trust in the legal system. Justice Mustaque also highlighted the four principles of digital accessibility i.e. Perceivable, Operable, Understandable & Robust.

The second technical session of the day was chaired by Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Judge, Supreme Court of India. Justice A. Muhamed Mustaque, Judge, High Court of Kerala and Justice M. Sundar, Judge, High Court of Madaras were the resource persons for the session.

Justice N. Kotiswar Singh reiterated that case management provides the immediate need for preventing futile backlogs, providing swift justice, dealing with backlogs with a more determined effort and creating an atmosphere of joint venture between judges, lawyers, litigants and administrative officers. He emphasized that the judges must keep track of the case by adhering to the schedules and

see that no unreasonable time should be allowed to be wasted for service of the process and filing of the written statements.

Justice Sundar in the concluding session discussed the role of Artificial Intelligence(AI) in judicial decision making. He explained that the emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain, are revolutionizing judicial processes. He further stated that by adopting these advancements, the judiciary can strengthen governance, security, and efficiency, laying the foundation for future innovations.

Justice Mustaque through the PowerPoint presentation explained ON-courts portal service successfully launched at High Court of Kerala for ensuring transparency and efficient Justice delivery system. He also introduced the concept of digital courts which creates a system in which judicial and administrative processes are simplified.

Director J&K Judicial Academy, Sonia Gupta compared all the technical sessions of second day of the conference.

All the sessions remained very interactive during which all the participants actively participated and shared their experiences, difficulties and also discussed various aspects of the subject topics. They also raised a number of queries which were answered satisfactorily by the worthy resource persons.

DC Kupwara inspects JKSSB Examination Centres, takes stock of facilities

Top News Report

KUPWARA, Dec 1: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today inspected various examination centers across the district to monitor the smooth conduct of the OMR-based examination for the post of Constable, conducted by the J&K Services Selection Board (JKSSB).

The DC visited several centres, including AGS Wayan, GHSS Kupwara, GDC Kupwara and GDC Handwara, where she reviewed the arrangements and interacted with the examination staff and candidates. She emphasized maintaining transparency, fairness and strict adherence to prescribed guidelines.

The DC was accompanied by SSP Kupwara Ghulam Geelani



Wani and SSP Handwara Mush-taq Ahmad Chowdhury.

Ayushi appreciated the efforts of the district administration, law enforcement agencies, and examination staff for their coordinated efforts in facilitating a

conducive and secure environment for the candidates.

She reiterated the administration's commitment to upholding the integrity and transparency of the recruitment process.

Meanwhile ADC Kupwara,

Rouf Rehman who is chief inspector examinations inspected various exam centres at Trehgam, Kralpora and Kupwara

A total of 41 examination centres were established in the district where 9062 candidates appeared for the examination.

FROM PAGE 1

BSF soldiers safeguarded the honor, ambitions of Bharat: Amit Shah

the undying wellspring of inspiration that has raised generations of patriots to ensure that our nation continues to flourish forever. My solemn homage to the bravehearts who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty," Shah posted on X.

The BSF, often referred to as India's First Line of Defence, was established on December 1, 1965, in the wake of the 1965 India-Pakistan war. Before its formation, border security was managed by state armed police battalions. However, the challenges posed during the conflict highlighted the need for a specialized and centralized force to protect India's borders.

BSF was created as a paramilitary force under the Ministry of Home Affairs to safeguard India's borders with Pakistan and later with Bangladesh, ensuring national security, preventing illegal activities, and supporting counter-insurgency operations. Since its inception, BSF has played a crucial role in defending India's territorial integrity and maintaining peace along the borders.

The BSF, with a sanctioned strength of over 2,65,000 personnel spread across 192 battalions, is responsible for securing India's borders stretching over 6,386.36 kilometres with Pakistan and Bangladesh.

BJP appoints Tarun Chugh as Supervisor for 'Sangthan Parv' in Five South Indian States

elections. Party leaders from Punjab, including State Executive Member Manav Taneja and District Vice President Chandrashekar Sharma, expressed gratitude to the party's high command for assigning Chugh, a native of Amritsar, to this significant role.

They highlighted his decade-long dedication to strengthening the party's organization and assured the leadership of their support in this endeavor.

Preparations underway for Ice Skating Season in Sonamarg

the region. "It's not just a sport, it's a chance to showcase Sonamarg's winter charm to the world," said a local resident.

The SDA's dedication to developing winter sports has inspired local youth and boosted tourism prospects. This year's event is expected to be even more thrilling, with enhanced facilities and wider participation anticipated.

Commercial LPG cylinder prices hiked by Rs 16.5, domestic remained unchanged

Last month too, the rates of 19 kg commercial LPG cylinder were increased, by Rs 62.

These price adjustments are expected to impact commercial establishments and small businesses that rely heavily on LPG for their operations.

The revision comes as part of a broader trend in fuel price adjustments in response to changing global market conditions, seen in recent days due to volatile international

order. This price revision will directly impact restaurants, hotels, and other commercial establishments that utilise these cylinders for daily operations. Despite the increase in commercial LPG prices, there has been no change in domestic LPG cylinder rates, offering some relief to households.

Nearly 3,500 projects completed under PMGSY in J&K

enhancing rural connectivity across the region, the officials said.

The PMGSY was launched in Jammu and Kashmir during 2001-02 with the aim to provide all-weather connectivity to unconnected habitations in rural areas with a population of more than 250 as per the 2001 Census.

A total of 3,742 projects, including 305 bridges, having a road length of 20,801 kilometres have been sanctioned for J&K since the inception of the PMGSY. Besides this, 2,140 habitations having a population of 250-plus as per the 2001 census have been approved for providing connectivity, the officials said.

Out of the sanctioned programme, 3,429 projects, including 217 bridges, have been completed so far, they said, adding out of the targeted habitation of 2,140, 2,129 have been connected so far, thereby incurring an expenditure of Rs 12,650 crore.

The officials said the meeting was informed that the implementation of the PMGSY in J&K has been given focused attention during the last five years, thereby giving significant strides in enhancing rural connectivity, particularly in remote and hilly regions, aligning with the vision of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas".

Shukla emphasized the need for a daily

monitoring mechanism to meet project timelines and address challenges effectively.

He issued specific instructions to ensure uncompromising quality standards in road construction, underscoring the importance of creating durable and safe infrastructure for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

He issued directions for the completion of all PMGSY projects as per the sunset date fixed by the ministry.

Earlier on Saturday, the joint secretary conducted an on-ground review of critical road and bridge infrastructure projects under the PMGSY in the Jammu region.

The Union joint secretary, along with senior government officers, visited Kalas Kullian to Chak Harni Road and also inspected the ongoing work on a bridge over the Jagti Bamyal road.

Snowfall intensifies cold in Kashmir

December 2 to December 3 morning.

The weather will remain dry hereafter till December 7

On December 8 there is a possibility of another wet spell with the possibility of light rain and light snow over the higher reaches and at the isolated places, the MeT office said and added the weather will remain dry till December 10.

Kashmir valley continued to reel under the severe cold as the day and night temperatures significantly dropped after yesterday's snowfall over the higher reaches with Konibal remained the coldest place at minus 3.5°C on Sunday.

Srinagar had a low of minus 1.3°C recorded during the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday against the 1.0°C the previous night. This was 0.9°C below normal for the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir during this period of the season.

Srinagar's iconic Dal Lake and other parts were also engulfed with the fog disrupting normal activities.

Qazigund recorded a low of minus 1.8°C against the minus 0.4°C a day ago and this was 1.1°C below normal for the gateway of Kashmir in south Kashmir.

The night temperature at Pahalgam improved but stayed below freezing point and recorded at minus 0.3°C on Sunday against minus 1.5°C on Saturday. This was 2.5°C above normal for the famous tourist destination in south Kashmir.

The minimum temperature at the ski resort of Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district witnessed a significant drop after snowfall and recorded at minus 2.6°C against the at minus 0.5°C recorded the previous night. This was 0.2°C above normal for the valley of meadows during this period of the season.

The temperature at Kokernag also improved and recorded at 0.4°C on Sunday against the 3.0°C previous night and it was 0.5°C above normal for the picnic spot of south Kashmir.

Kupwara had a low of minus 0.5°C against the 3.4°C recorded a day ago and this was 0.5°C above normal for the frontier district of north Kashmir during this period of the season, the MeT office.

Two drug peddlers arrested in Srinagar with contraband substances

nearest police establishment or dial 112. The general public is requested to cooperate with Police in curbing the menace of drugs from the society. We reassure the community members that police will act tough against the criminals as per law.

68th National School Games U-17 Boys Football Mental toughness overpowers skill as young footballers guide their teams to victory



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 1: The young footballers representing their respective team showed extraordinary mental toughness and held their nerves when it mattered the most in the crunch situation, thus overpowering skill of the rival players to guide their teams to victory in the ongoing 68th National School Games in the discipline of Football U-17 Boys, being organised by the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports, under the aegis of School Games Federation of India (SGFI) at Sainik School Nagrota and Khel Gaon Nagrota near here.

As part of the historic series of the 68th National School Games in four sports disciplines, the mega soccer event is being held under the patronage of Minister for Sports, Sh Satish Sharma; Secretary Youth Services and Sports, Sh Sarmad Hafeez and under the chairmanship of Director General Youth Services and Sports, Sh Rajinder Singh Tara.

In this month-long series of 68th National School Games three events of Judo, Fencing and Wushu have already been completed and the fourth one that's Football

U-17 Boys & Girls is in progress. Over 4000 athletes and officials have participated in these games.

Meanwhile, a big number of matches were played in the evening session of day-1 yesterday and on day-2 today at the four venues of Sainik School Nagrota and two venues of Khel Gaon Nagrota.

Today, there was mixed fortune for Jammu and Kashmir team as it faced a defeat against Tamil Nadu and registered a big win over CBSE by thirteen goals to one (13-1). The goal scorers for Jammu and Kashmir were Hanan Ibrahim, Basit, Anwar, Faisal, Huzaif, Adnan and Pranav.

At Ground-1, Orissa held Bihar to goalless draw; Lakshadweep blanked DNHDO by eight goals to nil (8-0); Vidya Bharati held Madhya Pradesh to (1-1) draw; Chandigarh Vs Kerala match ended in a goalless draw and J&K crushed CBSE by thirteen goals to one (13-1).

At Ground No-2 of Sainik School Nagrota, Rajasthan thrashed Himachal Pradesh by eight goals to one (8-1); Karnataka Vs Assam match ended in a (2-2) draw; Himachal blanked Bihar by five goals to nil (5-0); Uttar Pradesh got

the better of ISBO by two goals to nil (2-0)

At Ground-3 of Sainik School Nagrota, Chhattisgarh outplayed Puducherry by two goals to nil (2-0); West Bengal beat IPSC by two goals to one (2-1); Chhattisgarh beat Andhra Pradesh by two goals to nil (2-0); Karnataka prevailed over Lakshadweep by two goals to one (2-1); Tamil Nadu defeated J&K by six goals to two (6-2) and West Bengal drubbed Manipur by three goals to nil (3-0)

At Ground-4 of Sainik School Nagrota, Jharkhand held Haryana to (1-1) draw, KVS Vs Manipur match ended in a goalless (0-0) draw; Jharkhand thrashed Puducherry by eight goals to one (8-1).

At Ground-5 Khel Gaon Nagrota, Uttar Pradesh held Kerala to (2-2) draw; IPSC defeated KVS by three goals to one (3-1) and Vidya Bharati beat Gujarat by two goals to one (2-1).

At Ground-6 Khel Gaon Nagrota, Chandigarh crushed IBSO by nine goals to nil (9-0); West Bengal trounced Punjab by a solitary goal (1-0); IPSC drubbed KVS by three goals to nil (3-0) and Meghalaya outplayed Delhi by five goals to one (5-1).

Illegal extraction and transportation of minerals 7 vehicles seized, 6 persons arrested

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Dec 1: Cracking a whip on illegal mining of minerals, Police have arrested six persons involved in illegal extraction and transportation of minerals in Pulwama and Sopore.

A police team from Police Station Pulwama, arrested 5 persons and seized six vehicles for illegal extraction and transportation of minerals at Romshi Nallah. The arrested persons have been identified as Jaffer Hussain son of Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din resident of Doda, Mohammad Shaheen Khan son of Mohammad Ibrahim Khan resident of Banali Boniyar, Nazir Ahmad Hajam son of Mohammad Sultan Hajam resident

of Gusoo, Rafiq Ahmad Wani son of Mohammad Ayoub Wani resident of Chewakalan Pulwama and Zahoor Ahmad Sofi son of Abdul Aziz Sofi resident of Wahibugh.

Meanwhile in Sopore, a Police team of Police Station Tarzoo headed by SHO PS Tarzoo seized a tractor and arrested a driver for illegal extraction and transportation of minerals. The driver has been identified as Mohammad Ashraf Bhat son of Ghulam Mohammad Bhat resident of Amberpora Sopore.

Accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered in respective police stations and investigations have been initiated.

Police organizes Sports Festival Exhibition/ Friendly Cricket Match

Top News Report

SOPORE, Dec 1: Police in Sopore held a Sports Festival Exhibition/Friendly Cricket Match at the Soin Sadnar Sports Stadium, featuring an exciting contest between the Sopore Police Cricket Team and Soin Cricket Club.

After winning the toss, the Sopore Police Cricket Team decided to field first. Soin Cricket Club set a challenging target of 137 runs in 18 overs. In response, the Sopore Police Cricket Team began their chase aggressively, dominating the powerplay. However, despite a strong effort, they fell short by 25 runs, ending their innings at 112 runs.

The chief guest for the

event, SP Sopore Smt. Divya D-IPS, commended the youth for their active participation in sports and called for greater collaboration between the police and the community to tackle social issues, such as drug abuse and promote a healthier society.

The event received widespread appreciation from the public, who praised the J&K Police for organizing such initiatives, helping to foster a positive image of the department.

The exhibition match was deemed a resounding success, reinforcing the police's commitment to engaging with the community through sports and further promoting a positive relationship between the public and the department.

DC inspects arrangements at various examination centers

Top News Report

GANDEBAL, DEC 1: The J&K Service Selection Board (J&K SSB) examination for recruitment to constable posts in the Police Department concluded successfully today across Ganderbal district.

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shyambir, along with SSP Ganderbal, Ragav S, inspected various examination centers to assess the arrangements and ensure a smooth and transparent conduct of the written examination.

A total of 5989 candidates were scheduled to appear for the exam, out of which 5473 candidates participated. The examination was held across 27 designated centers in the district.

During his visit, the DC inspected the arrangements being put in place for the candidates, including seating arrangements, cleanliness, videography, drinking water, lighting and heating in the examination halls.

He expressed satisfaction with the arrangements and commended the efforts of the Nodal Officer and all concerned officials for ensuring the successful conduct of the examination.

To maintain transparency and security, magistrates and videographers were deployed at all examination centers. Additionally, the district police ensured adequate security arrangements throughout the process.

Fulfill promise by restoring statehood to J&K: S. Manjit Singh to GoI



Top News Report

VIJAYPUR, Dec 1: - Apni Party Provincial President, Jammu, and Former Minister, S. Manjit Singh today expressed his concern over delay in granting statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a meeting of the party leaders at village Gurgani in Block Parmandal in Samba District, the Former Minister referred to the growing concerns of the people regarding the unfulfilled promise that was made with the people of Jammu and Kashmir that they would get back their statehood.

"Jammu and Kashmir is a historic state that was ruled by Dogra

Maharaja. The people of J&K have built this state with their sacrifices, and if the statehood status is delayed, it would create a feeling of discontent and dissatisfaction among the people," said S. Manjit Singh.

Expressing his dismay over the developmental activities in Block Parmandal, he said that the area has remained neglected for decades, and the people feel that they were deprived of development because of political reasons as the administration sides with a particular party.

"The administration, and its field departments should have done justice with the people by providing equal developmental opportuni-

ties with development, construction of lanes, drains, ensuring the clean drinking water supply, health facilities, approach roads etc.

Earlier, the people complained that the Govt officials do not listen to their grievances even as they highlight their issues before them a number of times.

"The people are told to visit again, and the issues remain unresolved," he said, while urging for the early restoration of statehood so that the Govt Departments can be made accountable.

The meeting was also attended by the District President of Samba District, Raman Thappa, and other leaders.

Maharishi Vidya Mandir shines at 21st State Matsogi-Do Championship 2024



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 1: The 21st State Matsogi-Do Championship concluded on a high note, held from 28th to 30th November 2024, with over 800 students from various schools across Jammu participating in the grand event. The championship showcased outstanding performances by young athletes competing in different age and weight categories.

The students of Maharishi Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School, Sainik Colony, brought laurels to their institution, winning a remarkable 7 Gold, 7 Silver, and 11 Bronze medals, highlighting their exceptional talent and dedication.

Gold: Mehak Verma, Krithvik Mahajan, Vikhyat Balotra, Navika Choudhary, Laksh

Sharma, Jaspinder Kour and Aarav Mankhotra. Silver: Arshita, Akash, Rudra Salathia, Prachi, Naitik Verma and Sanchit Sharma.

Bronze: Jyotsana, Anmol Sangral, Renaksh, Navya Choudhary, Karan Dhar, Mehak Thakur, Jaskirat, Kartik Singh and Anirudh Sadhotra.

The championship witnessed the esteemed presence of Shri Satish Sharma, Cabinet Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, who inaugurated the event. The closing ceremony was graced by Shri Sat Sharma, Senior BJP Leader, who encouraged the young athletes and showered them with blessings.

Both dignitaries emphasized the importance of sports in shaping a disciplined and determined youth, fostering physical fitness and mental strength.

Shri Sat Sharma lauded the efforts of all participants and congratulated the winners for their hard work and dedication, urging them to continue their pursuit of excellence in sports.

The management of Maharishi Vidya Mandir congratulated the students for their stellar performance and expressed gratitude to the organizers for hosting such an inspiring event. The school reiterated its commitment to nurturing talent and encouraging students to excel in extracurricular activities alongside academics.

This remarkable achievement by the students of Maharishi Vidya Mandir not only showcases their skills but also underscores the significance of sports in empowering the youth and building a vibrant, competitive community.

BJP strengthens grassroots presence through Membership Drives: Chandan



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 1: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) District Secretary and District Convener Membership Drive Jammu South RS Pura, Rohi Chandan, emphasized the significance of the "BJP Membership Drive" in establishing a direct connection with the youth.

This initiative aims to empower the masses and promote the party's ideology among the younger generation. The BJP membership drive camp was organized in Roi Morh in the esteemed presence of Gadigarh Mandal President Vijay Sharma. The camp was organized by Gadigarh Mandal membership drive Convener Sanjeev Khajuria. The event saw the presence of senior leader BR Sharma, Mandal Co Convener Divanshu Sharma, Durga Dutt, and others present on the occasion.

While having an interactive session with the general public during the camp, Rohi Chandan highlighted the importance of such

public-friendly camps in connecting with the common masses and enhancing the BJP membership drive. He elaborates that BJP membership drive camps are a significant initiative aimed at expanding the party's base and promoting its ideology among the masses. These membership drive camps are open to all citizens who share the party's vision and values. He appeals to the people, and interested individuals can join the party by giving a missed call on 88 00 00 2024. Chandan said, "Since the BJP got more votes than the National Conference, it was clear that the BJP is more popular in J&K and is going to play a very constructive role in the union territory administration under the leadership of PM Modi. He asked party cadres to work effectively for the party's 2024 membership drive 'Sangathan Parv, Sadasyata Abhiyan 2024' by renewing his membership and urged party workers to hold camps and ensure special efforts to con-

nect with the youths.

Rohi Chandan added that these "BJP Membership Drives" are essential in promoting public participation and involvement in the party's activities. By conducting these drives, the BJP can increase its membership base, foster a sense of community among its supporters, and ultimately, strengthen its presence at the grassroots level.

Vijay Sharma said the BJP membership drive is a crucial initiative aimed at empowering the youth and promoting the party's ideology among the masses. With its focus on connecting with the younger generation, the party is poised to play a significant role in shaping India's future.

Sanjeev Khajuria and Divanshu expressed that the membership drive is also focused on expanding the party's reach and strengthening its roots in every corner of the country. They said we are working to enhance the pace of the BJP membership drive in Gadigarh Mandal.

TNWS organizes session on "Yoga for Mental Health" in collaboration with Isha Foundation

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 1: The Trikota Nagar Welfare Society (TNWS) organized a highly impactful session on "Yoga for Mental Health" in collaboration with the esteemed Isha Foundation. The session aimed to foster mental well-being and spiritual harmony through the ancient practices of yoga and meditation, drawing a positive response from participants.

The event featured Dr. Shreyansh Kumar Jain, the State Yoga Commissioner, Chairman of the Indian Yoga Association, and President of Vichar Kranti Manch International, as the Chief Guest. Rajinder Parsad Kakkar, President of TNWS, presided over the session, which marked



an important stride toward raising mental health awareness within the community.

The program was led by Isha Foundation's certified yoga instructor, Shivani, assisted by Shubham Barnala and Sanjeevni Rani.

Shivani elaborated on the philosophy of Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev and the foundation's mission to enhance human well-being through yoga, meditation, and sustainable living

practices. Participants were introduced to effective meditation techniques via an engaging video presentation, offering practical tools for achieving inner calm and mental clarity.

The event saw active participation from TNWS executive members, including Indu Puri, Rajni Malhotra, Rama Jamwal, Shailja Gupta, Amarjeet Singh, O.P. Sharma, Dr. T.R. Gupta, and K.K. Mahajan, who found the session

profoundly insightful and beneficial.

In his address, Dr. Jain highlighted the significance of yoga in maintaining a balanced lifestyle for optimal mental and physical health. He emphasized the transformative role of yoga in nurturing a sound mind and body while sharing practical tips for holistic well-being. His message inspired attendees to integrate yoga into their daily lives for lasting health ben-

efits. Ashok Kumar Arora, Patron of TNWS, expressed gratitude to the Isha Foundation, the Chief Guest, and all attendees during his closing remarks. His vote of thanks recognized the collective efforts that contributed to the event's resounding success.

This initiative underscores Trikota Nagar Welfare Society's dedication to promoting holistic development and addressing mental health challenges through yoga and meditation, reflecting the society's commitment to a healthier and more harmonious community.

For more information on Isha Foundation and its programs, visit www.isha.sadhguru.org.

Jay Shah begins tenure as ICC Chair after successful BCCI stint

Jay Shah assumed the role of Chair of the International Cricket Council (ICC) on December 1, ushering in a new era of leadership in global cricket. He succeeds Greg Barclay, who has served as ICC Chair since November 2020.

NEW DELHI, Dec 1 (Agencies): Jay Shah has officially taken charge as the Chair of the International Cricket Council (ICC) today, December 1, marking a new chapter in global cricket administration. Shah succeeds Greg Barclay, who has held the position since November 2020. In his inaugural statement as ICC Chair, Shah outlined his vision, focusing on leveraging cricket's inclusion in the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games as a transformational opportunity and prioritising the growth of the women's game.

"I am honoured to take on the role of ICC Chair and grateful for the support and trust of the ICC Directors and Member Boards," Shah said. "This is an exciting time for the sport as we prepare for the LA28 Olympic Games and work to make cricket more inclusive and engaging for fans worldwide. We are at a critical juncture with the coexistence of multiple formats and the need



to accelerate the growth of the women's game. Cricket holds immense potential globally, and I look forward to working closely with the ICC team and Member countries to seize these opportunities and take the sport to new heights."

Shah brings a wealth of experience in cricket administration. His journey began in 2009 with the Gujarat Cricket Association,

where he played a pivotal role in the development of the world's largest cricket stadium in Ahmedabad. In 2019, Shah became the youngest-ever Honorary Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), a position he held until stepping down to assume the ICC role. Shah also served as President of the Asian Cricket Council and chaired the ICC's

Finance and Commercial Affairs Committee, demonstrating his capability in steering major cricketing organizations.

Shah's tenure begins at a time of significant opportunities and challenges for global cricket. The sport's inclusion in the LA28 Olympics presents a chance to reach new audiences, while the simultaneous management of multiple formats-Test, ODI, and T20-requires strategic leadership to maintain balance and growth.

Women's cricket, a rapidly evolving segment, also features prominently on Shah's agenda, aligning with the ICC's vision of inclusivity and expansion.

Shah expressed gratitude to outgoing ICC Chair Greg Barclay, recognizing his contributions over the past four years. "I would like to thank Greg Barclay for his leadership in the role for the past four years and the milestones achieved during that period," Shah said.

Sunil Gavaskar predicts 3 changes in India XI for Pink-Ball Test: "KL Rahul to bat at..."



NEW DELHI, Dec 1 (Agencies): Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar has predicted the team's playing XI for the Pink-Ball Test against Australia, starting December 6 in Adelaide. The visitors, who lead 1-0 in the five-match series, are likely to welcome captain Rohit Sharma and star batter Shubman Gill back into the side for the game at the Adelaide Oval. While Rohit missed the first Test due to the birth of his second child, Gill picked up a thumb injury during India's intra-squad practice match at the WACA Ground.

During an interaction on 7Cricket, Gavaskar said Rohit and Gill will definitely come back into the playing XI in place of Devdutt Padikkal and Dhruv Jurel. However, the legendary batter suggested that the management is

likely to rejig the batting order.

While Rohit opened the batting in Rohit's absence, Gavaskar feels that the former will drop down to the middle order.

"I think there will be two changes for sure, both Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill coming back into the 11. My feeling is that the batting order will change. Where Rohit Sharma will replace Rahul, Shubman Gill will bat at three, Padikkal and Jurel will go out of the team, Rahul will bat at six," Gavaskar said.

Gavaskar suggested that India are likely to make another change with Ravindra Jadeja replacing Washington Sundar.

"And one other change that could happen is that Jadeja comes in place of Washington Sundar," he added.

Meanwhile, India beat Australia by 295 runs in the first Test in Perth to take a 1-0 lead in the five-match series. The second Test starts December 6 at the Adelaide Oval.

Australia will be without pacer Josh Hazlewood, who has been ruled out of the match due to a side strain.

Sunil Gavaskar's Predicted Playing XI For India Vs Australia 2nd Test:

Rohit Sharma (c), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant (wk), KL Rahul, Ravindra Jadeja, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Harshit Rana, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj.

Former Australia Test opener Ian Redpath passes away at 83

CANBERRA, Dec 1 (Agencies): Former Australia Test opener Ian Redpath has passed away at the age of 83, said Cricket Australia (CA) on Sunday. Redpath was a regular fixture in the Australian team in the 1960s and 1970s, and served as a member of the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame. Hailing from Geelong, Redpath played 66 Tests and made 4737 runs at an average of 43.45, including eight centuries and 31 half centuries with a top score of 171. He took 83 catches mostly in the slips where he excelled.

He made his Test debut at the MCG in the second game of the 1963-64 series against South Africa and contributed 97 to an opening partnership of 219 with fellow Victorian Bill Lawry. Redpath's maiden Test century, 132 against the West Indies at the SCG, did not come until 1969.

But his patience and endurance had already become a trusted bulwark to some of the more flamboyant members of the Australian line-up. His seniority and leadership was acknowledged when he was made vice-captain to Ian Chappell of the Australian team for the home series against England in 1974-75 and to Greg Chappell for the series against the West Indies in 1975-76.

"Ian was a much loved and revered figure and everyone in Australian Cricket will be enormously saddened by his passing. As a fine opening batter, Ian was a mainstay of the national team through one of the great eras of Australian cricket and beloved by many throughout the world for his courage, impeccable sportsmanship and wry humour."

"We were privileged to hear Ian speak of the wonderful experiences and rela-



tionships cricket had provided upon his induction into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame in 2023 and this deep love of the game was manifest in his enormous contribution to cricket at first-class and community level. The thoughts of everyone at Cricket Australia are with Ian's family and many friends at this sad time," said CA Chairman Mike Baird.

In first-class cricket, Redpath went on to make 14,993 runs for Victoria at an average of 41.99 with 32 centuries and 84 fifties in 226 first class matches. Redpath remained an active contributor to first-class and community cricket serving as Victorian men's coach and in various voluntary roles in his home city, particularly with the Geelong Cricket Club.

In 1975, Redpath, who also played five ODIs for Australia, was made a Member of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire for services to cricket. He once emerged from international retirement to join World Series Cricket where injury restricted his on-field contributions, and returned to retirement.

Carse takes first ten wicket haul as England beats New Zealand by 8 wickets in 1st test

CHRISTCHURCH, Dec 1 (Agencies): New Zealand battled to delay the inevitable but England eventually eased to an eight wicket win in the first test on Sunday and a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Resuming on the fourth day with only a four run lead and four wickets in hand, New Zealand managed to bat through all the first session thanks to Daryl Mitchell who made 84 as a lone rearguard and was the last man out.

Playing in just his third test, Brydon Carse took 6-42 for match figures of 10-196 as New Zealand was bowled out for 252 in its second innings, leaving England needing only 104 runs to win.

New Zealand managed to claim the wicket of Zak Crawley (1) in the second over of England's innings, then Ben Duckett when the tourists were 55-2 to create a little suspense before the end.

But Jacob Bethell who made an unbeaten 50 from 37 balls, his first half century in his debut test, and Joe Root, who scored 23 after a first innings duck, saw Eng-



land to 104-2 in only 12.4 overs at a run rate of over eight runs per over. The victory came with more than a day and a half to spare.

England's win was made possible by Harry Brook whose innings of 171 in partnerships of 151 with Ollie Pope (77) and 159 with Ben Stokes (88) propelled England to 499 in its first innings in reply to New Zealand's 348, a lead of 151.

Carse had three wickets by the end of the third day and took three more Sunday to become the first Englishman since Monty Panesar in 2012 to take 10 wickets in a test overseas.

"Of course I'm very proud of the outcome today and to be able to win as a team is very satisfying," Carse said. "I think we were thrown

different challenges throughout the game but I think as a group we stuck to certain plans and we got our rewards during the game."

In a moment of concern for England, captain Ben Stokes completed 6.3 overs during New Zealand's second innings and was unable to continue, calling on Gus Atkinson to complete his seventh over. Stokes remained on the field for the remainder of the innings and showed no obvious sign of injury, though he recently had to overcome a hamstring strain.

"We're very happy with the way we performed through the whole week," Stokes said. "We got put under pressure on day two. We were 40-3 and to go on and get a big first innings score and a pretty like-

able lead was very nice. "I thought our bowlers were pretty relentless the whole time."

England was in a strong position from the first day when, after winning the toss, it had New Zealand 319-5 at stumps on a pitch at Hagley Oval which offered pace and bounce on all four days.

Kane Williamson held the New Zealand innings together with 93 while Tom Latham (47) and Rachin Ravindra made solid starts but didn't go on. Young off-spinner Shoaib Bashir took 4-69, bowling 20 overs in an unusually heavy workload for a spinner on the first day at Hagley Park.

On day two, Glenn Phillips completed a half century and finished 58 not out as New Zealand reached 348.

New Zealand removed Zak Crawley early but Ben Duckett made 46 at a brisk pace to set the tone for England's first innings which was driven by Brook's 171, his seventh test century.

England also was helped to its commanding position by New Zealand's poor catching. It dropped seven catches, including Brook on five occasions, at 17, 41, 70, 112 and 132.

"If we isolate the first two innings, being put in on that sort of surface and to be in the position we were, we were happy with that," New Zealand captain Tom Latham said. "The position we had them in, we had our opportunities. If catches go to hand things could have been different."

Using Bazball principles, England added 180 in 33 overs on the third day at almost six per over. New Zealand then slumped to 64-3 early in its second innings, losing Devon Conway, Latham and Ravindra cheaply. Williamson made 61, compiling half-centuries in both innings for the 10th time in his career.

But New Zealand was 155-6 at stumps on day three and while Mitchell's gallant effort on the last day was impressive, it ultimately came in a lost cause.

The second test begins at the Basin Reserve in Wellington on Friday.

Pakistan Cricket Board will accept 'Hybrid' model if same policy followed for ICC events in India, says source

KARACHI, Dec 1 (Agencies): Backing down from its boycott threat, the Pakistan Cricket Board has told the ICC that it is willing to accept the 'Hybrid' model for hosting next year's Champions Trophy provided the world body allows the same arrangement for events to be held in India till 2031.

A top PCB source told PTI that the Board is also demanding a greater share in the annual revenue cycle for agreeing to the model under which India would be playing its share of matches, including the clash against Pakistan in Dubai, owing to security concerns. The Champions Trophy is to be held in February-March.

The proposal is a climbdown for the PCB, which had earlier threatened to boycott the tournament if its hosting rights

were not granted in full and India's demand for a neutral venue was accepted.

"The current situation is that PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi has said that it will only accept hosting the Champions Trophy on a hybrid model if the board agrees that in future all ICC events will be on same system with Pakistan not going to India to play matches," a PCB source told agency.

Till 2031, India are due to host three ICC men's events—the 2026 T20 World Cup jointly with Sri Lanka, the 2029 Champions Trophy and the 2031 ODI World Cup jointly with Bangladesh.

Given that Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are co-hosts for two major events, Pakistan would not be compelled to travel to India if they insist against it. The point of contention could be just the 2029 Champions

Trophy, which will be held entirely in India.

Another flash-point could be next year's women's ODI World Cup in October, also to be held in India.

The state of flux surrounding next year's Champions Trophy is now expected to be resolved in the next couple of days after the ICC executive board considers Pakistan's latest demands.

The ICC Board met briefly to find a solution on Friday but no agreement could be reached. The world body eventually told PCB to either accept the hybrid model or be prepared to be excluded from the tournament after Naqvi reiterated the unyielding position of his country.

The impasse has led to a delay in the announcement of the schedule for the tourna-

ment.

The PCB source claimed that Naqvi is sticking to his stance despite pressure and has even sought financial perks for the PCB to accept the hybrid model.

"Pakistan also wants the ICC board to increase its financial cycle share of revenues from 5.75 percent and Naqvi is insistent on this but he has not sought any additional hosting fees," the source added.

"People are saying that Naqvi has sought time to get back after talking to his government but we don't know if he went there with the backing of the government and had already sought their approval to make his stand in the ICC board's virtual meeting," he asserted.

Naqvi, who is also the interior minister in his country, also faces the prospect of a public

backlash if PCB is seen to be backing down without any tangible gains.

Earlier, Naqvi also met Emirates Cricket Board head Mubashir Usmani in Dubai, conveying that Pakistan was ready to host the Champions Trophy and all the preparations were on schedule.

The PCB source though rejected speculation that the Board would get a bonus of USD 20 million besides the hosting fees of USD six million for the Champions Trophy for conceding to India's demands.

"Pakistan has taken only one stance and that is in future, it will also not play in India in any ICC events and the Hybrid model should be applied for all future ICC events that Pakistan and India will play their games at neutral venues," he said.

Barcelona suffer loss on club's 125th anniversary

BARCELONA, Dec 1 (Agencies): LaLiga leaders Barcelona's 125th anniversary celebrations were spoiled by Las Palmas who claimed a shock 2-1 victory after Fabio Silva scored the winner to extend the hosts' winless league run to three games.

In a game dominated by Barca, who had 70% of possession and peppered the goal with almost 30 shots, it was Las Palmas who made their few chances count to claim a famous triumph.

Barca remain on 34 points and lead second-placed Real Madrid by four but their rivals now have two games

in hand, while the victory moved Las Palmas up to 14th place on 15 points. "I think when we don't score the goals, the team struggles a little bit," Barcelona coach Hansi Flick said. Kaoru Mitoma's first-half header for Brighton & Hove Albion was cancelled out by a Flynn Downes strike just before the hour as the Seagulls drew 1-1 at home with bottom side Southampton to move up to second in the Premier League table.

Brentford's Kevin Schade bagged a hat-trick, plus set up a fourth goal, as Thomas Frank's men roared back from a goal down to beat Leicester City 4-1.

GGs College Principal Dr. R.K Uppal honored with Bharatiya Gyan Ratna Puraskar

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 1: Dr. Uppal was awarded the Bharatiya Gyan Ratna Puraskar by K. EV. Research Council. It is a prestige reorganization awarded to individual washes that embody excellence, education, and innovation in their respective fields. As a gesture of respect and appreciation, this award is presented to those whose work not only advances their fields but also has a positive impact on society. The award seeds inspire others to strive for excellence and contribute meaningfully to the nation's development and progress by acknowledging exceptional achievements.

Dr. Rajinder Kumar



Uppal, a distinguished Emeritus Professor and acclaimed academician, currently serves as Professor-cum-Principal at Guru Gobind College of Management and Technology, Gidderbaha, Punjab, India. He holds

the esteemed position of MTC Global Chair Professor of Banking and Finance and is a Research Professor at the Indian Institute of Finance, New Delhi.

Dr. Uppal's expertise extends further as

a Visiting Professor at various institutions Born in a modest setting near Bathinda District, Punjab, Dr. Uppal's journey from humble beginnings to scholarly heights underscores his unwavering passion for

knowledge and learning. He embarked on his academic career at D.A.V. College, Malout in 1987 as a part-time lecturer, ascending to his current eminent role through dedication and scholarly prowess. Dr. Uppal is recognized internationally for his profound contributions to Banking and Finance, evidenced by numerous national and international patents stemming from his research.

A prolific writer and mentor, he has authored numerous scholarly works and serves as a frequent reviewer, discussant, and session chair for professional organizations. His visionary leadership and scholarly endeavors continue to inspire and shape the academic landscape in the field of Finance.

NMOPS urges restoration of OPS for government employees

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 1: The Jammu and Kashmir chapter of the National Movement for Old Pension Scheme (NMOPS), led by its president Mohd Ashraf Sheikh, has intensified its call for the restoration of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) for government employees in the Union Territory.

The OPS, which was replaced by the National Pension Scheme (NPS) in 2010, ensured a pension amounting to 50% of the last drawn salary, fully funded by the government. In contrast, the NPS, a market-linked contributory scheme, has faced criticism for failing to provide similar financial security.

"The NPS has proven inadequate in ensuring a dignified post-retirement life for gov-

ernment employees," said Sheikh. "We urge the newly formed J&K government to heed the long-standing demand of employees and reinstate the OPS in the Union Territory."

The movement for OPS restoration has been gaining traction across India, with several states addressing similar demands. The NMOPS contends that the OPS is not just a financial issue but a matter of social justice.

"The OPS offered guaranteed benefits, including dearness relief and alignment with Central Pay Commissions (CPC) recommendations. The NPS, on the other hand, exposes retirees to market volatility, transferring risks from the government to individuals," Sheikh explained.

The NMOPS also dismissed the recently proposed Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) as insufficient, calling it an extension of the NPS with superficial changes that fail to address employees' core concerns.

The association is optimistic about achieving its goal, emphasizing that the restoration of OPS is essential for the financial security and dignity of government employees. The NMOPS plans to continue raising its voice until the government takes decisive action.

The appeal for OPS restoration reflects a broader national movement, with government employees across various states rallying for a pension scheme that guarantees stability and dignity in retirement.

Sunny Nanda and Renu Devi selected for Int'l Raffa Bowls Coaching Camp in Australia



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 1: Sunny Nanda and Renu Devi have been selected to represent India at the prestigious Open International Raffa Bowls Coaching Camp and Training Seminar-2025, set to take place in Melbourne, Australia, from January 2 to January 5, 2025. Organized by the Asian Oceania Bowls Confederation, this marks a historic moment as it will be the first time an Indian team participates in the Open Raffa Bowls Event.

To celebrate this

achievement, the Raffa Bowls India Federation held a special ceremony to honor Sunny and Renu. The duo will receive guidance from Antonio Biancacci, Vice President of Bocce Australia, during the event. Their participation is fully sponsored by the J&K Sports Speed Ball Association, covering all expenses, including entry fees and travel.

Pooja Malhotra, the founder patron of the association, Maven Vibes, and a noted author and youth leadership coach, extended her heartfelt congratu-

lations and best wishes to the team. She expressed confidence in Sunny Nanda's leadership and emphasized that their participation would inspire young athletes across the country. Malhotra highlighted the importance of such events in fostering a love for sports among the youth and hoped the team would bring glory not just to Jammu & Kashmir but to the entire nation.

This milestone reflects the growing prominence of Raffa Bowls in India and is a testament to the dedication and skill of its players and coaches.

JKTJAC monthly meeting highlights key issues of teaching fraternity

Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Dec 1: The Jammu Kashmir Teachers' Joint Action Committee (JKTJAC) convened its monthly meeting today in Udhampur under the leadership of UT President Vinod Sharma and District President Lekh Raj Parihar. The meeting witnessed active participation from executive members and representatives from all zones of the district, who came together to deliberate on pressing issues faced by the teaching community, particularly those under the ReT scheme.

Addressing the gathering, Vinod Sharma underscored the importance of implementing Government Order No. 469 Edu of 2014, which provides for the inclusion of the 5-year ReT period for seniority benefits and permits transfers within districts for ReT teachers. He pointed out that the Central Administra-



tive Tribunal (CAT) had recently ruled that regularized ReT teachers are equivalent to general line teachers and should not face discrimination based on their mode of appointment. Sharma expressed hope that the government would act promptly to implement this order, ensuring justice for the teaching fraternity.

He also highlighted the growing demand for the restoration of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) for employees appointed on or after January 1, 2010. Sharma criticized the National Pension Scheme (NPS) for failing to provide adequate

post-retirement benefits and urged the government to reinstate the OPS to secure the financial future of teachers.

Other critical issues discussed during the meeting included the regularization of ReTs who have completed their 5-year tenure, the conversion of RRETs into Teachers Grade III/III, and the extension of cash-in-lieu benefits to teachers. Sharma called for the conversion of head teacher posts into non-plan master posts, conducting another round of Departmental Promotion Committees (DPC) to elevate teachers to

master grades, and the immediate adjustment of newly promoted masters in Jammu Province, mirroring recent adjustments in Kashmir Province.

The teaching community also sought the release of time-barred arrears for teachers and masters, raising their grade to match their counterparts in other Union Territories, and granting earned leave to teachers who participate in summer or winter camps and other duties during vacation periods. Sharma further pressed for the filling of vacant posts, such as ZEOs, Principals, and Headmasters, in headless zones and schools, and granting Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO) powers to these institutions to streamline operations.

District President Lekh Raj Parihar brought attention to administrative lapses in some zones of the district,

urging the Chief Education Officer to address the delay in submitting budget requirements that hinder salary grant releases and cause undue hardship for teachers. Parihar also called for the swift completion of service records and the disbursement of pending dues to teachers, emphasizing the urgency of these matters.

The meeting saw contributions from several other prominent members, including Sham Sharma, Ashok Seth, Ravinder Singh Rathore, Vijay Sadotra, and Suresh Sharma, who collectively voiced their concerns and proposed solutions to improve the welfare of the teaching community. The JKTJAC reaffirmed its commitment to advocating for the rights and needs of teachers and called on the government to act decisively to address these genuine and urgent demands.

Army at Bandi helps extinguish fire in Lagama



Top News Report

URI, Dec 1: Demonstrating exceptional readiness and dedication, the Indian Army deployed at Bandi acted swiftly to assist in extinguishing a house fire in Lagama, Uri. The fire, which broke out in a residential home, posed an immediate threat to the safety of the occupants and surrounding properties.

Upon being alerted about the incident, Indian Army personnel quickly reached the location and coordinated efforts with the local firefighters from Uri and members of the local populace. Together, they effectively controlled the blaze, preventing its spread to adjacent houses and minimizing potential damage.

The Army's immediate response included evacuating residents from the affected house, ensuring their safety, and providing assistance in firefighting operations. This timely and collaborative effort between the Army, local firefighters, and the community not only brought the situation under control but also highlighted the importance of unity during emergencies.

Local residents expressed their deep gratitude to the Indian Army for their prompt and selfless action, which played a crucial role in averting a major disaster. This incident underscores the Army's unwavering commitment to the safety and welfare of the people in the region.

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