

# TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, MONDAY, DECEMBER 09, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



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## BRIEFLY

**GST officers detect Rs 35,132 Cr ITC evasion by over 17,000 fake firms**

NEW DELHI, Dec 9 (Agencies): GST officers have detected cases of ITC evasion of Rs 35,132 crore by 17,818 fake firms between April-October and arrested 69 persons, Parliament was informed on Monday.

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said regular action is taken to detect fake firms through data analytics and other intelligence by the central and state authorities.

Also, a coordinated special drive was launched between August 16 and October 30 to detect fake firms. "A total of 18,876 ITC fraud cases were detected involving 17,818 fake firms with suspected ITC evasion of Rs 35,132 crore during fiscal 2024-25 (April-October)," Chaudhary said.

This has saved Rs 6,484 crore of which Rs 5,422 crore by blocking of ITC and Rs 1,062 crore by way of recovery. A total of 69 arrests have been made in the cases during the current fiscal till October.

**Five detained for drug trafficking along LoC in Poonch**

MENDHAR/JAMMU, Dec 9: Five people allegedly involved in drug trafficking were detained during a search operation along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district on Monday, officials said. Jammu tourism packages

The search operation was launched in the forward areas following inputs about drug trafficking in the area, they said.

Police personnel cordoned off Khari, Ajote, Degwar, Purani, Poonch and Jernally Mohalla in the district, the officials said.

During the operation, five people allegedly involved in drug trafficking were detained for questioning, they said.

**Leopard found dead in Rajouri district**

RAJOURI, Dec 9 (Agencies): A leopard was found dead near a forest in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, officials said on Monday.

## Parliament disrupted as BJP raises 'Cong-Soros links', demands debate



NEW DELHI, Dec 9 (Agencies): Both Houses of Parliament continued to suffer disruptions on Monday as the ruling BJP upped the ante on the issue of alleged Congress links with Hungarian-

American businessman George Soros and demanded a debate on the matter.

Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha were both adjourned until noon and then again till 2 pm with the BJP MPs demanding

a debate on reports that Congress leader Sonia Gandhi had ties with organisations financed by the George Soros Foundation.

The Congress dismissed the charge

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## IED defused at Palhalla on Srinagar-Baramulla highway, traffic restored

SRINAGAR, Dec 9 (Agencies): An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) was defused at Palhalla on Srinagar-Baramulla highway in north Kashmir on Monday morning, officials said.

Earlier, the traffic movement was halted along the highway after a joint team of police, army and paramilitary forces discovered a suspicious bag near Hyderabad TCP.



An official told Greater Kashmir that a bomb disposal squad was summoned to the site,

which inspected the bag and defused it without causing any damage.

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## Pakistani intruder shot dead along International border in Punjab

CHANDIGARH, Dec 9 (Agencies): A suspected Pakistani intruder was shot dead along the International Border in Punjab's Amritsar district, a BSF spokesperson said on Monday.

The incident happened in the border area near Mahawa village Sunday night when BSF troops noticed some suspicious movement.

"During the night hours, alert BSF troops on duty

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## Over 40 Delhi schools get bomb threats via e-mail, demands ransom of USD 30,000

NEW DELHI, Dec 9 (Agencies): More than 40 schools in the national capital received bomb threats via e-mail and demanded a ransom of USD 30,000, Delhi Police said on Monday.

"I planted multiple bombs (lead azide, explosive compound used in detonators) inside the building. I planted multiple bombs inside the building. The bombs are small and hidden very well. It will not cause very much damage to the building, but many people will be injured when the bombs detonate. You all deserve to suffer and lose limbs. If I do not

receive USD 30,000, I will detonate the bombs," the threat mail read.

This email came on December 8 at around 11:38 pm.

Meanwhile, Mother Mary's School, British School, Salwan Public School, and Cambridge School also received bomb threats via e-mail, Delhi Police said.

The Mother Mary's School stated that an email was received this morning regarding a bomb threat in school.

"Dear Parents, an email was received this morning regarding a bomb threat in school. As such the students

are being dispersed immediately as a precautionary measure. You are requested to kindly collect your wards from your respective bus stops. On the footer, parents are requested to kindly come and collect their wards immediately. The Bus Route Incharges will keep you updated about the movement of the buses from time to time," Mother Mary's School stated.

Meanwhile, Delhi Chief Minister Atishi attacked the Central government and said that the BJP-ruled central government has failed in its only task of providing

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## KP organization files complaint against Iltija Mufti for allegedly insulting Hindus

SRINAGAR, Dec 9 (Agencies): The Kashmiri Pandit organization Youth 4 Panun Kashmir has filed a police complaint against PDP leader Iltija Mufti, accusing her of insulting Lord Rama and the Hindu community.

The complaint was filed by Vithal Chowdhary,

President of Youth 4 Panun Kashmir, alleging that Mufti made a derogatory and inflammatory tweet about Lord Rama, Hinduism, and Hindus. The complaint has been lodged with the Cyber Crime Cell in Delhi, accusing Mufti of making a deeply offensive statement designed

to incite communal discord and deliberately insult Lord Rama, the Hindu religion, and its followers.

The complaint cites Sections 302, 325, and 323 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and Section 67 of the IT Act, as per the statement issued by the organization.

Meanwhile, Roots in Kashmir (RIK), another Kashmiri Pandit group, has supported the actions of Youth 4 Panun Kashmir. Amit Raina, spokesperson for RIK, called Mufti a "habitual offender" and promised to provide full

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## Higher reaches experience fresh snowfall across Kashmir, Gulmarg records Minus 9 °C



SRINAGAR, Dec 9 (Agencies): After fresh snowfall in the higher reaches of Kashmir, the cold wave tightened its grip across the valley, sending night temperatures plummeting.

The famous ski resort of Gulmarg recorded a bone-chilling minus 9.0°C on Monday, marking it as one of the coldest nights of the season, officials said.

Gulmarg had witnessed fresh snowfall on Sunday, adding to the

picturesque charm of the destination.

In Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, temperatures also fell significantly. The city recorded a low of minus 3.3°C on Monday, a steep drop from Sunday's minus 0.5°C.

The mercury at the tourist spot of Pahalgam plunged to minus 6.8°C on Monday against the minus 2.8°C on Sunday, and this was 4.0°C below normal for

the tourist spot of south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Qazigund slipped down to minus 5.2°C against the minus 1.0°C a day ago, and it was 4.5°C below normal for the gateway to Kashmir on this day.

The picnic spot of Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, dropped to minus 4.4°C against the 0.4°C recorded the previous night, and this was 3.8°C below normal for

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### Gupshup Restaurant & Homestay / Guest House

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## Lieutenant Governor releases 3rd Edition of "Kartavya Marg"

*We need to enhance intellectual capacity, enrich personality of our youth through knowledge and values of courage: Sinha*

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha released the 3rd edition of "Kartavya Marg", annual in-house magazine published by Shri Kailakh Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan Trust, at Raj Bhawan on Monday.

The Lieutenant Governor congratulated and extended his best wishes to the editor and everyone associated with the publication. He appreciated the efforts of all the members of Shri Kailakh Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan



Trust for promotion of Sanskrit and setting high standards for research on ancient knowledge system in Jammu Kashmir.

"Destiny of Jammu

Kashmir will be decided by its youth and all the arms of government is committed to empower them, to provide support and guidance to realize their dreams. We need

to enhance intellectual capacity and enrich the personality of our youth through knowledge and values of courage, compassion, sacrifice and selfless service," the

Lieutenant Governor said.

The publication, edited by Mahant Rohit Shastri, President, Shri Kailakh Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan Trust, features a number of research-oriented articles by renowned Sanskrit scholars and young researchers.

Trustees and members of Shri Kailakh Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan Trust including R K Chhibber, Prof Sharat Sharma, Nigam Gupta, Sh Sunil Sharma, Vinay Agarwal and Dr Sanjay Sharma were also present.

## Youth Festival at SMVDU highlights issue of drug abuse among Youth

### Top News Report

JAMMU Dec 9: The Board of Cultural Activities (BCA) at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU), in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages (JKAACL) and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Jammu chapter, organized a vibrant Youth Festival centered around the pressing theme of "Drug Abuse Among Youth of Jammu and Kashmir."

The festival commenced with an inaugural ceremony attended by distinguished guests, including Vice Chancellor Prof. (Dr.) Pragati Kumar as the Chief Guest, Dr. Rakesh Thusoo, President of the BCA, and Dr. Kamini Pathania, Vice President of the BCA, Dr. Rahul Sharma, Cultural coordinator, along with other dignitaries. Dr. Kamini Pathania welcomed the audience with a heartfelt address, emphasizing the importance of raising awareness about drug abuse.

The Vice Chancellor followed with an insightful speech, highlighting the role of youth in combating this societal issue. The inauguration also featured mesmerizing classical and cultural performances by the talented students of SMVDU, setting the stage for a day filled with creativity and expression. The second half of the event witnessed a spirited showcase of talent through various inter-school competi-

tions. Inklet, a creative writing contest, challenged participants to pen down compelling narratives, while the Battle of Voices showcased powerful singing talents.

A captivating dance competition explored themes of human emotions, leaving the audience spellbound. The cultural evening was elevated by electrifying celebrity performances. Nishu Pandita and Group enthralled the audience with the Kashmiri folk dance 'Roshuk,' while Ram Dutta and Group delivered a soul-stirring rendition of the traditional art form 'Gitro.' Both these performances were sponsored by JKAACL.

The grand finale featured an energetic performance by the renowned Sajjan Musical Group, Sponsored by ICCR leaving the crowd cheering for more. Dr. Rajesh Kumar and Mrs. Reena Slathia attended the show and congratulated the board for organising such a splendid show.

The festival not only celebrated the rich cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir but also served as a powerful platform to engage youth in meaningful conversations about the dangers of drug abuse. BCA, SMVDU was highly appreciative of ICCR and Harvinder Kour, JKAS, Secretary JKAACL and Mr. Anil Tickoo for their prompt response and sponsorship of folk dance and music teams.

## Sixteen Students from IDPS, Akhnoor, Select for 25th RSFI National Rope Skipping Championship 2024



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: International Delhi Public School (IDPS), Akhnoor, proudly announces the selection of sixteen talented skippers for the 25th RSFI National Rope Skipping Championship 2024, to be held at Tau Devi Lal Stadium, Panchkula, from 12th to 14th December 2024.

The selected students are: Aditya Morya Singh Jamwal, Divyansh Sharma, Ritish Kumar, Jagdeep Kumar Manni, Ankit Kumar, Shashwat Johal, Harash Kumar, Karthik Khajuria, Shivansh Gupta, Abheer Salgotra, Shrawan Malhotra, Sourav Keshar,

Yuvraj Chib, Rithvick Singh, Gourav Singh, and Kanika Sharma.

The team is trained under the guidance of Mr. Danish Sharma and Mr. Bharat Bhushan, whose efforts have been instrumental in their preparation.

The management, including Dr. Dheeraj Jamwal Sharma (Managing Director), Dr. K.C.S. Mehta (Principal), Mr. Vinay Khajuria (Vice Principal), Mrs. Aanchal Gupta (Headmistress) and Mrs. Rajni Sharma (Co-ordinator) congratulates the students and wishes them success in the championship. [

## LSAC organizes musical evening at Orphanage Home



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: Lagan Society For Art And Culture (LSAC) organized a Musical Evening at Orphanage Home for inmates at Ved Mandir Complex with great enthusiasm. In this function, Chander Mohan Gupta (Ex-Mayor, JMC) was the Chief Guest and Sohail Kazmi (Sr. Journalist and Social Activist) was presided over the function.

The function was started with a melodious Bhajan sung by Lagan Verma and Parmita Sharma followed by Various musical performances performed by the talented students of Lagan Society for Art and Culture which was much appreciated by

the audience as well as the guests of the function.

The Chief Guest, Sh. Chander Mohan Gupta expressed his appreciation for the efforts to preserve and promote culture through such artistic endeavor. He also appreciated the efforts of the Lagan Society and also said that these type of functions helps to encourage the youngsters and also helps to promote the rich cultural heritage of the society. Jenab Sohail Kazmi said that Music is not only an activity this is also a worship of god and helps to develop overall personality of the humane. The Birthday of little Eshanaya Gupta was also celebrated in

the function.

In the end, President LSAC, Rajesh Kumar thanked all the dignitaries and the audience who gave their valuable time in making this event a huge success.

On the occasion, the participants were Lagan Verma, Parmita Sharma, Aditya Sharma, Sarthak Verma, Ram Bakshi, Hinaya Kotwal, Girdhari Lal (General Secretary, LSAC), Sonia Dogra (Treasurer, LSAC), Suresh Kumar (Joint Secretary, LSAC), Shubham Manmar (IT Incharge, LSAC), Rohit Bains (Publicity Secretary, LSAC), Hitesh Verma, Mr. Kanav Gupta, Ajay Gupta, Meenakshi Gupta and Shreya Gupta were present on the occasion.

## Trikuta Group of Colleges organizes 9th Blood Donation Camp in memory of Founder Chairman

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: 9th Blood Donation Camp was organized by Trikota Group of Colleges, Jammu in memory its Founder Chairman Late Dr. Roop Lal Sharma on his birth anniversary.

The blood donation camp was inaugurated by Sham Lal Sharma, the Honourable MLA of Jammu North Assembly Constituency. A highly respected figure in the community, Sharma's presence lent great significance to the occasion.

A total of 80 volunteers from various colleges, including teaching staff, non-teaching staff, students, post-graduate scholars and interns came forward to donate blood, demonstrating their commitment to this noble cause. The camp saw enthusiastic participation from individuals of all ages and backgrounds showcasing the community's spirit of giving



and service.

Suman Sharma, the Chairperson of Shri Sain Charitable Trust, addressed the gathering and urged the public to come forward and contribute

voluntarily to such life-saving initiatives. She expressed her heartfelt desire to continue organizing such blood donation camps in the future furthering the trust's mission

to promote health and social welfare.

Sharma also took the opportunity to extend her appreciation to the students and staff members of the colleges

## ACB Srinagar celebrates international Anti Corruption Day; holds series of events

### Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Dec 9: The Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) Srinagar branch on Monday celebrated International Anti corruption day with the theme for the day as "Uniting the Youths Against Corruption, Shaping Tomorrow's Integrity".

The event was observed across Srinagar and its two adjoining districts Gander-

bal and Budgam.

The Srinagar branch of ACB observed the day at six locations including different colleges and Central University of Kashmir Ganderbal.

The main event was organised at SP College Srinagar which was presided over by SSP ACB Srinagar, Dr Zahoor Ahmad Wani.

Among others Principal



SP college, Dr Mohammad Farooq Mir and faculty members besides students participated in the event.

Similarly, other events were organised at Government Degree Colleges Khansaheb, Beerwah, Ganderbal and Women's College Srinagar.

During the events, the officers from ACB Srinagar and faculty members of

concerned institutions deliberated on importance of the day. A debate competition on the subject was also organised in which students and guest speakers of concerned institutions participated.

Meanwhile, the students who participated in the debate competition were felicitated with commendation certificates and mementos.

## Modi bats for skilled India, JU aims to shut Skill Development Courses: JYF President

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: Jammu Youth Forum vociferously flays the Jammu University for closing Hotel Management Course in SHTM and strongly condemned the decision of Academic Council Jammu University to close the Hotel Management course offered by the Department of SHTM (School of Hospitality and Tourism Management).

Addressing the press conference, Rishu Sharma, President JYF said that SHTM Department has claimed that the Department lacks the infrastructure required to run the course. However, Sharma questioned the authenticity of this claim, especially considering that the Department has been successfully offering the Hotel Management program for the last 14 years.

Questioning the Director of SHTM, Dr. Anil Gupta, and the Dean of Business

Studies, Sharma said as to how concerned Department has been running the Hotel Management course for over a decade sans necessary infrastructure.

If there are, indeed, no proper facilities, then why has the Department been purchasing Lab Equipments for practicals in the Hotel Management course since last six months, he asked. This itself belies the version of the Department behind closure of the program.

The reasons provided by the Director of SHTM and the Dean for discontinuing the course are just lame excuses, completely unconvincing and devoid of transparency.

JYF asked that if the Department has limited infrastructure, why not the Department should urgently take up the matter with JU Authority to enhance and upgrade the required facilities instead of closing the course, which is very

much against the interests of concerned students.

JYF urged the Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Chowdhary who is also the Minister of Skill Development Department to intervene in the matter for ensuring continuation of the Hotel Management course in order to help make Jammu and Kashmir youth more skilled and self-reliant.

Cautioning the Jammu University administration and SHTM not to fiddle with the interests of students, Sharma said that if the Hotel Management course is discontinued, we will feel forced to take this issue in the streets and protest against this discriminatory decision of University.

The closure of this most important skill development course is totally unacceptable, as this will have long-term serious repercussions on the future of Jammu and Kashmir youth, which will be fought tooth and nail, come what may, he added.

## JMC Commissioner visits Sabzi Mandi Parade to review facilities

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: Commissioner of Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), Dr. Devansh Yadav, today visited the Sabzi Mandi in Prade, Jammu to take stock of the facilities available for vendors and customers. During his visit, he toured the premises of the market, inspecting the available amenities.

The Commissioner interacted with the vendors, who highlighted several issues they are facing, including concerns about sanitation, the need to make the sewerage system functional, repairs for the high-mast lights, water coolers, and drains both within and around the



Mandi.

The Commissioner directed the concerned to address these issues at the earliest to ensure convenience for both vendors and customers.

Later, Dr. Yadav also visited the residential accommodation for tenants at the Sabzi Mandi. The tenants requested

repairs to the accommodations provided to them. The Commissioner assured that their genuine concerns would be promptly addressed, and he also assured the vendors that necessary repairs to their shops would be carried out soon.

## EDITORIAL

EMBRACING  
YOGA

Aging is an inevitable process, but how we age is largely influenced by the lifestyle choices we make. While genetics play a role, research and ancient wisdom alike emphasize that the way we treat our bodies and minds can significantly slow down the aging process. In today's fast-paced, stress-driven world, where quick fixes are often sought for everything, the importance of holistic and natural approaches to aging cannot be overstated. Yoga, pranayama (breathing exercises), and the wisdom of nature offer profound solutions that not only slow down the signs of aging but also enhance the quality of life.

One of the most powerful tools for graceful aging is yoga. Regular practice of yoga improves flexibility, strengthens the body, and enhances mental clarity. More importantly, specific asanas (yoga poses) have been found to support anti-aging by stimulating circulation, promoting detoxification, and maintaining spinal health. For instance, Tadasana (Mountain Pose) helps improve posture and balance, while Trikonasana (Triangle Pose) enhances digestion and flexibility, two factors crucial for a youthful body. Shirshasana (Headstand), often referred to as the "king of asanas," increases blood flow to the scalp and face, reducing wrinkles and promoting radiant skin. These poses, when performed regularly, not only provide physical benefits but also help calm the mind, reducing stress—one of the key contributors to premature aging.

Pranayama, the practice of controlled breathing, is another powerful tool for rejuvenation. The various techniques of pranayama, such as Kapalabhati (Skull Shining Breath) and Anulom Vilom (Alternate Nostril Breathing), detoxify the body, improve oxygenation, and balance the nervous system. These practices help eliminate accumulated toxins and reduce stress, both of which are key to maintaining youthful vigor. With stress being one of the primary causes of aging, pranayama provides a simple yet effective method for rejuvenating the mind and body. Incorporating these practices into our daily routine can have profound effects, from improved mental clarity to glowing skin.

The natural world offers another treasure trove of remedies to fight the effects of aging. Herbs and superfoods such as Ashwagandha, Shatavari, and Amla provide vital nutrients that promote skin elasticity, reduce inflammation, and increase energy levels. Turmeric, with its potent anti-inflammatory properties, not only enhances the skin's appearance but also plays a vital role in preventing age-related diseases. Natural oils like Coconut Oil and Aloe Vera are celebrated for their ability to hydrate and rejuvenate the skin, reducing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.

But perhaps the most profound aspect of slowing down aging is a holistic approach that integrates mind, body, and spirit. Meditation and mindfulness are powerful practices that not only promote mental well-being but also foster emotional resilience and longevity. By learning to manage stress, express gratitude, and maintain a positive mindset, we can dramatically enhance our physical health and vitality. Moreover, staying connected with nature, nurturing relationships, and pursuing a life of purpose all contribute to the emotional and spiritual well-being that is integral to healthy aging.

## NC Governments Political One-Upmanship

By: Omkar Dattatray

National Conference as the oldest and traditional mainstream political party of Jammu & Kashmir as well as its government at present time is apt in political upmanship. Take the case of abrogated Article 370 of the constitution as well as the down-sized statehood status of Jammu and Kashmir by the Modi government, the NC-Congress coalition government of J&K has as a top priority passed the resolutions seeking and favoring the full statehood as well as seeking a dialogue by the centre to restore the special status and position of J&K as provided by the constitution of India. On 17th October 2024 Council of Ministers had passed resolution for restoration of statehood stating that this resolution symbolizes and echoes the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. LG Manoj Shina also affixed his seal of approval to the statehood resolution. LG mentioned resolution of statehood in his address to the and welcomed it. Omar government has given first preference to passing the two resolutions one regarding and asking the center government to restore full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and the other more important resolution seeking / asking the Modi government to initiate a dialogue about re-instatement of the special position to Jammu and Kashmir. The passing of these two resolutions one by the cabinet and another about the initiation of a dialogue concerning reinstatement of abrogated Article 370 by the elected legislative Assembly in the very first session after assuming office by the new government. On the resolution favoring and seeking initiation of dialogue by the centre, there was clear division between the 28 MLA's all belonging to Jammu region and mostly Kashmir MLA's of the NC. The ruckus and situation in the assembly came to such a pass that some BJP MLA's were marshaled out of the house. There was clear confrontation between the BJP legislators and that of the Valley legislators belonging to NC, PDP and others. However in passing of these two resolutions, one finds only political maneuvering and political

skilling at its worst. The passing of the two resolutions which is called by NC as historical is only necessitated by the political expediency and thus the resolutions have been passed to satisfy the political and psychological aspirations of the people of the UT. Thus it is only for mere politicking that NC-Congress alliance government has passed the statehood resolution in the very first meeting of the cabinet. Similarly the elected representatives of the UT have also passed the resolution asking the centre government to hold a dialogue about reinstatement of the special position to J&K and mind this resolution asking for initiation of a dialogue by the NDA government to reinstate the scrapped special status of the Jammu and Kashmir and this resolution also has been passed in the very first session of the newly constituted legislative assembly post August 5, 2019 unilateral decisions of the Modi government. By passing these two important resolutions, NC government is taking a leap forward from other political competitors like PDP, PC, Apni Party and others. NC tried to kill two birds with one stone by passing the two resolutions. On the one hand NC addressed its home constituency back in Kashmir as it makes the Kashmiris understand that it is at least pursuing the promises and planks given in the election manifesto. On the other hand NC is giving a strong message and impression to the centre government that J&K government as well as the NC-Congress alliance government is serious in getting article 370 back. Though it is all together a different story that the alliance partner Congress has distanced from the resolution regarding special status to Jammu and Kashmir perhaps for its political fortunes in the country as the Congress cannot afford to risk its political standing in the country as Article 370 abrogation is not only a political issue but a psychological issue as well. The fact of the matter is that in our scheme of constitutional provisions and federal set up, the J&K government or for that matter any other federal government has not got unlimited powers and authority and same with the sensitive and

boarder region of JK. So NC government could only pass the resolutions only concerning statehood and special status for Jammu and Kashmir and it cannot go beyond that and cannot annoy and displease the centre government which is most unlikely to reinstate the abrogated article 370 come what may. So far as the resolution of NC government in favor of statehood is concerned nothing should be read from this resolution as the GOI and Prime Minister Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah had umpteen times promised that the centre government will restore statehood to Jammu and Kashmir at the appropriate time and so there was no need for passing a resolution in this regard. NC government had thought it proper and fit to pass the two different resolutions rather than addressing the mundane issues and concerns confronting the people. These resolutions could have waited and they should have been postponed and in their place more important and pressing concerns like provision of goods and services at reasonable rates, good roads, schools, health services, uninterrupted and cheap electricity and pure drinking water besides provision of employment to the educated and skilled youth should have been the top most priority of the NC government. But for mere political expediency NC government chose to address different issues which are not related with the lives of the people. Thus the NC government tried to hoodwink the gullible people of Jammu and Kashmir as passing of the resolutions will not give the people either statehood or the special status as these are under the domain of the centre government. Thus NC government only tried to please its political constituency in Jammu and Kashmir knowing well that the passing of the two resolutions will not alter the ground reality and cannot ensure reinstatement / restoration of either statehood or special position to Jammu and Kashmir. Reinstatement of Article 370 will not fill the belly of the poverty ridden people of Jammu and Kashmir. The people of J&K are only being exploited on the sensitive and psychological issue of article 370. One is at a loss to under-

stand that why the NC-Congress government while passing the special status resolution has fallen short of mentioning clearly Article 370 and instead wrote special position in its place? It may have been perhaps due to the compulsion of alliance government. All said and done, it can be said that the two resolutions which the NC calls historical cannot bring back full statehood and abrogated article 370. Abrogation of Article 370 has got the post facto sanction / approval of the apex Court as it has affixed its seal of approval saying that article 370 was a transitory provision of the constitution and the Parliament of the country had the powers to repeal the same and so its abrogation is lawful, legal and constitutional. Thus no power on earth can restore and reinstate Article 370 leave alone the Congress when it comes to power at the centre and that is a rare possibility in near future and even it cannot now tinker with abrogated Article 370 for political expediency and vote bank politics. Thus Article 370's abrogation should be accepted as a reality. So no more politics over the issue. There is need and urgency to keep the statehood and Article 370 issues in the cold storage for a reasonable time and instead the new government should concentrate on addressing the day to day issues and concerns confronting people and the statehood and Article 370 resolutions which had been passed should now be kept in limbo and postponed for future so that it may not lead to strained relations between the UT and centre government. All this is political upmanship of the NC government as it tried to beat its opponents with one stroke of the pen as it tried its best to go ahead of other political players so far as Article 370 and statehood issues are concerned.

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

## CBSE/ICSE/STATE Board exam very near : how to keep the stress away

By: Vijay GarG

As February 15 fast approaches, thousands of students who are appearing for the Board exams are likely to become increasingly anxious and get stressed out. "Have I prepared enough? Is there something I have missed? Should I focus more on that particular topic?" Your mind would be abuzz with several such thoughts. No matter how much you study and revise the subjects, the feeling of contentment is difficult to achieve. What can you do to steady your nerves and keep your cool? "The Board exams are like any other exam. The only difference is that they are held in another school. So there is no need for students to panic and they should stick to the normal routine they follow everyday."

## Study Tips

Having a preparation strategy is crucial. With merely half a month left for the exams, how can you utilise the time effectively? "Students should divide their time for each subject. They should prepare for the first paper last and for the last paper first," says Vijay GarG, Retired Principal of G G senior secondary School, MHR MALOUT

"Early morning hours are the best time for revision as reten-

tion is better and the body and mind are fresh," He advises. Note-making is an effective method that can come to your rescue. "Students should prepare notes of the main points because at the last minute, revising the whole syllabus from the scratch is not possible. Notes make it easy for them to recall from memory quickly."

Another tested method is solving previous years' question papers and sample papers. "Students can simulate the exam at home. This will give them an idea of how much time they are taking to solve the paper. Based on the result, they can improve their speed and accuracy. The more sample papers they solve, the more confident they will become," says Mr GarG

Parents have an important role in play in their child's success as well. They should be supportive and encouraging and help students develop self-discipline, self-confidence and a sense of achievement. This will go a long way in boosting his/her morale.

Group study is a popular mode of studying. But is it always effective? "Though it can help in getting the doubts and concepts cleared, it does not help in retention. For the final revision, self-study is the best," says GarG.

## Lifestyle Tips

During exams, the stress levels

of students generally go through the roof. This leads to excessive eating, sleeping difficulties and so on. How can one deal with it? "Students should keep a light diet. This will keep them fresh and not feel sleepy while studying. Breakfast can consist of light food such as porridge or cereals. Fruits and dry fruits are rich in essential vitamins and proteins and their intake should be increased. Whenever students feel hungry or a little bit lethargic, they should go for a diet of fruit such as guava, apple, banana and so on. Also, in case you get an urge to munch something, dry fruits can be kept handy," says GarG

## Counselling

To help students relieve their stress, the CBSE has started a helpline where school principals, teachers and trained counselors have volunteered to guide the students. Students from any Board can connect with them and seek counselling. The toll-free helpline number is 1800118004 and is operational from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

## Exam Days

On the day of the exam, it is essential that you stay calm and focused. It is natural to get butterflies in the stomach. To ensure that you don't miss anything, prepare a checklist. Before leaving your house, ensure that you

have the following items: Water bottle, extra pens, ruler, pencil, eraser, sharpener, watch and the hall ticket. Here's a checklist of things you should do while writing the exam:

There is a cool off period of 15 minutes in the beginning which excludes the time you get for writing the exam. Utilise this time for reading the question paper carefully. Although advisable, it is not necessary to answer the questions in same sequence/order. Attempt the ones you know first, but number them correctly. If you're running out of time, write the answer in points rather than leaving the question. Label the diagrams properly.

In the end, remember that though scoring well in this exam is important, it's not the end of the world if you are not able to achieve the marks you expected. There are endless opportunities waiting for you.

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

## 129 students of Oriental Academy successfully complete "one day short treks series programme"

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: A group of 129 students, including 65 girls, from Oriental Academy Sr. Secondary School, Jammu, successfully participated in the "One Day Short Treks Series Programme" organized by Tawi Trekkers J&K, the premier trekking organization of Jammu and Kashmir. The trek took place in the scenic Mansar-Mohoregarh area.

The group of budding trekkers was led by Sonam Sidharth, a trained mountaineer and General Secretary of Tawi Trekkers J&K, along with Suksham Verma, Vikas Singh, and Kashish Bharti. The students were escorted by ten teachers, led by



Principal Vivek Chauhan, and senior trekkers from the school, including Arvinder Kour, Jyoti Bala, Pinki Sharma, and others. In addition, octogenarian Surinder Singh, 63-year-old Kalpana Vinay Saraf, and 75-year-old Ram Khajuria, a founder member of the club, also participated in the event.

After enjoying a hearty breakfast at Mansar, the young trekkers, whose average age was about 12 years, embarked on a 3-kilometer soft trek in the Mansar-Mohoregarh area. They were captivated by the panoramic views of the serene lake and the surrounding natural beauty. The group also visited the

local zoo, managed by the Department of Wildlife Protection, where they learned about various birds and wild animals, their habitats, and behaviors.

This event marks the latest chapter in Oriental Academy's participation in Tawi Trekkers' programs, bringing the total number of partici-

pants from the school to 262, with a remarkable contribution of over 300 girls. Earlier, Tawi Trekkers J&K had successfully organized other treks, including a short trek from Kattal Batal to Aithem via Bhed Devta, a 14-kilometer heritage trek from Sagoon to Purmandal, and a trek to Devi Pindian.

The One Day Short Treks Series Programme aims to engage around 2,000 boys and girls, fostering a spirit of adventure, an appreciation for nature, and a sense of self-confidence. Through these activities, Tawi Trekkers J&K hopes to nurture the young minds of today into bold and responsible future leaders and builders of the country.

## GDC Kishtwar collaborates with Anti-Corruption Bureau for Int'l Anti-Corruption Day symposium



### Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Dec 9: Government Degree College (GDC) Kishtwar, in collaboration with the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) of Jammu & Kashmir, organized a meaningful symposium on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day. The event was attended by distinguished dignitaries, highlighting the importance of combating corruption and fostering a transparent society.

The symposium was graced by Pawan Kotwal, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Kishtwar, who served as the Chief Guest. Pawan Kumar (Addl. SP Kishtwar) was the Guest of Honour, and Professor Basharat, Principal of GDC Kishtwar, attended as the Special Guest.

In his address, Pawan Kotwal, ADC Kishtwar, emphasized the critical role of good governance and public participation in eradicating corruption. He highlighted the need for collective efforts to

ensure transparency and accountability. Professor Basharat, Principal of GDC Kishtwar, stressed the importance of education in nurturing values of honesty and integrity among the youth, encouraging them to become responsible citizens.

The event commenced with a formal welcome address by Dr. Sehrih Gazal, Head of the Department of Environmental Sciences, followed by a bouquet presentation to the dignitaries. A total of six student speakers participated in the symposium, each emphasizing the significance of transparency, accountability, and integrity in building a corruption-free society.

Imran Malik, Deputy Superintendent of Police (Dy. SP) ACB, delivered a compelling PowerPoint presentation on the theme of the event. He discussed the legal frameworks and measures in place to combat corruption and urged citizens to report unethical practices. Dr.

Azhar Amin from the Department of Political Science provided further insights through his presentation, highlighting the theme and reinforcing the commitment to transparency and accountability.

The event also featured a competition among student speakers, where the first prize was bagged by Amit Thakur, the second by Maroof Ayub, and the third by Arif Bumal, all from the 1st semester. The event culminated with a prize distribution ceremony, celebrating the winners and encouraging continued efforts towards integrity and honesty.

The vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. Haq Nawaz Ahmad, ensuring that the event concluded on a thoughtful and positive note. Among other dignitaries who attended the event were Prof. N.K. Manhas, Shafiqat Keen (Assistant Director, Food Kishtwar), Prof. Ashfaq, Prof. Haq Nawaz, and other officials from the district administration.

## GDC RS Pura organizes awareness lecture, symposium competition

### Top News Report

RS PURA, Dec 9: Literary committee in collaboration with Anti-Corruption Bureau organized awareness lecture and Symposium Competition under the patronage of worthy Principal Prof (Dr.) Preetpal Kour, Government Degree College R.S Pura, Jammu and supervision of Dr. Neena Gupta Rohmtra, Convener Literary Committee to observe Anti-Corruption Day on 9th December 2024. The theme of the event was "Uniting with youth against corruption shaping tomorrow's integrity". In the presidential address, Principal of the college, Prof (Dr.) Preetpal Kour expressed her gratitude towards the officers from ACB for conducting the program. She assured that the institution will work towards a corruption free India. The college

will also collaborate with law enforcement agencies like ACB towards achieving a common goal that is a progressive and corruption free India. The programme started with a screening of a video on the working of the Anti-Corruption Bureau.

The program witnessed detailed presentations by Bandeshwar Singh, Inspector ACB, Mohd Araf Inspector ACB relating to functioning of ACB, process of lodging complaints against corrupt public servants and the practices to curb menace of corruption. The presentation was followed by an interactive session in which Inspector Bandeshwar Singh and Inspector Araf answered the queries of students and the staff members of GDC RS Pura. This awareness Lecture was followed by a symposium competition which witnessed a participa-

tion of 10 students. The Judges of the symposium were Dr. Neena Gupta HOD English, Dr. Chanchal Angral HOD Zoology and Dr. Shivani Manchanda HOD Economics. Mridul Sharma bagged 1st position, Sarbjit Heera bagged 2nd position and Manpreet Kour scored 3rd position.

The Principal of the college lauded the efforts of the organizing committee and encouraged the students to participate more enthusiastically in such types of activities.

The welcome address was given by Prof Vijieta Anand and vote of thanks was presented by Dr. Sunil Kumar Mangoch. The other dignitaries who were present in the event were Dr. Rajinder Sharma Convener IQAC, Prof Shifali Abrol, Prof. Anju Kumari, Prof. Rajinder Singh and Prof. Sanjeev Kumar Upadhyay.

## Mohd Ashraf Sheikh congratulates Dr. Karamjeet Singh on nomination



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: Mohd Ashraf Sheikh, the State President of NMOPS/JKTF and Provincial President of EJAC, extended his heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Karamjeet Singh on his nomination as the State Joint Secretary of the United Doctor Front Jammu & Kashmir.

The nomination recognizes Dr. Singh's significant contributions to the medical community, his advocacy for the rights of healthcare professionals, and his relentless efforts to enhance healthcare services in

the region.

Dr. Karamjeet Singh, who also serves as the Deputy General Secretary of NMOPS Jammu and Kashmir, has been widely acknowledged for his exceptional leadership and dedication to the welfare of medical professionals.

Expressing his delight, Mohd Ashraf Sheikh stated, "We are thrilled to see Dr. Singh's hard work and dedication being recognized. His leadership and expertise will undoubtedly bring immense value to the United Doctor Front Jammu & Kashmir and strengthen the National Movement for Old Pension Scheme in the state."

This nomination is expected to further enhance the efforts of both organizations in advancing their mission for the welfare and empowerment of their respective communities.

## MLA Devsar holds review meeting with rural development department

### Top News Report

KULGAM, Dec 9: Peerzada Feroze Ahmad Shah, Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) for Devsar Constituency, convened a review meeting with the Rural Development Department (RDD) on Monday to assess the progress of various developmental schemes.

The meeting was attended by Block Development Officer (BDO) Devsar, Arif Ayaz Dar, who also holds additional charge of Block Kund, BDO Pahloo Humaira, and other officials from the department.

Key issues reviewed included the implementation status of works under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), projects under the CAPEX budget, construction of PMAY-G (Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Gramin) houses, and the devel-



opment of Block Development Plans.

MLA Shah emphasized the importance of building a robust relationship between the public

and local officials to ensure smooth and effective governance. "Our goal is to ensure a government that works for the people," Shah remarked. He

urged officials to remain accessible, address public grievances promptly, and maintain transparency and accountability in their duties.

Highlighting the need for community growth and equitable service delivery, Shah stressed, "Every official must do their job well, and there will be zero tolerance for non-performance by any official in my constituency."

The MLA encouraged all present to prioritize the timely execution of development projects and assured his commitment to closely monitoring the performance of the RDD to ensure that the benefits reach the grassroots level effectively.

The meeting concluded with directions for officials to expedite pending works and enhance their engagement with the community to better address local needs.

## Sahil Mahajan releases dogri album "Tere O Vichhode"



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: Sahil Mahajan, Co-Convenor of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) J&K UT Sanskriti, Art, and Culture Cell, launched the Dogri music album "Tere O Vichhode" in an event held at Near Yatri Niwas, Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu.

The program was organized by Maa Bawe Wali Records and Kaith Music Factory. The album was released in the presence of Director V.K. Kaith, Ashok Hans, Rohit, and journalist Palvi.

"Tere O Vichhode" is

sung by Vicky Thakur and Neeta Adrash, composed by V. Kaith, with lyrics by Vicky Thakur. The video, directed by Sanjay Malkan, was simultaneously released on the YouTube channel Vicky G20 Presents.

Speaking at the event, Sahil Mahajan praised the efforts of the production team and highlighted the importance of encouraging young talent in Jammu and Kashmir. "Our cultural heritage is our identity, and initiatives like these play a crucial role in nurturing and showcasing the creative abilities of our youth," he stated.

He commended the singers, lyricists, and composers for their dedication and hard work in creating such a melodious piece. Mahajan emphasized the role of fine arts in promoting positive and innovative thinking among the youth, ensuring the preservation of the region's rich cultural traditions.

The event marked another step in the ongoing efforts to support and uplift local artists and promote regional music, further contributing to the vibrant cultural fabric of Jammu and Kashmir.

## One day awareness programme organized by Civil Defence, Jammu

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: A one-day awareness-cum-demonstration programme was successfully held at the NCC Camping Ground, Nagrota, Jammu. The event was organized by Civil Defence Jammu under the supervision

of Dy. SP Anita Pawar, Dy. Controller of Civil Defence, Jammu.

The purpose of the programme was to educate NCC cadets about the basics of First Aid, CPR, choking, fire fighting, and other emergency rescue methods. A total of 85 boys and 25 girls from the NCC

attended the session.

During the event, the Civil Defence instructors conducted practical demonstrations on first aid and fire fighting. The Camp Commandant, Col. Surabh Sexena, and Adm Col. R.D. Sharma of the 1st J&K NCC Bn Srinagar praised the efforts of



the Civil Defence organization and expressed gratitude for organizing such an important and impactful awareness programme.

The event was also attended by R. Vijay Magotra, Dy. Chief Warden of Civil Defence, Jammu, SI Ram Dayal, In-Charge

of Trainings, and the Civil Defence instructors and staff of NCC Nagrota.

The programme successfully highlighted the importance of preparedness in emergencies and contributed to the overall safety and well-being of the community.

## Celebrities speak on changes to shape the industry's future



The entertainment industry has always been a dynamic field, constantly evolving to adapt to societal changes, technological advancements, and audience preferences. However, many celebrities believe there is still room for growth and improvement. They share insights into two significant changes that could foster a more inclusive, efficient and sustainable entertainment world.

For mental health: Deeksha Sonalkar

Tham

The industry needs more mental health support systems for actors and crew members. Working in a high-pressure environment often leads to burnout. Also, I'd love for the industry to prioritise original scripts over remakes or adaptations. Authentic storytelling connects better with audiences and allows for creative exploration.

Get mature: Devangana Chauhan

The media needs to shift focus from sensa-

tionalism to thoughtful, positive storytelling. It would be great to see more emphasis on our work and contributions rather than personal controversies. Also, celebrities are expected to maintain unrealistic standards of fitness and beauty. I'd like to see the industry embrace more realistic expectations and support holistic wellness for everyone involved.

No groupism please: Nikhil Arya

I would like to see less groupism of any kind in

the entertainment industry.

People should look beyond the glamour and acknowledge it as a serious business. It is one of the most challenging industries, demanding immense hard work and intent. Only someone with extraordinary passion would venture into creating meaningful content, whether it's a sincere film or a series.

Celebrate equality: Aadesh Chaudhary

Supporting roles are as vital as lead roles. The industry should promote

all contributors equally, giving credit where it's due. I hope for a system that celebrates quality performances and creative risks, regardless of commercial success. Awards and recognition should reflect artistic value.

Opportunity for all: Srikanth Dwivedi

The focus is often on big-budget films or mainstream content. I'd like to see equal recognition for theatre, indie films, and web series, as they are vital parts of the industry.

## Alia Bhatt trades her swanky drive for a quick auto rickshaw ride

Bollywood star Alia Bhatt, who was recently seen in the theatrical movie 'Jigra', ditched her swanky car, and took a quick ride as she sat in an auto rickshaw.

The actress was recently spotted at the Versova jetty in Mumbai, as she got down from the boat and took an auto rickshaw. She was seen wearing an oversized striped shirt and a pair of wenge coloured pants.

Of late, many celebrities are opting for jetty rides from Versova to shooting spots in the Madh Island area of Mumbai as it saves time compared to the road ride of almost 90 minutes. Other actors like the Kannada superstar Yash, and Kiara Advani were also seen taking the jetty in order to reach the shooting spots.

Recently, Alia kickstarted the month of December by installing a Christmas tree at her home. The actress took to the stories of her Instagram and shared a video which showed the Christmas tree.

The Christmas tree was adorned with ornaments bearing the names of her family, husband Ranbir Kapoor and their daughter Raha, who turned 2 years old last month.

She wrote on the video, "And it's up".

December is a special month for Alia and Ranbir as they also participate in the customary Christmas celebrations of the Kapoor family which takes place at Kunal Kapoor's (the elder son of late actors Shashi Kapoor and Jennifer Kendal) house. The entire Kapoor



family gathers at Kunal's home for the celebrations.

Last year, during the Kapoor family's Christmas celebrations, Ranbir and Alia had revealed the face of Raha for the first time to the media and the Internet.

Earlier, Ranbir and Alia were seen cheering for the Mumbai City FC, co-owned by Ranbir along with Raha. Mumbai City FC squared off against Hyderabad FC during the latest season of the Indian Super League.

Ranbir and Alia, who tied the knot in 2022, welcomed Raha in November 2022.

## Citadel: Honey Bunny to compete for Critics Choice Awards 2025

Citadel: Honey Bunny received a nomination under the Best Foreign Language category for the 30th Annual Critics Choice Awards 2025. After bagging Best Series (critics) and Best Screenplay awards at Filmfare OTT Awards 2024, the makers of Citadel:

Honey Bunny will be eyeing to add another milestone by securing a Critics Choice Award next year. The action-packed series stars Varun Dhawan, Samantha Ruth Prabhu, Kay Kay Menon and Saqib Saleem in the lead roles. It is the spin-off to the American television series Citadel on Amazon Prime Video,



which starred Priyanka Chopra in the lead role.

Taking to Instagram on Friday, Raj & DK shared the news of the nomination.

While sharing the poster, he wrote, "This is incredible! So excited to be nominated for

the prestigious Critics Choice Awards!"

The show will compete with series Acapulco, La Maquina, The Law According To Lidia Poet, My Brilliant Friend, Pachinko, Senna and Squid Game for the award.

## Sanjay Mishra speaks of actors being typecast, and the constant struggle to break the mould

Actor Sanjay Mishra says he is grateful to directors who gave him the opportunities to play diverse characters, especially in an industry that is fixated on casting him in comedic roles. The actor has established a name for himself, primarily through comedic roles in films like Golmaal: Fun Unlimited, Dhamaal, All the Best: Fun Begins, Bunty Aur Babli, and Bhool Bhulaiyaa two and three, among others.

At the same, Mishra has also showcased his range as an actor with performance-driven parts in films such as Ankhon Dekhi, Masaan, Vadh, and Bhakshak.

"Rajat Kapoor and Subhash Kapoor allowed me to be part of movies like Ankhon Dekhi and Phas Gaye Re Obama respectively. But here in the industry, they offer similar roles to an actor. For instance, they need Johnny Lever, and Sanjay Mishra for a particular scene in a movie, and cast them in those parts," Mishra said in an interview.

Citing the example of late Hindi cinema icon Mehmoor, the actor said people knew him mostly for comedic roles but he also made Kunwara Baap, a film with a serious message about polio vaccination. "If you don't take a chance, then how will things change?"



he asked.

Mishra believes that it is the fear of losing money that prevents filmmakers from casting actors like him in more unconventional roles. "A lot of money goes into making a movie. For instance, if I would've got the role of Bhoot in Bhool Bhulaiyaa, then the film would be minus Rs. 400 crores.

"In the industry, it is fixed that this kind of role is made for so-and-so actors because it

is about math (return on investment). That's why content-driven films are being made and you can do what you wish to do (with them)," he said. Mishra, however, is committed to exploring diverse roles. He is set to appear in the upcoming feature Jaaiye Aap Kahan Jaayenge, a fictional tale where a man named Kishan attempts to do good for society, especially women, by innovating a mobile toilet rickshaw to overcome this challenge. The film stars Karan Anand as Kishan, also known as Sadhu, Mishra as the father, Adrija as the daughter, and Monal Gajjar as the wife, alongside Ishiyak Khan, Neeraj Sood, Subrat Dutta, and Hrishita Bhatt in pivotal roles.

Mishra recounts his collaborative journey with director Nikhil Raj Singh and said the film developed during their road trips across India. "We should do some films that other people will talk about and say to you, 'I'll watch the film too... When you are a part of a story since its development stage, then you've to do it. I'm sure people in the future will say, 'You did a good film'."

The film, which was released recently on Prasar Bharati's new OTT space, Waves, will open in theatres on December 20.

## Director Girish Malik and music composer Bickram Ghosh tell us what makes their musical Oscar-worthy

The story based on a sanjha Punjab, of shared roots and common life, took shape in young Girish Malik's mind, who then lived in Gurdaspur, Ferozpur and Amritsar – the border areas of Punjab. That story got a screen outing in the form of a musical, titled Band of Maharajas.

Directed by Girish, Band of Maharajas has been declared eligible for the Oscars in two prestigious categories. The film's soul-stirring song Ishq Walla Daku and the captivating original score, composed by the renowned maestro Bickram Ghosh, are in the race for the Oscars contention for nomination in the Best Original Song and Best Original Score categories. The duo is joyous. It's their second Oscar run after Jal (2013) that was short-listed for Best Original Score. "Ishq Walla Daku is one among 80 songs that are in consideration this year," says Girish.

He opens up on how his young mind was impacted when the elders in his family talked about the shared legacy between India and Pakistan. "I carried that seed since my childhood, and when around 2008, Pakistani artistes faced resistance as music was labelled as a 'sin' their country, I started writing the story." Band of Maharajas is based on three artistes who cross border to pursue their musical dreams and get into trouble.

Interestingly, there is no trailer or song available online. Girish calls it part of his strategy. "In today's time we need to make sure that the film goes to the best of the platforms worldwide. It's such a crowded market, so we wanted to take a very serious approach."

Meeting Bickram was a chance, hastened by Sonu Nigam and Girish's team. They collaborated on Jal, followed by Torbaaz. Band of Maharajas is their third outing. Both of them are well travelled and share an affinity for world music. "Bickram, a percussionist, is okay with jazz, and equally at ease with folk. And that's why we click," says Girish. The film is based on true incidents, and it also features Bickram. In fact, Girish is an actor and dancer too. The film stars Navraj Hans, Arjun Bajwa and Kuwaar-jeet Chopra. "It was interesting to work with the cast that comprised real musicians and actors who were very motivated to be part of the musical film."

Bickram too is all excited about Ishq Walla Daku. "The song has myriad structures, and an exotic world music sound. We have American drummer Greg Ellis, who has played in Hollywood films like Iron Man, playing nagaras. Then we have used exotic instruments from the Middle-East, the guitar and Punjabi dhol. The sound has a global ring to it, but emotionally

it's Indian."

The duo is on the same plane when it comes to music but there are disagreements too. "We take each other very seriously and there is a lot of back and forth if we have any disagreement," says Girish. "We do not impose our thoughts on each other but rather convince each other, and that's very, very important," says Bickram.

Everybody dreams of an Oscar, Girish admits. "But for that I am not going to make a slow-burner, showing just poverty and darkness. That sort of a film will run in festival circuit and probably win an Oscar. But for us Indians everything is loud, be it celebrations or death. We are loud and we are allowed to be so. We have to be a little more pleasant to the world audience, but at the same time, it cannot become a film for a handful of people and not the rest of the world. Cinema is for larger audience, and we will keep on doing our karma."

The duo is happy that Jal, made 10 years back, is now being appreciated by the young audience. "In fact, there is a talk of re-releasing it. People are loving its music and rediscovering it," says Girish. But, right now the entire focus is on Band of Maharajas and passionate filmmaker Girish is leaving no stone unturned to put in on the Oscar map.

## A dream for me to essay the role of Lord Ram in 'Ramayana': Ranbir Kapoor

Bollywood star Ranbir Kapoor has finally opened up about playing Lord Ram in Nitesh Tiwari's two part "Ramayana" and said he is excited to be part of the film. Which is the big-screen retelling of "India's greatest story". "Ramayana" will be released in two parts on the festival of Diwali in 2026 and 2027. Namit Malhotra of Prime Focus Studios is producing the film.

Reports say that Ranbir and Sai Pallavi will play Ram and Sita in the movie. In a recent interview, "KGF" franchise star Yash said he will play the role of Ravana in "Ramayana". The makers are yet to confirm the cast.

During an in-conversation session at Saudi Arabia's Red Sea International Film Festival 2024, on Sunday, Ranbir said he has finished shooting for part one of "Ramayana" and will begin work on the second part soon.

"Just to be a part of that story, I am so hum-



bled to essay Ram's role. It's a dream for me. It's a film that has everything. It teaches what Indian culture is about – family and husband-wife dynamics. I'm very excited about that," the actor said. According to the makers, "Ramayana" is a live-action film adaptation of the Hindu epic of the same name. "This epic adaptation brings to life one of India's most cherished tales with unmatched

scale and visionary storytelling," they said in a press release issued last month.

Ranbir spoke in detail about the film in an interview with the American outlet Deadline.

"I got artists, creators and different crew members from all around the world. It's made over two parts. It's the story of Lord Ram and Ravana and its India's greatest story.

"And to tell it to this (story) to a new genera-

tion with the kind of technology that we have, it's a very exciting and gratifying opportunity for me as an actor, especially to play the part of Lord Ram," he added.

The 42-year-old also gave an update on Sandeep Reddy Vanga's "Animal Park", the sequel to his 2023 blockbuster "Animal".

He said the team will start shooting for "Animal Park" in 2027 and Vanga and he are in talks for a third part in the franchise.

"I get to play two characters, the antagonist and the protagonist. It is an extremely exciting project, with an extremely original director."

The actor said "Brahmastra: Part Two - Dev", the follow-up to 2022's "Brahmastra: Part One - Shiva", is currently in the writing stage.

Ranbir is next set to star in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's "Love & War" with wife and "Brahmastra" co-star Alia Bhatt and Vicky Kaushal, with whom he worked in "Sanju".

## “Youth should lead country in politics, cannot leave to those who consider politics their family property: PM Modi

NEW DELHI, Dec 9 (Agencies): Emphasising preparing the youth for leadership in every field of nation-building, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that the youth should lead the country in politics, adding that politics cannot be left to those who consider politics as their “family’s property.”

“We need to prepare youth for leadership in every field of nation-building. Today, just like technology and other fields, our youth should lead the country in politics as well. Now we cannot leave politics to those who consider politics as their family’s property. That’s why we are going to make a new beginning in 2025,” the PM said, virtually addressing a programme organised by Ramakrishna Math in Gujarat. He further said that on Janu-



ary 12 on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, the Young Leaders Dialogue will be organized in Delhi.

“On 12 January 2025, on the occasion of Youth Day on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, the Young Lead-

ers Dialogue will be organized in Delhi. In this, 2,000 selected youth from across the country will be invited. Crores of youth from across the country will participate in it through technology. The resolution of developed India will be discussed

from the perspective of youth,” he added.

The Prime Minister further said that Ramakrishna Math is that tree, whose seed contains the infinite energy of a great ascetic like Swami Vivekananda.

“Whenever I get an opportunity, I try to come among you, to connect with you,” PM Modi said.

He further said that India is moving ahead at a fast pace based on its knowledge tradition.

“Today we have started a new journey of Amritkaal, we have taken a firm resolve of ‘Viksit Bharat’, we have to fulfill it and complete it within the stipulated time frame. Today, India’s youth has proven its capability and capacity in the world,” he said.

## Wishes pour in as Sonia Gandhi turns 78



NEW DELHI, Dec 9 (Agencies): Birthday wishes poured in for former Congress president Sonia Gandhi as she turned 78 on Monday, with party chief Mallikarjun Kharge hailing her as a “true champion” of the rights of the marginalised.

He said Gandhi’s contribution to public life has inspired millions.

Sonia Gandhi, the longest serving Congress president, has taken a back seat from active politics in the last few years for health reasons, with her son Rahul Gandhi and daughter Priyanka Gandhi Vadra playing a key role in the party. However, she is a member of the Rajya Sabha and continues to be the Chairperson of the Congress Parliamentary Party.

In a post on X, the Congress president extended his warm greetings to Sonia Gandhi on her birthday.

“A true champion of the rights of the marginalised, embodying utmost grace, dignity and courage amidst adversity, her contri-

but ion to public life has inspired millions,” Kharge said.

“I wish her a long and healthy life,” he added.

Congress general secretary in-charge organisation K C Venugopal also extended his best wishes to Gandhi and hailed her as “an iconic leader of our times”.

“Her unparalleled contribution to India, in the face of the immense sacrifices she made, is an inspiration for millions across the world.

Her guidance, during the years of good governance under PM Dr. Manmohan Singh ji, played a pivotal part in India’s post-independence journey towards growth,” Venugopal said in a post on X.

“Despite the continuous attacks she faces, she has shown great wisdom and commitment in her public service. Her support and vision continue to be great sources of strength for our party,” he said.

The Congress, on its official X handle, hailed Gandhi’s contribution and said she is a leader whose commitment and

belief in the founding principles of India and the party are an inspiration.

“Championing women’s empowerment, social justice, and inclusive growth, her vision led to the upliftment of millions of marginalized people and the strengthening of India’s welfare state,” the Congress said.

As president of the Congress and chairperson of the UPA she has played a pivotal role in path breaking reforms, it said.

From MGNREGA and the Right to Food to the Right to Education and the Right to Information – these landmark legislations have reshaped India’s political, social, and economic landscape, the party said.

“Through personal sacrifice and deep-rooted commitment to India’s democratic values, she has exemplified selflessness, grace and dignity in public life. Here’s wishing the Chairperson of the Congress Parliamentary Party Sonia Gandhi ji a very happy birthday!” the party said.

“May she be blessed with good health, happiness, and more strength as she continues to guide and inspire generations through her vision,” the party said.

Several Congress leaders extended birthday wishes to Gandhi and lauded her contribution in public life.

## All parties should unite against those working with anti-India forces: Rijju

NEW DELHI, Dec 9 (Agencies): Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju on Monday urged all political parties, including the Congress, to unite against anti-India forces, and raise their voice if they find their leaders working against the country’s interest.

His remarks come a day after the BJP alleged that former Congress president Sonia Gandhi has links to an organisation financed by the George Soros

Foundation and which has backed the idea of Kashmir as an independent nation.

Addressing reporters here, Rijju said anybody found to be working with anti-India forces must be countered unitedly by all political parties.

“I wish to tell the leaders and workers of the Congress that even if their own party leaders are found to be working in tandem with anti-India forces, they should raise their voice against them,” Rijju said.

The minister also said that the government had informed the Congress that discussion on the Constitution will be taken up in the Lok Sabha on December 13-14 and in the Rajya Sabha on December 16-17.

The BJP on Sunday claimed that Sonia Gandhi, as the co-president of the Forum of the Democratic Leaders in Asia Pacific (FDL-AP) Foundation, is linked to an organisation financed



by the George Soros Foundation.

“Notably, the FDL-AP Foundation has

expressed their views that treat Kashmir as a separate entity,” the BJP said.

## 7 Killed as cars collide in Gujarat, catches fire, spreads to nearby huts

JUNAGADH, Dec 9 (Agencies): Seven people, including five students, were killed in a deadly collision between two cars on the Junagadh-Veraval highway near Maliya Hatina village in Gujarat on Monday morning. The collision led to a larger catastrophe as one of the vehicle’s CNG cylinders exploded, putting the car on fire which then spread to the nearby huts.

According to the police, both cars were travelling at full speed when the incident took place.

CCTV footage of the incident shows a car crossing a road cut near a divider and driving on the opposite side on the highway. It then crashed into another car and both the vehicles overturned. The vehicle with a CNG cylinder exploded while the passengers were sitting inside. The vehicle’s blaze quickly spread to the nearby huts.

A police convoy, along with fire department officials and ambulances immediately rushed to the spot as the locals alerted them, officials said.

The fire was brought under control within a few minutes, officials added.

According to an eyewitness, the incident took place around 8 am.

“I ran to the incident spot as soon as I heard the horrific loud noise. The acci-



dent happened around 8 am...I was in a nearby hotel when I heard the explosion,” Dilip Singh Sisodia said.

Officials said that there were four people in one car and five people in another vehicle. All those inside the burning car could not be saved.

The victims have been identified as Veenu Devshi Wala, Nikul Vikram Kuwadia, Om Rajnikant Mugra, Raju Kanji Gone, Dharam Vijay Gore, Axar Dave, and Raju Kanji Bhutan. While two others have been critically injured in the incident.

Out of the seven victims, five were students who were on their way for an exam, the police said.

The victims’ bodies have been sent for post-mortem and further investigation is underway, police added.

## Will we have lollipop while you occupy our land: Mamata to Bangladeshi politicians

KOLKATA, Dec 9 (Agencies): Taking a dig at a section of Bangladeshi politicians, who said the country has legitimate claims over Bengal, Bihar and Odisha, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday wondered whether Indians “would have lollipop” when external forces would try to occupy Indian lands.

In the West Bengal Assembly, she urged people to remain calm and not get provoked by statements made in Bangladesh, stating that West Bengal will always stand by any decision taken by the Centre. Mocking some Bangladeshi leaders, who have made provocative statements recently, she said, “Stay calm and healthy and have peace of mind.”



In a public meeting held in Dhaka recently, a Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leader said that the country has legitimate claims over Bengal, Bihar and Odisha.

Asking people of West Bengal to remain calm and not get swayed by provocative statements made by some people in Bangladesh, she said, “In our state, even imams have condemned the comments and attacks on minori-

ties in Bangladesh.”

“The same blood flows in the veins of Hindus and Muslims and all other communities. We must all work together to ensure nothing is done to aggravate the situation in West Bengal,” she said.

“West Bengal is the first state in the country where people irrespective of caste, creed or community staged collective protest against the situation in Bangladesh,” the Chief Minister said.

Asking everyone, including her political rivals, not to do anything that might aggravate the situation, she also urged media houses to act responsibly while commenting on the situation in the neighbouring country.

the Ministry of External Affairs and will not speak out of turn.

“Our foreign secretary is in Bangladesh for talks. Let us not speak more than what is required. Let us wait for the outcome. We are responsible citizens. Our country is united,” she said.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Monday held talks with his Bangladeshi counterpart Mohammad Jashim Uddin, amid strained bilateral ties since August, following the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Misri arrived in Dhaka earlier in the day on an Indian Air Force jet for a day-long visit, officials said. It is the first high-level visit from New Delhi after a massive uprising ended Hasina’s 15-year rule in August.

## Two students fall from the fourth floor of PG accommodation in Delhi’s Rohini

NEW DELHI, Dec 9 (Agencies): Two students died after falling from the fourth floor of their PG (paying guest) accommodation in Delhi’s Rohini on Monday, an official said.

The deceased have been identified as Ishaan, a resident of Bharatpur, Rajasthan, and Harsh, a resident of Delhi’s Palam Colony, the official said.

They were pursuing BBA from Delhi Technological University

(DTU) and Bhagwan Parshuram Institute of Technology (BPIT), he said.

“A PCR call was received at 1:10 am at the KNK Marg police station informing that two boys had fallen from the terrace of a building. The police team immediately visited the scene. Upon local enquiry, it was found that the two individuals, who were in a room on the fourth floor of a PG accom-



modation, had fallen through the window,” a senior police officer said.

The police had earlier said that the students

had jumped from the fourth floor.

Further investigation is underway, the officer added.

## Three killed in explosion in West Bengal’s Murshidabad

KOLKATA, Dec 9 (Agencies): At least three persons were killed and a few others injured in an explosion when they were allegedly manufacturing illegal crude bombs in Murshidabad district of West Bengal, police said on Monday.

The incident happened late Sunday night at Khoyertala village under Sagarpura gram panchayat, they said.

The three deceased were identified as



Sakirul Sarkar (32), Mamon Mollah (30) and Mustakin Shiekh (28), the police officer said, adding that those injured fled the place. “The explosion took place at the house of

Mamon where they were making crude bombs. The roof of the house was blown away in the blast. We are investigating the matter,” the police officer told agency.

Initial probe revealed that the deceased trio were recently found to be involved in phensedyl smuggling.

Locals tried to take Mamon Mollah and Sakirul Sarkar to Murshidabad Medical College and Hospital but both succumbed on their way, he added.

A huge police team was deployed in the area while the bomb squad was investigating at the explosion site, the officer said.

## World 'surprised' by how quickly Assad's Syria collapsed, Austin says

*Austin warned that groups like ISIS might seek to take advantage of the chaos.*

LONDON, Dec 9 (Agencies): U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said Monday that the international community was "surprised to see that the opposition forces moved as quickly as they did" in Syria as President Bashar Assad's government collapsed in the face of a surprise rebel offensive.

"Everybody expected to see a much more stiff resistance from Assad's forces," Austin said while in Japan, during what is expected to be his last trip to the Indo-Pacific region as defense secretary.

The speed of developments, he added, "was surprising, I think, to most everybody in the international community."

Damascus' fall to rebel forces on Sunday marked "a moment of historic opportunity for the



long-suffering people of Syria to build a better future for their country," President Joe Biden said in a post to X, adding, "It is also a moment of risk and uncertainty."

U.S. forces are already moving to suppress any hint of an ISIS resurgence in central and east-

ern Syria, where hundreds of American personnel have been active for several years alongside Kurdish forces to defeat the remnants of the jihadist group.

U.S. forces launched 75 strikes on ISIS targets in central Syria on Sunday to "disrupt, degrade and defeat" the group, the head

of the U.S. Central Command said in a statement.

Austin said the strikes were designed "to keep the pressure on ISIS."

"As this unfolds, there's a potential that elements in the area, such as ISIS, could try to take advantage of this opportunity and regain capability," he explained.

"We've been tracking ISIS as a part of our 'Defeat ISIS' campaign for some time, as you know, and we've seen cells trying to strengthen and develop additional capability out in the Vidalia Desert and those strikes were focused on those cells," Austin said.

U.S. forces are "still evaluating the results, but I think that we're going to find that we've been pretty successful," Austin said.

## Israeli strikes in Gaza kill six, target suspected chemical weapons sites in Syria

GAZA, Dec 9 (Agencies): Palestinian medical officials said Monday that Israeli strikes in the central Gaza Strip overnight killed at least six people, including one woman.

The strikes came as ousted Syrian leader Bashar Assad fled to Moscow on Sunday and received asylum from his longtime ally, according to Russian media, hours after rebels seized control of Damascus.

The U.N. Security Council plans to hold emergency closed consultations on Syria later Monday at Russia's request.

Among the dead in the overnight Israeli strikes were Raed Ghabaien,

who was released from Israeli detention in 2014, according to the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, where the casualties were taken. He was killed along with his wife when an Israeli strike hit their tent in the central town of Zuweida, the hospital records showed. Two other people were killed in a strike that hit their house late Sunday in the built-up Nuseirat refugee camp. Another two were killed in a strike in the Wadi Gaza area early Monday.

An agency journalist counted the bodies at the hospital's morgue.

Israel's offensive has killed over 44,500 Palestinians in the Gaza since the start of the

war, according to local health authorities. They say most of the dead are women and children but do not distinguish between fighters and civilians.

Israel says it only strikes militants and blames Hamas for civilian deaths because its fighters operate in residential areas.

The war began when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting around 250, including older adults and children. Around 100 hostages are still inside Gaza, at least a third of whom are believed to be dead.

## South Korea President Yoon banned from foreign travel after martial law fiasco

SEOUL, Dec 9 (Agencies): South Korea's justice ministry said on Monday it had slapped a travel ban on President Yoon Suk Yeol as police probe him for insurrection over his ill-fated declaration of martial law.

At a parliamentary hearing, a lawmaker asked whether Yoon, who stands accused of leading an insurrection by declaring martial law Tuesday, had been



banned from leaving the country. "Yes, that's right," Bae Sang-up, an

immigration services commissioner at the Ministry of Justice said.

## Flash floods and landslides devastate Indonesia's Java island: 10 dead, thousands displaced

SUKABUMI, Dec 9 (Agencies): Indonesian rescuers recovered 10 bodies that were swept away in flash floods or buried under tons of mud and rocks that hit hilly villages on the country's main island of Java, officials said Monday. Two people are still missing.

Torrential rains since last week have caused rivers to burst their banks, tearing through more than 170 villages in Sukabumi district of West Java province, as mud, rocks and trees tumbled down mountainside hamlets, said Lt. Col. Yudi Hariyanto, who heads a rescue command post in Sukabumi.

Landslides, flash floods and

strong winds devastated 172 villages and forced more than 3,000 people to flee to temporary government shelters. Hariyanto said. Authorities have warned nearly 1,000 people to evacuate as more than 400 houses are threatened by extreme weather.

The disasters also destroyed 31 bridges, 81 roads and 539 hectares (1,332 acres) of rice fields, while 1,170 houses were flooded up to the roof. Extreme weather has also damaged more than 3,300 other houses and buildings, the local Disaster Management Agency said.

Rescue workers on Monday pulled out 10 bodies in the

worst-hit villages of Tegalbuleud, Simpenan and Ciemas, including three children, and rescuers are searching for two villagers who are reportedly still missing, Hariyanto said.

Videos circulating on social media showed flash floods caused by heavy downpours in Sukabumi swept away almost everything in their path, including cars, motorbikes, buffaloes and cows.

Footage released by West Java's Search and Rescue Agency showed roads that were transformed into murky brown rivers and villages covered by thick mud, rocks and uprooted

trees as soldiers, police and rescue workers pulled muddied bodies from a devastated hamlet.

Seasonal rain from about October to March frequently causes flooding and landslides in Indonesia, an archipelago of 17,000 islands where millions of people live in mountainous areas or near fertile flood plains.

Last month, a landslide and flash floods triggered by heavy downpours hit Indonesia's North Sumatra province, leaving 20 dead and two missing. A landslide in the region also hit a tourist bus that killed nine people.

## Tonga PM Siaosi Sovaleni abruptly resigns following rift with king

NUKU'ALOFA, Dec 9 (Agencies): Tonga's Prime Minister Siaosi Sovaleni abruptly resigned on Monday, stepping down in the wake of a power struggle with the Pacific nation's royal family.

Sovaleni has butted heads with Tonga's influential King Tupou VI, fuelling speculation of a deepening rift between the royals and his government.

In cryptic remarks delivered before announcing his shock resignation, Sovaleni suggested the country's nobility was "fearful" of losing its sway.

"I thought this land had been given freedom, but there's still enslavement," he told parliament through tears.

"I hope there's a time where we'll work together."

"If the nobility can do it and we can work together, we can achieve great things."

Sovaleni resigned before facing a vote of no confidence brought on by opposition lawmakers on Monday afternoon.

Tonga's hereditary nobles occupy nine seats in the country's 26-member legislative assembly.

If the nobles voted as a bloc alongside the opposition, they would have enough numbers to force Sovaleni out.

It was not immediately clear who would replace Oxford-educated Sovaleni, who has been prime minister since 2021.

Veteran politician and longtime rival 'Aisake Eke loomed as one of the likely frontrunners.

The line of Tongan kings and queens stretches back more than 1,000 years, according to a government history.

Although the monarchy no longer enjoys



the unbridled power of old, it remains one of the most dominant institutions across the Tongan archipelago.

King Tupou VI penned a letter earlier this year saying he no longer had "confidence" in Sovaleni as Tonga's armed forces minister.

Bad blood Sovaleni refused to stand down from the portfolio, sparking a tense standoff between two of Tonga's most powerful figures.

Eventually Sovaleni backed down, delivering a traditional apology to the king and resigning from the armed forces ministry.

Although the details of the disagreement remain a mystery, it appears this was not enough to quell the bad blood between the two.

Tonga overhauled its constitution after pro-democracy protests in 2006, which spiralled into angry riots that left swathes of capital Nuku'alofa in smoking ruins.

At the time, the Tongan king held immense sway as the country's head of state, head of government, and military commander-in-chief.

Although the monarchy eventually agreed to devolve much of its responsibility to a cabi-

net of elected lawmakers, its power has not been totally diluted.

The king still has the power to veto legislation, and appoints the prime minister on the advice of the Tongan parliament.

A developing country of some 106,000 people spread across dozens of islands, Tonga's debt-laden government is seen as particularly vulnerable to economic pressure from China.

The island kingdom owes China's export bank around \$130 million -- almost a third of its GDP -- which was loaned to help rebuild after the 2006 riots. Repayments on that loan were scheduled to start spiking this year.

Sovaleni was first elected to parliament in 2014 and served as deputy prime minister from 2014-17, then became education minister in 2019.

## Foreign secretary Vikram Misri holds talks with Bangladeshi counterpart in Dhaka



DHAKA, Dec 9 (Agencies): Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Monday held talks with his Bangladeshi counterpart Mohammad Jashim Uddin, amid strained bilateral ties since August following the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

Misri arrived in Dhaka earlier in the day on an Indian Air Force jet for a day-long visit, officials said. It is the first high-level visit from New Delhi after a massive uprising ended Hasina's 15-year rule in August.

A senior Bangladesh

Foreign Ministry official received him at the airport. Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma was also present at the airport.

Soon after his arrival here, Misri held talks with Uddin.

He will also meet the country's de-facto foreign minister Mohammad Touhid Hossain.

He is also scheduled to pay a courtesy call to Bangladesh's interim government head or Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus.

Misri's visit comes amid increasing strain in

ties between New Delhi and Dhaka over attacks on minorities, including Hindus, in Bangladesh after Hasina's ouster.

The close ties between India and Bangladesh came under severe strain after Hasina was forced to leave the country in the face of a massive anti-government protest in August. Nobel Peace laureate Yunus came to power days after Hasina took shelter in India.

The relations deteriorated further in recent weeks over attacks on Hindus and the arrest of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das.

There have been a spate of incidents of violence against Hindus and other minorities as well as attacks on temples in the neighbouring country in the last few weeks that triggered strong concerns in New Delhi.

## Fishing boat capsizes after colliding with sand barge in South Korea, killing seven

SEOUL, Dec 9 (Agencies): A fishing boat capsized after colliding with a sand barge in waters off South Korea's southeastern coast early Monday, leaving seven crew members dead and one missing, according to local coast guard and fire departments.

The 29-ton fishing boat, which had eight passengers, three South Koreans and five Indonesian nationals, capsized after colliding with a 456-ton barge in waters near the city of Gyeongju, according to Kim Eul-dong, an official at the Pohang coast guard.

Dozens of emergency workers, along



with 15 coast guard vessels and six helicopters, were mobilized to search for the missing passenger, who was Indonesian. None of the passengers from the barge were hurt.

## Taiwan says China has sent naval ships into nearby waters ahead of anticipated drills

BEIJING, Dec 9 (Agencies): China's military appears to be preparing for widely anticipated drills in response to a recent visit by Taiwan's president to Hawaii and Guam.

Taiwan's defense ministry said Monday that it detected Chinese naval and coast guard ships entering the Taiwan Strait and the western Pacific and that China had restricted airspace along its southeast

coast through Wednesday.

There was no immediate confirmation from the Chinese side.

A Taiwan defense ministry statement said it has set up an emergency response center and launched combat readiness exercises. It did not say what those exercises entailed.

The Chinese government says Taiwan is part of its territory and opposes American sup-

port and military sales to the self-governing island.

Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te made stops in Hawaii and Guam during a weeklong tour of the Pacific that ended Friday.

China maintains that Taiwan is a province that should not have its own president or foreign relations.

"It must be pointed out that there is no such thing as a defense min-

istry in Taiwan," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said when asked about the Taiwanese statement. "Taiwan is part of China, and the Taiwan issue is China's internal affairs. China will firmly safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity."

China, which views Lai as a separatist, held major military exercises around Taiwan following his inauguration in

May and his national day speech in October. It also held a major drill after Nancy Pelosi, then the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, visited Taiwan in 2022.

The Taiwan defense ministry statement said China had restricted airspace in seven zones off Fujian province, which faces Taiwan, and off Zhejiang province, which stretches north from Fujian to Shanghai.

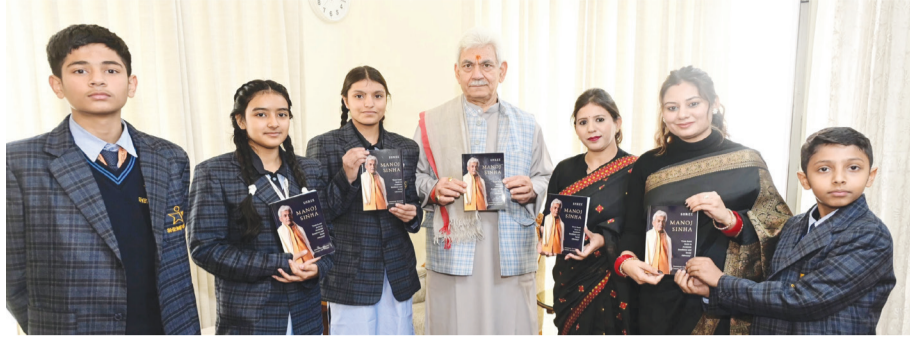




## LG meets class 10th student, signs copy of her book

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: The Nandini, a budding author and student of Shemford Futuristic School, Birpur, Jammu, said that she has tried to capture Lieutenant Governor's leadership journey through her writing. The Lieutenant Governor congratulated



and extended his best wishes to Nandini for her future endeavours.

## Trikuta Nagar Traders Association delegation class on LG



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: A delegation of Trikuta Nagar Traders Association, Jammu led by its President Abhinav Anand, called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, on Monday.

## SBI card crosses 2 crore cards in Force Mark

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: SBI Card, India's largest pure-play credit card issuer, has surpassed the 2 crore cards in force milestone, highlighting its commitment to delivering innovative solutions and enhancing customer experiences across the nation. This achievement also underscores SBI Card's pivotal role in transforming India's credit card landscape, and its promise of 'Currency of Digital India'.

Since its inception in 1998, SBI Card has been a pioneer in designing a wide range of products to meet diverse customer needs. From thoughtful core cards, co-branded partnerships with premium brands, to rewards-driven and lifestyle-

centric offerings, SBI Card has consistently set new benchmarks for customer-focused innovation in the Indian credit card industry and strengthened its leadership in the market. SBI Card has witnessed strong growth of around 25% CAGR in cards in force, and 26% CAGR in spends, between FY19 and FY24.

Commenting on the achievement, Abhijit Chakravorty, MD&CEO, SBI Card, said "SBI Card brand is based on the value proposition of 'Make Life Simple'. Crossing the 2 crore cards in force milestone is a testament to the trust and confidence that our customers place in us. It reflects our relentless focus on innovation, superior customer service, and our vision of empower-

ing every Indian with convenient, secure, and rewarding payment solutions. We remain committed to delivering unmatched value to our growing customer base as we continue to address their evolving needs."

SBI Card today has a strong customer acquisition network across length and breadth of India, comprising of BANCA and open market. SBI Card offers a diverse portfolio of credit cards, including the exclusive AURUM, a super-premium card, and the feature-rich SBI Card Elite for the premium segment. Credit cards, such as CASHBACK SBI Card, SimplyCLICK SBI Card, SimplySAVE SBI Card, and SBI Card PULSE provide tailored benefits to meet varied customer

needs. SBI Card offers co-branded travel cards such as, KrisFlyer SBI Card, Air India Signature SBI Card, BPCL SBI Card, and IRCTC SBI Card cater to globetrotters and travelers. At the same time, retail-focused credit cards, including Titan SBI Card and Reliance SBI Card, offer immense value on lifestyle spends. Today, SBI Card credit cards are available on all key payment networks in the country.

Over the years, SBI Card has also harnessed technology to introduce seamless digital onboarding, enhanced security features, and robust rewards programmes, making it a preferred choice for around 2 crore Indian customers today.

## Sports activities for CCI children conclude

Top News Report

ANANTNAG, Dec 9: The three-day sports activities for children from Palaash and Pareesha Child Care Institutions (CCIs) concluded on Monday in Anantnag.

The event was organized by the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) under Mission Vatsalya, to promote the overall well-being and development of children in care institutions.

The children participated enthusiastically outdoor games including cricket, Kabadi, Kho Kho and Tug of War & in indoor games children participated



chess and carrom, showcasing their skills, sportsmanship and teamwork. The event served as a plat-

form for them to engage in healthy competition and build confidence. To encourage and motivate

the young participants, the DCPU distributed trophies, medals and certificates.

On this occasion Child Protection Officer Anantnag Muzaffar Ahmad Malik informed that these sports activities were part of the DCPU's ongoing efforts to ensure the holistic development of children in care institutions, fostering their physical, mental, and social well-being.

The event concluded with a sense of accomplishment and joy, as the children received recognition for their participation and performance, reinforcing the importance of such initiatives for their overall growth.

## Sainik Welfare Board, NCC delegation calls on Dy CM



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: In con-

nection with celebration of Armed Forces' flag day, a delegation com-

prising Sainik Welfare Board and NCC cadets, called on Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Chaudhary here on Monday.

Pertinently, the Sainik Welfare Board along with NCC Cadets from 2nd J&K Girls Battalion, are presently conducting fund raising campaign for welfare of family members of the deceased defence personnel.

## ASCCNE organizes awareness campaign on HIV/AIDS

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: Acharya Shri Chander College of Nursing Education (ASCCNE) organized Awareness HIV/AIDS with the theme "Take the Right Path: my health, my pride" the series of impactful events aimed at raising awareness about HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and to need eliminate stigma. The event was held under the leadership of Principal Prof. Dr. Indra Moza, the active from students, faculty, and esteemed guests.

Dr. Indra Moza extended a warm welcome to the Chief Guest, Dr. Monika Wali, Medical Officer and Incharge of IEC J&K AIDS Control Society, and Special Guest. Rajesh Sharma, Assistant Director



Youth Affairs and Radhika Sudan, Assistant Director GIPA. The theme was highlighted and significance of World AIDS Day, emphasizing how education and awareness can transform the lives of millions worldwide.

The Guests noted the substantial progress in HIV prevention, treatment, and care, while acknowledging the

ongoing challenges in combating the disease, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. The speakers reiterated the importance of access to life-saving medications and the urgent need to address stigma and discrimination faced by people living with HIV.

A range of cultural performances by students brought vibrancy

to the event while promoting key messages about HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention in the form of rangoli, Skit, Project & debate was organized. Discussions centered on the history, significance, and preventive measures of HIV/AIDS, aiming to educate participants about the disease its impact and the steps needed to combat its spread.

Through educational initiatives i.e community engagement, Acharya Shri Chander College of Nursing continues to play a vital role in spreading awareness and empowering society to address this global public health challenge. Lastly the winners were appreciated & felicitated by the chief guest.

## Symposium on "Embrace Yoga, Pranayama, and Nature to slow down aging naturally" held



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: Vichar Kranti Manch International (VKMI), the Indian Yoga Association, and Sarv Uthan Trust organized a symposium titled "Slow Down the Aging Process through Yoga and Nature."

The event highlighted how yoga, pranayama, and natural remedies can contribute to graceful aging. The focus was on practices that harmonize the body, mind, and spirit to delay the aging process.

Dr. Shreyansh Kumar Jain, State Yoga Commissioner, Chairman of the Indian Yoga Association, and President of VKMI, led the discussions on how alternative therapies and regular yoga practices can prevent premature aging.

During the symposium, Dr. Jain explained how regular yoga can improve flexibility, circulation, detoxify the body, and promote mental well-being. Specific anti-aging yoga poses such as Tadasana (Mountain Pose), which improves posture and spinal health, Trikona-

sana (Triangle Pose), which boosts flexibility and digestion, and Bhujangasana (Cobra Pose), which rejuvenates skin by enhancing oxygen flow, were discussed in detail. Other poses like Shirshasana (Headstand), known for improving blood circulation to the scalp and face, and Vrikshasana (Tree Pose), which enhances focus and strengthens the core, were also highlighted as beneficial for aging gracefully.

In addition to yoga, the symposium emphasized the importance of pranayama (breathing techniques) in anti-aging. Techniques like Kapalabhati (Skull Shining Breath) and Anulom Vilom (Alternate Nostril Breathing) were explored for their role in detoxifying the body, improving circulation, and balancing the nervous system. Bhramari (Bee Breathing) was noted for reducing stress and wrinkles, while Ujjayi (Victorious Breath) promotes vitality by enhancing lung capacity. Dr. Jain suggested that a daily prac-

tice of these techniques for 10-15 minutes could produce noticeable benefits in rejuvenating both the body and mind.

Natural remedies and herbs were also presented as powerful tools in slowing down the aging process. Herbs like Ashwagandha, which reduces stress and improves skin health, Shatavari, known for enhancing skin elasticity, and Tulsi (Holy Basil), rich in antioxidants, were recommended for their anti-aging properties.

Other herbs like Turmeric and Amla (Indian Gooseberry) were noted for their ability to reduce inflammation and boost collagen production, which are essential for youthful skin. The symposium also highlighted the role of natural oils and superfoods like Coconut Oil, Aloe Vera, and Green Tea in maintaining radiant skin.

Moreover, Ashok Gupta, Vice President of VKMI, shared holistic and spiritual approaches to aging. He emphasized the importance of meditation, mindfulness, and a positive

mindset in promoting emotional health and longevity. He also discussed the benefits of connecting with nature, practicing gratitude, and engaging in meaningful activities. Gupta encouraged the attendees to build supportive relationships and embrace spiritual practices such as prayer and self-reflection, which contribute to both physical and mental well-being.

The symposium also saw contributions from dignitaries and health enthusiasts such as Abhinandan Jain, Swaran Amla, and Virender Anand, who enriched the discussions with their insights on aging gracefully. The event concluded with a soulful bhajan by Swar Kokila Anju Bansal, Punjab Coordinator of VKMI, which emphasized a spiritual approach to aging. VKMI members also celebrated the 73rd birthday of Sh. Harish Chopra, a retired senior manager at SBI, by presenting him with a poetic life sketch composed by Dr. Jain. Mr. Abhinandan Jain presented the vote of thanks, bringing the enriching symposium to a close.

This event highlighted the transformative power of yoga, pranayama, and nature in slowing down the aging process, promoting health, vitality, and spiritual well-being.

## Vi launches Super Hero Prepaid Plan with Unlimited Data from Midnight to Noon

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: As the internet becomes a backbone for communication, education, work, and entertainment, uninterrupted access to data has never been more critical. In line with its commitment to delivering a seamless and worry-free digital experience, Vi, India's leading telecom operator, today introduced the Super Hero Plan, a unique proposition tailored for Indian prepaid

users.

The Super Hero Plan is designed to align with evolving data consumption patterns, empowering users to maximise their digital experiences without worrying about running out of data. With this plan, prepaid customers enjoy unlimited data for half a day, from 12 AM to 12 Noon. The plan strengthens Vi's appeal to data-savvy youth, already benefitting from Vi's successful Hero plan, addition-

ally also addressing the needs of women who prioritise productivity during morning hour, with enhanced data benefits tailored to their schedules.

For the remaining half of the day, Vi will offers extra data benefits to ensure uninterrupted connectivity for its customers. Other key Benefits of Vi's Super Hero Recharges include:

Users can carry forward unused weekday data and use it during

the weekend, providing added flexibility.

Twice a month, users can unlock up to 2GB of extra data at no additional cost via the Vi app or by dialling 121249.

The Super Hero plan will be available on recharge packs offering 2GB/day or more daily data quota in Maharashtra, New Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Punjab and Haryana, with price starting at Rs. 365.

## Chess World Championship: Gukesh breaks deadlock, takes lead with three games to go

SINGAPORE, Dec 9 (Agencies): Indian teenage Grandmaster Gukesh Dammaraju beat defending champion Ding Liren in Game 11 of the World Chess Championship in Singapore, taking a vital one-point lead with the score at 6 points to Ding's 5, with just three games remaining.

After seven consecutive draws, particularly the last two uneventful ones, former champion Magnus Carlsen and several chess commentators were eager to see dynamos and blood on the board. They especially urged Gukesh to take risks in this game, as Ding will retain his title if the match ends in a tie. And the Indian chess sensation didn't disappoint.

Gukesh once again took advantage in the opening, continuing to surprise the clearly underprepared defending champion. Playing with white, Gukesh opted for the rare and spicy Reti-Blumenfeld Gambit, also called the Reversed Blumenfeld Gambit. In this opening, white sacrifices the c-pawn, drawing the black pawns into its territory



and claiming them later. However, the gambit is risky, with high chances for both players to secure a win. "I knew it was a double-edged opening, but I went for it. I was prepared," Gukesh reflected on the choice of the opening later.

The game lived up to expectations. Like almost all the previous 10 games in the 14-round championship, Gukesh introduced a novelty on move 5 by pushing a pawn to a3. Ding spent 22 minutes responding with the routine Nf6, drawing criticism from commentators

who called him unprepared and under-confident.

After five moves, Gukesh had used an incredible 32 seconds, compared to one hour, two minutes, and 35 seconds by his opponent. This was despite the fact that Ding had beaten another Indian Grandmaster, Adhiban, with black in the same opening just a year ago.

However, the situation changed when Ding found an outpost for his knight, forcing Gukesh to think for a record one hour and 17 seconds to find an equal response. Later, he con-

fessed to reporters, "I owe a lot to my team for preparation and got a better position again in the opening, but then I lost my cool for not playing accurately. I had to go to the rest lounge to cool myself."

Eventually, Gukesh built pressure on the queen side, and in the time scramble, where Ding had just about seven minutes to play 15 moves to reach the stipulated 40 moves in the first time control of two hours, Ding capitulated and resigned on move 29 when Gukesh sacrificed his queen to gain a decisive advantage.

When asked if he could bounce back now, Ding responded in the post-match conference, "In the last championship, I came back from behind with white in Game 12. And now also it will be Game 12."

Gukesh, whose meditative pose on the board is as popular as his calm demeanour, kept his feet on the ground. "This game could have easily gone the other way as well (Ding could have won), so considering that, it's a very important game, but there are still three more very important games to go (for the title)."

## New Zealand opener Devon Conway to miss third England Test



WELLINGTON, Dec 9 (Agencies): Opener Devon Conway will miss the third Test against England, New Zealand cricket said Monday, clearing the way for the return of unwanted batter Will Young.

The out-of-touch Conway is awaiting the birth of his first child so won't join the Black Caps squad in Hamil-

ton, where the final Test of the series begins on Saturday.

England hold an unsailable 2-0 lead after winning the second Test in Wellington on Sunday by 323 runs.

Conway's place in the squad will be taken by middle-order batter Mark Chapman but the more experienced Young is likely to be promoted to the start-

ing XI. Young was a contentious omission from the first two England Tests following a consistent run of scores during New Zealand's 3-0 sweep of India in October and November, scoring 244 runs at an average just short of 50.

He made way for the returning Kane Williamson for the England Tests after Williamson missed the Indian tour with injury.

Conway has been out of form, having failed to score a century for nearly two years.

The 33-year-old has been dismissed for scores of 2, 8, 11 and 0 in the England series.

Young, 32, batted at number three throughout the India series but has predominantly played as an opener throughout his 19-Test career.

## 'Next 24 hours will...': Josh Hazlewood gives update on his availability for 3rd Test vs India

ADELAIDE, Dec 9 (Agencies): Australia pacer Josh Hazlewood, who is recovering from a side strain, bowled two full spells at Adelaide Oval on Monday and said how he "pulls up" in next 24 hours will determine his availability for the upcoming third Test against India. On what would have been the fourth day of the pink-ball Test, which Australia won by 10 wickets, the 33-year-old Hazlewood bowled through two sessions to simulate match conditions and assess his readiness for the third Test, set to begin in Brisbane on Saturday.



next day and then thinking 'yeah, I'd be right to go again if I had to,' he added.

The veteran pacer who has a history of side issues, however, said the recent one was a minor injury, adding that had the Adelaide Test been the last of the summer, he could have pushed himself to play. "It's not necessarily your typical side strain, which I've had a couple in my career."

I've ticked every box so far this week. The side's obviously been a troublesome area for me, in the past, so if I can lean on the side of caution, I guess a little bit, (I'll do that)," Hazlewood said.

"But it's very minor compared to the last few I've had. I played

the (Sheffield) Shield game and ticked all that off and I was very happy where I was and it still happened, so I was pretty annoyed for a few days.

"If this (Adelaide) was the last Test of the summer, I could have potentially run the gauntlet and played."

"Obviously (we have) got Scotty (Boland) there, who does a fantastic job every time he plays."

So I guess that sort of makes the decision a little easier. Sometimes you've sort of got to be pretty much 100 percent to play. And if not, Scott is there (and ready) to go," he said.

If Hazlewood is declared fit, Scott Boland will make way for him in the playing XI.

## Ravi Shastri delivers blunt verdict on Rohit Sharma's captaincy against Australia: "too subdued"

ADELAIDE, Dec 9 (Agencies): Former Indian cricket team head coach Ravi Shastri believes that skipper Rohit Sharma was quite 'subdued' during the loss against Australia in Adelaide. India were completely outplayed by the hosts as they slumped to a 10-wicket loss - a result that majorly dented their World Test Championship (WTC) Final hopes. Shastri said that he wants Rohit to be more animated and involved in the upcoming matches and believes that



they can bounce back in the five-match series.

"That's the reason I want him at the top. That's where he can be aggressive and expressive. Just thought he was a little too subdued, just seeing his body lan-

guage. The fact that he didn't make runs, I don't think there was enough on the field there. I just wanted to see him more involved, and a little more animated. You still have to believe that you can bounce back in this

series. You have seen with these two teams, that the counter-punch is almost immediate. It's happened over the last 10 years. You lose one, you win the next, but you have to have the belief," Ravi Shastri told the broadcasters.

Shastri also suggested that India should take a few lessons from Australia's approach and reflect on their weaknesses in order to improve ahead of the third Test. The former India head coach also suggested that KL Rahul can go back to the middle-order with Rohit playing as an opening

batter once again.

"I like the choice of words by Pat Cummins in Perth. He said we weren't good enough, but we weren't as bad as the scoreboard showed. The reason I say good choice of words is because it wasn't about what people said or what was written about, it was about what the scoreboard showed. I think India can take a leaf out of that. It would mean Rahul would go back to the middle order. But that's what he was going to do if Rohit Sharma had started from the first Test itself," Shastri said.

## Doubts cast on Shami's return as Rohit says bowler has 'swelling in knee'

ADELAIDE, Dec 9 (Agencies): Mohammed Shami's much-anticipated return to Test arena could be delayed further after India captain Rohit Sharma informed that the senior speedster had once again developed "some swelling" in his knees after playing seven Mushtaq Ali Trophy games.

Shami's playing kit and Australian visa are believed to be ready and he was supposed to fly at the earliest but after Rohit's post-match comments, fresh doubts have been cast whether he will go to Australia.

Asked if there is a chance for Shami's comeback, the Indian skipper was cautious in his answer. "No, no, definitely. That door is very much open. But we are just monitoring him because while playing Syed Mushtaq Ali T20,

he again got some swelling in his knee, which obviously hampers his preparation to come and play a Test match. We want to be very, very careful," the India skipper said after the game.

Shami had bowled 42 overs in a Ranji Trophy game apart from playing seven SMAT T20 games in 13 days. According to an NCA source, Shami has told the medical team that even though he has no trouble bowling four overs, the swelling in his knee is returning after every game. Apparently, the decision makers, who have all spoken to Shami, feel that even he is reluctant to play the longest format as of now.

Skipper Rohit said that they don't want a Shami, who is not 100 percent fit. "We don't want to bring him here in a situation and he plays and then he pulls up sore or something

happens. We want to be more than 100 percent sure with him. Because it's been such a long time that he's not played (international) cricket."

Rohit said that if Shami doesn't feel 100 percent, the team won't like to put pressure on him. "To be fair to him, we don't want to put pressure on him to come here and do the job for the team."

Rohit said a final call will be taken by the NCA medical team headed by Dr Nitin Patel.

"There are some professionals who are monitoring him. And we will take the call based on what those guys feel there. Because they are the ones watching him every game."

"So we just have to be very, very careful. But again, like I said, that door is very much open for him to come and play any time," he said.

## Afridi urges PCB to take firm stand on India tours

KARACHI, Dec 9 (Agencies): Former captain Shahid Afridi has advised the PCB to refrain from sending the national team to India for any cricket event, including ICC tournaments, unless India agrees to send its team to Pakistan.

Speaking at the Urdu conference at the Karachi Arts Council, Afridi emphasised the need for the Pakistan Cricket Board to adopt a firm stance on cricketing ties with India, asserting Pakistan must become self-reliant to make strong decisions, particularly regarding participation in ICC events such as the Champions Trophy.

"Pakistan cricket should be strong and self sufficient and take

strong principled decisions. If India cannot come and play in Pakistan then there is no reason for us to go and play any event in India," he said.

The Champions Trophy is slated to take place in Pakistan between January and March next year.

India has refused to play its Champions Trophy matches in Pakistan and instead demanded the tournament be played in a 'hybrid model', which would allow it to play its matches at a neutral venue.

According to a top International Cricket Council (ICC) source, the global governing body for the sport has reached a consensus to conduct the Champi-



ons Trophy in a hybrid model, allowing India to play its share of matches in Dubai while agreeing "in principle" to a similar arrangement in multilateral events till 2027.

Afridi said the PCB had taken the correct stand on the Champions Trophy after India again decided against sending its team to Pakistan for the Champions Trophy, leading to a long delay in the announcement of the final schedule and

venues.

"Even the ICC now has to decide whether its responsibility is to ensure every member nation gets to play cricket or it just wants to make money," he added.

Afridi, who is the father-in-law of fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi, believes Pakistan cricket's biggest problem is that policies change with every new Chairman.

"When Shaheen was

made Pakistan T20 captain I was against it and I said that the board should have made Muhammad Rizwan the captain as he was the best choice. But once they made Shaheen captain it was also wrong for the PCB to remove him as captain after just one series. It affected him," he said.

Afridi expressed confidence in young Saim Ayub's potential to excel across all formats but lamented that many talented players like him fail to flourish due to the flawed grooming system in Pakistan cricket.

"We have a lot of talent in Pakistan but we also lose so much of this talent because we don't have a system to identify such players and groom them properly," he said.

## U19 Asia Cup: Batters falter as India lose title clash to Bangladesh



DUBAI, Dec 9 (Agencies): The batters could not capitalise on the good job done by the bowlers as India suffered a 59-run defeat to Bangladesh in a low-scoring U19 Asia Cup title clash here.

After India produced

a fine performance with the ball to keep Bangladesh to a mere 198 in 49.1 overs, it looked like the job was half done since the batters had played their roles to perfection since defeat in the tournament-opener to Pakistan.

However, in the final, India lost wickets in a flurry on two occasions which broke the back of their chase, with Bangladesh's bowlers and fielders doing their part well in exerting further pressure.

Chasing 199, India were bundled out for 139 in 35.2 overs as none of their specialist batters could play an impactful knock.

Brief scores: Bangladesh: 198 all out in 49.1 overs (Hossain 47, Shihab 40; Guha 2/29, Raj 2/41); India: 139 all out in 35.2 overs (Amaan 26, Raj 24; Emon 3/24).

## Arunpal Singh demands probe into JU's CDOE irregularities

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: Arunpal Singh, the Working President of the National Conference Students' Union (NCSU), has called for a comprehensive investigation into alleged administrative lapses within the Centre for Distance & Online Education (CDOE) at the University of Jammu (JU). During a press conference, Arunpal expressed serious concerns about the DEB's recent rejection of four out of JU's 13 proposed courses, attributing it to gross negligence and systemic deficiencies. He criticized the university's administration for submitting an applica-

tion to the Distance Education Bureau (DEB) over three years late, riddled with errors and omissions.

Among the critical deficiencies, Arunpal pointed out the non-submission of statutory body approvals for online and distance learning programs, the absence of a valid NAAC certificate, failure to provide the Director's qualification and appointment details, and missing plagiarism reports for Self-Learning Materials (SLM). Furthermore, the university failed to submit details about full-time faculty, approval minutes from the Academic Council, and the



regulatory approval for the B.Ed program. Such lapses, he stated, reflect a troubling lack of oversight and accountability within the institution. He also highlighted specific irregularities in JU's postgraduate diploma courses, which continue to be advertised as one-year programs, despite the UGC-DEB's 2020 regulation mandat-

ing two-year duration. Arunpal questioned how the university could notify admissions for these courses without first obtaining DEB approval or clarifying their duration. He emphasized that this has left hundreds of students uncertain about their academic futures, further undermining trust in the institution.

Expressing concern over why JU managed to meet the DEB's requirements for only nine courses while neglecting the remaining four, Arunpal demanded greater transparency and accountability. He described the situation as a clear example of

administrative carelessness and potentially deeper conspiracies, calling for a high-level probe into the reasons behind the delayed and deficient application process.

Arunpal Singh concluded by urging the university to take immediate corrective measures, ensure strict adherence to regulatory norms, and hold those responsible accountable. He stressed that the integrity of the institution and the academic futures of countless students are at stake, calling for urgent action to restore confidence in the university's governance and operations.

## Iltija Mufti needs psychiatric treatment, claims BJP leader Raju Chandel

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: Senior Hindu Sanatani BJP leader Guruji Raju Chandel has launched a scathing attack on Iltija Mufti, daughter of former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, accusing her of spreading hatred and calling for her social and political boycott. Speaking at an event with Jagatguru Swami Maan Das Valmiki Ji to discuss the development of the Valmiki community, Chandel criticized Iltija Mufti's recent remarks allegedly targeting Sanatan Hindus, labeling her as someone in need of psychiatric treatment.

Chandel emphasized the historical resilience of the Valmiki community, stating that they have been protectors of Sanatan Dharma and



fierce opponents of the Mughals and British invaders. He alleged that descendants of the Mughals, like Iltija Mufti, are attempting to divide Indian society by fostering hatred and questioned their loyalty to the nation, claiming that their ancestors "sang songs of terrorism and Pakistan."

Swami Maan Das echoed Chandel's sentiments, highlighting the inclusiveness of Sanatan Hindu Dharma and noting how leaders in Islamic countries like the UAE and Dubai have

embraced Sanatan traditions by establishing temples. He contrasted this with what he called divisive rhetoric from leaders like Iltija Mufti and others.

Chandel further accused Mehbooba Mufti and her family of making inflammatory statements to gain media attention after being politically sidelined in Jammu and Kashmir. He claimed that the people of the region have rejected the Mufti family and that their statements are attempts to stay relevant.

The event was attended by BJP leaders, including District President of BJP AISI Morcha Chandrapal Chandel, Mohit Laxmi Chandel, and Shakuntala Chandel, among others.

## Dr. Rajeev Bhagat inaugurates black topping and lane-drain work in Bishnah Constituency

### Top News Report

BISHNAH, Dec 9: To accelerate the development works Dr. Rajeev Kumar Bhagat, MLA Bishnah kick started the black topping work from Mehmoopur to Kotli Mian Fateh via Prithvir and also Lane and drain work in Rehal Kalandriyan, here today. The estimated cost of both the works is about 2 Crore 37 Lacs.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Rajeev Bhagat expressed his vision

for Bishnah Constituency's future, stating his unwavering dedication to transforming it into a model constituency. "We are committed to ensuring that every corner of Bishnah Constituency enjoys modern, high-quality infrastructure," he declared.

"The work of black topping was pending since a long time. This work is a step towards fulfilling our promise of connectivity, safety and progress for all residents." The MLA took the



opportunity to emphasize the importance of maintaining quality standards.

He urged the engineers and officials of the PWD Department to strictly adhere to quality

protocols to ensure that the road serves the community for years to come.

"I call upon our engineers to uphold the highest standards in this work, as every project we undertake reflects our commitment to excellence and trust, the people have placed in us," he added.

All the locals present there, thanked MLA Bishnah and Officer/officials of PWD department for this long pending demand of the general public.

## Keshav provides ration cards to locals



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: Chairman Samvedna Society Keshav Chopra today provided Ration cards to the locals. Speaking on the Occasion Keshav Chopra appreciated the work of Director Food Civil supplies and consumer Affairs and her team

for working tirelessly in solving the grievances related to ration cards of the common man. It is important to mention that a KYC updated ration card is required not even to get Ration but to get Ayushman Bharat Golden cards (PMJAY) also, Ration card is also required to

avail the benefits of Pensions and other Government Schemes, hence it's a very important document. The motive of Samvedna Society is to provide doorstep services to the common man so that they can get their Ration card easily at one Place Keshav further added.

Speaking on the Occasion Locals appreciated the work of Chairman Samvedna Society Keshav Chopra for providing them ration cards, Locals also thanked Director FCS and CA and her team.

Anju, Vikas Kumar, Manoj tandon, Sushil Gupta, Parshotam Lal and others were also present.

## Dimple leads protest against Gautam Adani bribery scandal in J&K



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: Sunil Dimple, President of Mission Statehood, led a strong protest rally against allegations of bribery involving Gautam Adani in Jammu and Kashmir. The protest, which saw effigies of Gautam Adani burnt, started from Amphalla and New Plot and culminated at Janipur High Court Chowk, drawing large participation from traders and local residents.

Addressing the rally, Dimple demanded an immediate statement from Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Parliament, alongside NIA and CBI inquiries into how Jammu and Kashmir's name surfaced in the alleged Adani bribery distribution list.

He further called for the arrest and imprisonment of individuals in Jammu and Kashmir accused of taking bribes from Gautam Adani for projects such as solar lighting systems, prepaid meters, and power distribution.

Dimple criticized the Parliament for failing to address pressing public issues, including unemployment, rising prices, and poverty. He urged the Prime Minister to restore Jammu and

Kashmir's statehood, special status under Articles 370 and 35-A, and to provide 200 units of free electricity, double ration distribution, and 12 free LPG cylinders to all residents.

Key Demands by Dimple were immediate NIA and CBI investigation into the bribery allegations in Jammu and Kashmir, arrest of all individuals involved in accepting bribes from Adani, public disclosure of contracts and deals linked to power projects and Adani's involvement in Jammu and Kashmir, free electricity (200 units), double ration, and 12 LPG cylinders for all residents, restoration of the Darbar Move and the state's special status and a white paper from the LG administration on the Adani bribery allegations.

Dimple accused the BJP government, which has governed Jammu and Kashmir for the past decade, of being complicit in allowing such scams. He alleged that poor families are being burdened with exorbitant costs due to prepaid and smart meters, privatization of the power department, and questionable contracts granted to external entities, including Gautam Adani's

firms. He also demanded Chief Minister Omar Abdullah convene a cabi-

net meeting to address the bribery allegations, ensure accountability, and punish all guilty officers and individuals.

Dimple threatened to launch an indefinite agitation if immediate action is not taken against those responsible for defaming and damaging Jammu and Kashmir's reputation domestically and internationally.

Other leaders present at the protest included Kala Singh, Deepak, Arun Verma, Biloo Pehlwan, Lohari Shaha,

and Shashi Pal, among others.

## JKBS condoles the loss of eminent members

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 9: The Jammu and Kashmir Batwal Sabha (JKBS) convened a meeting today to express deep sorrow and condolences over the untimely demise of two of its eminent members, Rattan Lal Kaith and Jameet

Raj Mandi. The late members hailed from Chatha Gujran and Chack Sardar Attar Singh, respectively.

During the meeting, JKBS General Secretary RL Kaith described the deceased as respected figures and pillars of strength for their fami-

lies. Their loss is deeply felt not only by their loved ones but also by the wider community.

All members present at the meeting offered prayers to the Almighty, seeking eternal peace for the departed souls. They also extended their heartfelt support to the

bereaved families, praying for their strength and courage during this difficult time.

The gathering highlighted the significant contributions of the late members to the community and emphasized the irreplaceable void left by their passing.

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