

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



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Pratik Gandhi calls his role in Agni a proud responsibility



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Akhilesh Yadav questions BJP Government's preparedness for Mahakumbh, offers help

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Trump slams Biden for commuting death sentences for 37 of 'worst killers'



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BRIEFLY

Jammu Police arrest drug peddler with 10 kg poppy straw

JAMMU, Dec 25 (Agencies): Police have arrested one drug peddler with 10 kilograms of poppy straw in Sidhra area in the city outskirts.

A spokesman on Wednesday said that on Tuesday night, a police team while conducting routine naka checking at Sidhra Bridge, intercepted a tanker from Nagrota which is going to Narwal.

The driver attempted to evade the checkpoint but was apprehended, he said.

The accused was identified as Kamaljeet Singh, resident of Gole Gujral Ranjtpura, Jammu.

Upon checking, 10 kilograms of poppy straw was recovered from the vehicle while a case under relevant sections was registered at police station Nagrota.

The arrest marks a significant step as police have reiterated their commitment to intensifying the fight against the drug menace and have urged the public to report any suspicious activities to them.

Intense cold wave conditions in Kashmir, Srinagar records minus 7.3 degrees celsius

SRINAGAR, Dec 25 (Agencies): Minimum temperatures decreased at most places in Kashmir as the valley continued to reel under intense cold conditions, leading to the freezing of several water bodies and water supply lines in many areas.

Srinagar recorded a low of minus 7.3 degrees Celsius on Tuesday night — down from the previous night's minus 6.6 degrees Celsius, the meteorological department said on Wednesday.

It has predicted a dip of two to three degrees in the minimum temperatures in Kashmir over the next two days.

Except in Gulmarg, the night temperatures plummeted across all other weather stations in the Kashmir valley.

Currently under the grip of 'Chillai-Kalan', the harshest winter period of 40 days that started on December 21, the Kashmir valley is experiencing

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China 2024 | Military standoff with India ends in Ladakh, Long freeze over



BEIJING, Dec 25 (Agencies): It was a breakthrough year in India-China ties after a near freeze in their ties for over four years — the longest since the 1962 war — with an agreement to end the eastern Ladakh military standoff.

After "amassing of a large number of troops by China along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh" in April-May 2020, as External Affairs Minister

S Jaishankar said in a recent statement in Lok Sabha, resulting in the Galwan valley clash in June 2020, there had been a breakdown in the relations between the two Asian giants.

The post-1962 war chill lasted till the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Beijing in 1988.

This time, the two countries held periodic talks between the top commanders and through the Working

Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC), resulting in disengagement in stages from four points — the Galwan Valley, the Pangong Lake, Hot Springs, and Gogra — in eastern Ladakh by creating buffer zones.

Finally, on October 21, India and China firm up an agreement on patrolling and disengagement of troops along the LAC in eastern Ladakh at the remaining

friction points of Depsang and Demchok.

The agreement led to the first structured meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS summit at Kazan in Russia soon after, their first in five years.

Subsequently, Jaishankar met Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the sidelines of the G20 meeting in Brazil in November where they reached an understanding that the Special Representatives (SRs) and the Foreign Secretary-level mechanisms will be convened soon.

Constituted in 2003 to comprehensively address the vexed dispute of the India-China border spanning to 3,488 kms, the Special Representatives mechanism is headed by NSA Doval and Foreign Minister Wang.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh too met his Chinese counterpart Dong Jun at the ASEAN Defence Ministers'

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BJP celebrates Vajpayee 100th birth anniversary as good governance day in Kashmir



SRINAGAR, Dec 25 (Agencies): The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Kashmir unit on Wednesday celebrated the 100th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee as Good Governance Day.

The event reflected Vajpayee's enduring

legacy and commitment to transparent and accountable governance, a BJP statement said here today.

The commemoration began at BJP head office at Jawahar Nagar, Srinagar with party members paying floral tributes to former Prime Minister Vajpayee.

The leaders highlighted the contributions to India's development by Vajpayee which emphasized his

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Passenger plane en route to Russia from Azerbaijan crashes in Kazakhstan

MOSCOW, Dec 25 (Agencies): A passenger plane travelling from Azerbaijan to southern Russia with 67 people on board crashed near Aktau, a city in Kazakhstan on Wednesday, CNN reported, citing local officials.

Kazakhstan's Ministry of Emergency Situations stated that emergency teams discovered the aircraft engulfed in



flames upon reaching the crash site. "Rescue units began extinguishing the fire.

Currently, information about the victims is being clarified, and

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CM Omar Abdullah conducts surprise checks at Kashmir's premier medical institutions

SRINAGAR, Dec 25 (Agencies): Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today conducted surprise inspections of premier Health Institutions in Srinagar to gain firsthand knowledge of the facilities and services being provided to patients and their attendants.

Chief Minister visited the Bone & Joint Hospital, Barzulla, one of the region's top Orthopaedic healthcare facilities.

During his inspection, he toured various sections and wards, interacting with patients and attendants to understand their concerns.

Accompanied by Minister of Health, Sakeena Itoo, Senior Faculty



Members and Doctors, the Chief Minister engaged with hospital staff to assess the winter arrangements, treatment facilities and the availability of medical professionals and paramedics.

Chief Minister Omar

Abdullah also inspected the state-of-the-art additional block of the hospital, constructed under the Jhelum Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP) with funding from the World Bank.

Designed with earthquake-resilient technol-

■ Turn to page 9

72-hour shutdown in Katra begins against ropeway project; Protesters detained



REASI/JAMMU, Dec 25 (Agencies): Several people were detained by police during a protest in Katra, the base camp of the Mata Vaishno Devi temple in Jammu and

Kashmir, as demands to shelve the proposed ropeway project intensified with the town observing a 72-hour shutdown from Wednesday.

The Shrine Board called for the bandh and said that all activities in Katra would remain suspended during the protest.

Scores of people led by Samiti leaders Bhupinder Singh and Sohan Chand took out a protest march in the town, raising slogans against the Shrine Board and the administration, accusing them of adopting a stubborn attitude.

However, when police personnel stopped the

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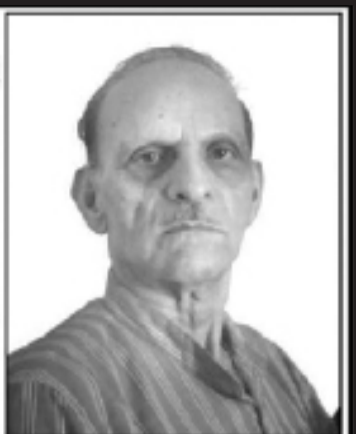
TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved Sh. Makhan Lal Raina S/o Lt Sh. Thakurjoo Raina originally R/o Manigam Ganderbal A/p 74, Patoli Mangotriam Jammu who left for heavenly abode on 18.12.2024.

The Tenth Day Kriya will be performed on 27.12.2024 (Friday) Time - 09:30 AM at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education.

Grief Stricken:-

Smt. Phoolia Raina - Wife
Daughter & Son-in-law
Smt. Pami Koul & Sh. Nanaji Koul
Smt. Sunita Raina - Daughter-in-law
Son & Daughter-in-law
Sh. Sanjay Raina & Smt. Natasha Raina



Sh. Makhan Lal Raina

Mobile: 8146641289,
7986016038

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved Father Karamyogi Sh. Triloki Nath Bhat S/o Late Sh. Shiv Ji Bhat of Super Kulgam (Wanpow) at present H No 3, Lane No 1, Hari Vihar, behind Union Bank of India, Kunjwani Bypass who left for heavenly abode on 18/12/24.

10TH DAY KRIYA will be performed on 27/12/2024 (Friday) and assembly will be held at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education Jammu on 27/12/24 (Friday) at 11.30 am.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Son and Daughter-in-law
Sh. Kuldeep Bhat and Meenu Bhat
Daughters and Sons-in-law
Sunita and Sh. M.K. Bhat
Nirmal and Sh. Bal Ji Raina
Pummy and Sh. Sunil Koul

SAMAST BHAT, KOUL, RAINA, SHAH PARIVAR.
PHONE NO:- 7006481707, 9682318128, 7780916481, 9315617711



Karamyogi Sh. Triloki Nath Bhat

10TH DAY/KRIYA/RASAM PAGRI

With heavy heart & profound grief, we are sorry to inform the sad demise of our beloved mother Smt. Vidya Devi (BOBO JI) W/o Late Sh. Om Parkash Pakhtra resident of Ward No.4, Ramnagar, who breathed her last on 15th Dec, 2024.

Tenth Day will be performed on 24th Dec, 2024 (Tuesday) at 11.00 AM to 12.00 Noon at Brahmin Sabha Ramnagar.

13th Day/Kriya
Kriya will be performed on 27th Dec, 2024 at our residence W.No.4, Ramnagar at 12.00 Noon onwards. Rasam Pagri on 27th Dec at 4.00 PM at our residence.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Sons & Daughters-in-law
Sh. Ashok Gupta & Smt. Sneha Lata
Sh. Kulbeer Gupta (Billa Shah) & Smt. Sushma Gupta
Sh. Pardeep Gupta & Smt. Arju Gupta
Daughters & Sons-in-law
Smt. Swarn Lata & Late Sh. Kishor Gupta
Smt. Rama Gupta & Kulbeer Gupta
Deeply Remembered By:-
All Grand Children
M/s Om Pharmaceuticals (Jammu)
Malgotra Medical Shop (Ramnagar)
Contact No: 9419273939, 9419281654



SMT. VIDYA DEVI (BOBO JI)

ASTHIYA DARSHAN

Jagdish Mitter Ghai (S/o Shri Ram Ghai) Former President, Sanatana Dharma Sabha, Surankote, passed away on 20th December, 2024.

Antim Asthiya Darshan will be held on 26th December, 2024 from 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM at Hari Mandir, Rehari Colony, Jammu.

DEEPLY MOURNED BY:-

Smt. Prem Lata - Wife
Sons & Daughters-in-law
Sushil Kumar Ghai & Nimmi Ghai
Parveen Kumar Ghai & Jyoti Ghai
Sunil Ghai & Kavita Ghai
Sanjay Ghai & Renu Ghai
Mob: 8716823484, 7006483567, 8553163573



JAGDISH MITTER GHAI
10-05-1934 TO 20-12-2024

CHOUBARSI

Four years have passed since you left us for heavenly abode. We remember you and miss your presence in every moment of our lives.

CHOUBARSI of Smt. Suman Dutta W/o Late Sh Rajesh Dutta will be performed on 27th December at Shakti Palace on degree college road near Birla Park Kathua.

Deeply Missed and Remembered by:
Pooja and Saurabh Dutta (7006533007)
Sheetal and Abheek Dutta (8283818420)
Shakuntla Dutta



Smt. Suman Dutta

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved Father Karamyogi Sh. Narayan Raina S/o Lt Sh. Prasad Razdan R/o Arreh, Tehsil & Distt. Kulgam, Kashmir A/P H.No. 39, Sec 2, Sharika Vihar, Lower Roop Nagar, Jammu.

10th Day Kriya will be held at Muthi Ghat on 26th Dec, 2024 (Thursday) at 9:30 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN:

Son and Daughter-in Law:
Sh. Ramesh Raina and Smt. Versha Ji
Daughters & Sons-in-law:
Smt. Bimla and Sh. Pyaray Lal Bhat
Smt. Kaki and Sh. Bheem Ji Bhat
Smt. Pinky and Sh. Bal Krishan Pandita
Grand Children: Sakshi, Sonali, Babli, Rakesh, Vimal, Menika, Viboti, Me
Contact: 9419 149997, 9469807767, 9 103890965.



Karamyogi Sh. Narayan Raina

OBITUARY

With profound grief and heavy hearts, we share the sad news of the passing of Sh. Dharni Dhar Sharma (Former, President, Sanatan Dharma Sabha and Chairperson, Dharmik Yuvaik Mandal), beloved son of Late Pt. Manorath Ram Sharma R/o H.No.1, Amar Manorath Market, Purani Mandi, Jammu at present at H. No. 23, Sec-6, JDA Colony, Upper Roopnagar, Jammu, left for his heavenly abode on 24th Dec. 2024. Tenth Day will be performed on 01-01-2025.

IN GRIEF:

Smt. Subkha Sharma - Wife
Sons & Daughters-in-law
Shreedhar Sharma & Shifali Sharma
Vasudhar Sharma & Riya Sharma
Devdhar Sharma - Son
Brothers & Sisters-in-law
Late Sh. Shakti Prakash & Late Smt. Krishan Kanta
Late Sh. Ram Krishan Sharma & Late Smt. Kanta
Late Sh. Naayan Sharma & Smt. Susheela
Sisters & Brothers-in-law
Late Smt. Vimla & Late Sh. Hira Lal
Late Smt. Shanti Devi & Late Sh. Swami Dayal
Smt. Pawan Bala & Sh. Kulbhushan Sharma
Smt. Dev Bala & Late Sh. Ashok Sharma
Smt. Jagriti & Sh. Vad Bhushan Seth
Grand Children: Vedant Sharma
Contact Numbers: 9149639597, 9419200222, 9622100222



SH. DHARNI DHAR SHARMA

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad & untimely demise of our beloved mother Smt. Pitty Pandita (Pyari) W/o Late Shri Jagar Nath Pandita on 21.12.2024 (Saturday), originally resident of Hakherpora (Hatmulla) District & Tehsil Kupwara, presently at Lane No.17, Block No. 84, Flat No. 19 Mini Township Jagti Colony Nagrota, Jammu. The MOURNING is being observed at Lane 17 Community Hall, Mini Township Jagti near BSNL Tower.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be held on Monday, 30.12.2024 at Akhnour Ghat and assembly will take place at 11:00 AM, Lane 17 Community Hall, Mini Township Jagti near BSNL Tower.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-

SAMAST, PANDITA, BHAT PARIVARS
CONTACT NOS: 9419250786, 9419250781, 9469650834, 9622320893



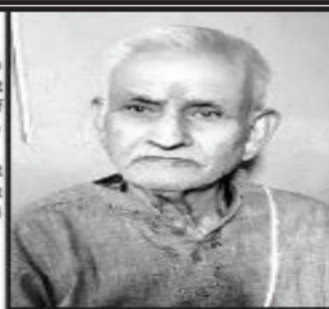
Smt. Pitty Pandita (Pyari)

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of Shri Janki Nath S/o Lt Sarwanand Pandita originally resident of Rawoocha Rafiabab Baramulla at present Lane No.3, Block-12, Flat-13, Jagti Township, Nagrota. The Tenth Day will be performed at Akhnour Ghat on 27-12-2024 and Assembly will be held at Community Hall Backside Lane No.4, Jagti Nagrota at 11.30 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt. Princy Devi - Wife
Son & Daughter-in-law
Sh. Sha Linder Pandita & Smt. Pooja Pandita
Daughter & Son-in-law
Smt. Astha Pandita & Sh. Ravinder Kumar Pandita
Brothers & Bhabhis
Smt. Dulari & Sh. Prem Nath Pandita
Smt. Jaishori Pandita & Sh. Makhan Lal Pandita
Lt. Smt. Lajwanti Pandita & Sh. Chuni Lal Pandita
Smt. Kamla Thusoo & Lt. Sh. J.N Thusoo - Sister
Grand Children: Deepika, Kashti, Eshita, Harshita, Divyanshi, Charlen, Es
Harsh, Daksh, Vasu, Rudraksh
Mob: 6006967906, 9906197577, 8899548132



SHRI JANKI NATH

OBITUARY AND TENTH DAY

It is with deep sorrow that we inform the sad demise of our beloved Karmayogi Sh. Omkar Nath Bagati (Tathya) S/o Late Sh. Shiv Ji Bagati originally resident of Tekpora, Lolab, Kashmir, who left us on 22nd of December, 2024. He breathed his last peacefully at his Jammu residence H.No 38, Lane No 2, Anand Nagar Bohri.

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed at Akhnour Ghat on 31st December, 2024, Tuesday and assembly shall be held at our residence at 11.00 AM.

Grief Stricken:-

Brothers and Bhabhis
Smt. Jaishori & Sh. Sohan Lal Bagati (9622274996)
Smt. Gudi W/o Late Sh. Hira Lal Bagati
Smt. Priya W/o Late Sh. Aakar Krishan Bagati
Smt. Lovely & Sh. Bhaskar Nath Bagati
Sisters and Brothers in Law
Smt. Jaya W/o Late Sh. Bishan Lal Kachroo
Smt. Sheela W/o Sh. Ashok Ji Thusoo
Smt. Shama W/o Pyaray Lal Kachroo
Smt. Nirmala W/o Sh. Hira Lal Bhat
Smt. Baby W/o Sh. Krishan Ji Pandita
Smt. Lovely W/o Sh. Billoo Ji Padroo
Smt. Girja & Sh. Sanjay Pandita- Daughter and Son-in-law
Smt. Sunita & Dheeraj Pandita- Daughter and Son-in-law
Son & Daughter in law
Smt. Rumeela & Sh. Kewal Bagati (Ph. 8825018308, 9 797596776, 9682125864)
Grand Children: Shivesh, Dilsha, Suvani, Ayush, Koshika, Parthand
Samast Bagati Parivar



Karmayogi Sh. Omkar Nath Bagati (Tathya)

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow it is to be inform to all near & dear that Smt. Woma Shori Bhat W/o Lt. Sh. Dwarka Nath Bhat R/o Chandpora Harwan Srinagar at present H.No 586/A, Lane No. 5, Suryavanshi Nagar, Lower Roop Nagar, Muthi Jammu.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed at Akhnour on 27th December 2024 and ASSEMBLY will be held at Muthi Ghat (11:30 AM)

GRIEF STRICKEN

Brother-in-law- Mohan Lal Bhat
Son and Daughter-in-law
Chinda Bhat W/o Gokal Nath Bhat
Soni Bhat W/o Sarjay Kumar Bhat
Daughter and Son-in-law
Lt. Bita Pandita W/o Bansi Lal Pandita
Nirmala Koul W/o Tej Krishan Koul
Sunita Bhat (Pumny) W/o Dileep Kumar Bhat
AND SAMAST BHAT, KOUL, PANDITA PARIVAR
MOB: 9419 206241, 7889 767088



SMT. WOMA SHORI BHAT

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With heavy hearts and profound grief, we announce the untimely passing of our beloved Sh. Maharaj Krishan Raina s/o Late Sh. Mohan Lal Raina. A pillar of strength, wisdom, and love, he departed this world, leaving an irreplaceable void in our lives. Formerly of Memender, Shopian, he was residing at H.No. 6, Lane 2, Anant Vihar, Lale-De-Bagh, Jammu.

The Tenth Day rituals to honor his memory and bid him a heartfelt farewell will be observed on Sunday, 29th December 2024, at Akhnour Ghat. We humbly invite family and friends to join us for the assembly at Muthi Ghat near the Director School, Muthi, at 11:00 AM to pray for his eternal peace.

GRIEF-STRICKEN:-

Raina Parivar
Along with the Mahanoori, Pandit, Munjal, and Koul families, who share in our pain over this profound loss. His love, guidance, and warmth will remain forever etched in our hearts. May his soul rest in eternal peace.



SH. MAHARAJ KRISHAN RAINA

TENTH DAY/UTHALA

With profound grief & sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved Smt. Babita Dogra W/o Sh. Parshotam Lal R/o 161/128 Pacci Drakki Jammu who left for her heavenly abode on 15th of December, 2024.

Tenth Day will be performed on 24-12-2024 (Tuesday) from 12:00 Noon at Dogra Brahmin Sabha, Parade Jammu.

Uthala will be performed on 27-12-2024 (Friday) from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM at Dogra Brahmin Sabha Parade, Jammu.

Grief Stricken
Sh. Parshotam Lal - Husband
Shivani & Musliq Mama - Daughter & Son-in-law
Shigra Dogra - Daughter
Brothers-in-law & Sisters-in-law
Tilak Raj & Santosh Kumar
Suraj Parkash & Santosh Kumar
Subhas Chander & Shakti Devi
Naresh Dogra & Savita Dogra
M/s Oidhari Tea Stall, Pacci Darga, Jammu
Mobile: 9419703272, 9622912338



Smt Babita Dogra

TENTH DAY

With profound grief & sorrow, we regret to inform about the sad demise of our beloved Sh. Aneel Bhushan Zalpuri S/o Late Sh. Prem Nath Zalpuri, original R/o Habbakadal Srinagar, currently residing at 14A, Roop Nagar Enclave B Jammu

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed on 30-12-2024 (Monday) at 9 am, at Muthi Ghat Near Directorate of Education, Jammu.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Raj Kumari Zalpuri (Wife)
Prem Lata Zalpuri W/o Lt. Yugesh Raman Zalpuri (Sister-in-Law)
Priyanka Zalpuri & Akhil Bhat (Daughter & Son-in-Law)
Priyanka Zalpuri & Kaamil Nakhasi (Daughter & Son-in-Law)
Nisha & Chetram (Family Members)
Kanhaiya, Anshu, Aarav & Ridit (Grand Children)
Samast Zalpuri, Wali, Koul Parivar
Contact No: 9622360918, 9596658861



Sh. Aneel Bhushan Zalpuri

Sri Akhand Paath Sahib

Har Bhana Gur Paya Gur Jawee Har Prabh Paas Jio



In loving memory of
Dr Avtar Singh Sasan
on his
4th death anniversary.

The void you left us never fills and it takes forever to learn how to live with the void and the wound that you have left behind. Every passing day we remember you with love and cherish the memories.

May your soul rest in eternal peace and may we continue to draw inspiration from your legacy.

Arambh Sri Akhand paath sahib on 25.12.24 at 10:30 am
Bhog Sri Akhand paath sahib on 27.12.24 at 10:30 am
Kirtan and Antim Ardaas 10:30 am to 12 pm
Guru ka langar 12 pm onwards

Address- 78/79 Sector 7, lane no 3, Nanak Nagar, Jammu
Remembered by:
Dr Baljeet Kour (wife) & Sasan family
+91 9796483949

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved Mother Smt. Raj Rani W/o Late Prem Nath Bhat of Zangalpora Devast, Kulgam at present H.No. 332, Dina Nagar, Bari Near Rama Erent on 22/12/2024.

The Tenth Day will be performed on 30/12/2024 (Monday) at Akhnour Ghat and the Assembly will be held at our residence at 11.30 am.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Prem Nath Bhat and Lalita Pandita (Son & Daughter-in-law)
Grand Son & Grand Daughter-in-law
Suraj Bhat and Mehak Pandita
Doly Bhat and Ram Krishan Bhat (Daughter & Son-in-law)
Daughter & Son-in-law
Princy Pandit and Pradman Krishan Pandit



Smt. Raj Rani

Grand Children: Showta Bhat, Kavita Bhat, Anur Raina, Amit Pandit, Swati, Suraj, Sumit
Mobile: 7006803175, 832506131, 7780949581, 9419281111

UTHALA / RASAM KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform you the sad and untimely demise of our beloved Sh. Jiwan Jandial who left for his heavenly abode on 17th December 2024.

UTHALA will be held on 20th December 2024 from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm at Shiv Temple, Housing Colony, Udhampur.

Rasam Kriya will be held on 28th December 2024 at Devika Ghat.

Grief Stricken:

Sh. Shambhu Nath Jandial (Father)
Mrs. Jyoti Jandial (Wife)
Mr. Sarvesh Jandial (Son)
Brij Paul Jandial and Sonika Mahajan (Brother and Bhabhi)
Gopal Jandial and Ruchi Jandial (Brother and Bhabhi)
Contact No. 9419697220, 9419160526



Sh. Jiwan Jandial (1967 - 2024)

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, it is to be inform to all near & dear that Smt. Dulari Raina W/o Late Triloki Nath Raina R/o Devi Angan Hari Purani Srinagar Kashmir, Present at L-47A, Opp SBI Patia Di Road New Delhi-110045.

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed at Modi Nagar Ganga Ghat Chotta Haridwar, Muradnagar Ghazibad. Later Assembly will be held 29th Dec at above mentioned New Delhi address at 1 PM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Ashwini Raina - Son
Bharni Raina - Daughter-in-law
Aashok Raina - Son
Arvi Raina - Daughter-in-law
Grandsons: Mayya Raina, Rudraksh Raina, Samaeeta Raina
Brothers-in-law & Sister
Sh. Kashish Nath Raina
Sh. Durga Nath Raina & Smt. Pushpanjali Raina
Sister-in-law
Sheela Ji
& SAMAST RAINA PARIVAR
MOB: 783825560, 951037972, 9873101531



SMT. DULARI RAINA

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother Smt. Shanta Nehru W/o Late Bishan Lal Nehru, originally resident of Aragam Bandpora Kashmir residing at H.No. 163, Lane 6, Kabir Colony, Talab Tillo, Jammu at present H.No. 421, Sector 21-D, Fardabad Near Housing Board on 22-12-2024 at Fardabad.

The Tenth Day will be performed on 30-12-2024 (Monday) at Chota Haridwar Murad Nagar U.P. Assembly will be held at our Fardabad residence on 30-12-2024 (Monday) at 2 PM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Sangry Nehru & Arpi Nehru (Son & Daughter-in-law) Mob. 9910055221
Pawan Nehru & Parvathi Nehru (Son & Daughter-in-law) Mob. 941919135 / 7006483031
Pradman Krishan Koul & Binayara Koul (Son-in-law & Daughter) Mob. 9910223959
Vijay Nehru/S/O of Late Haridwar Nath Nehru & Neelam Nehru (Son & Daughter-in-law)
Smt. Krishna Nehru W/o Late Prem Nath Nehru (Sister-in-law)
Smt. Anjali Nehru W/o Late Ashok Nehru (Sister-in-law)
Smt. Asha Koul W/o Late Bishan Lal Koul (Sister-in-law)
Smt. Sima Lidhoo W/o Late M.K. Lidhoo (Sister-in-law)
Smt. Nirmala Pandita W/o Sh. S.C. Pandita (Sister-in-law & Brother-in-law)
Sh. Vinod Koul S/o Late Dina Nath Koul (Nephew)
Grandchildren: Ayushwin, Anubhav, Amrita, Anuram, Archi



Smt. Shanta Nehru

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VKMI organizes seminar on holistic health, mental clarity, emotional balance & spiritual enlightenment

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 25: The Vichar Kranti Manch International (VKMI) on Wednesday organized a seminar focusing on holistic health, mental clarity, emotional balance, and spiritual enlightenment.

The seminar emphasized adopting a disciplined, holistic approach to health that incorporates physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being to lead a disease-free, healthy life.

The main speaker, Dr. Shreyansh Kumar Jain, who is the State Yoga Commissioner and President of Vichar Kranti Manch International, discussed how individuals can achieve holistic health and mental clarity through yogic practices, natural cures, homemade remedies, and lifestyle discipline. He outlined a comprehensive approach to health that covers various aspects of well-being.

Dr. Jain began by addressing physical health. He recommended following a strict daily routine, including waking up early (Brahmuhurta is ideal), drinking warm water with lemon or honey in the morning for detoxification, and consuming a balanced diet. He encouraged eating fresh, seasonal fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and seeds, while avoiding processed foods, sugar, and excessive oil. He also stressed the importance of practicing yogasanas for flexibility, strength, and vitality. Some of the recommended asanas included Surya Namaskar (Sun Salutations),



Trikonasana (Triangle Pose), Bhujangasana (Cobra Pose), Tadasana (Mountain Pose), and Vrikshasana (Tree Pose).

In terms of mental health, Dr. Jain emphasized the role of meditation and pranayama (breathing exercises). He suggested spending 10-20 minutes daily in mindfulness meditation, using techniques like deep breathing and focusing on body parts or chakras.

He also recommended Yoga Nidra (deep relaxation) to rejuvenate the mind. For pranayama, he advocated exercises such as Anulom Vilom (Alternate Nostril Breathing), Bhramari (Bee Breath), Kapalabhati (Skull Shining Breath), and Ujjayi (Ocean Breath) to reduce stress, improve focus, and enhance lung capacity.

Dr. Jain also addressed emotional health, suggesting practices like maintaining a gratitude journal, surrounding oneself with positive people, and engaging in selfless acts of kindness (Seva). These practices, he explained, help nurture emotional resilience and foster a positive outlook on life.

For spiritual health, Dr. Jain recommended chanting mantras like

Om, Soham, or the Gayatri Mantra to connect with universal consciousness. He also encouraged reading spiritual texts such as the Bhagavad Gita and Upanishads for inspiration on living a life of higher values.

Additionally, he highlighted the importance of following the principles of Yama (ethical restraints) and Niyama (positive observances) as part of a yogic lifestyle.

The seminar also delved into the topic of natural cures and homemade remedies.

Dr. Jain suggested using hydrotherapy for detoxification, such as cold showers and soaking feet in warm salt water. He also recommended spending time outdoors for sunlight and fresh air to gain vitamin D and oxygen, with morning sunlight being especially beneficial.

Dr. Jain also discussed the importance of discipline in achieving holistic health. This includes

time management, where individuals allocate specific times for work, rest, exercise, and leisure. He also suggested a digital detox, limiting screen time, especially before sleeping, and emphasized self-control, advising against habits like smoking, alcohol consumption, and overeating. Additionally, he encouraged practicing simple meditation by focusing on natural breath and the sound "So-Ham."

The seminar concluded with contributions from other speakers, including Ashok Kumar Gupta, Vice President of VKMI; Narinder Wadhwa, a Naturopath and Social Activist; Anju Bansal, Former President of Bharat Vikas Parishad Shivalik; and Vandna Maini, an English teacher and philanthropist.

In a special moment, the seminar also celebrated the birthday of Vikram Honda, Director and Principal of Tiny Tots Higher Secondary School.

Dr. Jain composed a poetic life sketch of Vikram, which was presented to him. The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Veena Honda, Chairperson of Tiny Tots.

The seminar successfully emphasized the importance of integrating physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual practices into daily life for overall well-being and personal growth. It encouraged attendees to start gradually and remain consistent in their pursuit of holistic health and spiritual enlightenment.

Indian Army Chief, personnel mourn death of 5 soldiers in Poonch road accident



POONCH, Dec 24 (Agencies): Rescue operations are underway after an army vehicle met with an accident, in the Poonch sector on Tuesday. Reportedly, 5 soldiers lost their lives.

Indian Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi and members of the Indian Army on Wednesday expressed grief over the death of five soldiers in a road accident in Poonch district.

The deceased have been identified as Subedar Dayanand Tirakannavar, Lance Havildar Anoop, Naik Ghadge Shubham Samadhan, Sepoy Nikure Digamber and Sep Mahesh Marigond.

Taking to social media X, ADG PI posted, "General Upendra Dwivedi and all ranks of the Indian Army express profound grief on the loss of Subedar Dayanand Tirakannavar, Lance Havildar Anoop, Naik Ghadge Shubham Samadhan, Sepoy Nikure Digamber, and Sep Mahesh Marigond in a tragic and unfortunate road accident while on operational duty in Poonch, J&K."

"The Indian Army extends its deepest condolences and stands firm with the bereaved families in this hour of grief," the post added.

Indian Army extends its deepest condolences and stands firm with the bereaved families in this hour of grief," the post read.

Earlier today, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and National Conference President Farooq Abdullah also expressed deep sorrow over the death of the soldiers.

The JK CM assured full support to the families of the soldiers who died near a forward post along the Line of Control (LoC) during this "difficult time."

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, via an X post, said, "The President of Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, Farooq Abdullah, and the Vice President and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah have expressed their profound sorrow and heartfelt condolences over the tragic loss of five soldiers in a road accident near

a forward post along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district."

"The leaders have extended their deepest sympathies to the families of the fallen soldiers, assuring them of the government's support in this difficult time. They also prayed for the quick and complete recovery of the injured soldiers, wishing them strength in their recovery process," JKNC post added.

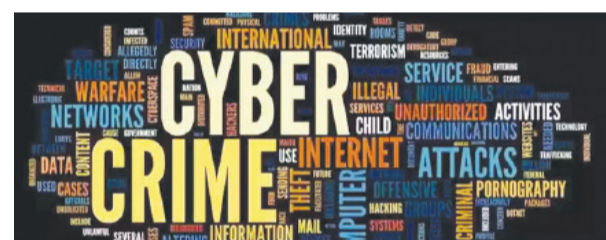
Meanwhile, Congress Chief Mallikarjun Kharge also offered his condolences on Tuesday to the families of the soldiers.

"Deeply anguished by the terrible news of the death of five of our brave Indian Army soldiers in a vehicle tragedy in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. Our heartfelt condolences to the families of our bravehearts. We salute their sacrifice and selfless service to the nation. Our thoughts are with the injured, and we wish them a speedy and complete recovery," Kharge posted on X.

Cyber Police Warns Social Media Influencers, Youtubers to refrain from promoting betting apps, fraudulent investment schemes

SRINAGAR, Dec 25 (Agencies): Cyber Police Kashmir on Wednesday warns social media influencers and youtubers to refrain from promoting betting apps, fraudulent investment schemes or fake work-from-home job offers.

In a post on X, Cyber police wrote, "Attention



Social Media Influencers & YouTubers: Refrain from promoting betting apps, fraudulent invest-

ment schemes, or fake work-from-home job offers. Such actions not only mislead the public

but are also punishable under the law."

"Cyber Police Kashmir is closely monitoring these activities. Strict legal action will be taken against anyone found advertising or endorsing such fraudulent platforms. Stay responsible. Report suspicious activities to us," the post added.

Jammu Lawyer Arrested for Forging Court Order to Secure Release of Seized Vehicle

JAMMU, Dec 25 (Agencies): The police here on Tuesday arrested a lawyer accused of masterminding a forgery in which a vehicle seized in a mining case was released using a forged court order, counterfeit stamps and a judge's signature, officials said.

The case, registered at Police Station Janipur, was initiated following a complaint filed on December 19 by the 3rd Additional Munsiff, Jammu, through the Chief Judicial Magistrate, a police spokesperson said.

The complaint also sought the

formation of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to expedite the probe.

According to the complaint, a forged court release order bearing counterfeit stamps and a judge's signature, along with a fake receipt for Rs 50,000, was used to illegally release a vehicle seized in connection with a mining case, the spokesperson said.

The Jammu Senior Superintendent of Police formed an SIT that gathered crucial evidence, including the fabricated court order, and the fraudulent receipt.

Following an intensive investigation, Advocate Basharat Ahmed Khan was identified as the prime accused in the forgery and was arrested. He is currently in custody at the Nagrota Police Station, the spokesperson said.

A search at Khan's residence, conducted in the presence of an Executive Magistrate, led to the recovery of the mobile phone allegedly used to create the fake documents. Other electronic devices, including a computer and a printer, were also seized, alongside the counterfeit receipt used in the crime, he said.

Srinagar police arrest two drug peddlers in Nowhatta, contraband substances recovered

SRINAGAR, Dec 25 (Agencies): In its tireless efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Srinagar Police has arrested two drug peddlers and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

A police party of PS

Nowhatta, during routine naka checking at Ganj Baksh Park, apprehended two drug peddlers namely Khalid Ahmad son of Mohd Ismail Rather resident of Rathan Ghat, Soura, and Basit Ahmad Dar son of Bilal Ahmad Dar resident of Usmaniya

Colony, Wantpora, Eidgah.

During their search, substantial quantity of contraband psychotropic substances was recovered from their possession.

In this connection, case FIR No. 59/2024 under relevant sec-

tions of NDPS Act has been registered at PS Nowhatta, and investigation initiated.

Tackling the menace of drugs is a collective responsibility, and we urge everyone to support the J&K Police in this vital effort to protect our society.

J&K: 5 doctors suspended after woman suddenly dies in GMC Rajouri

JAMMU, Dec 25 (Agencies): Five doctors have been suspended, and two senior doctors have been served show-cause notices at the Government Medical College (GMC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, an official said.

According to the official, they have been asked to explain their roles in connection with the "sudden" death of a woman in her fifth month of pregnancy.

"In this case, we have suspended five doctors and asked for an explanation from two senior doctors. In such cases, where the attendants themselves are alleging negligence, I understand that we may have been at fault somewhere as well," said Amarjeet Singh

Bhatia, Principal of GMC Rajouri, speaking to ANI.

He informed that the authorities took cognizance of the matter after watching the news on social media where a patient's attendant was alleging that his patient was not given proper treatment at Rajouri Medical College.

The five-month pregnant woman died suddenly due to pulmonary embolism, Bhatia said, adding that the doctor on duty had catheterized her as soon as she was brought to the hospital. The doctor further informed that the woman was fine until the next morning, but her condition worsened suddenly.

"Yesterday on social media I saw a post where a man (patient's attendant) was alleging that his

patient was not given proper treatment in Rajouri Medical College. Taking cognizance of the matter, we constituted a team of doctors (from different departments) who submitted a report. Based on the report, it was found that the death of a five-month pregnant woman was due to pulmonary embolism after she faced urinary retention and pregnancy-related complications. The doctor on duty catheterized her. She was fine till the morning. She had breakfast after which her condition worsened all of a sudden. As this happened, the lady could not be revived. We are investigating her sudden death. If there is any negligence found, action will be taken," Bhatia said.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RAVI CANAL CONSTRUCTION LOWER, DIVISION HIRANAGAR, SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No. 11 of 2024-25 RCC LOWER DIVISION HIRANAGAR DATE: 23-12-2024

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory Jammu and Kashmir, Executive Engineer Ravi Canal Construction Lower Division Hiranagar invites E-Tenders from the approved/eligible PWD contractors registered in appropriate class/category for the below noted works.

S. No.	Name of work	Bid Validity	Estimated Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Cost of tender document	Period of Completion	Class of Contractor
1	Clearance of Jungle from Main Ravi Canal RD: 47000-49400M	90 days	1.43	2860/-	600/-	15 days	"ABCD"
2	Clearance of Jungle from Main Ravi Canal RD: 50860-51645M	90 days	0.78	1560/-	600/-	10 days	"ABCD"
3	Clearance of Jungle/Slip from Feeder Channel of Main Ujh Canal from RD: 05-550M and Escape Channel	90 days	0.45	900/-	600/-	10 days	"ABCD"
4	Clearance of Jungle/Slit from Seswan Link Channel RD: 05-1150M	90 days	0.42	840/-	600/-	10 days	"ABCD"
5	Clearance of Jungle/Slit from Main Ujh Canal RD: 4206-6090M	90 days	4.00	8000/-	600/-	25 days	"ABCD"
6	Clearance of Jungle/Slit from Main Ujh Canal RD: 6150-9675M	90 days	3.75	7500/-	600/-	20 days	"ABCD"
7	Clearance of Jungle/Slit from Distributary U-1 of Main Ujh Canal from RD: 05-3150M	90 days	1.40	2800/-	600/-	15 days	"ABCD"
8	Clearance of Jungle/Slit from Distributary U-2 of Main Ujh Canal from RD: 05-3200M	90 days	1.44	2880/-	600/-	15 days	"ABCD"
9	Clearance of Jungle/Slit from Distributary U-3 of Main Ujh Canal from RD: 05-3500M	90 days	1.44	2880/-	600/-	15 days	"ABCD"
10	Clearance of Jungle/Slit from Distributary U-5 of Main Ujh Canal from RD: 0-4000M	90 days	2.20	4400/-	600/-	15 days	"ABCD"
11	Clearance of Jungle/Slit from Distributary U-5 of Main Ujh Canal from RD: 4005-8000M	90 days	2.02	4040/-	600/-	15 days	"ABCD"
12	Clearance of Jungle/Slit from D-10 of Main Ravi Canal from RD: 0-7000M	90 days	3.04	6080/-	600/-	20 days	"ABCD"

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION:
MH-2701 M&R
Position of Funds: Budgetary in principle.
Position of AA/TS: Accorded.

- The bidding documents can be downloaded from the website <http://www.iktenders.gov.in> from 26-12-2024 (10 AM) to 01-01-2025 (6:55 PM).
- The Bids shall be uploaded in electronic format on the website <http://www.iktenders.gov.in> from 26-12-2024 (10 AM) to 01-01-2025 (6:55 PM).
- The complete bidding process will be ONLINE.
- A pre-bid meeting will be held on 30-12-2024 (12.00 Noon) in the office of the Executive Engineer, RCC Lower Division, Hiranagar if required to clarify the issues and to answer queries on any matter that may be raised at that stage as stated in instructions to bidders of the bidding documents and general conditions of the contract, Seek Clarification Start Date is 26-12-2024, (10 AM) and Seek Clarification End Date is 30-12-2024, (12 Noon).
- The Technical bids uploaded on the website up to due date and time will be opened on 02-01-2025 (02.00 PM) in the office of the Executive Engineer, Ravi Canal Construction Lower Division Hiranagar, in presence of the bidders who wish to attend. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

Signed for and behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory Jammu and Kashmir,

No: LRC/1840-60
Dated: 23-12-2024
DIP/J-8554/24

Executive Engineer,
RCC Lower Division,
Hiranagar.

EDITORIAL

Preserving
Local Culture

Globalization has brought the world closer in ways previously unimaginable. The advent of technology, the internet, and easy access to information has led to a more interconnected global society. While globalization has many benefits, including economic growth, improved access to knowledge, and cultural exchange, it also poses significant challenges to the preservation of local cultures.

In regions like Jammu & Kashmir, where rich traditions and a diverse cultural heritage form the foundation of community identity, the impact of globalization is particularly pronounced.

The challenge, therefore, is not to reject globalization but to strike a balance between embracing global opportunities and preserving local culture.

Local culture is the lifeblood of a community. It includes the customs, traditions, art, language, rituals, festivals, and even the food that people pass down through generations. In Jammu & Kashmir, for instance, the culture is a blend of various influences, including Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhist traditions, all of which contribute to a rich and diverse heritage. From the famous Kashmiri Pashmina shawls and intricate carpets to the spiritual practices rooted in Sufism and Hinduism, the region boasts a unique cultural identity. These cultural markers not only define the social fabric of the community but also offer a sense of belonging and pride to the people.

Globalization has led to the spread of a more homogeneous, Western-centric global culture, driven by mass media, technology, and consumerism. While it has introduced new opportunities for economic growth, it has also created a situation where local traditions and practices are increasingly marginalized. The global influence is particularly evident in urban centers, where modern lifestyles are often seen as more desirable, especially among the younger population. Western pop culture, fashion, and entertainment are easily accessible, leading to the erosion of traditional forms of expression.

In Jammu & Kashmir, globalization has manifested in the rapid growth of technology, urbanization, and tourism, all of which have altered the traditional way of life. The younger generation, exposed to global trends, often gravitates toward more modern, globalized ways of thinking and living. This shift, while positive in some respects, threatens to dilute the cultural richness that has defined the region for centuries.

One of the most visible consequences of globalization is the decline of local languages and artforms. In Jammu & Kashmir, languages like Kashmiri, Dogri, and Gojri are slowly losing ground to Hindi and English, especially in urban areas and educational institutions. The younger generation, in particular, tends to use English and Hindi more frequently, and this linguistic shift is weakening the cultural ties to their roots.

Similarly, traditional artforms, including Kashmiri shawl weaving, paper-mâché craft, and the region's folk music, are at risk of disappearing. Globalization, with its mass production and easy access to cheap imports, has made it difficult for local artisans to sustain their craft. The younger generation, seeking more lucrative career options, is often not interested in learning these traditional skills, resulting in the gradual decline of these artforms.

While globalization poses significant challenges to the preservation of local culture, it also presents opportunities for cultural revitalization and exchange. The key lies in finding a balance between embracing global influences and preserving the unique cultural heritage of a region.

The first step toward preserving local culture is to educate the younger generation about the importance of their heritage. Schools and universities in Jammu & Kashmir can incorporate courses on local history, languages, and artforms to ensure that the youth are aware of the value of their cultural heritage. Community programs, cultural festivals, and exhibitions can also play a crucial role in keeping traditions alive.

Government and non-governmental organizations can help preserve traditional crafts by providing support to artisans and promoting their products. Initiatives like fair trade markets, local exhibitions, and collaborations with international platforms can help local artisans gain recognition and financial stability. Additionally, efforts to create sustainable tourism that celebrates local culture can offer economic incentives to communities while preserving their traditions.

Technology, often seen as a threat to local cultures, can also be harnessed as a tool for cultural preservation. Digital platforms can be used to promote local languages, artforms, and traditions to a global audience. For example, virtual museums, online language courses, and social media campaigns can help raise awareness and foster a sense of pride in local culture.

Christmas the birth Day of Lord Jesus Christ

By: Omkar Dattatray

The festival of Christmas is celebrated worldwide by Christians and non-Christians on 25th December annually with great pomp and show. Christmas is the birth anniversary of Jesus Christ and it was on this date that this prophet of humanity, peace, love and spirituality was born to shepherd parents. The most significant holiday for the Christian world is the birth day of Jesus Christ and it is celebrated across the world with great pomp and show not only by the people of Christian faith but by the non-Christians as well. Even being a traditional Christian holiday, Christmas is widely celebrated worldwide, including in non-Christian countries. Some traditions of the season celebration are so old that goes up to pre-Christian era or secular origins. Nowadays, the most common is the exchange of gifts and cards with beloved ones. Christmas dinner, Christmas carols and other celebrations alongside local traditions, bringing together each place's custom to this time of the year. Although Christians are a minority in India, Christmas in our country is celebrated with enthusiasm in all states and major cities. The country's famous adage "unity in Diversity" derives the whole festivity. In south India, one of the most common Christmas celebrations is putting a burning earthen lamp on their roofs, symbolizing that Jesus is the world's light. In the northwest, Christians tell Christmas stories and sing carols in their dialects. In some places of northwest, devotees fast from December 1st until December 24 and end it with a sumptuous feast at midnight on December 25. Christmas is celebrated on 25th December every year by the world Christian community. The day holds much significance for Christians as they believe that Jesus Christ was born on the same day at Bethlehem. It is observed as a public holiday in several Christian majority countries. Also, in some countries where Christians are in minority, it is still observed as a holiday. The festival calls for a grand celebration and is

one of the major festivals. The preparations begin much in advance with the shopping enthusiastically for gifts and other articles. Children are happiest around the festival as they get lots of gifts and cakes. Families sing, dance and eat together with family and friends on Christmas. It is the most important festivals of the Christians and also most awaited one. The popularity of the festival could well be ascertained from the fact that every year in the month of December, gifts and other items worth billions are sold across the world, mostly in western countries. Christmas is indeed a festival of great significance for Christians and is celebrated with much gaiety and fanfare by the people especially by the Christians. It is observed to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, whom the Christians believe to be the son of God. The festival calls for a grand celebration and is one of the major festivals. Christmas means Feast day of Christ. Christmas is the festival of joy. It is about sharing and helping others. On this day people remember Jesus Christ and his lessons of life. This festival encourages us to make merry and be happy. Its sole aim is to teach us that the light of the Lord always guards us and thus we must follow the message of Jesus Christ and remember him. Christmas is the Christian festival celebrating the birth day of Jesus Christ. Since the early 20th century, Christmas has been a secular family holiday observed by Christians and non-Christians alike, devoid of Christian elements, and marked by an increasingly elaborate exchange of gifts. In this secular Christmas celebrations, a mythical figure named Santa Claus plays a pivotal role. The early Christian community distinguished between the identification of the date of Jesus birth and the liturgical celebration of that event. The actual observance of the day of Jesus birth was long in coming. In particular, during first two centuries of Christianity, there was strong opposition to recognizing birthdays of martyrs or, for that matter of Jesus. Numerous church Fathers offered sarcastic comments about pagan custom of celebrating birthdays when in fact, saints and mar-

tyrs should be honored on the days of their martyrdom -their true birthdays from Church's perspective. The precise origin of assigning December 25 as the birth date of Jesus is unclear. The New Testament provides no clue in this regard. December 25, was first identified as the date of Jesus birth by Sextus Julius Africanus in 221 and later became the universally accepted date. One widespread explanation of the origin of this date is that December 25 was the Christianizing of the dies solis invicti nati (day of the birth of the unconquered sun), a popular holiday in the Roman Empire that celebrated the winter solstice as a symbol of the resurgence of the sun, the casting away of the winter and the heralding of the rebirth of spring and summer. Christmas is an annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, observed primarily on December 25 as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world. Christmas is a public holiday in many countries and is celebrated religiously by a majority of Christians, as well as culturally by many non-Christians and forms an integral part of the holiday season surrounding it. Indeed, after December 25 had become widely accepted as the date of Jesus birth, Christian writers frequently made the connection between the rebirth of the sun and the birth of son. One of the difficulties with this view is that it suggests a nonchalant willingness on the part of the Christian church to appropriate a pagan festival when the early church was so intent on distinguishing itself categorically from pagan beliefs and practices. A second view suggests that December 25 became the date of Jesus birth by a priori reasoning that identified the spring equinox as the date of the creation of the world and the fourth day of creation, when the light was created, as the day of Jesus conception that is March 25. December 25, nine months later became the date of Jesus birth. For a long time the celebration of Jesus birth was observed in conjunction with his baptism celebrated January 6. Christmas began to be widely celebrated with a specific liturgy in 9th century but did not attain the liturgical

importance of either Good Friday or Easter, the other two major Christian holidays. Roman Catholic churches celebrate the first Christmas mass at midnight, and protestant churches have increasingly held Christmas candlelight services late on the evening of December 24. A special service of "lessons and carols" intertwines Christmas carols with scripture readings narrating salvation history from the Fall in the Garden of Eden to coming of Christ. The service, inaugurated by E.W. Benson and adopted at the university of Cambridge has become widely popular. None of the contemporary Christmas customs have their origin in theological or liturgical affirmations, and most are of fairly recent date. The Renaissance humanist Sebastian Brant recorded, in Das Narrenschiff (1494 -The Ship of Fools), the custom of placing branches of fir trees in houses. Even though there is some uncertainty about the precise date and origin of the tradition of the Christmas tree. Towards the end of the 18th century the practice of giving gifts to family members became well established. Theologically, the feast day reminded Christians of God's gift of Jesus to mankind even as the coming of Wise Men or Magi, to Bethlehem suggested that Christmas was somehow related to giving gifts. The practice of giving gifts, which dates back to 15th century, contributed to the view that Christmas was a secular holiday focused on family and friends. In European countries, gifts are exchanged on Christmas Eve, December 24, in keeping with the notion that the baby Jesus baby was born on the night of December 24. The morning of December 25, however has become the time for the exchange of gifts in North America. Given the importance of Christmas as one of the major Christian feast days, most European Countries observe, Christian influence, December 26 as second Christmas Day. In short let us follow the teachings of Lord Jesus Christ and live a life of contentment and resolve to be guided by the life and teachings of Lord Jesus Christ.

Education: From Kothari Commission to NEP-2020

By: Vijay Garg

The educators and policy-makers are called upon to transcend ideological divides and lead India toward inclusive progress and innovation. The most comprehensive initiative in education in post-independence India was the report of the National Commission on Education, usually referred to as the Kothari Commission. It submitted its report entitled "Education for National Development" on June 29, 1968. The first two sentences say it all: "The destiny of India is now being shaped in its classrooms. This, we believe, is no rhetoric." It was this report that led to the first national education policy of 1968. For the first time, science and mathematics became compulsory for both boys and girls up to tenth standard!

Yes, it was generally believed that only boys could handle the tough subjects of science and mathematics, and girls could opt for lighter options of spinning weaving, home science; and the like! The compulsory study of science and math was resisted and opposed as being unjust and unfair to girls! This one change transformed the lives of millions of girls and has brought global accolades to the Indian advancements in the world of science, technology, ICT and space research. Policies once formulated and formalised deserve support in vigilant implementation, persistent monitoring, and scrutiny based on their relevance 'in the great enterprise of national reconstruction'. India today has great challenges ahead, both national as well as global.

It has the manpower and enough experience to confront these successfully. In the third decade of the 21st century, it's the quality of education and skill acquisition that would equip India shall remain its prime contributory tool against

every challenge. The content and process of education shall have to specifically equip itself against nurtured negativity, increasing mutual distrust and ballooning bitterness in public life. Solutions shall certainly not emerge from those that thrive only on negativity and are ill-equipped to see light and positivity around them.

Who must come forward and accept responsibility to normalise such an unacceptable socio-cultural environment? Why not ask the Gandhi ji? Once, before independence, one Dr Mote posed a query to Mahatma Gandhi: what he thought was the greatest problem facing his country! The expected answer could have been, in those days, related to slavery, poverty, illiteracy, ill health, or in the social context.

While narrating it in his Gandhi Katha, Narayan Desai tells the audience: that the answer was the 'callosness of the intellectuals'! Narayan Desai Goes ahead: "Give it a thought. If we stand by and watch the poor blaming their poverty on fate, Gandhi is relevant today. If we can see the callosness of the intellectuals, then Gandhi is relevant today. What are the problems according to intellectuals?"

"Why X or Y has become Vice-Chancellor and not me"! They think only of this and are unaware of other social issues". Their concerns for critical social, cultural, social cohesion and religious amity are minimal.

One's obvious inference would be that solutions to major national concerns shall - and must - emerge from institutions and the educated and the learned responsible for attaining their stated objectives. It includes the dilapidated structures running Sarkari schools, much sought-after private schools, and the universities.

It also includes the glittering cam-

pus of national institutions that have brought international repute to our educational enterprise.

So, mainly it points out to teachers; from primary schools to professors of the universities, and researchers working in institutions of science, technology, psychology, social sciences and every other area.

One wishes each one of them recalls the assessment of Gandhi shuns away the dreaded callousness and strives to create centres of dialogue and discussions on improving the life and living standards of our people, particularly the 'last man in the line' who was so dear to the Mahatma!

At first glance, the existing climate makes such a transformation rather impossible!

Despite all the odds, sincere attempts must be launched to create institutional think tanks with open boundaries that provide for healthy academic, scholarly and intellectual deliberations, not constrained by individual ideological affiliations. For an academic, who shapes the lives of numerous individuals, it is the well-being of others that must precede his own!

And this is no rhetoric or a cliché in the Indian context and culture. For a broad-minded person, this becomes a must, an integral part of his thought and action and hence, an achievable premise.

This is the main task of every teacher preparation institution, from where it shall percolate to schools via teachers trained there, and then to the establishment and the society. After the education policies of 1968, 1986 and 1992, and a gap of around three decades, another policy formulation comes before the nation in the shape of the National Education Policy; NEP-2020. It has been under implementation for the last four years. Having been associated with the implementation and also policy formulations, one could

venture to infer that the NEP-2020 was prepared with unprecedented enthusiasm from teachers, scholars academics institutions, organisations and individuals.

As the process was long overdue and rightly very extensive, it inspired active participation from practically every section of society. Unfortunately, its implementation stands hampered in certain states on grounds that may not necessarily be academic.

India has a developed well-knit interactive system of the national and state-level bodies and institutions that have learnt over the years how to arrive at a national consensus in the sectors of education and teacher education. This institutional strength of consultation, collaboration and cohesion need not be diluted in cases where the union and state governments belong to different ideological affiliations.

Intellectuals in education and research must convincingly internalize that they are making the future of individuals and creating the future of India. No one else is destined and better placed than them to reconstruct India. The moment each one of them expands his horizons, thinks holistically, and takes a long-term view, the road ahead would emerge very clearly; how to proceed individually and also collectively to sed the intellectual callousness and lead the nation on the right path.

*(Vijay Garg Retired
Principal Educational
columnist street kour
Chand MHR Malout
Punjab)*

BLSKS celebrates National Consumer Rights Day

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 25: To celebrate the National Consumer Rights Day and promote the rich traditional culture of J&K, Bhartiya Lok Sangeet Kala Sanasthan (BLSKS) staged 473th Musical Play "Jago Grahak Jago", in collaboration with Sangam Tru art production at Jugi Jompadi , Upper Paloura Jammu.

The topics of discussion this year will be; "Health washing and how it affects consumer choices", "Ensure effective execution of Consumer Commission orders" and "E-Jagriti/Virtual hearings: Towards efficient, hassle free and cost-effective justice delivery system".

The programme was inaugurated by the Chief Guest V.K Magotra, former Regional Director, Directorate of Field Publicity, Government of India, Dr. Anju Dogra, Health Department, J&K Government & Sh. Mukesh Singh, Media person Jammu were the Guest of Honor and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

The main attraction of the program was song sung by the artists of



BLSKS "Jag Mada Jag-Ghrak Mere jag", " Bol Bol Ghrak Mere Bol", " Appu jago -duyen gi jagana lotti gi mitana hai", "Plastic Gi Shodo".

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Guest lauding the role of BLSKS and underlined the importance of staging such plays in all parts of the state to generate awareness among the masses about various social evils through theatre/drama which are still very powerful medium of communication.

Chief Guest Magotra also urged the artists/cultural Organizations to contribute in enriching the cultural heritage of the country and inspiring the younger generation to follow the footprints of their elders in preserving the composite culture of

the Nation. Customer is the king.

The market revolves around this principle. No one is more powerful than a consumer who is aware of their rights. In India, keeping the integrity of consumers in mind, they are conferred with a set of rights to protect them from prevalent malpractices.

The program was also recorded & uploaded online on Social Media for benefit of the peoples.

Welcome speech was given by Dr.M.L.Dogra, Chairman, Bhartiya Lok Sangeet Kala Sansthan who highlighted the concept and said that in India, 24th December is being observed as National Consumer Rights Day. On this day the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 had

received the assent of the President. The enactment of this Act was considered as a historic milestone in the consumer movement in the country. This Act aims to provide consumers with effective safeguards against different types of exploitation such as defective goods, unsatisfactory services and unfair trade practices. This day provides an opportunity for individuals to highlight the importance of the consumer movement and the need to make every consumer more aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Mrs. Usha Raina, Troupe Leader, STAP said in his speech the Consumers are provided protection against unfair trade practices like hoarding, fake

advertisements, false gift offers and many others. Via an effective complaint redressal forum, this act assures that there is an efficient settlement of consumer disputes. Consumers have been now empowered to a great extent. It has also brought changes in the process by which consumer complaints are dealt with. There is a confusion between National Consumer Day and World Consumer Rights Day. Both the days have similar motives but they are celebrated on two different dates. World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated on March 15 and National Consumer Day is observed on December 24. The singers, musician, actors and students of music and computer institute who participated in the musical concert were Usha Raina, Rajni Gupta, Raju Bajjal, K K Joshi, Kuldeep Singh, M C Kotwal, Zulekha Bano, Sanjeev Kumar Sodhi and many others presented enthralled performances. At last of the programme Master Deepak Kumar presented vote of thanks for successful conduction of the program.

Dr. Ajay re-elected as State President, Sannak State Secretary for 2024-25

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 25: Dr. Ajay Sharma re-elected as State President & Sannak Shrivats as newly elected State Secretary for session 2024-25.

Dr Ajay Sharma has been re-elected as State President and Sannak Shrivats is newly elected State Secretary of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) Jammu Kashmir for the session 2024-25.

This announcement was made today by the State Office of ABVP in Jammu.

According to the statement issued by the ABVP Election Officer, Dr. Rakesh Sharma, the tenure of both the posts will be of one year and both the office bearers will assume their responsibility during the 60th State Conference of ABVP scheduled to be held in MV International School, Vijaypur, Samba from 27 to 30 December 2024.

Dr Ajay Sharma hails from Udhampur. He completed his Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Mathematics. Presently, he is working as Senior Professor of

Mathematics in Government Women College Udhampur. He has been re-elected as the State President of ABVP for this session 2024-25.

Sannak Shrivats hails from Billawar in Kathua District and is in contact with ABVP since 2018. He completed his B.A. from GDC Billawar and is currently pursuing LLB from Jammu University.

After serving as Joint Secretary for two years now he has been elected as State Secretary of ABVP Jammu Kashmir for Session 2024-25.

DC Poonch felicitates national taekwondo medalist Sukriti Sharma

Top News Report

POONCH, Dec 25: Deputy Commissioner of Poonch, Vikas Kundal congratulated Sukriti Sharma, a talented Taekwondo player from the Poonch Taekwondo Club.

Sukriti recently won a bronze medal at the Sub Junior National Taekwondo Championship held in Panchkula, Haryana, where she triumphed over states like Assam, Andhra

Pradesh, and Uttarakhand.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal congratulated Sukriti Sharma for making the entire Jammu and Kashmir UT proud with her remarkable achievement. He commended her dedication and hard work, which led to her success at the national level.

He also applauded the efforts of Rajinder

Singh, Taekwondo coach from the Department of Youth Services and Sports, for providing excellent training to the players of Poonch, which contributed to their impressive performance on the national stage.

The Deputy Commissioner assured all possible support for the development of Taekwondo in District Poonch to encourage more players to excel in the sport.

Ramgarh BJP celebrates 'Good Governance Day'

Top News Report

RAMGARH, Dec 25: To commemorate the 100th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Ramgarh BJP organized 'Good Governance Day' (Sushasan Divas) programmes in the Ramgarh constituency.

The event highlighted the importance of good governance, public welfare, and the transformative leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, MLA Ramgarh from Ramgarh, delivered a stirring address on the occasion, reflecting on the leadership qualities of the late



Prime Minister and his contributions to the nation.

He emphasized the need for continued dedication to the values of transparency, accountability, and good governance that Vajpayee embodied during his tenure.

Chairman of the Dis

trict Development Council (DDC) Samba, Keshav Dutt Sharma, also addressed the gathering, sharing his thoughts on the ongoing efforts to foster development and ensure effective governance in the region.

d by prominent leaders, including General

Secretary Amit Dubey, District President Kissan Morcha Mohinder Paul Bika Sharma, Ex. Pala, Bharat Bhushan, Subash, Mandal Pardan Swankha Shamsher Singh, Trilok Singh, Former Vice Chairman Municipal Ramgarh Kamlesh Kumari, General Secretary Neeru Chib Mahila Morcha, Naveen Sharma, Raj Kumari and Tilak Raj.

The occasion was a significant reminder of Atal Bihari Vajpayee's vision for a strong, progressive, and inclusive India, inspiring those present to work towards realizing his ideals.

AWWA Udhampur, FICCI FLO launch Digital Skilling Program for Veer Narism AWWA beneficiaries

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 25: Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA), Northern Command and FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO), business women wing of FICCI along with FICCI FLO Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh Chapter launched a transformative digital skilling initiative designed to empower the families of India's brave soldiers with an aim to equip 100 Veer Naris and AWWA beneficiaries with essential skills, paving the way for financial independence and enhanced livelihood opportunities.

The digital skilling program has been conceptualized and launched under the aegis of Mrs Asha Suchindra Regional President, Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA) Northern Command; Mrs. Joyshree Das Verma, National President FICCI-FLO; Ms. Reshma Patel, Nation-

al Head, Digital Literacy Initiative; and Mrs. Ruchika Gupta, Chairperson FICCI-FLO Jammu Kashmir & Ladakh (JK&L), at Udhampur.

Joyshree Das Verma, National President FICCI-FLO, commended FICCI-FLO JK&L for spearheading this empowering initiative, particularly for the courageous Veer Naris. She emphasized FICCI-FLO's commitment to creating sustainable livelihoods for women facing adversity and acknowledged the sacrifices made by military families. "These women are a source of true inspiration. FLO remains dedicated to supporting and strengthening them as a tribute to their unwavering courage and sacrifice," she stated.

In her address, Aarti Monga, General Secretary, AWWA Northern Command lauded the vision and commitment of Mrs Asha Suchindra

towards women welfare and empowerment, and expressed heartfelt gratitude to FICCI-FLO for its dedication and contribution towards this noble cause.

She highlighted the transformative potential of the program, which offers Veer Naris and AWWA beneficiaries not only hope but also tangible pathways to financial independence. The online course, featuring pre-recorded modules and live sessions, ensures convenience and accessibility. Upon completion, participants will receive a certificate recognized by Skill India and the National Skill Development Corporation, providing them with credibility, access to government schemes, and enhanced job opportunities.

Ruchika Gupta, Chairperson FICCI-FLO JK&L, shared insights into the program, explaining how the initiative equips beneficiaries to leverage their

skills for entrepreneurial ventures or small businesses. She underlined FLO JKL's ongoing collaboration with AWWA to honor and support women who make the ultimate sacrifice for the nation.

As part of the event, 100 HUNAR skilling kits in basic professional makeup were distributed to the beneficiaries, further equipping them for their entrepreneurial journeys. The event was graced by FLO JKL core team members, including Varuna Anand (Immediate Past Chair), Aarti Choudhary (Senior Vice Chairperson), Sona Mehta (Treasurer), and Nandita Bajaj (Joint Treasurer), along with other esteemed FLO members.

This milestone initiative marks a significant step towards supporting military families, empowering women to become self-reliant, and building brighter futures for their communities.

Symposium on 'Corruption in India: a Menace to Good Governance' held at GCW Udhampur



Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Dec 25: The Department of Political Science, Govt. College for Women (GCW), Udhampur, under the aegis of IQAC and the patronage of the principal of the college, Dr. Nalini Pathania, organised a symposium on the theme "Corruption In India: A Menace To Good Governance" at college campus on yesterday.

The purpose of the competition was to inculcate among the students the sense of Integrity, Honesty, Ethics, Values and Vigilance and to make them aware about the role of good administration and civil Soci-

ety in the development of our nation.

Principal of the college, Dr. Nalini Pathania, the chief guest on the occasion, in her Speech, congratulated the HOD and other staff of the department for organising such a brain-storming event.

He exhorted upon the importance of realising the importance of Ethics, Values and Integrity for the administration, Government as well as for the citizens at large and for realising the principles of democracy in India. She advised the students to take part in such events in future also which will inspire them to develop in themselves the good

moral character and ethics.

Earlier, the Programme began with the formal welcome address by Prof. Swarna Devi, HOD, Political Science. She highlighted the concept of Corruption and its adverse effects on good governance. She focused that corruption does not mean giving or taking bribe only but if a teacher does not come in the class on time or if a student bunks his or her class, is also a kind of corruption.

She advised the students that we should avoid such behaviour in order to eradicate corruption in all forms and also to remain vigilant towards such acts by the administrators and to report any such event if it happens anywhere at any time.

Total 12 students participated in the symposium competition. All students presented their view points in their own different ways.

Jahnvi Bakshi stood first, Diksha stood second and Tania Patyal

secured 3rd position.

Dr. Ravinder Kumar, HOD Mathematics, Prof. Yash Paul, HOD History, Prof. Shama Rani, Assit. Prof. Dogri, were the Jury members in the event.

They judged the programme in a judicious manner. The proceedings of the event were carried out by Dr. Tanveer Ahmad Lone, Lecturer, Political Science.

The programme concluded with the vote of thanks by Dr. Roohul Amin Malik, Lecturer, Political Science.

The whole event was organised by Prof. Swarna Devi, HOD, Political Science, Dr. Nazim Mohi Ud Din, Dr. Tanveer Ahmad Lone and Dr. Roohul Amin Malik.

Other members, who were present on the occasion, were Dr. Indu Khajuria, Dr. Monika Gupta, Dr. Sanjeet Kour, Prof. Dr. Ravinder Kumar, Prof. Yash Paul, Prof. Shama Rani, Prof. Pooja Bharti, Gohhar Ahmad and Sareer.

BJP leader Sahil Gupta pays tribute to Atal Bihari Vajpayee on 'Good Governance Day'

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 25: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Sahil Gupta paid rich tributes to the former Prime Minister and Bharat Ratna awardee, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, on his birth anniversary, which is observed as Good Governance Day. Gupta expressed deep respect and admiration for Vajpayee's monumental contributions to the nation, calling him a beacon of exemplary leadership and visionary governance.

The program was organized under the leadership of BJP

Mandal President Sushil Sharma, who highlighted the significance of Good Governance Day and the values that Vajpayee instilled in Indian politics. Sharma emphasized the importance of adhering to Vajpayee's principles of integrity, development-oriented policies, and inclusive governance.

In his address, Sahil Gupta spoke about Vajpayee's enduring legacy and the inspiration he continues to offer to both leaders and citizens. Gupta remarked, "Atal Ji was a leader who transcend-

ed political boundaries and worked tirelessly for India's progress. His dedication to good governance, nation-building, and his unwavering commitment to democratic ideals will always be remembered."

The event saw active participation from party members and local residents. Notable attendees included Ganga Ram, Rohit Kumar, Anshu Kumar, Aryan, Sunit, Rajni Devi, Harbans Lal, Shantanu, Tushar, Vansh Mehra, and others.

The program concluded with a collective pledge taken by

all present to uphold the values of good governance and work towards the betterment of society, in line with Atal Bihari Vajpayee's vision. Participants also shared anecdotes and speeches that reflected Vajpayee's significant contributions to the nation's development, leaving a profound impact on everyone present.

The gathering served as a poignant reminder of the enduring legacy of Atal Bihari Vajpayee and his invaluable contributions to Indian democracy and governance.

Here's how TV celebrities marked this magical Christmas season...

Work is worship Subuhii Joshii Being a DJ, for me, Christmas means a lot because this is our season. I get to do a lot of shows in a lot of different cities. So, I get to see a lot...



Work is worship
Subuhii Joshii

Being a DJ, for me, Christmas means a lot because this is our season. I get to do a lot of shows in a lot of different cities. So, I get to see a lot of places. I love Christmas. I love putting up a tree at my house. But this year, I'm not able to do any of it because I have so much work!

Good deeds: Kavitta Verma

Year-end definitely means leaving certain things behind and making new memories. I celebrate Christmas in my own way—by going to Mount Mary Church, lighting candles, and praying. I believe everyone has a little bit of Santa in them. Good deeds bring

Santa closer to us.

Sweet tradition: Shivangi Verma

I love how everyone comes together to celebrate and enjoy the festivities. Christmas Eve is such a fun time, especially when you're surrounded by loved ones, delicious food, and, of course, Christmas songs playing everywhere! As for secret Santa, I think it's such a sweet tradition! My secret Santa this year? Hmm... someone who knows how much I love surprises! Maybe a cute little handmade gift.

Happy time: Ekta Tiwari

I've decided to be my own secret Santa this year, gifting and receiving bundles of happiness, prosperity, success, warmth,

understanding, health, wealth, wisdom, and countless awards and rewards for both my personal and professional life! I extend these heartfelt wishes to everyone.

Cherished memories: Raviraa Bhardwaj

Christmas is a magical time that reminds us the year is coming to a beautiful close. In Mumbai, the festive spirit is unmatched—a true celebration of joy and unity. I believe the best 'secret Santa' is life itself, constantly giving us lessons, love and laughter. This year, I wish for everyone to receive the gift of happiness, peace, and endless opportunities to shine. After all, the greatest presents are the memories and moments we share with those we cherish.

Cameras start to roll for Sunny Deol, Diljit-starrer 'Border 2'

The filming for Sunny Deol, Varun Dhawan, Diljit Dosanjh and Ahan Shetty-starrer "Border 2" has commenced.

A tweet from the label T-Series on X, previously called as Twitter, read: "The cameras are rolling for Border 2! With Sunny Deol, Varun Dhawan, Diljit Dosanjh and Ahan Shetty leading the charge, this Anurag Singh directorial, powered by cinematic legends Bhushan Kumar, JP Dutta and Nidhi Dutta promises action, drama, and patriotism like never before. Mark your calendars: #Border2 hits theaters on Jan 23, 2026!

The film, which is helmed by Anurag

Singh, is the sequel to the 1997 film "Border", an epic war film, based on the events of Battle of Longewala (1971). Directed by J. P. Dutta, the film is set during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971.

It stars Sunny Deol, Suniel Shetty, Jackie Shroff, Akshaye Khanna, Sudesh Berry, Puneet Issar, Kulbhushan Kharbanda, Tabu, Raakhee, Pooja Bhatt and Sharbani Mukherjee.

"Border 2" is backed by a powerhouse production team comprising Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, JP Dutta, and Nidhi Dutta. Presented by Gulshan Kumar & T-Series in

association with JP Dutta's J.P. Films and helmed by Anurag Singh, the sequel is set to carry forward the legacy of the iconic original while delivering a grand cinematic experience.

'Border 2' seems to be based on the 1999 Kargil War.

In early 1999, Pakistani troops infiltrated across the Line of Control (LoC) and occupied Indian territory mostly in the Kargil district.

"Border 2" is presented by Gulshan Kumar & T-Series & JP Dutta's J.P. Films.

The film is produced by Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, JP Dutta, and Nidhi Dutta, and is set to land in theatres on January 23, 2026.

It was in June, when it was announced that Sunny is set to return with the sequel to another iconic movie, 'Border'. Meanwhile, Varun and Diljit's announcements were made in August and September respectively.



Pratik Gandhi calls his role in Agni a proud responsibility

Prime Video and Excel Entertainment's Agni has set the screens ablaze, earning rave reviews for its high-octane narrative and stellar performances. At the heart of this cinematic spectacle is Pratik Gandhi, who steps into the boots of the fearless firefighter Viitthal. More than just a role, Pratik's portrayal dives deeply into the often overlooked heroism and valour of firefighters—those who rush into danger while others flee, tackling not just fires but other calamities such as earthquakes, floods, collapsed buildings and even rescuing trapped animals. Pratik offers a look into their world, revealing the sheer unpredictability and daring that define their existence, making Agni a stunning tribute to these daily heroes.

"Playing a firefighter in Agni has been one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of my career, as it has given me a profound understanding of the courage, resilience and sacrifices of firefighters. With deep admiration, I reflect on their bravery and the hidden challenges they face daily. I am extremely proud that now I am an ambassador of fire services in India, and what touches me deeply



is that fire marshals from all over the country have reached out to express their gratitude for my portrayal of this role. This is a testament of the fact that the film has truly struck a chord with the firefighters' fraternity across the length and breadth of the country. Through our film, I hope that we inspire youth to join the Indian Fire Services as well and dedicate themselves to a cause larger than life itself," said Pratik.

Mallika Sherawat heaps praise on Kapil Sharma: His humour brought an infectious joy

Actress Mallika Sherawat said that she loved shooting with Kapil Sharma for his show and added that the comedian's humour brought joy to all.

Mallika took to Instagram, where she shared a reel video. In the clip, the actress could be seen getting dressing up, rehearsing her lines and posing with the cast and crew of the show.

"Loved shooting with @kapilsharma for the Great Indian Kapil show, it was such a unique & refreshing experience full of laughter & Happiness... Kapil's humor brought an infectious joy for all of us," she wrote as the actress praised Kapil.

Earlier this month, Mallika replied to a fan on X, formerly known as Twit-



ter, who asked: "I dont care of any plastic surgeons/botox/diet except for that is treating #mallikasherawat!! I want that fitness/cosmetic/diet/ yoga trainer."

To which, the actress shared: "My secret is leading a satvik disciplined life devoid of late night parties, alcohol and cigarettes. Try to sleep by 9pm and you will look like a million bucks," she wrote.

On the work front, Mallika was last seen on screen in "Vicky Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video" starring Rajkumar Rao, Vijay Raaz and Triptii Dimri. The film follows the story of a couple who decide to film their first night as a souvenir. It all seems fine until the CD in which they stored their video

gets stolen along with the CD player.

Mallika first stepped into the limelight in 2002 with the film "Jeena Sirf Merre Liye", where she was credited as Reema Lamba.

Her journey to stardom began in 2000, when she got the title of a sex symbol courtesy her performance in the Emraan Hashmi-starrer "Murder," a 2004 romantic thriller.

The actress was then seen in the West with movies such as "Hiss" and "Politics of Love".

Her credits also include movies including "Khwahish", "Bachke Rehna Re Baba", "Pyar Ke Side Effects", "Aap Ka Suroor - The Real Love Story", "Welcome" and "Kis Kis Ki Kismat" among many others.

'Mother India' Shefali Shah goes river rafting in Rishikesh

Actress Shefali Shah has spoken about what all went through in her mind while she was planning a solo trip to Rishikesh, Uttarakhand.

Shefali took to Instagram, where she shared a picture of herself going for river rafting alone and captioned it: "My family really doesn't know what they are missing. It's not as though I didn't try. The plan was for all four of us to come here but, the first hurdle was to align dates of four people living in the same house under the same surname, probably as difficult as achieving celestial harmony where Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn align. (The next such alignment is due on 25th January 2025, make a note, must watch!)"

"One reluctant team member (no prizes for guessing who) tried endlessly for days to coordinate this collaboration. Dates were finalized, changed, & re-changed to suit everyone. The decision-making for the destination was left to our offspring. Big mistake."

She added: "In the span of a couple of hours, we traveled the world. From Rishikesh to

Sri Lanka, Bali to Goa, Hampi to Pondicherry, and many more exotic places, we went back and forth in our heads. If this travel were counted in miles, it would have taken us halfway to any one of those destinations."

"After providing more options than the 20-course tasting menu at Noma, or a hypothetical 100-course menu, my prodigal son, without ceremony, announced he didn't want to go anymore. And immediately, the other son followed suit, as did the father."

She shared that all three of them wanted to "chill at home." "Together? The last time I saw all of us together was in the Diwali photograph. Upset would be the understatement of the century to describe how I felt."

So, the actress "decided to go alone."

"But a decision like this does not come without its moral dilemmas. Ranging from doubt (Should I go? Or shouldn't I?), guilt (How can I go alone without my family?), to major guilt (How can I spend so much on myself?), she added.

The actress said that she is thankful to her parents for giving her middle-class values.



"But the problem is, those same values often undervalue me. According to them, anything besides food on our plate, a roof over our head, & clothes on our body is an exorbitant indulgence, and definitely invalid for a woman who chooses to travel alone without her family."

"What will you even do alone? How will you enjoy without your family? Isn't it too expensive for one person? What a waste, it would've been so much better with everyone."

She then talked about how she

ended up going on a solo trip.

"Dare anyone say this out loud? No one does, except that annoying voice in my head, the one that comes up with these ridiculous, ubiquitous norms deeply embedded in me.. But this Mother India wants to let go of endless waiting and go to a place in the lap of nature, surrounded by a gurgling river, wrapped in the warmth of a blanket after a relaxing massage, accompanied by a book and some wine."

"How can she sing, 'These are a few of my favorite things' when the only sound of music chiming in her head is 'Mere Karan Arjun Ayenge.'! I don't know if it's having middle-class thoughts or being a woman that ensues such a battle within, or if it's the combination of both that makes it even more deadly and disappointing."

"Before I give in to my Sati Savitri conscience, which believes any indulgence toward my solitary self is criminal, I do the bookings. I look deeply into the eyes of this guilt-ridden, 'I don't deserve anything' woman and holler: 'Ja Simran, ja. Jee le apni zindagi.'"

Bhumi Pednekar hunts for 'ultimate' chole bhature in Delhi



Actress Bhumi Pednekar recently shared a video showcasing her quest to satisfy a quintessential Delhi craving—chole bhature.

Taking to social media, the actress posted a short clip of herself exploring the vibrant streets of the capital city. The video shows Bhumi and her team navigating the bustling streets, embracing the spirit of Delhi's dynamic food culture.

In the caption, the 'Bhakshak' actress wrote, "On the streets to find chole bhature #DilliDilli." In the video, Pednekar can be heard saying, "I can't believe I'm once again on the streets of another city trying to find food. I think I've come

to Nirula's after 10 years. I want chole kulche, but I can't believe they're not available!" She then makes a grumpy face and says, "We have no time, we really have to go and get it."

The video ends with Bhumi finally relishing her favourite chole bhature, adding, "I've craved this. Just the best!" Meanwhile, the 'Badhaai Do' actress, an avid social media user, had previously posted stunning photos of herself in sarees for World Saree Day.

Alongside the post, Bhumi wrote, "Sorry, I love wearing a saree :) #WorldSareeDay. In a world of fast fashion, the saree remains my constant—a symbol of sustainable luxury that's timeless and versatile. For me, it's more than just an outfit; it's a story of art, culture, and heritage, woven with care and purpose. This #WorldSareeDay, I celebrate the magic of the saree—where tradition meets conscious living."

On the professional front, Bhumi was last seen in the Netflix crime thriller 'Bhakshak', based on the Muzaffarpur shelter case. The show also starred Sanjay Mishra, Aditya Srivastava, and Sai Tamhankar.

In 'Bhakshak', the actress played Vaishali, an independent journalist who uncovers a crime in a shelter home for homeless girls. Directed by Pulkit and bankrolled by Shah Rukh Khan and Gauri Khan's Red Chillies Entertainment, the film premiered on Netflix on February 9.

Vajpayee architect of India's transition into 21st century: PM Modi

NEW DELHI, Dec 25 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised Atal Bihari Vajpayee as the architect of India's transition into the 21st century and said the BJP stalwart ushered in reforms that set the stage for India's economic surge, abandoning an economic philosophy which encouraged cronyism and stagnation.

In an article which appeared in several newspapers on the 100th birth anniversary of Vajpayee, Modi said he spent his long parliamentary tenure largely in the opposition benches but never carried any trace of bitterness even though the Congress stooped to new lows by going to the extent of calling him a "traitor".

Modi said, "He stands tall as a statesman who continues to inspire countless people."

The prime minister said Vajpayee provided stable and effective governance at a time when people were getting impatient and sceptical about the government's ability to deliver due to the political instability of the 90s when four Lok Sabha polls were held in about nine years.

Coming from humble roots, Vajpayee realised the struggles of the common citizen and the transformative power of effective governance, Modi said, adding that the long-term impact of his leadership is visible in several sectors.

His era marked a gigantic leap in the world of information technology, telecom and communications, he said.

"The NDA government under Atal ji made the first serious attempt to make technology accessible to citizens. At the same time, there was fore-



sight in connecting India. Even today, most people recall the Golden Quadrilateral Project which connected the length and breadth of India," he said.

He also cited initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana and the push for Metro connectivity by doing extensive work for the Delhi Metro, which stands out as a world-class infrastructure project.

He said, "The Vajpayee government not only boosted economic growth but also brought distant regions closer, fostering unity and integration."

An initiative like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan highlights how Vajpayee dreamt of building an India where modern education is accessible to people across the nation, particularly the poor and marginalised sections, he added.

His government's decision to carry out nuclear tests and its handling of the aftermath provide a wonderful example of his leadership, Modi said.

He said, "The world was stunned that India had done the tests and expressed their anger in no uncertain terms. Any ordinary leader would have buckled, but Atal ji was made differently. And what happened? India stood firm,

with the government calling for another set of tests two days later, on May 13."

If the tests of May 11, 1998, showed scientific skill, the ones on May 13 showed true leadership, he said.

It was a message to the world that gone were the days when India would buckle under threats or pressure, he said.

Despite facing international sanctions, Modi said, the NDA government stood firm, articulating India's right to safeguard its sovereignty while simultaneously being the strongest proponent of world peace.

Modi said Vajpayee understood Indian democracy and also the need to make it stronger. He presided over the creation of the NDA, which redefined coalitions in Indian politics and became a force for development, national progress and regional ambitions.

"His parliamentary brilliance was seen throughout his political journey. He belonged to a party with a handful of MPs but his words were enough to rattle the might of the all-powerful Congress Party that time. As Prime Minister, he blunted the criticisms of the Opposition with style and substance," Modi said.

Vajpayee was not one to cling

to power through opportunistic means. He preferred to resign in 1996 instead of following the path of horse-trading and dirty politics, the prime minister said, adding that his government fell by one vote in 1999.

Eventually, he came back with another resounding mandate from the people.

Modi said, "When it comes to commitment to protecting our Constitution too, Atal ji stands tall. He was deeply impacted by the martyrdom of Syama Prasad Mookerjee. Years later, he was a pillar of the anti-Emergency movement."

In the run-up to the 1977 elections, he agreed to the merger of his own party (Jana Sangh) into the Janata Party as safeguarding the Constitution was all that mattered to him, he said.

Modi noted that as external affairs minister, Vajpayee became the first Indian leader to speak in Hindi at the United Nations, noting that this shows how deeply rooted he was in the Indian culture.

His persona was magnetic and his life was enriched by his love for literature and expression, he said.

Modi said for so many Bharatiya Janata Party members like him, it is their privilege that they were able to learn and interact with a person like Vajpayee.

Whenever the choice came between ideology and power, Vajpayee always chose the former, Modi said.

"He was able to convince the nation that an alternative world view from the Congress was possible and such a world view could deliver," he said, asking people to rededicate themselves to realising his ideals and fulfilling his vision for India.

Congress insulted Ambedkar; didn't want anyone to grow bigger than Nehru-Gandhi family, claims Fadnavis



NAGPUR, Dec 25 (Agencies): Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Wednesday demanded that Congress apologise to the nation for insulting Dr B R Ambedkar repeatedly.

The Opposition party distorted Union home minister Amit Shah's speech in Parliament, he said, speaking at a 'meet-the-press' program here.

"Congress should apologise to the nation for always insulting Ambedkar. Its anxiety was that no one should grow in stature above the Nehru-Gandhi family. Congress distorted Amit Shah's comments on Ambedkar to mislead the people. BJP and Shah can not insult Ambedkar even in their dreams," Fadnavis claims.

Even his own speech in the Maharashtra assembly where he said that Naxalites do not believe in the country's Constitution was distorted in such a way that it appeared he did not believe in the Constitution, the chief minister said.

"We now have the technology to get the entire digital footprint for identifying those who are circulating such messages," said Fadnavis who also holds the home portfolio.

Congress also knows that EVMs are tamper-proof, but "one can not wake up someone who pretends to be sleeping," he said.

The Mahayuti received a massive mandate in the assembly elections as it could

debunk the fake narrative used by the Opposition during the Lok Sabha polls, he said.

The mandate brings a lot of expectations and challenges, he added.

"As a Nagpur-kar (native of Nagpur), I want to assure you that power doesn't go to my head. I will never let you down. I believe power is a means for service," Fadnavis said.

Revenue Minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule will discuss the issue of appointment of guardian ministers of districts with allies NCP and Shiv Sena, he said, adding, "Whatever decision he takes, will be binding on me. I would like to be the guardian ministers of Gadchiroli, if permitted."

Gadchiroli in eastern Maharashtra is affected by Naxal violence.

Fadnavis said Naxalism was now at an all-time low, and a lot of development is taking place in Gadchiroli district.

Referring to the brutal murder of a sarpanch in Beed district, Fadnavis said his government had taken the incident seriously. "We will not tolerate lawlessness. But it is wrong to defame the Beed district," he added.

Five killed as car collides with bus in Rajasthan

JAIPUR, Dec 25 (Agencies): Five people were killed when their car collided with a bus in Karauli district of Rajasthan, police said on Wednesday.

Due to the impact of the collision, the car was left badly mangled and its front portion got stuck under the bus.

Superintendent of Police, Karauli, Brijesh Jyoti Upadhyay said those travelling in the car were headed towards Gangapur city after visiting the Kaila Devi temple when the accident took place on the Salempur-Kudgaon road under the Kudgaon police station area on Tuesday night.

All the five occupants



of the car - Nayan Deshmukh (60), his sister Preeti Bhatt (60), his son Khush Deshmukh (22), his daughter Manasvi (25) and a relative Anita (55) - died on the spot, the SP said.

Station House Officer, Kudgaon, Ruk-

mani Gurjar said the victims were residents of Indore, Madhya Pradesh. The bodies have been shifted to a mortuary for post-mortem.

"The post-mortem will be conducted after their family members arrive today," she said.

Akhilesh Yadav questions BJP Government's preparedness for Mahakumbh, offers help

LUCKNOW, Dec 25 (Agencies): Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Wednesday questioned the Uttar Pradesh government's preparedness for the upcoming Mahakumbh and accused it of mismanagement.

In a social media post, the opposition leader flagged several issues regarding security arrangements, local concerns and overall administration in Prayagraj, urging the government to take immediate corrective action.

"This is the truth of preparations for 'Prayagraj Mahakumbh 2025' under the BJP government! At least the work



of the police department should have been completed long ago because the management of the security circle does not wait for the last day," he said on X.

The former chief minister of the state also drew attention to the alleged

delay in addressing the needs of local residents and the fair area, stating that people in Prayagraj were questioning the government's priorities.

"The aggrieved people of Prayagraj are asking that the BJP government was very prompt

in removing the statue of 'Mahadani' Emperor Harshvardhan, but why is the same speed not being shown for administrative management?"

Yadav highlighted complaints about the "neglect" of local issues, such as transportation and movement around the Mahakumbh area.

"Alternative arrangements should also be made to address the concerns of the residents of Prayagraj about movement and transportation in case of an emergency," he added.

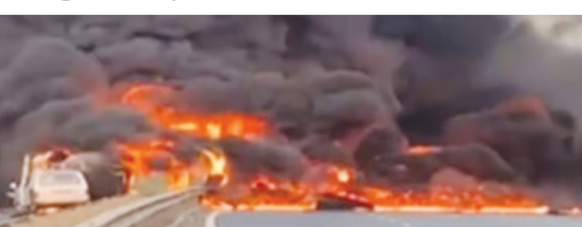
While expressing his party's support for the successful conduct of the Mahakumbh, Yadav emphasised that the

local administration must act swiftly to address these gaps. "We want the Mahakumbh to go on and Prayagraj to also remain dynamic."

The SP president said his party is ready to assist the government as the "BJP people would be busy earning money or in election planning".

"If the government-administration has failed in the preparations for the Mahakumbh, then we propose to send our true and dedicated workers to help because the BJP people would be busy earning money or in election planning," he said in a dig at the ruling party.

Chemical tanker catches fire near Mumbai-Pune highway; traffic hit



MUMBAI, Dec 25 (Agencies): A speeding tanker carrying a chemical caught fire after it overturned near Mumbai-Pune highway in Maharashtra's Raigad district on Wednesday morning, police said.

No casualty was reported, an official said, adding that traffic movement on the road was affected for a couple of hours.

The incident took place at 6.15 am at Patel Nagar, Shilphata, near the highway exit in Khopoli area, he said.

According to the official, the driver lost control over the wheels due to which the speeding tanker overturned. As the tanker was carrying an inflammable chemical, it caught fire and suffered damages, he said.

After receiving information, the Khopoli police reached the spot. Fire-fighting vehicles of Tata, Godrej groups, HPCL and JSW were also rushed to the spot, the official said. The blaze was later brought under control, he said.

Crane crushes 3 kills workers to death at Gujarat jetty site

DEVBHUMI DWARK, Dec 25 (Agencies): Three workers were killed after a crane fell on them at a jetty construction site at the

Okha port in Gujarat's Devbhumi Dwarka district on Wednesday, police said.

The jetty at the Okha port is being construct-

ed by the Gujarat Maritime Board, district collector GT Pandya said.

Two workers died on the spot after getting crushed by the crane,

while another worker was rushed to a hospital where he succumbed to his injuries, an official from Okha Marine police station said.

Girl, 15, run over by train in Uttar Pradesh, cops suspect suicide

BARABANKI, Dec 25 (Agencies): A 15-year-old girl died after being hit by a train on the Lucknow-Ayodhya railway track near Patulki village here, police said on Wednesday.

Prima facie, it appears to be a case of suicide, Station House Officer of Dariyabad Police Station Manoj Sonkar said.



The incident occurred on Tuesday when the

Vande Bharat Express train was on its way

from Ayodhya to Lucknow.

The loco pilot, after noticing the girl on the tracks, immediately applied the brakes, but she was unfortunately struck by the train, officials said.

A thorough investigation is underway, they said, adding the body has been sent for post-mortem.

4 killed, over 24 injured as bus falls into gorge near Uttarakhand's Bhimtal



UTTARAKHAND, Dec 25 (Agencies): Four people died and over 24 were injured after a bus fell into a gorge near Uttarakhand's Bhimtal town on Wednesday. Among those injured, some of them are in a critical condition.

The bus, headed to Haldwani from Almora, lost control and fell into a 1,500-ft deep gorge near Bhimtal. As a result, many passengers were thrown off the bus. Those injured have been taken to Bhimtal and hospitalised.

Police, SDRF teams, fire officials and locals are engaged in rescue operations. People are being pulled out of the gorge using ropes.

Fifteen ambulances have been sent to the accident site from Haldwani.

Pakistan air strikes kill 46 in Afghanistan, claims Taliban spokesman

While Pakistani officials have not officially confirmed the airstrike, security sources close to the military suggested that the attack was aimed at Taliban hideouts near the border.

KABUL, Dec 25 (Agencies): A series of Pakistani airstrikes on the Barmal district of Paktika province in Afghanistan has resulted in the death of 46 people, including women and children, the Taliban government spokesman on Wednesday.

The airstrike targeted seven villages, including Laman, where five members of a family were killed, as reported by Khaama Press. Local sources claim that Pakistani jets were responsible for the bombings. Reports indicate that the Murg Bazaar village in Barmal was destroyed, exacerbating the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

"Last night (Tuesday), Pakistan bombed four points in the Barmal district of Paktika province. The total number of dead is 46, most of whom were children and women," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said.

The airstrikes have caused severe civilian casualties and widespread destruction, further escalating tensions in the



region. As recovery efforts continue, further investigation is required to confirm details and clarify responsibility for the attacks, Khaama Press reported.

The Taliban's Ministry of Defence has vowed to retaliate following the airstrike on Barmal, Paktika. The Ministry stated that defending their land and sovereignty is their legitimate right, and condemned the attack, claiming that "Waziristani refugees" were among those targeted.

While Pakistani officials have not officially confirmed the airstrike, security sources close to the military suggested that the attack was aimed at Taliban hideouts near the border.

This comes amid escalating tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan, particularly regarding the presence of Pakistani militants in Afghanistan.

The Pakistani Taliban, or Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), has increased its attacks on Pakistani forces in recent months, with Pakistan accus-

ing the Afghan Taliban of providing shelter to these militants, Khaama Press reported.

Enayatullah Khwarazmi, a spokesperson for the Taliban Ministry of Defence, denied the Pakistani claims and posted on X (formerly Twitter) that "civilian people, mostly Waziristani refugees," had been killed in the airstrike.

The Waziristani refugees are civilians who had been displaced by military operations in Pakistan's tribal areas. However, Pakistan maintains that many TTP commanders and fighters have fled to Afghanistan, where they are reportedly being protected by the Afghan Taliban in border provinces., Khaama Press reported.

Tensions between Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban have been building for some time, fuelled by the ongoing presence of TTP militants in Afghanistan. While Pakistan accuses the Afghan Taliban of harbouring these militants, the Taliban insists it is not collaborating with the group.

Bloody Christmas in Ukraine as Russia launches "massive attacks" on cities



KYIV, Dec 25 (Agencies): Russia has launched a "massive attack" on Ukraine's energy sector, a Ukrainian minister said on Wednesday, without specifying which cities were under fire. Russian cruise and ballistic missiles also struck several residential areas in the Ukrainian cities of Kryvyi Rih and Kharkiv, with reports suggesting several people were killed in the attacks.

Air raid sirens rang out over Ukraine on Wednesday morning, with the air force reporting that Russia launched Kalibr cruise missiles from the Black Sea.

Energy Sector Attacked "The enemy is again massively attacking the energy sector," Ukraine's Minister of Energy German Galushchenko wrote on the social media platform Telegram.

Ukraine faces its toughest winter of the almost three-year war as Moscow stepped up its aerial bombardment, with its troops advancing on the frontlines in the east.

"The transmission system operator is taking the necessary measures to limit consumption to minimise the negative consequences for the energy system," he added.

Attacks on Cities A ballistic missile also struck an apartment building in the central Ukrainian city of Kryvyi Rih on Tuesday, killing one person and injuring

15, of which, four are serious. "The monsters landed a direct hit on a four-storey residential block with 32 apartments," the head of the city's military administration, Oleksandr Vilkul, wrote on Telegram.

One man whose body had been pulled from under the rubble could not be revived by medics, regional governor Serhiy Lysak said.

Kryvyi Rih, a steelmaking city with a pre-war population of more than 600,000, is President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's hometown.

City of Kharkiv was also pummeled by a "massive missile attack", Mayor Igor Terexhov said on Wednesday morning. "Kharkiv is under a massive missile attack. A series of explosions were heard in the city and there are still ballistic missiles heading towards the city," he wrote on Telegram.

The regional governor counted seven Russian strikes, Terexhov saying at least three people were wounded in a missile attack on Kharkiv in northeastern Ukraine on Wednesday morning, Mayor Ihor Terexhov said.

The regional governor counted seven Russian strikes and said casualties were still being assessed.

Christmas Attacks Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Wednesday said Russia had carried out an "inhumane" attack launching

dozens of missiles and drones on his war-torn country's energy grid on Christmas Day.

"Putin deliberately chose Christmas to attack. What could be more inhumane? More than 70 missiles, including ballistic missiles, and more than a hundred attack drones. The target is our energy system," Zelenskyy said.

The Ukrainian President said Russia launched over 70 missiles and 100 drones at Ukraine's energy system.

Ukraine's human rights ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets also slammed the Russian attack. He wrote on Telegram, "While other countries of the world are celebrating Christmas, Ukrainians are continuing to suffer from endless Russian attacks."

Russia has accelerated its advance across eastern Ukraine in recent months, looking to secure as much territory as possible before US President-elect Donald Trump comes to power in January. The Republican leader has promised to bring a swift end to the nearly three-year-long conflict, without proposing any concrete terms for a ceasefire or peace deal.

Moscow's army claims to have seized more than 190 Ukrainian settlements this year, with Kyiv struggling to hold the line in the face of manpower and ammunition shortages.

Russia's defence ministry on Wednesday said its forces had shot down 59 Ukrainian drones overnight while the Ukrainian Air Force reported the launch of Kalibr cruise missiles from the Black Sea, although it was not initially clear where they were headed.

'We should try again': Pakistan Punjab Assembly Speaker on failed peace talks with New Delhi

'Future depends on free trade, unrestricted movement'

LAHORE, Dec 25 (Agencies): "Even though the chance was missed, we should try again," said Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Ahmad Khan when asked about Atal Bihari Vajpayee's 1999 'bus yatra', a bold attempt by the then Indian prime minister to put India-Pakistan relations on the peace track.

Vajpayee took a bus ride to Lahore on February 19, 1999.

He and Pakistan premier Nawaz Sharif signed the Lahore Declaration after a his-

toric summit here. The agreement signalled a breakthrough, but just months later a Pakistani intrusion led to the Kargil War.

Wednesday is Vajpayee's 100th birth anniversary. "Vajpayee's visit to Lahore in 1999 was a defining moment.

Even though the chance was missed, we should try again.

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who follows Vajpayee's vision, leading India, and Shehbaz Sharif, Nawaz's brother, in charge in

Pakistan, there is a real possibility of restarting the peace process," says Khan, who is a senior member of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

Khan says the future of the region depends on free trade and unrestricted movement between countries.

"Peace in the region is not just a good idea – it is necessary for growth and prosperity," the Punjab Speaker adds.

Another senior PML-N leader, Mohammad Mehdi, describes Vajpayee's Lahore visit



as historic. He believes the visit could have led to lasting peace if the Kargil conflict had not happened.

Mehdi said Jamaat-e-

Islami (JI) held protests during Vajpayee's visit, which many believe were organised by the military led by General Musharraf.

Hasina's son claims Yunus Govt weaponising judiciary for carrying out "political witch hunt"

WASHINGTON, Dec 25 (Agencies): Sanjeeb Wazed, son of deposed Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has accused the Muhammad Yunus led interim Government of "weaponising the judiciary" for carrying out a "political witch hunt" against the Awami League leadership.

Wazed's allegations, as a long post on X, came two days after the interim government on Monday said it has sent a diplomatic note to New Delhi seeking Hasina's extradition from India.

Hasina, 77, has been living in India since August 5 when she fled Bangladesh following a massive student-led protest that toppled her Awami League's (AL) 16-year regime.

Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) has issued arrest warrants for Hasina and several former Cabinet Ministers, advisers, and military and civil officials for "crimes against humanity and genocide."

"The judges and prosecutors appointed by unelected Yunus led regime to conduct farcical trial process through International Crimes Tribunal makes it a political witch hunt that forsakes justice and marks another ongoing onslaught to persecute Awami League leadership," Wazed said in his post on Tuesday.

An IT entrepreneur, Wazed is based in the US and has been an ICT adviser in Hasina's Government.

"The kangaroo tribunal and subsequent request for extradition comes while hundreds of leaders and activists are extrajudicially killed, framing of outrageous murder charges, illegal incarceration



tion of thousands by law enforcement and violent attacks including looting vandalism and arson going on with impunity everyday fuelled by denial of the regime," he added.

On Monday, India confirmed receiving the 'note verbale' or diplomatic communication from the Bangladesh high commission in New Delhi but refrained from commenting on it.

Under the provisions of the India-Bangladesh extradition treaty, extradition may be refused if the offence is one of a "political character."

Bangladesh's de facto foreign minister Touhid Hossain said Dhaka wants Hasina back to face the judicial process.

Wazed further accused that the chief prosecutor of ICT Tribunal Tajul Islam appointed by Yunus regime on December 22, despite proven records of defending war criminals, "reportedly spread deliberate disinformation campaign" against Hasina by claiming that Interpol issued red notice against her, and termed it as "a desperate bid to extradite her and hold farcical trial to serve the interest of Dr Yunus."

"But the very prosecutor later

altered his statement following media exposure of the outright lie and now officially sent a request to India for the extradition," Hasina's son said.

"We reiterate our position that every single incident of human rights violation between July and August needs to be investigated in a free and fair manner but the Yunus led regime weaponised the judiciary, and we express no confidence in the justice system," he alleged.

Last month, in an address to the nation on the completion of 100 days of the interim Government, Yunus said Bangladesh will seek Hasina's extradition. "We must ensure justice in every killing... We will also ask India to send back fallen autocrat Sheikh Hasina," he had said then.

Yunus, who assumed office on August 8, claimed that about 1,500 people, including students and workers, were killed while 19,931 others were wounded during the protest against the Hasina Government.

India has expressed concern as there have been a spate of attacks on minorities including on the Hindu community in Bangladesh in the last few months.

In recent weeks, Hasina has accused the Yunus-led interim government of perpetrating "genocide" and failing to protect minorities, especially Hindus, since her ouster.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited Dhaka two weeks back during which he conveyed to the Bangladesh side India's concerns, especially those related to the safety and welfare of minorities.

Trump slams Biden for commuting death sentences for 37 of 'worst killers'



WASHINGTON, Dec 25 (Agencies): US President-elect Donald Trump on today criticized outgoing President Joe Biden for commuting the sentences of 37 individuals on federal death row, calling it a blow to the families and friends of the victims.

"Joe Biden just com-

muted the Death Sentence on 37 of the worst killers in our Country. When you hear the acts of each, you won't believe that he did this. Makes no sense. Relatives and friends are further devastated. They can't believe this is happening!" Trump wrote on Truth Social.

On Monday, Biden commuted the sentences of 37 out of the 40 individuals on federal death row, replacing their death penalties with life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

The list includes at least five child killers and several mass murderers, according to media reports.

In his statement, Biden emphasized that he condemns these murderers, grieves for the victims of their "despicable acts," and aches for all the families who have suffered "unimaginable and irreparable loss."

At the same time, the

outgoing president said he is "more convinced than ever" that the US must stop the use of the death penalty at the federal level.

The three individuals who did not get a commutation are Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, who perpetrated the April 2013 Boston Marathon bombings that killed three, white supremacist Dylann Roof, who killed nine African Americans in a Charleston church in June 2015, and Robert Bowers, who carried out the October 2018 Pittsburgh synagogue shooting that claimed 11 lives.

US House Speaker may lose his post in Jan elections – Reports

WASHINGTON, Dec 25 (Agencies): US House Speaker Mike Johnson has found himself in a difficult position after the adoption of the government funding bill and may not get enough votes in the upcoming elections, which will be held in the House in January 2025, The Daily Caller news portal reported, citing Republi-

can congressmen. "Mike Johnson's disastrous handling of the continuing resolution unquestionably left his future speakership imperiled with several members rethinking whether they can back him in January," one House Republican was quoted as saying by the news portal. Johnson's fate largely

depends on whether US President-elect Donald Trump will continue to support him, the report noted.

"There's nothing Mike Johnson can do between now and the Speaker's race to regain the trust of Republicans in Congress. He's as lame of a duck as Joe Biden," another Republican lawmaker added.

The Semafor news portal reported that Trump's allies accuse Johnson of betraying Republican interests after Congress passed a bill to finance the government. Johnson introduced the bill that did not contain Trump's key demand – raising the debt ceiling before the president-elect's inauguration.

Dr Jitendra launches 'Viksit Panchayat Karmayogi' to mark Good Governance Day

Top News Report

JAMMU / NEW DELHI, Dec 25: In a significant step towards strengthening grassroots governance, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology; (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh launched the 'Viksit Panchayat Karmayogi' initiative to mark the "Good Governance Day", commemorating 100th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

The initiative, which is part of the broader 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur' campaign, aims to enhance the capacity and competence of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) by equipping elected representatives and officials with the tools and knowledge required for effective governance and participatory planning.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized that governance reforms must begin at the grassroots to bring about long-lasting and meaningful change as well as to fill

up the capacity gaps. The "Viksit Panchayat Karmayogi" initiative focuses on strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) through innovative tools and capacity-building frameworks.

Marking Good Governance Day Dr. Jitendra Singh launched a series of other transformative initiatives as well aimed at enhancing efficiency, transparency, and citizen-centric governance. These initiatives, rooted in leveraging technology and fostering collaboration, underscore the government's commitment to inclusive and accountable administration.

The first initiative unveiled by Dr. Jitendra was the launch of a new dashboard on the iGOTKarmayogi platform, along with the milestone introduction of the 1600th e-learning course. The enhanced dashboard is designed to empower ministries, departments, and state administrators with advanced tools to monitor user registrations, course completions, and overall progress in capacity-building efforts.

With customizable views and robust data filtration capabilities, the dashboard provides detailed insights to improve deci-



sion-making and optimize training initiatives. The second was the launch of the Viksit Panchayat Karmayogi initiative. The third initiative, the launch of CPGRAMS Annual Report 2024, provides a comprehensive review of the Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS). As the world's largest citizen interface platform, CPGRAMS has redefined grievance redressal by integrating advanced technologies, multilingual support, and comprehensive tracking mechanisms.

The fourth initiative, the Single Simplified Pension Application Form, revolutionizes pension processing for retiring officials. Combining nine separate forms into one streamlined digital format, the new system

ensures end-to-end digitization through the integration of e-HRMS with Bhavishya. Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted the initiative's benefits, including real-time tracking of pension applications, Aadhaar-based e-signatures, and seamless verification through e-Service Books. This innovation reduces processing time and costs, ensuring timely disbursement of pensions while enhancing user experience through a pensioner-friendly interface.

Another significant initiative launched during the event was the Compendium of Pension Related Instructions, 2024, a comprehensive document consolidating all updated rules, procedures, and guidelines related to pensions. This compendium serves as a single-window ref-

erence for pensioners and administrative personnel, eliminating ambiguities and ensuring clarity in pension-related processes. Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted that this initiative aligns with the government's vision to simplify and streamline pension systems, making them more accessible and user-friendly. By integrating the latest amendments, including digital innovations and procedural reforms, the compendium is expected to enhance the ease of living for pensioners and promote efficient pension administration across the country.

Dr. Jitendra Singh reflected on the progress made in governance reforms under the Modi administration since 2014, focusing on inclusive and participatory governance as a

cornerstone of the government's approach. He remarked that Good Governance Day, institutionalized by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, serves as a reminder of the government's commitment to initiatives that directly impact citizens' lives.

The Minister pointed to several governance milestones achieved in recent years. Among these, he highlighted the liberalization of childcare leave and the extension of maternity benefits to women delivering still-born babies, which he described as measures that promote equity and address long-standing societal issues. He further noted the success of the Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS), which has revolutionized grievance redressal in India. Since 2014, the number of grievances addressed annually has grown from 2 lakh to over 25 lakh, reflecting increased public trust in the system.

Technology has played a transformative role in modernizing governance, Dr. Jitendra said. He highlighted the introduction of face recognition technology for digital life certificates for pensioners, a signifi-

cant step in simplifying processes for elderly citizens. Recalling the hardships faced by pensioners in the past, he shared how the government has moved from paper-based to biometric and now to face recognition technology, ensuring ease and accessibility for all.

Dr. Jitendra also emphasized the need to dismantle outdated practices in governance. He recounted personal experiences with bureaucratic inefficiencies, particularly in pension processing, and stressed the importance of adopting a corporate-like approach to enhance productivity in government systems. He advocated for a single-page pension form and the elimination of redundant paperwork, which he termed as a waste of time and resources.

The Minister lauded the Capacity Building Commission for its efforts in integrating private-sector efficiency into public administration. He noted that this corporate-style work culture has significantly improved service delivery and productivity within government departments.

Reflecting on India's journey towards its centenary as an indepen-

dent nation in 2047, Dr. Jitendra Singh outlined the need to prepare for a future where citizens can independently manage governance processes with minimal reliance on bureaucratic systems. He shared his experience of introducing AI-driven mobile health clinics in rural areas, highlighting how technology not only facilitates governance but also captivates and engages communities.

Dr. Jitendra also paid tribute to Atal Bihari Vajpayee, whose vision for good governance inspired the institutionalization of this day. He stated that each year, the government strives to introduce new initiatives that add value to governance and reflect its dynamic and evolving nature.

Concluding his address, Dr. Jitendra Singh remarked that initiatives like 'Viksit Panchayat Karmayogi' exemplify the government's commitment to inclusivity, transparency, and technological innovation. By empowering panchayats and ensuring participatory governance, the government aims to lay the foundation for a future-ready India where citizens are active partners in shaping their destinies.

FROM PAGE 3

China 2024 | Military standoff with India ends in Ladakh, Long freeze over

meeting in Vientiane in Laos in November. After the 23rd SR dialogue between Doval and Wang in December, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the extensive talks focussed on a "positive" direction for cross-border cooperation, including resuming the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra and border trade, while the Chinese side said a six-point consensus, including continuing to take measures to maintain peace at borders and promote healthy and stable development of relations, was reached between the two sides.

While there was no clarity from China on why it moved its troops near the LAC in 2020, equally puzzling is the timing for the agreement to bring down the border tensions with India, months ahead of the 75th anniversary of their diplomatic relationship. But Beijing, in recent months, appeared to be mellowing down after its economy struggled to reverse its slowdown, weighed down by issues such as property crisis and rising unemployment.

Throughout the over four-year crisis, bilateral trade was not impacted. In fact, it continued to boom.

The bilateral trade, according to Chinese official figures, totalled USD 138.2 billion in 2023, with Chinese exports climbing to USD 122 billion and Indian exports to China standing at USD 16.2 billion. India's trade deficit with China amounted to USD 105.8 billion last year.

The trade deficit in the first six months of this year climbed to USD 41.89 billion, with Chinese exports totalling USD 50.35 billion against India's exports to China USD 8.46 billion, according to data from the Indian Embassy in Beijing.

In 2025, amid stubborn attempts by the US and EU to restrict Chinese exports with heavy tariffs, China looks to push its exports as well as investments in India, especially electric vehicles.

Experts here see the trade expansion with India, currently the fastest growing economy in the world, also as a new avenue to partly offset its likely damages in the Trump 2.0 era.

China also recalibrated its foreign, trade and military policies ahead of this year's US Presidential elections, especially after President-elect Donald Trump vowed to enhance tariffs over and above what he imposed against China in his first tenure.

Officials here say there is considerable concern in Beijing that India-US relations under Trump's Presidency will pick up further momentum, especially the Quad grouping comprising the US, India, Australia and Japan, which China perceives as an alliance aimed at containing it.

Besides India, China also sought to recalibrate frayed ties with Australia and Japan. Meanwhile, as China marked 75 years of

communist party rule, a crucial meeting of the ruling Communist Party in July adopted a resolution for comprehensive reforms to lift the sluggish growth by achieving socialist modernisation by 2035.

President Xi, who continued to crack the corruption whip on the ruling Communist Party and the military officials, asked them in January to turn the knife inwards and carry the anti-graft campaign without any mercy.

Xi's anti-graft campaign in the military has drawn global attention, which his critics say enabled him to consolidate his hold on power.

China also announced to raise its retirement age from January 2025 after its population dipped for a second consecutive year. The demographic crisis was further highlighted as China's marriage registrations in the first half of 2024 fell to a record low since 1980, not to mention the reduced number of kindergartens and drop in the number of children enrolled in them.

In June, Chinese spacecraft Chang'e-6 successfully touched down in the South Pole-Aitken Basin - the far side of the Moon, in the first endeavour of its kind in human history to collect samples from the rarely explored terrain and brought back the soil.

Meanwhile, Tibet and Arunachal Pradesh continued to be contentious issues as China celebrated the 65th year of its takeover of Tibet.

In March, the Joe Biden administration recognised Arunachal Pradesh as Indian territory. Biden also signed into law the 'Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Dispute Act' in July, triggering a sharp response from Beijing.

BJP celebrates Vajpayee 100th birth anniversary as good governance day in Kashmir

visionary initiatives, including the Golden Quadrilateral project, advancements in information technology, and efforts to strengthen India's global standing. "Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee was a statesman whose leadership continues to inspire the nation and his dedication to good governance and development has set a benchmark for all of us," the leaders said.

The event also featured discussions on the significance of Good Governance Day, underscoring the party's commitment to uphold the principles of transparency, accountability, and citizen-centric administration.

Members reiterated their resolve to work towards realizing Vajpayee's vision of a prosperous and inclusive India.

As part of the celebrations, the BJP Kashmir unit announced a series of initiatives including outreach programs to engage with citizens, workshops on effective governance practices, and campaigns to raise awareness about government schemes and services.

The BJP remains steadfast in its commit-

ment to the ideals espoused by Vajpayee and continues to strive towards building an India that embodies the principles of good governance, development, and inclusivity, the statement added.

Passenger plane en route to Russia from Azerbaijan crashes in Kazakhstan

according to preliminary information, there are survivors," the ministry said, according to CNN.

In a preliminary report, Kazakhstan's transport ministry said that there were 62 passengers along with five crew members on board.

Russian news agency TASS reported that the plane flying from Baku, which crashed in Kazakhstan, was first diverted to Makhachkala and then to Aktau due to fog in Grozny.

"This was a routine flight initially scheduled to arrive in Grozny. However, due to fog, it was redirected to Makhachkala and then, apparently, to Aktau," Chechen capital's airport press service told TASS.

Azerbaijan Airlines in a post on X wrote, "The Embraer 190 aircraft operated by Azerbaijan Airlines, flight numbered J2-8243 on the Baku-Grozny route, made an emergency landing approximately 3 kilometers near the city of Aktau."

"Additional information regarding the incident will be provided to the public," the post added.

This is a developing story. Further details are awaited.

CM Omar Abdullah conducts surprise checks at Kashmir's premier medical institutions

ogy, the block will add 160 beds, increasing the hospital's total capacity from 150 to 310 beds.

During his visit, the Chief Minister emphasized the need to expedite the completion of the new block, which is critical for addressing the space crunch caused by a fire incident in 2022 that reduced the hospital's original capacity of 200 beds.

He directed the executing agencies to ensure its swift operationalization by January 2025 to enhance patient care and to dedicate the facility to public service.

Chief Minister also inspected the 500-bedded Children's Hospital in Bemina, where he interacted with patients, attendants, and hospital staff.

During his visit, attendants from far-flung areas raised concerns about the lack of a Sarai (inn) for their stay.

The Chief Minister immediately directed the concerned authorities to construct a Sarai to accommodate attendants and alleviate their difficulties.

The hospital staff highlighted the challenges of expanding super-specialty facili-

ties due to express space constraints.

The Chief Minister assured them that the issue would be addressed on priority.

He also promised to resolve the shortage of medical staff, including doctors and paramedics, not only at this hospital but across healthcare facilities in Jammu and Kashmir.

Furthermore, the Chief Minister instructed hospital authorities to ensure the timely availability of medicines and other essential facilities for patients.

During the inspections, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah reiterated his government's commitment to improving healthcare infrastructure ensuring better facilities for the public and addressing manpower shortages in health institutions across Jammu and Kashmir. The Chief Minister was accompanied during his visits by Minister of Health Sakeena Itoo, Medical Superintendent of the Children's Hospital, senior faculty members and other concerned officials.

72-hour shutdown in Katra begins against ropeway project; Protesters detained

protesters from advancing, clashes broke out between the two sides.

Several protesters, including Singh and Chand, were detained by the police and taken away in a police vehicle from the protest site, officials said.

Singh alleged that the government was derailing the issue and forcing the people of Katra to come on the roads.

"We are demanding the shelving of this project to save the jobs of thousands of people. Instead of holding talks with us, as promised by the administration, they are using police to detain us. This is unfortunate", he said.

Former minister Jugal Kishore criticised the "use of force" against the protesters.

"We strongly condemn the administration's move to use force against peaceful demonstrators. Their actions are aimed at disturbing the situation in Katra, which is unacceptable," Kishore told reporters.

He accused the administration of avoiding dialogue. "Instead of holding discussions, they are aggravating the situation," he said.

In response to the protest call, all business establishments remained closed, and traffic was off the roads in the holy town.

"A 72-hour shutdown by pony owners, shopkeepers, and other local stakeholders began on Wednesday to protest the proposed ropeway project," a Samiti spokesperson said.

The spokesperson added that the administration had initially scheduled a meeting for December 23 but postponed it to 3 PM today.

"We met the Deputy Commissioner today, who requested more time to consult higher authorities. Therefore, we have decided to

continue with the strike," he said.

Last month, the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board announced plans to install the ropeway to facilitate access to the temple for senior citizens, children, and others who find it challenging to trek the 13-km-long path to the cave shrine.

The proposed Rs 250-crore project aims to connect Tarakote Marg to Sanji Chhat, which leads to the shrine.

Meanwhile, pilgrims expressed frustration over the shutdown, citing the closure of eateries and the suspension of local transport, which caused significant inconvenience.

"We are facing a lot of difficulties. Where will pilgrims eat or rest during this three-day bandh? This is not the right way to protest," a pilgrim told reporters.

"We humbly request those leading the protests to call off the strike, as thousands of pilgrims are facing hardships," he added.

Intense cold wave conditions in Kashmir, Srinagar records minus 7.3 degrees celsius

below-normal maximum as well as minimum temperatures for this time of the season, the officials said.

The fall in the mercury has led to the freezing of water supply lines even as a thin layer of ice covered the surface of several water bodies, including the Dal Lake.

The city was colder than Gulmarg, a tourist resort town known for skiing activities in north Kashmir, where the mercury settled at a low of minus 6.6 degrees Celsius, up from minus 7.4 degrees Celsius the previous night, the department added.

Pahalgam, the base camp for the annual Amarnath Yatra in south Kashmir, registered a minimum temperature of minus 8.4 degrees Celsius, down from the previous night's minus 7.8 degrees Celsius, it said.

Qazigund, the gateway town to Kashmir, logged a minimum temperature of minus 6.6 degrees Celsius, while Konibal, a hamlet in the Pampore area, was the coldest recorded place in the valley at minus 9.5 degrees Celsius, it said.

Kupwara, in north Kashmir, registered a low of minus 6.4 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag, in south Kashmir, was at minus 5.4 degrees Celsius.

There is a possibility of light snowfall over the higher reaches towards the later afternoon on December 27 till the forenoon the next day, the Met Office said.

While the weather would stay mainly dry on December 29, 30, and 31, light snowfall is possible in the isolated higher reaches on New Year's Eve, and light snowfall could take place at isolated to scattered places in Kashmir from January 1-4.

During the 40 days of Chillai-Kalan, the chances of snowfall are most frequent and maximum and the temperature drops considerably.

It ends on January 30 next year, but the cold wave continues even after that in the valley. The 40 days are followed by a 20-day 'Chillai-Khur'd' (small cold) and a 10-day 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold).

Vajpayee talked to Pak despite Kargil, Parliament attack: Mehbooba Mufti

Pays tribute to late PM on his 100th birth anniversary; calls him a great visionary

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Dec 25: On the occasion of 100th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti paid rich tributes to the iconic leader, focusing on his unwavering commitment to dialogue and peace in Jammu and Kashmir.

In her tribute, Mehbooba Mufti praised Vajpayee for his remarkable leadership, stating that his approach to peace and diplomacy, especially with Pakistan, remains a vital part of his legacy.

"Despite the challenges of the Kargil conflict and the 2001 Parliament attack, Vajpayee did not shy away from pursuing talks with

Pakistan, a stance that distinguished him as a leader who valued dialogue over conflict."

"Atal Bihari Vajpayee was a man with a vision for peace. Despite the turmoil of Kargil and the attack on Parliament, he never abandoned the path of dialogue with Pakistan.

His determination to engage in talks, even in the face of adversity, demonstrated his belief in diplomacy as the only solution for lasting peace," Mehbooba said.

She also highlighted Vajpayee's acknowledgment of the late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed's "healing touch" policy, which was instrumental in improving the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. Vajpayee's support for this policy led to practical steps, such as the opening of

roads, that contributed to easing the strained atmosphere in the region and provided much-needed relief to its people.

"Vajpayee's recognition of Mufti Sahab's healing touch policy was a turning point for Kashmir.

The opening of roads and the beginning of confidence-building measures were the first real signs that the people of Kashmir were being given the attention they deserved. It was a significant moment in the peace process," she added.

She noted that Vajpayee's vision for a peaceful, prosperous India, built on the foundation of communication and mutual understanding, continues to shape the discourse in Jammu and Kashmir even today.

Kandur roti price hike sparks anxiety among Kashmiri families

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Dec 25: The price of Kashmiri "Kandur Roti," a staple food in the Valley, has doubled from Rs 5 to Rs 10, sparking widespread concern, particularly among low-income families. The sharp increase has led to frustration among residents who rely on bread as an affordable food option.

Sofi Abdullah Majeed Pampori, president of the Kashmir Bread Makers and Bakers Union, defended the hike, citing the rising costs of essential ingredients like ghee and flour. "The price adjustment was unavoidable due to escalating operational expenses,"

Pampori explained, adding that the decision was reached after extensive discussions and was communicated to authorities.

The price hike has hit economically vulnerable groups the hardest. Kulsum Jan, a resident of Beerwah, voiced her concern: "We can't afford to pay Rs 50 for five rotis, which used to cost Rs 25. A slight increase would have been understandable, but doubling the price is too much."

Sajad Ahmad, a daily wage earner from Srinagar, shared a similar sentiment. "With earnings of just Rs 200 to Rs 300 a day, this increase is unmanageable, especially during the harsh winter. The government must step in to regulate

the price and make it affordable for all," he said.

The price hike has sparked calls for government intervention to ensure essential commodities remain accessible to the public. Many residents have urged authorities to find a balance that addresses the rising costs faced by bakers while protecting the economically disadvantaged.

The issue has become a significant talking point in the Valley, highlighting the growing economic pressures on both businesses and consumers. As the cold winter months set in, affordable access to staple foods like Kandur Roti remains a pressing concern for Kashmiri families.

Sham Lal meets SDM Jammu South, Tehsildar Bishnah to express gratitude

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 25: Sham Lal Gupta, the Chairman of the Anti-Crime (NGO), called on Rafiq Ahmad Jaral, SDM Jammu South, and Ankush Tripathi, Tehsildar Bishnah, to express appreciation for their dedicated efforts in addressing public concerns and ensuring transparency in administrative processes.

During the meeting, Gupta acknowledged the commendable work undertaken by the administration in facilitating land registration processes and resolving genuine public grievances. He praised their efficient handling of cases and their commitment to ensuring that public services are delivered seamlessly.

Gupta emphasized the importance of maintaining a corruption-free environment in public offices and praised the proactive approach taken by SDM Rafiq Ahmad Jaral in streamlining procedures related to



land registration and other civic issues. Similarly, he appreciated Tehsildar Ankush Tripathi for his diligent efforts in addressing

citizens' concerns promptly and ensuring justice in cases requiring administrative intervention. Speaking on the occasion,

Gupta stated, "The efforts of the administration in ensuring public trust and delivering on critical issues like land registration are truly praiseworthy. These initiatives have brought significant relief to the public and reinforced faith in governance."

SDM Rafiq Ahmad Jaral and Tehsildar Ankush Tripathi thanked Gupta for his acknowledgment and assured him of their continued commitment to serving the people with honesty and integrity. They reiterated their focus on prioritizing public welfare and promoting transparent governance.

The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to fostering cooperation between public representatives and the administration to address civic issues effectively. The acknowledgment of genuine work being done by officials highlights the importance of collaborative efforts in building a more accountable and citizen-friendly administration.

Khajuria demands overhaul of health services after nine mysterious deaths in Rajouri



Top News Report

RAJOURI, Dec 25: Senior social & health activist Sukesh C. Khajuria has expressed

deep concern over the recent deaths of nine people, including seven children, from two families in the border district of Rajouri, Jammu and

Kashmir. Among the victims, one was a male and one was a female who was five months pregnant. The cause of the deaths remains unknown, sparking alarm and raising serious questions about the state of health services in the region.

Khajuria, who has been at the forefront of numerous social causes, particularly in the areas of health and medical services, is calling for urgent reforms in the region's healthcare system. He urged Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to immediately initiate an overhaul of the health services, which, according to Khajuria, have become increasingly exploitative, leaving poor and marginalized sections of society vulnerable and underserved.

"The tragic deaths of nine people, especially seven children, within such a short time span, highlight the grim realities of health and medical services in Jammu

and Kashmir, particularly in its remote and hilly areas," Khajuria stated. He noted that while the health sector has seen tremendous technological advancements, these benefits have not reached the impoverished populations in far-flung areas.

Khajuria also stressed the need for a comprehensive investigation into the deaths, calling for the involvement of law enforcement and other investigating agencies, including the CBI, to determine the cause and responsibility for the tragic event.

Sukesh Khajuria, who previously advocated for victims of spurious drugs in Ramnagar tehsil of Udhampur, urged authorities to launch a thorough investigation into the Rajouri deaths and implement corrective measures swiftly. His efforts in the past, including securing compensation for families affected by harmful drugs, have shown his commitment to protect-

ing public health.

A central team of health experts has been dispatched to Rajouri to assist in the investigation. A Biosafety Level 3 (BSL-3) mobile laboratory was sent to expedite testing and identify the illness. The victims, all from Badhaal village in Kotranka tehsil of district Rajouri, belonged to two ST families.

The deaths have highlighted the vulnerability of the region's population, raising concerns about whether the disease is contagious, environmental, or the result of medical negligence. As the nature of the disease remains unclear, Khajuria called on health authorities to ensure that no further fatalities occur in the region.

The tragic incident, in which seven of the nine victims were children, has deeply shaken the local community, leading to widespread concern over the adequacy of health services in the area.

BJP leaders pay tribute to Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his 100th birth anniversary at Jammu West

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 25: BJP leaders along with prominent citizens Pays Tribute to Bharat Ratna and Former PM of India Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his 100th Birth anniversary at ward 29, Jammu west.

Arvind Gupta (MLA Jammu West), Sangathan Mantri Org Jammu West Ashok Kumar, Bawa Sharma (Senior Leader), Braham Jyot Satti (State Incharge BJP OBC Morcha), Jorawar Singh (senior leader), Surinder Chowdhury (ex corporator), Atul Bakshi (Mandal President Bakshi Nagar), Keshav Chopra (Mandal President Talab Tillo), Kushant Prajapati (Mandal Gen Sec), Hira Lal Sharma (Shakti kendr parmukh), Suresh Kumar (Mandal Vice President), Perveen Badyal (Vice President OBC), Pawan Kumar (Vice President OBC), Sanjay Verma (Mandal President OBC), Pawan Sharma (Booth President), Renu Chowdhury (BJP leader), Anuradha (Booth No.35 President) were present on the occasion.

The program was organised by Kamal Kishore (Pummy) booth President were present on the occasion.

The program began with floral tributes to Vajpayee, followed by speeches remembering his contributions as the former Prime Minister of India. While addressing, Arvind Gupta praised Vajpayee as a great leader, eminent poet, and patriotic person who resigned from government for the nation. He



also highlighted Vajpayee's courage in facing national threats and his achievement as the first non-Congress leader to serve a full term in office.

He said Atal Bihari Vajpayee was a ground to earth personality and he face every national threat with courage

He said Atal Bihari Vajpayee was a ground to earth personality and he face every national threat with courage and was the first leader not from the Congress to serve a full term in office.

He was an Indian politician who served three terms as the Prime Minister of India.

Braham Jyot Satti also spoke, describing Vajpayee as an honest and great leader who led India to victory in the Kargil war against Pakistan. He also mentioned Vajpayee's tenure as Prime Minister, during which India conducted the Pokhran-II nuclear test in 1998, and his receipt of the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honor, in 2015.

The event concluded with slogans in favor of India and Vajpayee, and the leaders reiterated that Vajpayee will always remain alive in their hearts.

BJP media in-charge Srinagar, Saba Ali, extends warm Christmas greetings

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Dec 25: Saba Ali, the BJP Media In-Charge for Srinagar, extended heartfelt Christmas greetings to the people of the nation, emphasizing unity, love, and goodwill during the festive season.

In her message, Saba highlighted the spirit of Christmas as a celebration of hope, compassion, and togetherness. "Christmas is a time for families to unite, share joy, and spread kindness. It reminds us of

the values of love and generosity," she said.

Saba expressed her wishes for a joyous and prosperous season for all, encouraging everyone to embrace the holiday's spirit by reaching out to those in need. "This is a time to remember the less fortunate and open our hearts to help them. Let us collectively share our blessings and create an atmosphere of compassion and support," she urged.

The BJP leader also emphasized the importance of fostering harmony and peace, underscoring the essence of Christmas as a festival that brings communities together.

As the nation celebrates the festive season, Saba's message serves as a reminder of the power of kindness and unity in building a better society.



Akhnoor Ashram celebrates 32nd foundation day with grand satsang and bhandara



Top News Report

AKHNOOR, Dec 25: On this auspicious day, the 32nd Foundation Day of Akhnoor Ashram was marked with a grand Satsang and Bhandara, under the divine guidance of Sadguru Shri Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj, the revered spiritual leader of Sahib Bhandara.

During the event, Sahib Ji enlightened the congregation with profound discourses, emphasizing the immense power of prayer and devotion. "There is great power in a sincere request,"

Sahib Ji said, referencing spiritual texts and experiences to underline the eternal nature of spoken words and their impact on divine realms.

He explained, "Scientists have discovered that words, once spoken, remain in existence as long as the universe persists. This supports the spiritual belief that prayers are never destroyed but reach the divine." Sahib Ji illustrated this point with examples, including historical incidents where voice recognition technology demonstrated the permanence of sound.

Highlighting the teachings of Kabir Sahib, Shri

Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj spoke of the transformative power of Sumiran (remembrance of God's name). "Just as food nourishes the body, Sumiran purifies the heart. Practices like Japa, Tapasya, Sanyam, and Sadhna are essential for spiritual growth," he said.

Sahib Ji also spoke of the poetic and devotional legacy of Kabir Sahib, who inspired countless souls through his Dohe, Chhand, and other compositions. Referencing the devotional prayers of Goswami Tulsidas, he encouraged devotees to embrace humility and surrender in their spiritual journey.

The event concluded with heartfelt prayers and a communal Bhandara, symbolizing unity and spiritual nourishment. Devotees left the ashram feeling uplifted and inspired, carrying the message of devotion, humility, and the eternal power of prayer.

Ready to spar on Boxing Day: India fret on Rohit's batting position

With a tied score after the third test, India hope to win at their return to the MCG

MELBOURNE, Dec 25 (Agencies): Divine intervention and a wagging tail might have lifted India's sagging spirits in Brisbane but an out-of-form skipper Rohit Sharma's batting position will be in focus against a dangerous Australia bracing to deliver the knockout punch in the 'Boxing Day' Test starting here on Thursday.

The Indian skipper was the last to hit the nets on Christmas eve and there is speculation doing rounds that he could replace the team's most assured opener, KL Rahul, at the top of the order.

If that happens, Rahul will come in at No. 3 while Shubman Gill could either play in the middle order or make way for a Dhruv Jurel in the playing eleven. The series is currently locked 1-1.

The Indian skipper stopped batting in the middle order after being elevated to the opening slot back in 2019. But he chose to come down in Adelaide and Brisbane to accommodate an in-form Rahul and first-Test centurion Yashasvi Jaiswal.

The move was a spectacular failure and it remains to be seen how the team adjusts in case Rohit opens and Gill is either dropped or bats at number five.

Asked about his batting position during the pre-match press conference, he was borderline irritated.

"Let's not worry about that. I think who bats where, we should be discussing that within ourselves and I shouldn't be answering this question in every press conference," the skipper just about held his composure.

How teams are stacked
Both captains feel that 1-1 after three games is a fair reflection of the competition between the sides but things can quickly change at the MCG.

The rain-affected draw at the



Gabba was like a soothing balm for India after Pink Test debacle in Adelaide.

But now, India are back at one of their favourite Australian venues where they have remained undefeated in Tests since the 2014 series.

The last two (2018-19 and 2020-21) of the three Tests (other being 2014-15) resulted in Indian wins where solid batting played its part.

But this line-up, with three young mavericks (Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rishabh Pant and Shubman Gill), one confident opener (KL Rahul) and a couple of ageing stalwarts (Virat Kohli and Rohit) hasn't looked very assured.

They will have to put up their best show against a home team which isn't exactly a runaway favourite either but has shown tremendous resilience.

For under-fire Rohit, it is his own reputation as a Test batter that is at stake while Kohli will need to channelise the inner champion in him which lit up the MCG skyline with the most talked about sixes in his T20 career.

Those sixes required flair, the situation now will warrant loads of patience when Pat Cummins and Mitchell Starc tease him with that probing line outside the off stump.

For Rohit, the equation is as simple as it gets. Win the next two Tests and likely head into a potentially memorable swansong at the Lord's in June.

A captain has to score and even without an injured Josh Hazlewood, Australia would be a handful with local hero Scott Boland ready to bowl those uncompromising hard lengths.

Jaiswal, Gill and Pant would like to live up to their own expectations and go into the game with an uncluttered mindset as expected by their skipper.

Indian Bowling combination
For the hosts, all eyes will be on teenage sensation Sam Konstas, billed as one for the future with an attacking game to match Jasprit Bumrah.

Konstas would do well to know that Bumrah has already put brakes on his predecessor Nathan McSweeney's career.

The other good news for Australia is that the marauding Travis Head is fully fit and raring to go at Melbourne which is certain to increase the creases on Rohit's forehead.

Head had an extended session on Wednesday where he appeared for a fitness test and then looked in good touch at the nets.

With scores of 89, 140 and 152, the Indian bowlers need some special plans to counter

their main threat.

Temperature is predicted to be close to 40 degrees followed by an equally hot second day, which is why the role of an extra spinner is being seriously looked into by the team management.

But if one looks at teams in recent Tests at MCG, the option for second specialist spinner has never looked viable.

The pitches at MCG, over the years, don't have too many cracks but could offer variable bounce which Nathan Lyon has used to the fullest in the past.

But then Lyon, as a finger spinner, is in a different league compared to a relatively inexperienced Washington Sundar.

The question is where does one fit in Washington? Dropping Nitish Reddy could just be a very poor move.

Will they trade a seamer like Akash Deep specifically looking at conditions? Looks unlikely unless it's a like-for-like fast bowler taking that slot.

Rohit will have a lot on his plate as a skipper, potentially more, as a batter if he goes back to the top.

Teams (from):

India: Rohit Sharma (captain), KL Rahul, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant (wk), Ravindra Jadeja, Nitish Reddy, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Akash Deep, Washington Sundar, Prasidh Krishna, Harshit Rana, Tanush Kotian, Sarfaraz Khan, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Dhruv Jurel, Devdutt Padikkal.

Australia (XI): Pat Cummins (captain), Usman Khawaja, Sam Konstas, Marcus Labuschagne, Steve Smith, Travis Head, Mitchell Marsh, Alex Carey (wk), Mitchell Starc and Scott Boland. Match Starts at 5 am.

India-Pak clash in Dubai on Feb 23



DUBAI, Dec 25 (Agencies): The Champions Trophy will be held in Pakistan and Dubai, after hosts Pakistan selected the UAE as a neutral venue for their rivals India, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said.

Holders Pakistan will host an ICC event for the first time in 28 years. The eight-team competition kicks off on February 19 in Karachi and wraps up with the final on March 9, featuring a total of 15 matches across Pakistan and Dubai.

Tournament matches will be held in Rawalpindi, Lahore and Karachi. Each venue in the country is set to host three group-stage games, with Lahore also staging the second semifinal.

"Lahore will also host the final on March 9, unless India qualify, in which case it will be played in Dubai. Both the semifinals and the final will have reserve days," the ICC said in a statement.

"The three group matches involving India, as well as the first semifinal, will be played in Dubai."

Due to strained political ties, India haven't toured Pakistan since 2008, and the Indian cricket board (BCCI), citing government advice, has refused to send its team for the Champions Trophy. The two sides now meet only in multi-team events, with Pakistan last visiting India for the 50-over World Cup.

"We are pleased that an agreement has been reached based on the principles of equality and respect, showcasing the spirit of cooperation and collaboration that defines our sport," Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Mohsin Naqvi said.

"Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to the ICC members who played a constructive role in helping us achieve a mutually beneficial solution. Their efforts have been invaluable in promoting the interests of international cricket."

The ICC said last week that matches between India and Pakistan in tournaments from 2024 to 2027 organised in either nation would be played at neutral venues. "Our country is known for its great hospitality and I am

sure the fans will not only support our team, but also appreciate the performances of other teams," Pakistan white-ball captain Mohammad Rizwan said.

Defending champions Pakistan face New Zealand in the Group A opener in Karachi on February 19, while India meet Bangladesh in Dubai a day later.

Pakistan's premier fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi had requested the team management and national selectors to not consider him for the Test matches in South Africa because of workload management since he wants to be "100 per cent fit" for the ICC Champions Trophy in February-March. After the Pakistan squad was announced for the two Tests in South Africa without Shaheen, the interim head coach and senior selector, Aaqib Javed, said that the left-arm pacer's workload is being managed to keep him fresh for the Champions Trophy.

"The truth is Shaheen himself requested he not be considered for Test matches until the Champions Trophy is over," a source said.

India-West Indies women's ODI series: Deol steals show in run fest

VADODARA, Dec 25 (Agencies): Harleen Deol underscored her growing maturity with an impressive maiden hundred, which proved to be the foundation of India's 115-run win over West Indies in the second Women's ODI here. The victory also propelled India to an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

Deol (115 off 103 balls, with 16 fours) powered India to a record-equaling 358/5. She received ample support from Pratika Rawal (76 off 86 balls, with 10 fours and 1 six), Smriti Mandhana (53 off 47 balls, with 7 fours and 2 sixes) and Jemimah Rodrigues (52 off 36 balls, with 6 fours and 1 six) as four India batters registered fifty-plus scores in an ODI for only the second time.

The task of chasing 359 was always going to be out of Windies' reach, and they were bowled out for 243 despite skipper Hayley Matthews making a flowing hundred (106 off 109 balls, with 13 fours).

The writing on the wall was clear once the Indian bowlers reduced West Indies to 69/4 inside the first 20 overs. But Matthews added 112 runs for the fifth wicket with Shemaine Campbelle (38) to delay the inevitable.

Matthews, who reached her seventh ODI hundred in 99 balls, stood out for the power and precision until she fell to off-spinner Rawal. The Indian bowlers



also deserve a good chunk of credit for sticking to good lines on a slightly spongy wicket. They attacked the stumps regularly and leg-spinner Priya Mishra was splendid while mixing up leg-breaks and googlies.

Priya (3/49), pacer Titas Sadhu (2/42) and seasoned spinner Deepti Sharma (2/40) were the pick of Indian bowlers.

Earlier, Deol's impressive coming-of-age hundred powered India's batting effort that saw them equalling their highest-ever ODI total, which was also the highest total any team has made against the Caribbean team.

The Indian management will be mighty pleased by Deol's hun-

dred as she marked her growth as an all-field player from a predominantly off-side batter during this knock.

Not precisely a power-hitter, the right-hander has added more nuances to her batting through the ability to find angles and gaps.

It was evident when she peppered Deandra Dottin for three fours through fine leg, point and behind point to move into the 90s. Her 100 came along in 98 balls with a nicely-timed boundary off pacer Shamilia Connell.

But for an imposing total, India should also thank Mandhana and Rawal for adding 110 runs for the opening wicket in just 16.3 overs, their second successive 100-run partnership in

ODIs.

They hardly looked in any trouble until some lethargic running between the wickets resulted in Mandhana's run out. Rawal, who raised her maiden ODI fifty in 58 balls, looked well settled for a hundred in only her second 50-overs game, but the right-hander failed to negotiate Zaida James' delivery with a bit of extra bounce, scooping it to Qiana Joseph at short mid-wicket. She added 62 runs for the second wicket with Deol.

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur could not produce a big one, getting bowled in her attempt to slog sweep Afy Fletcher's full-length delivery. West Indies might have hoped for some respite after Harmanpreet's dismissal, but Rodrigues joined Deol to add a further 116 runs in a little over 12 overs for the fourth wicket.

Rodrigues, who reached fifty off just 34 balls, was at her innovative best as she clobbered Connell for four boundaries in an over as India motored in the backend of the innings. Deol fell to Qiana soon but that had little impact on the proceedings.

Brief scores: India: 358/5 in 50 overs (Deol 115, Rawal 76, Mandhana 53, Rodrigues 52, Fletcher 1/38); West Indies: 243 all out in 46.2 overs (Matthews 106, Campbelle 38; Mishra 3/49, Rawal 2/37, Deepti 2/40, Sadhu 2/42).

Head best batter in world, his performances against Bumrah exemplify fearless approach: Chappell



MELBOURNE, Dec 25 (Agencies): Travis Head is the "best batter in the world" whose performances against Indian pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy exemplify his fearless approach and "Australian way of batting", feels legendary cricketer Greg Chappell.

Head has dominated the batting chart with 409 runs in the first three Tests with two hundreds and a fifty, and former Australia captain Chappell believes his simplicity and aggression are behind his success as a Test batter.

"While most batsmen struggle to survive Bumrah's unorthodox action, sharp pace, and relentless accuracy, Head has treated him like any other bowler," Chappell wrote in Sydney Morning Herald.

"By playing with intent and looking to score off Bumrah, Head has not only nullified his threat but disrupted his

rhythm. His ability to dispatch short deliveries with authority and drive fuller ones with precision has been remarkable, underscoring the strides he has made," he added.

Chappell said Head's flourish in the recent years across formats is due to an uncluttered mindset.

"From a raw, unpredictable talent to one of the most dominant male batters in world cricket, Travis Head has soared into his prime with an almost ethereal elegance," Chappell wrote.

"His story is not just about overcoming challenges but about embracing a simplicity of style that has become his hallmark — one that allows his mind to remain uncluttered and his game devastatingly effective," he added.

Chappell termed Head's 152 against England in the 2021-22 series as the "turning point".

"The turning point came during the 2021 Ashes. Head's counter-attacking 152 in Brisbane was a revelation. Walking in at 5-195, he transformed the game with a whirlwind innings, taking the opposition bowlers apart and shifting the momentum firmly in Australia's favour," he wrote.

"That innings wasn't just about runs, it was a statement of intent, a declaration that he would play his way."

Chappell believes Head is one of the most feared batters in the world who can dictate terms against the best bowlers.

"Since that series, Head has gone from strength to strength, evolving into one of the most feared batsmen in the world."

"His numbers since 2022 underline his dominance: 1800 runs at an average of 56.25, with six centuries at a strike rate of 75.6. These are not just impressive figures, they are a testament to his ability to thrive under pressure and dictate terms against the best bowlers in the world," Chappell added.

Chappell praised the 30-year-old left-handed batter for prioritising intent over caution.

"The essence of Travis Head's batting lies in his uncluttered mind. He has chosen a path that prioritises intent over caution, a mindset that allows him to approach

every ball with the aim of scoring runs," he wrote.

"This doesn't mean recklessness — it's a calculated, efficient approach that keeps bowlers and captains under pressure. By getting into good positions to score, Head simultaneously positions himself to defend against the better deliveries. It's a virtuous cycle that rewards his positive intent," he added.

Chappell said Head's ability to strike balance between aggression and elegance are the qualities which also make him a captaincy candidate in future.

"What sets Head apart is his ability to blend aggression with elegance. He has always been a powerful player of cross-bat shots, but his recent improvement in driving full deliveries down the ground has elevated his game," he wrote.

"I believe Travis to be the most improved batter in world cricket in the past three years and in becoming so, has firmed in favouritism to be the next Australian captain."

"In his current form, Travis exemplifies the Australian way of batting, and I agree with Ricky Ponting and Ian Healy when they praise the way he is playing."

"Today, as the butterfly of his transformation soars, it's clear: Travis Head is the best batsman in the world."

J&K Congress intensifies protest against Amit Shah's remarks on Dr. Ambedkar



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 25: The Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) today intensified its protest against Home Minister Amit Shah's controversial remarks against the Father of Indian Constitution Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. The protest, led by Hari Singh Chib, Vice President of JKPCC, witnessed a gathering of Congress workers near the Police Station Janipur in the Jammu North Assembly segment.

The protest saw Congress workers raising slogans condemning the remarks and expressing solidarity with the ideals of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

Speaking to the media persons here, Hari Singh Chib strongly criticized the statements made by the Home Minister during a Constitution debate in the Rajya Sabha. "Amit Shah's remarks on Dr. B.R.

Ambedkar undermine the dignity and legacy of one of India's greatest leaders. Dr. Ambedkar's contributions to shaping modern India and empowering marginalized sections of society remain unparalleled," Chib asserted.

The senior Congress leader demanded an unconditional apology from Amit Shah, emphasizing the need for accountability from leaders holding high offices. He further called for the Home Minister's resignation, stating, "Such remarks are not only disrespectful to the Father of the Indian Constitution but also an insult to the democratic values he stood for."

The protesting Congress workers vowed to continue its protest until the Home Minister issues a formal apology and takes responsibility for his statements.

Hari Singh Chib also urged people across Jammu and Kashmir

to join the Congress in defending the dignity of national icons and preserving the values enshrined in the Constitution. "The Congress party will never tolerate attempts to tarnish the image of a visionary leader like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. We will remain steadfast in upholding his legacy and fighting for justice," he added.

Among those who joined the protest include Som Nath Sharma, H.S. Baghi, Parshotam Singh, Surinder Kumar, Om Parkash, Dr. Raj Pal, Fakir Chand, Kaka Ram, Balwan Singh, Jung Bahadur Singh, Rishiv, Billa, Chopra, Tarun Vaid, Virender Mehta, Shahbaz, Parveen Akhtar, Bal Krishan Sharma, Raghubir Singh, Harbans Lal, Rishu Kumar, Shinda, Ramesh, Kamal Singh, Summy, Surinder Singh, Madan Singh Chib, Tony Chib and others.

Reservation Policies in J&K unfairly disadvantage merit-based students: Tarun Uppal



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 25: Tarun Uppal, Chairman of the Nirbhay Bharat Foundation, has voiced serious concerns about the adverse effects of new reservation policies in Jammu & Kashmir on the region's youth. Uppal criticized these policies, stating that they undermine the efforts and capabilities of open-merit students, effectively denying them fair opportunities.

"The youth of Jammu & Kashmir deserve an equitable platform to pursue their aspirations and achieve their potential," Uppal remarked. "Unfortunately, the current reservation policies marginalize hard-working and deserving students, prioritizing quota-based admissions over merit. This is an injustice that requires immediate intervention from the Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, and the Lieutenant Governor,

Manoj Sinha, to ensure fairness and equality."

The Nirbhay Bharat Foundation, a non-profit organization committed to empowering India's youth, has been closely monitoring the impact of these policies. Uppal highlighted that open-merit students in the region are disproportionately affected, facing exclusion from opportunities due to the emphasis on quota-based systems.

"Merit-based education is the cornerstone of a just and thriving society," Uppal asserted. "By compromising this principle, the current reservation policies in Jammu & Kashmir are depriving countless young individuals of the chance to excel and contribute meaningfully to their communities. We urge the state leadership to act promptly and address this pressing issue."

The Nirbhay Bharat Foundation has reaffirmed its commitment to advocating for the rights of youth in Jammu & Kashmir. The organisation pledged to continue working relentlessly to ensure that all students, irrespective of their background, are provided with equal opportunities to succeed.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee was great personality of era: Chandel



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 25: On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, BJP senior leader Guruji Raju Chandel paid a heartfelt tribute at Vajpayee's Samadhi. Offering floral tributes, Chandel remembered Vajpayee as a towering figure in Indian politics and a "Messiah of peace" both for India and the world.

Chandel lauded Vajpayee's fearless and visionary leadership, recalling his instrumental role in making India a prosperous and powerful nuclear state. "Shri Vajpayee ji was a

courageous leader who prioritized the nation's interests above all else, never hesitating to make bold decisions for the welfare of the country," Chandel remarked.

Reflecting on his personal interactions with Vajpayee, Chandel shared, "I had the privilege of meeting him multiple times. His radiant personality and emperor-like aura left an indelible mark. Though he is no longer with us, his inspiration and blessings continue to guide every worker of the Bharatiya Janata Party."

Chandel emphasized how Vajpayee's legacy has shaped India's journey to becoming a

global power. "Following the path shown by Vajpayee ji, India has emerged as a world power and an economic giant. His vision and values are deeply ingrained in the hearts of every BJP worker and citizen."

Chandel also noted the global celebration of Vajpayee's birthday, stating, "Today, his birthday is being celebrated with great reverence, not only in India but by Indians across the world. Future generations will remember Vajpayee ji as a beacon of inspiration and greatness. Such exceptional individuals grace this earth only once in an era."

KDP Wing of DPAP demands reservation quota for Kashmiri Displaced Hindus in employment

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 25: The Kashmiri Displaced People (KDP) Wing of the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) has called for the restoration of a reservation quota for Kashmiri Displaced Hindus in both Central and UT government employment. This demand comes in the wake of concerns raised over the current employment policies affecting the displaced community.

In a joint statement issued by the KDP Wing leadership, including President Shri Sanjay Dhar, Chairman Shri Piary Lal Pandita, General Secretary Shri Raj Kumar Ticku, Publicity Secretary Charanjeet Singh, Mahila President Daizy Dhar, and Mahila Working President Renu Razdan, the leaders stressed the need for special consideration for the educated wards of Kashmiri Displaced Hindus. They emphasized that the displaced community should be recognized as a minority in the Kashmir Valley, with all documents linked to their ancestral valley addresses.

The leaders highlighted that while the Central Gov-

ernment had introduced a special employment package for Kashmiri displaced Hindus in 2008-09, offering 6,000 posts, the majority of these posts remain unfilled. They criticized successive governments for incorporating candidates from reserved categories such as SC, ST, LAC, and LOC into this recruitment package, allowing over a thousand individuals who had never experienced displacement to benefit from it. Additionally, these candidates were provided with transit accommodation, which the displaced community members found unfair.

"The successive governments have diluted the special recruitment process by including people who have not faced the trauma of displacement. This has led to an injustice to the educated wards of the displaced Kashmiri Hindus," said the leaders in their statement.

The KDP Wing demanded that instead of expanding recruitment quotas in the UT or Central Government departments, the special employment package should be reinstated exclusively for the wards of

displaced Kashmiri Hindus. They also called for the withdrawal of the incorporation of reserved categories in the recruitment process for this specific package.

Furthermore, the leaders urged that Kashmiri Displaced Hindus be granted minority status, and that a suitable reservation be provided to their wards in all government recruitment processes. They also called for a special recruitment drive for three battalions of the police, with specific relaxation for the displaced community's low-educated youth, to help address the rising unemployment and its associated social issues.

The leaders also appealed to the Director General of Police to consider the recruitment of a special battalion for unemployed displaced Kashmiri Hindu women, with relaxed criteria to help curb female unemployment within the community.

The KDP Wing's demands aim to ensure that the displaced community receives fair treatment and equal opportunities in employment, recognizing their unique hardships and status.

Dimple visits Churches, extends Christmas greetings, prays for J&K Statehood



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 25: Sunil Dimple, President of Mission Statehood Jammu Kashmir, visited the Catholic Church in Gandhi Nagar and the International Churches in Amphalla, Jammu, to celebrate the joyous occasion of Christmas.

Dimple extended warm greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the entire nation on

the eve of Christmas. He joined the festive celebrations, offering prayers to Jesus Christ for universal peace, normalcy, communal harmony, and brotherhood in the region. He also prayed for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood with special status.

In a symbolic gesture, Dimple wrote a heartfelt wish on a wall dedicated to Santa Claus, express-

ing his hopes for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood and the return of happiness to the region.

During his visit, Dimple interacted with the priests and congregants, sharing in the Christmas spirit. He also prayed to Mariyam Yusuf (Mother Mary) and Yusuf (Joseph), the parents of Jesus Christ, for blessings and divine guidance.

Dimple conveyed his heartfelt greetings to the Christian community and all people on the occasion of Christmas and the upcoming New Year. His participation in the celebrations underscored the message of unity, harmony, and shared joy among communities in Jammu and Kashmir.



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