

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, THURSDAY, JANUARY 02, 2025

Daily Evening Newspaper

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We set our own standards: Guneet Monga Kapoor



PM Modi lauds Maha gov't efforts for all-round development in Maoist-affected areas



Impeached South Korean president issues defiant message

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RNI No. JKENG/2010/39369

Regd. No. JK-435

Vol.-16 Issue-02 Pages-12 Rs.-2/-

BRIEFLY

Sakina Itoo announces reopening of winter coaching centres in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, Jan 2 (Agencies): The Minister for Health and Education, Sakeena Itoo, announced the reopening of winter coaching centres in Kashmir Valley, which were earlier shut.

Addressing reporters at SKICC on Thursday, Itoo confirmed that the government has recently issued an order to resume these centres, ensuring students can continue their studies during the winter months.

Itoo also highlighted the importance of these coaching centres for the academic progress of students in the valley.

"Earlier, these centres were shut, but the government has now decided to restart them," she said.

Shifting focus to the health sector, the minister highlighted the pressing issue of inadequate medical staff in the valley. While a significant number of buildings have been constructed under the health sector, many remain non-functional due to the unavailability of doctors. "Unless we have sufficient doctors available at these health centres, the health and education department will not take over these buildings," Itoo stated.

MLA Pulwama Waheed Para challenges CM Omar Abdullah's claim on satellite townships

SRINAGAR, Jan 2 (Agencies): Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) youth leader and MLA Pulwama Waheed-ur-Rehman Para today slammed chief minister Omar Abdullah for his remarks about establishment of satellite townships in valley, saying the statement is "contrary" as the concerned department working under CM's supervision is actively identifying the land.

He said that chief minister should throw some light on the matter.

Taking to micro-blogging site X (formerly Twitter) Para said:

"Contrary to CM @ [\[handle\]](#)

We will fulfill promises made to people during our 5-year term in office: Omar Abdullah



SRINAGAR, Jan 2 (Agencies) Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday expressed optimism that Jammu and Kashmir's statehood will be restored soon and said that his government will fulfil all promises made to the people during the five-year term. Jammu and Kashmir tourism

Addressing a press

conference at the Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC) here, CM Omar said he is hopeful that statehood would be restored to J&K soon so that his government can fulfil promises made to the people.

Before the beginning of the press conference, CM Omar said on social

media platform X that he would not make any big statement during the press conference as it is basically an interaction with the media.

National Conference leader Omar said that after taking over as the chief minister, he and his colleagues thought the new government was difficult to run because it was a totally different

scenario as compared to 2009-2015 as J&K is a Union Territory now, but things have started to fall in place.

"It took some time to understand the new rules of UT, however, not many difficulties are faced now," he said.

Speaking about the promises made to people, he said, "We will implement those promises step by step during our five-year term of office."

On the reservation issue, he said that a panel of ministers has been formed and expressed optimism that some solution will definitely come out within six months.

Regarding the electricity situation in J&K, he said that it has improved a lot and expressed hope that it will improve more with the completion of ongoing power projects.

About his promise to

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Three found dead in Baderwah Guest House; SIT formed to investigate

JAMMU, Jan 2 (Agencies): Three men were found dead under mysterious circumstances in a guest house in Baderwah, officials said.

They identified the deceased as Ashutosh Rana, son of Dilip Singh, from Bhella, Doda, currently residing in Purkhoo, Jammu; Mukesh Singh, son of Kuldeep Singh, from Domana, Jammu; and Sunny Choudhary, son of Subash Choudhary, from Bhawani, Nowshara, also residing in Purkhoo, Jammu.

According to them, the incident came to light on January 1, 2025 when the staff of Royal Inn Guest House opposite Maruti Showroom Baderwah reported that the trio was not responding to repeated knocks on the door or calls from family members.

Acting swiftly, a police team led by SHO Baderwah arrived at the scene and broke open

the door, finding all three men lying unconscious, officials further said.

A forensic science team and medical team from SDH Baderwah were immediately called to the spot. However, the medical team declared all three dead on arrival, they added.

Officials said, later, senior officials, including SSP Doda, other police officers, and EMIC Baderwah, also examined the scene along with forensic experts to ensure a detailed investigation.

In light of the seriousness of the situation, they said, SSP Doda has formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) headed by Additional SP Baderwah, comprising professional police officers, to determine the exact cause of death and rule out any foul play.

Additionally, a medical board has been

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Police attach property of drug peddler under NDPS Act

SRINAGAR, Jan 2 (Agencies): In yet another act to curb the drug menace and dismantle illegal narcotic networks, Police in Srinagar have attached the property of a notorious drug peddler under the Narco Act.

Police on Thursday said the legal action was taken from case FIR No. 134/2024, registered against the drug peddler identified as Mohammad Irfan Sheikh a resident of Pamposh Colony Palpora under the jurisdiction of Police Post Noorbagh.

"During the investigation, it came to fore that a huge quantity of narcotic drugs had been seized and the accused had acquired substantial property including a house and land through the proceeds of illegal drug trade," police said

adding, "Adhering to

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Will make Jammu AIIMS beacon of hope, trust & excellence in healthcare: CEO

JAMMU, Jan 2 (Agencies): Asserting that All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Jammu has reached significant milestones in medical education, research, and clinical care, Prof (Dr) Shakti Kumar Gupta, ED and CEO of AIIMS Jammu here on Thursday said that efforts will continue to make the institution a beacon of hope, trust, and excellence in the sector of healthcare.

As we bid farewell to an eventful year 2024, and welcome the New Year, we reflect with immense pride and gratitude at the incredible progress AIIMS Jammu has made, the CEO said in a statement.

Continuing the journey of excellence in infrastructure, AIIMS Jammu launched its patient care



services including OPD, Inpatient, Emergency, Trauma, and OT in August 2024 in a phased manner, he said. Dr Gupta said that looking ahead, 2025 holds immense promise for AIIMS Jammu, adding, "Our vision includes operationalising 750 beds, achieving complete healthcare digitalization, and expanding our patient care services to manage 2,500 daily

OPD cases. With continued collaboration, we will set new standards of excellence, facilitating healthcare transformation in the region and beyond."

"We aspire to establish a Centre of Excellence in Precision Medicine with Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS) technology, serving as a referral hub for Northern India," he said and added that AIIMS Jammu is also enhancing the residential complex with thoughtful additions such as a cycle track, soft music, and a crèche.

"As we continue our journey toward becoming a 'Global Village,' AIIMS Jammu is poised to welcome international students and establish a

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Fresh snowfall lashes Kashmir Valley, More likely between January 4-6

SRINAGAR, Jan 2 (Agencies): Fresh snowfall occurred in the Kashmir Valley on Thursday as the cold wave continued unabated across J&K.

The Meteorological Department has forecast more rain/snow because of two back-to-back Western Disturbances (WDs) passing over J&K.

A MET department statement said, "Because of a feeble WD, generally cloudy weather with light snow-

fall at scattered places is likely to occur on January 2. On January 3, generally cloudy weather with light snow is expected at isolated higher reaches of J&K."

"On January 4-6th, due to moderate to strong WD, generally cloudy weather with light to moderate rain in plains of Jammu and snow at most places of J&K with peak activity during January 4th night to 5th late night with improvement from 6th late afternoon," it said.

The weather department has forecast generally dry cloudy weather from January 7-10.

In view of fresh snowfall, sub-freezing temperatures and icy conditions over roads (plains/higher reaches), tourists/travellers/transporters are advised to plan accordingly and follow Admin/Traffic advisory, it said.

It has predicted heavy snow at isolated higher reaches during January 4 to 6.

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Bhandara, Jagran organized at Vaishno Mata Mandir, Bhagwati Nagar on New Year

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: On the occasion of the New Year, a grand Bhandara (community feast) and Jagran (night-long devotional music event) were organized by Mahant Shri Lucky Baba Ji at the Vaishno Mata Mandir, Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu.

The event saw a large gathering of devotees who came to seek blessings and partake in the festivities.

During the occasion, Shiv Kumar Sharma, DIG of Jammu Kathua Range, attended the event and received blessings from Mata Rani.

In his address, Shiv Kumar Sharma expressed his deep reverence for Mata Vaishno Devi and conveyed his best wishes to all those gathered for the occasion.

He highlighted the importance of spirituality in life, emphasizing



that the blessings of Mata Rani bring peace, prosperity, and harmony to individuals and society.

He also acknowledged the role of spiritual leaders like Mahant Shri Lucky Baba Ji in fostering a sense of community and devotion.

Shiv Kumar Sharma took the opportunity to pray for the welfare and safety of the people in the Jammu Kathua region and

across the nation.

He prayed for the health, happiness, and well-being of every family, urging everyone to stay united in faith and contribute positively to society.

Furthermore, Shiv Kumar Sharma expressed his gratitude to Mahant Shri Lucky Baba Ji for organizing such a grand and meaningful event that brings the community together in devotion.

He encouraged the attendees to continue following the path of righteousness, peace, and harmony, which are the core teachings of Mata Vaishno Devi.

As part of the event, Sharma also received the blessings of Mata Rani and joined the devotees in partaking in the Langar, which was served to all those present.

Mahant Lucky Baba Ji, in his address, prayed to Mata Rani for peace, happiness, and progress for the entire country.

The event was attended by thousands of devotees who gathered to receive blessings and partake in the Langar (community meal) and Prasad (holy offering).

The atmosphere was charged with devotion as the participants joined in singing Bhajans and celebrating the divine presence of Mata Rani.

JKAACL organizes 'Meet the Eminent Writer' programme with Prof. Rattan Lal Shant



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages today organized the "Meet the Eminent Writer" with prominent Kashmiri and Hindi writer and critic Prof. Rattan Lal Shant at the Writers Club, Jammu. A large number of writers, poets and artists across the languages participated in the event and appreciated the contribution of Dr. Shant.

The event was presided over by prominent Kashmiri writer Wali Mohammad Aseer Kistwari while eminent Kashmiri poet Prem Nath Shad was chief guest on the occasion. Harvinder Kour, Sec

retary Academy and Jawed Iqbal Khan Editor Kashmiri, JKAACL were in the presidium.

In her welcome address Harvinder Kour stated that the main objective of this programme is to acknowledge the lifetime achievement and contributions of Prof. Rattan Lal Shant. He said the Academy is documenting the celebrated poets through this programme. She said more such programmes are to be organized in the coming days to honour legendary writers and artists.

Prof Ratan Lal Shant in his address stated about his literary journey and answered the questions of invited writers about his vision and philosophy. He also nar-

rated his life story before the audience.

Aseer Kistwari in his presidential address has commended the literary vision and contribution of Prof. Shant in Hindi and Kashmiri. Prem Nath Shad stated that Shant was a living legend of Kashmiri who has guided a new generation of writers to his contribution to their mother tongue.

Earlier Dr. Ratan Lal Talashi has presented a paper highlighting the literary contribution of Dr. Shant.

Dr. Javid Rahi, Divisional Head JKAACL Jammu in his speech highlighted his invaluable contributions to guiding JKAACL to promote Hindi and Kashmiri literature.

The event was moderated by Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Rather, Assistant Editor, Kashmiri, and concluded with a vote of thanks by Javid Iqbal Khan, Editor, Kashmiri.

Churchill Bros FC, Kashmir United FC win in Christmas Gold Cup Football Tournament

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: The 18th Christmas Gold Cup Football Tournament, organized by the All J&K Sports and Cultural Welfare Association in collaboration with the J&K Sports Council and the J&K Football Association, got underway at Mini Stadium Parade Ground, Jammu.

The first match of the day featured Churchill Bros FC versus Akhnour Tiger. The match was a closely contested affair, with Churchill Bros FC emerging victorious with a narrow 1-0 win. The winning goal was scored by Adonis in the 10th minute, securing the first win of the tournament.

In the second match, Kashmir United FC faced Sainik Colony, and it was a dominant performance by Kashmir United, who won by



a convincing scoreline of 4-1. The first half saw Kashmir United take a strong lead with goals from Baras (5th minute), Azam (15th minute), and Ajay (36th minute). In the second half, Rahul Singh scored a solitary goal for Sainik Colony in the 55th minute, but Kashmir United responded swiftly with a fourth goal from Junaid in the 63rd minute to seal their win.

The event was graced by O.P. Chib, DSP of J&K Police, as the chief guest. He was accompanied by Masoom, former Corporator BJP, Ramesh Chander (International Player), Yousaf Don (Organizing Secre

tary), and other dignitaries, including David Masih, Rajesh Sumbria, Satpal Singh (Incharge Parade Ground), Mohd. Shuja, and Sodagar Mattoo.

The referees for today's matches were Ajay Singh, Bilal Ahmed, Romesh Sethi, and Kartik Sharma, who ensured smooth and fair conduct of the games.

Tomorrow's Fixtures: Jammu Sports FC vs Kashmir United FC at 12:00 PM; J&K Bank Academy vs Param FC at 2:00 PM

Football enthusiasts are eagerly awaiting the upcoming matches as the tournament continues to showcase exciting local football talent.

Archives & Heritage Deptt surveys TRKM Nagbal, Ram Mandir Thakurdwa

Top News Report

SHOPIAN, Jan 2: A team of Archives & Heritage Department headed by K. K. Sidha, Director Archives on Thursday surveyed TRKM Nagbal and Ram Mandir Thakurdwa Shopian to assess the damage and possible improvement to restore of heritage of these ancient temples.

Deputy Commissioner Shopian Mohd. Shahid Saleem Dar along with ADDC, ACR and R&B officers assisted K. K. Sidha.



On spot favourable recommendations were given by the team. TRKM management and Joginder Singh karikarta from Saidpora who is presently at Shopian was also in touch with K. K. Sidha during the visit.

TRKM Management headed by Ashok Sathoo is very thankful to K. K. Sidha and DC Shopian and his team for their concern and favourable recommendations and look forward that the works for reviving the cultural heritage of these temples is taken up at earliest.

CP Ganga, Arvind holds public darbar at BJP headquarters

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: Chander Parkash Ganga, MLA-Vijaypur and Arvind Gupta, MLA-Jammu West held a public darbar at BJP headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

Many deputations drawn from different sections of the society from different areas of Jammu met and apprised the senior leaders of party about their problems and grievances.

People apprised the BJP leaders about unscheduled power cuts, ration supply issues, drinking water supply, and other developmental issues.

Chander Parkash Ganga and Arvind Gupta heard the grievances of the deputations patiently and assured that whatever has been brought into their notice will be taken up with the



concerned authorities for appropriate action.

MLAs made the written communications and pressed upon the concerned department officials for the prompt redressal of genuine demands of the people.

Chander Parkash Ganga, speaking on this occasion, said that being a people-oriented party, the BJP has provided a platform to the general public for direct interaction with the elected MLAs from the party so

the woes of the people are raised at highest level and mitigated at the earliest. BJP stands committed to its approach in serving the people, he added.

Arvind Gupta, emphasizing the need for regular interactions with the public through darbar ensures the 2-way interaction of the public with the party. It makes sure that the common masses have an easy approachable platform to share their issues for their relief.

DIRECTORATE OF HORTICULTURE

Office of the Horticulture Information and Publicity Officer Jammu

GolePulli Talab-Tillo Jammu

(E-mail Id:- hipojam@gmail.com, Fax No. 2501219)

Important Message for Fruit Growers of Jammu Division.

The fruit growers of Jammu Division are hereby advised to adopt the following cultural and protective measures during the month of **January 2025** for better management of their Orchards:-

1. Dig / refill the pits (1 m x 1 m x 1 m) in the laid out areas for Spring plantation after mixing FYM @ 1 cft per pit and Chlorpyrifos for Termite control.
2. Prepare tree basins and apply full dose of FYM and DAP in the Orchards.
3. Use Bio-control agents such as Trichoderma to control soil borne diseases.
4. Use Bio-fertilizers like Azotobacter, Azospirillum, Phosphobacteria, VAM etc. to enhance soil fertility.
5. Vermicompost should be added in the soil to enrich soil with macro and micro nutrients thereby strengthening and increasing water holding capacity of soil.
6. Due to scarcity and limited sources of water, micro-irrigation system like Drip and sprinkler system should be installed in the orchards.
7. Heading back of unwanted limbs of old mango trees for Rejuvenation and then apply Bordeaux paste on the cut surfaces.
8. Thinning of over crowded and over lapping branches may be continued and spray Dinocap @ 0.5 ml per litre of water against Powdery Mildew in Mango.
9. To prevent the infestation of Mealy Bug, apply 1.5 per cent chlorpyrifos dust @ 250 g/ tree around tree trunk and spray carbofuran (0.05%, 25 EC. @ 2 ml/liter of water) or dimethoate (0.06%, 30 EC @ 2 ml/liter of water). *Verticillium lecanii* and *Beauveria bassiana* are effective in managing the Mealybug infestation. Also spray Neem oil 1500 ppm @5-7 ml/ltr water and use alkathene or sticky grease bands 15-20 cm wide by tying around trunks 0.5 m above the ground level.
10. For the control of Mango Malformation, spray Carbendazim @ 2gm/ltr. of water (one spray) and Potassium Metabisulphite @ 6gm/10 lt. of water at an interval of 10 to 15 days.
11. Prune and burn diseased, dead and ground touching branches after harvesting of citrus fruit and spray Copper Oxchloride @ 3gms per litre of water or Bordeaux mixture 1:1:100(Copper sulphate : Lime:Water) against die back, gummosis and citrus canker.
12. Complete the pruning of Grape plants followed by spraying of Copper Oxchloride @ 3gms per litre of water or Bordeaux mixture 1:1:100(Copper sulphate:Lime:Water) and apply half dose of Urea and MOP.
13. Head back desi /inferior Ber plants for top working and apply Copper oxchloride paste to the cut surface to protect against fungal attack.
14. In PEACH, complete the pruning operation during this month followed by spraying the plants with Copper Oxchloride @ 3gm / litre after pruning against fungal attack.
15. In APPLE / PEAR / PLUM & APRICOT, start Pruning of fruit trees, if not done earlier followed by application of Copper oxchloride pasteto all pruned cuts during first fortnight of January.
16. Application of full dose of Phosphorous and Potash, if not applied during December month as per the age of the tree during 1st week of January.
17. Under heavy snow fall, remove snow from tree canopy to avoid splitting of branches, If required.

FRUIT PLANT NURSERIES

1. Stratification of Walnut seeds for sowing purpose be got completed, if seeds are not sown in the month of December and sowing of Pecan nut seed in well prepared seed beds be completed.
2. Prepare the grape cuttings and dump them in trench for callusing.
3. Heading back of mother plants of Mango and Litchi to encourage bud wood availability.

All the orchardists are requested to contact their Horticulture office or feel free to dial 9149665493 for any Biotic or Abiotic disorder / disease in their orchard.

DIP/J-8823/24

Horticulture Information & Publication Officer, Jammu

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EDITORIAL

Women in
Nation-Building

In every society, women have always played a crucial role in shaping the cultural, social, and economic fabric of the nation. However, the significance of their contribution to nation-building is often overlooked or underestimated. Over the years, women's participation in all spheres of life has become an essential factor in the progress of nations. From being homemakers to politicians, entrepreneurs, educators, and activists, women have shown resilience, determination, and an indomitable spirit in overcoming barriers and making invaluable contributions to the development of their societies.

Throughout history, women have been instrumental in social and political movements. In India, for example, women like Sarojini Naidu, Kamini Roy, and Begum Hazrat Mahal played prominent roles in the struggle for independence. They not only fought for political freedom but also for social reforms, often challenging the societal norms and limitations imposed on them. Women like Mahatma Gandhi's associate, Kasturba Gandhi, and Indira Gandhi, India's first female Prime Minister, played key roles in guiding the country through critical times.

In the present day, the role of women in nation-building has expanded beyond the traditional confines of the home. The ongoing progress in various fields—politics, education, healthcare, science, and economics—would not have been possible without the active involvement and leadership of women.

One of the most critical areas where women have contributed to nation-building is in the economic development of a country. Empowering women economically leads to a more productive and sustainable economy. Across the globe, when women participate in the workforce, national economies experience a boost in productivity, innovation, and growth.

In India, women are playing an increasingly significant role in entrepreneurship. The rise of women-led startups, especially in the tech sector, is a testament to their entrepreneurial spirit. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, the founder of Biocon, and Falguni Nayar, the founder of Nykaa, are just a few examples of women who have transformed industries, created jobs, and contributed immensely to the economy. Women's participation in agriculture, handicrafts, and the service sector also continues to uplift the livelihoods of countless families, especially in rural areas.

Despite progress, many barriers still exist, such as gender discrimination, unequal pay, and lack of access to education. However, as the world moves towards gender equality, nations that prioritize women's economic empowerment are likely to experience faster and more inclusive growth. Governments must focus on policies that promote equal access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for women to unlock their full potential.

Women's involvement in governance is crucial for building more equitable societies. Countries with higher female political representation tend to have better social outcomes, including lower poverty rates, improved healthcare, and stronger education systems. Women bring unique perspectives to policymaking, often focusing on issues such as child welfare, gender equality, and social justice.

In India, women have made significant strides in politics. Women leaders such as Indira Gandhi, Mayawati, Sonia Gandhi, and Mamata Banerjee have not only led political parties but have also contributed to shaping the nation's policies. The increased participation of women in local governance through measures like the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, which mandated a certain percentage of seats be reserved for women in Panchayats and municipal bodies, has led to more inclusive decision-making.

However, women's political representation remains inadequate. Across the world, including in India, women hold a disproportionately low number of seats in legislatures and decision-making bodies. Addressing this imbalance and ensuring that women have a strong presence in leadership roles is essential for nation-building.

Women are also at the forefront of social reform and activism. In India, women have been leading movements for social justice, environmental protection, and human rights. Activists such as Medha Patkar and Aruna Roy have fought for the rights of marginalized communities, promoting social reforms and advocating for better living conditions.

Moreover, women have been the backbone of education and healthcare systems. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy was one of the first women doctors in India and advocated for the reform of education and health systems. Today, women like Dr. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Dr. Renu Bhagat, and countless others continue to make strides in improving public health, ensuring that the foundation of a healthy nation is strong.

Social change also begins at the grassroots level. Women have the power to influence and uplift communities. Whether through NGOs, self-help groups, or grassroots movements, women have demonstrated leadership and the ability to bring about transformative change in society.

By: Omkar Dattatray

The end purpose of a government in a democracy is public good and welfare as our government is a welfare government and so it cannot allow the interests and public good to be jeopardized. Government is supposed to protect, safeguard and promote public good and welfare. The Katra ropeway row and controversy is unfortunate and it has become the talk of the town. There is big controversy regarding the ropeway project to Mata Vaishno Devi, but the people of the Katra town and adjoining areas are against the installation of the ropeway project. The traders, businessmen, hoteliers, taxi operators, poniwalla's and the general public of Katra and adjacent areas are up against the proposed ropeway project as it amounts to assault on the local economy of the people residing in and around Katra and it will not be an exaggeration to say that Katra ropeway project is nothing less than Shabhkhon on the incomes of all traders as well as on the commoners of Katra and adjacent areas. The ropeway project in actual amounts to robbing traders and general public of their incomes which accrue to all the stakeholders because of the rush of the Vaishno Devi pilgrims as well as tourists who spend huge amounts of money and all this goes into the coffers of traders, businessmen, hoteliers, taxi operators, Poniwalla's, general public and so on and so forth. The Katra -Sanjichhat ropeway project aims to reduce the time it takes to reach the Vaishno Devi Shrine or Darbar regardless of its ill effects upon the business community and the general public. Traders in Jammu's Katra town are on continuous protest and strike and on 18th December they had observed also protest against the Katra Ropeway project. The traders, hoteliers, taxi operators, poniwalla's and others are on protest against the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Boards decision to install a ropeway project to facilitate the journey to the world famous shrine. Presently the shutdown and protest against the decision to install the ropeway has entered sixth day and BJP, other political parties including PDP and its chief Mehbooba Mufti

want unconditional talks with the protesters by the government so that an amicable solution can be arrived at and the shutdown and protest will come to an end. JCCI has also extended its support to the agitating people of Katra and want an end to the row. The shutdown follows the calls from Shri Mata Vaishnodevi Sangrath Samiti, which claims to represent local businessmen and workers and it is this organization which is spearheading the genuine agitation and protest against the ropeway project. "The Sangrath Samiti is fighting for our rights as the board is out to snatch the bread and butter of over 60,000 families. Everyone—hoteliers, shopkeepers, Poni operators, labourers, and transporters will be robbed of their income and so all of them are on protest demanding shelving of the ropeway project for the interest of the people including all the stakeholders who are participating in the continuous protest," said Bhupinder Singh Jamwal president of the Vaishno Devi Trek Mazdoor Union. Yuva Rajput Sabha of Jammu has also extended its support to the protest against the ropeway project. Authorities detained some protestors for opposing the proposed Rs 250 crore ropeway project in Katra, triggering hunger strike. Tensions remain high in J&K's Katra, with protests against the proposed Rs 250 crore ropeway project in the Trikuta Hills which is continuing. The shutdown, spearheaded by the SMVDSS, entered its seventh day on Tuesday, bringing life to a standstill in the pilgrimage town. The protests come during a peak period for pilgrims, as devotees flock to the Vaishno Devi Shrine for New Year's Day. Katra town serves as a hub for devotees, offering accommodation, shops for religious offerings, and other facilities. It is the starting point for the pilgrimage to the Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu and Kashmir. The trek from Tarakote Marg to Sanji Chhat was inaugurated in 2018 to decongest the traditional routes and provide a safer and more comfortable option for pilgrims. The route does not allow vehicles. Pilgrims also opt to take horses or palanquins, and porter services are managed by a municipal committee, ensuring that only registered service providers are allowed to operate on the track. The ropeway project, announced by the SMVSB, aims

to connect Tarakote Marg to Sanji Chhat, reducing the strain of the 13-Km trek to the shrine, particularly for senior citizens and children. While the project promises faster and safer travel for pilgrims, locals, including pony and palanquin owners and shopkeepers, fear it will impact their livelihoods. The agitation began in November, escalating on December 25 when local business owners called a 72-hour bandh. The protestors have demanded the projects reconsideration, citing concerns over employment loss. Demonstrations began on November 22 and have since escalated. On November 25, locals pelted stones during protests, prompting police intervention. On December 25, local business owners called for a 72-hour bandh, leading to a complete shutdown of commercial activities in the popular pilgrimage town. The SMVDSS earlier had extended shutdown till January 1st, 2025, with all commercial activities suspended and traffic halted in the bustling pilgrimage hub, in an effort to pressurize LG Manoj Sinha to reconsider the ropeway project. Police detained several protestors, including leaders Bhupinder Singh and Sohan Chand, during a march on December 25. The detention has triggered a hunger strike by eight youths demanding their release. The health of one youth has deteriorated, leading to hospitalization. Congress leaders have expressed concern over the treatment of detained protestors, seeking a meeting with LG Manoj Sinha to address the issue. LG Sinha commented on the protests, assuring that any losses suffered by locals would be addressed. He emphasized the project's role in enhancing tourism in the region. The protests have caused disruptions for thousands of pilgrims visiting the shrine. While some remain enthusiastic despite challenges, others have cancelled their trips due to the ongoing shutdown. The ropeway is seen as threatening the livelihood of pony and palanquin owners who now offer last-mile connectivity to the Vaishno Devi Shrine. Eighteen people detained by the police during protests against the ropeway project in Katra—the base camp of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine were released sparking overnight celebrations in the holy town. It is good that detained protestors including some of agitating leaders have

been released. The J&K administration announced the release of the detainees late on Tuesday night, 31st December 2024, and constituted a four-member committee to hold talks with the protestors. Work on Ropeway shall remain suspended while the committee holds talks with the protestors. Eighteen detained individuals, including some leaders, were released around 1am from Reasi and Udhampur Jail. They arrived in Katra to jubilant celebrations, where hundreds of people welcomed them, "said a spokesperson for the SMVDSS. He added that reopening of shops and businesses was underway, and the government-formed committee would hold discussions over the ropeway project. "The government has succumbed to our hunger strike. They have released our leaders, marking the first step towards our victory. We will continue our fight to shelve the ropeway project," said a youth participating in the hunger strike. Former minister and BJP MP Jugal Kishore Sharma welcomed the government's decision and said, "It is a positive step that all 18 detainees have been set free. SMVDSS has suspended their protest but mind it is not the cancellation of the shutdown but merely the temporary opening of shops and businesses. The government has taken a positive step and now SMVDSB & government should for lasting solution consider shelving of the proposed ropeway project in the interest of safeguarding the livelihood of the various stakeholders as the government has no right to snatch the incomes of the shopkeepers, traders, hoteliers, transporters, poni and Palki wallas, but should see how the incomes and employment as well as livelihood of the people is protected. So the government should reconsider and revisit its decision of the proposed ropeway and shelve it for the good and interest of all stakeholders including the public of Katra at large.

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

How to Reduce Stress and Anxiety during Exam

By: Vijay Garg

From mindful preparation and organized study schedules to physical activities and relaxation techniques, here are a range of strategies that can help you navigate challenging exam periods with a greater sense of calm and confidence.

Ways to overcome test anxiety - The conventional ways

1. Plan and Organize
Before diving into your study session, ensure you have all the essential materials and resources at hand. Break down your study materials into smaller, manageable segments and assign dedicated time slots to tackle each one. Having a structured plan can make studying feel more manageable and reduce last-minute cramming. As an alternative, you could also experiment with time management methods to make your study sessions more productive.

2. Planning and organizing study schedule can help reduce exam stress
Additional Tip: Use Study Tools
Consider utilizing digital tools or apps for better organization. For example, apps like Trello or Notion can help you create detailed study schedules and track your progress. These tools can also facilitate collaboration with tutors or study groups, enhancing the efficiency of your preparation.

3. Try Relaxation Techniques
Integrate awareness exercises such as deep breathing, meditation, or progressive muscle relaxation to enhance your daily routine. These methods will effectively soothe your mind, ease test anxiety, and improve your overall focus. For instance, the Mindfulness app on your Apple Watch can help you set aside a few minutes a day to focus on deep breathing, which could lower blood pressure and stress levels significantly.

Moreover, prioritize getting sufficient sleep to ensure that your brain functions optimally during both study sessions and exams.

Trying relaxation techniques can help reduce exam anxiety

Additional Tip: Create a Relaxation Routine
Establish a pre-study relaxation routine to signal your brain that it's time to focus. This could include a short meditation session, stretching exercises, or a few minutes of mindfulness. A consistent routine helps train your mind to transition smoothly into study mode.

4. Maintain a Balanced Diet
As rightly put by the saying, "You are what you eat," a well-balanced diet plays a crucial role in reducing exam stress. Nourish yourself with mind-enhancing foods like nuts, seeds, and leafy greens. While caffeine undoubtedly heightens alertness and concentration, scientific evidence has proven its potential to disrupt sleep patterns and trigger irritability. Choose more wholesome foods such as herbal teas and fruits to foster well-being.

Maintaining a balanced diet can help in lowering exam stress

Additional Tip: Plan Healthy Snacks
Prepare a list of healthy snacks and keep them handy during study sessions. Foods like berries, yogurt, and whole-grain crackers provide sustained energy and focus. Avoid heavy or sugary snacks that can cause energy crashes and distract you from studying.

5. Exercise Regularly
A healthy body lays the foundation for a sound mind. Engaging in daily physical activity naturally reduces exam stress. Make regular exercise a part of your routine, whether through jogging, yoga, or following a quick workout plan. Exercise stimulates the release of endorphins, which are known for their mood-enhancing and stress-reducing prop-

erties.

Making exercise a part of routine can help reduce exam related stress

Additional Tip: Incorporate Short Workouts
Integrate short exercise breaks into your study schedule. Even a 5-10 minute brisk walk or a quick yoga session can rejuvenate your mind and body, helping you return to your studies with renewed energy and focus.

6. Limit Distractions
While social media platforms and smartphones are great sources of entertainment, they also prove to be one of the biggest sources of distraction, especially during stressful periods like exams. Moreover, research indicates that excessive phone usage and extensive engagement with social media can adversely affect your mental health.

To maintain a healthier technological relationship and better mental well-being, set limits on your screen time, take breaks from social media, and participate in other stress-relief activities, especially during exam periods.

Limiting social media during exams can help with stress

Additional Tip: Create a Study Environment
Designate a specific area for studying that is free from distractions. Keep your study space organized and technology-free if possible. This will help your brain associate that space with focus and productivity, enhancing your study effectiveness.

7. Avoid Discussing with Peers
While engaging in discussions can act as an effective method to understand difficult concepts and revise information with your peers, at times, it can also imply that the material or resources your friend has covered might still be unfamiliar to you. This situation can potentially contribute to the stress of having a backlog of topics yet to be explored by you. It's important to keep in mind that each individual learns at a pace and in a style that suits them best, and staying true to your own learning pace and style will help you achieve better results.

Avoiding discussion with friends can act as an advantage during exam stress

Additional Tip: Use Study Groups Wisely
Participate in study groups strategically. Choose groups where you can review and reinforce your understanding rather than comparing progress. This approach ensures that group study sessions remain supportive rather than stress-inducing.

8. Try Different Learning Strategies
Effective learning strategies can significantly reduce the stress associated with exams, enhance your preparation, and boost your confidence.

Methods like the blurring technique, the Feynman approach, the Leitner system, and more, stand as examples. Always remember that consistency is key; finding the perfect blend of strategies that align with your strengths will definitely contribute to achieving successful outcomes.

Using different learning strategies can help boost confidence and reduce exam anxiety

Additional Tip: Experiment with Learning Tools
Incorporate various learning tools such as flashcards, educational apps, or interactive simulations. These tools can cater to different learning styles and help reinforce key concepts in a more engaging and effective manner.

Tips to reduce exam stress - The unconventional ways

The points mentioned above are quite mainstream and familiar; in fact, I'm sure you've tried most of them, but there are some other interesting ways to significantly reduce exam tension or stress. They all share a common factor, which ironically, involves not thinking about the looming pressure of exams, at least for a while. Here are some creative suggestions that can help you manage exam stress:

Alternate ways like eating dark chocolate, hobbies and VR can help with exam stress

1. Dark Chocolate
Just as Professor Lupin offers Harry Potter chocolate after facing a dementor (exams can be as scary as one!), eating chocolate, especially a dark one, can help with exam stress.

Professor Lupin offering Harry Potter chocolate after facing a dementor

Research shows that eating dark chocolate reduces stress hormones and boosts memory significantly. Dark chocolate might have an impact on stress hormones like cortisol, potentially leading to a temporary reduction in stress levels. However, the benefits of dark chocolate are generally thought to be most significant when it is consumed in moderation as part of a balanced diet.

Additional Tip: Choose High-Quality Dark Chocolate

Opt for dark chocolate with at least 70% cocoa content for maximum benefits. This type of chocolate contains higher levels of antioxidants and compounds that can help alleviate stress. Enjoy it as a small treat rather than a regular indulgence.

2. Express Through Art
Immerse yourself in activities that bring you joy, such as writing down your thoughts, journaling, playing a soothing musical instrument, singing, or perhaps painting. Engaging in things you enjoy and are passionate about can create numerous positive effects on your mental and emotional well-being, helping to manage and reduce exam stress in the process.

Additional Tip: Set Aside Creative Time
Dedicate a specific time each day for creative activities. Whether it's drawing, writing, or playing music, regularly engaging in these activities can serve as a productive outlet for stress and a break from academic pressures.

3. Virtual Reality Escapes
VR experiences can offer a way to distract yourself and escape from the real world. Immersing yourself in a captivating VR environment can divert your attention from stressors and negative thoughts, allowing you to concentrate on something enjoyable and novel.

Listening to music, playing with animals and guided imagery can help with exam stress

Additional Tip: Choose Calming VR Experiences
Select VR experiences designed for relaxation and mindfulness. Some VR applications offer serene environments or guided meditation sessions that can help reduce stress and provide a mental break from exam-related worries.

4. Create a Stress-relief Playlist
Music has been proven to have various psychological and physiological effects, including its ability to positively impact mood, emotions, and stress levels. Research has shown that listening to classical music such as solo piano pieces, Mozart sonatas, calming compositions and similar gentle music can have positive effects on focus, concentration and mood.

So, put on a playlist of your favorite soothing music that uplifts your spirits!

Additionally, you can even explore brown noises. Brown noises are basically deep rumbling sounds that resemble the low-frequency sounds of a waterfall or thunder. Studies have shown listening to specific noise types, including brown noise, might have potential benefits in reducing stress and promoting relaxation.

Additional Tip: Update Your Playlist Regularly
Refresh your stress-relief playlist regularly to keep it engaging and effective. Adding new tracks that resonate with your mood can enhance the playlist's impact, ensuring that it remains a helpful tool for managing stress.

5. Spend Time with Animals

Have you ever spent time with a cute puppy? Then you know that the fluffball can make all your problems disappear for a while! Spending time with animals can often reduce stress and have positive effects on mental well-being. Interacting with animals can trigger the release of oxytocin, often referred to as the "bonding hormone." Oxytocin is associated with feelings like happiness, trust, and social bonding, which can ease stress and anxiety. Whether it's spending time with your own pets or visiting an animal shelter, animals have a way of bringing joy and comfort.

Additional Tip: Consider Pet Therapy
Explore pet therapy sessions if you don't have your own pets. Many communities offer pet therapy programs where you can spend time with trained therapy animals. This experience can provide significant emotional relief and reduce stress.

6. Guided Imagery
Guided imagery involves using your imagination to create calming and soothing mental scenarios, such as imagining peaceful scenes, events, or objects. Engaging in guided imagery encourages your body's relaxation response by shifting your emotional state towards a more positive one.

Additional Tip: Use Guided Imagery Apps
Leverage guided imagery apps that offer structured sessions and calming scenarios. These apps can guide you through relaxation exercises and help you develop a routine for managing stress effectively.

7. Exercise your Brain Differently
Engaging in puzzles and games can divert your attention away from the sources of stress. They provide a mental break and allow you to focus on something enjoyable and challenging, such as solving puzzles, tackling brain teasers, or playing strategy games. Switching your focus to a different type of mental challenge can break the cycle of exam-related stress.

Additional Tip: Set Daily Brain Challenges
Incorporate daily brain challenges into your routine to keep your mind sharp and engaged. Activities like playing sudoku online, crossword puzzles, or strategy games can provide a productive distraction and help alleviate stress.

For tutoring academies, using tools like Class card can further enhance the learning experience. Class card's comprehensive class management software allows for efficient scheduling, student tracking, and resource management, which can help in creating a structured and supportive learning environment. By streamlining administrative tasks, tutors can focus more on delivering high-quality education and personalized support to students. This can significantly reduce the stress associated with exam preparation, both for tutors and students.

Exams may be challenging, but by implementing these strategies, you can effectively reduce exam anxiety and improve your overall performance to a great extent. Remember that it's normal to experience some level of stress before exams, but with proper planning, self-care, and a positive mindset, you can tackle exams with confidence and success.

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

DM Kishtwar approves 23 new cases under SFCAC



Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Jan 2: In a significant step towards ensuring welfare for orphaned children, District Magistrate (DM) Kishtwar, Rajesh Kumar Shavan, chaired a meeting of the Sponsorship and Foster Care Approval Committee (SFCAC) today.

The meeting focused on deliberations and approvals of new cases under the welfare schemes aimed at providing financial support to orphans.

During the meeting, the committee approved 23 new cases, taking the total number of beneficiaries under these schemes to 223, against a target of 201 cases. The committee had earlier approved 200 cases following a meticulous verification process.

The focus of the discussion revolved around saturating the target and ensuring that no eligible child is left out of the

benefits provided under these schemes.

The Sponsorship and Foster Care Schemes, implemented under the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), aim to provide financial assistance to children in need of care and protection. The Sponsorship Scheme provides monetary support to families or guardians to ensure proper upbringing of children, while the Foster Care Scheme allows children to live with foster families, ensuring a nurturing environment for their holistic development.

DM Kishtwar emphasized the importance of achieving 100% saturation of the target to extend the benefits of these schemes to all eligible orphans in the district. He directed the committee to ensure the inclusion of every orphan in Kishtwar under the schemes and instructed for robust verification to eliminate any discrepancies.

The DM further stressed the need for widespread publicity of these schemes through print, electronic, and social media channels, along with community outreach programs. He urged all stakeholders, including government officials, NGOs, and orphanage representatives, to collaborate in identifying and enrolling eligible beneficiaries.

"The welfare of orphaned children is a collective responsibility. We must ensure that no child is left without support. Wide publicity and effective implementation of these schemes will help us achieve our goal of inclusive development," the DM stated. Besides the participants discussed strategies for better implementation and follow-up mechanisms for the schemes. The committee decided to streamline the application process further and ensure timely disbursement of benefits.

The meeting was attended by the District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) Kishtwar, Sh. Zubair Ahmed (JKAS), Chairperson of the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), and other committee members. Representatives from stakeholder agencies and NGOs running orphanages in the district were also present.

Army conducts carpentry cadre at Thillu

Top News Report

REASI, Jan 2: The Indian Army, under Operation Sadbhavana, has commenced a Carpentry Cadre in Thillu, Reasi district.

These skill-development programs are aimed at empowering local youth by providing them with essential vocational training to enhance their employment opportunities and foster self-reliance.

The 45-day-long cadres will equip participants with modern techniques and practical knowledge in their respective trades.

More than 20 youth will benefit from this initiative, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to their communities or pursue self-employment.

This effort is part of the Indian Army's continued commitment to uplifting underprivileged regions by addressing local needs and promoting socio-economic development.

The initiative has been warmly welcomed by the local population, further strengthening the bond between the Indian Army and the people.

KP leaders demand twenty thousand permanent posts for educated KP Youth

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: Kashmir Pandits who faced the axe of forceful migration in 1990 at hands of terrorists and Anti social elements active in valley, bore the big brunt of losing more than Twenty five thousand permanent Government Jobs on which they were actively discharging their duties before in Kashmir Valley, thus gave a big setback to this displaced community in exile besides other irreparable losses suffered due to the volatile situation. These posts were cleverly grabbed and filled under a well thought out plan and machinations by the then officers in command at the helm thus grabbed their source of livelihood completely which needs a high level probe.

In a statement issued today by the prominent Socio political activists and leaders Vinod Pandita and Sanjay Dhar (President KDP WING

DPAP) have jointly appealed to Prime Minister of India, Home Minister of India and Lt. Governor J&K for creation and advertisement of twenty thousand permanent posts for educated youth of Kashmiri Pandits in order to tackle their grave rising unemployment and remove more than three decades old discrimination.

Pandita and Dhar have also appealed for tangible provisions for making the jobs of PM package employees permanent with all the provisions of usual benefits like normal employees of Jammu and Kashmir in order to end the tag of supernumerary posts.

They also appealed for formation of tangible rehabilitation policy at the earliest for resettlement of more than five lakh Kashmiri pandits back in Valley at safer zones after taking on boat the community leaders.

Girls shine in academic results of Aryans College of Law

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: Law students of Aryans College of Law, Rajpura, Near Chandigarh, brought laurels to the college in the 4th semester examinations conducted by Aryans under Punjab University, Patiala.

In BA-LL.B, 4th sem examination, Kashish bagged 1st position with 70%, Karni kaur bagged 2nd position with 69% and Ms. Priyanka Rani bagged 3rd position with 67.0% marks.

Dr. Davinder Kumar Singla Principal Aryans College of Law congratulated the students and faculty for the hard work. Such excellent

results by the students add more name and fame to the College, added Singla.

It is to be mentioned that Aryans was the only Law College in the region to be associated with Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) in the years 2019, 2020 and 2021. For the first time, Pearson VUE on behalf of Law School Admission Council (LSAC) has made Aryans College of Law the Exam Centre for Law School Admission Test (LSAT). The score of the test is being used by famous law schools of America & Canada i.e Harvard, Yale, Stanford University, British Columbia, Chicago etc.

Army rings in New Year with public at Tattapani

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Jan 2: The Indian Army, in collaboration with the Municipal Corporation and locals, welcomed the New Year with a massive cleanliness drive in Tattapani.

This collective effort aimed to preserve the beauty of nature and promote environmental awareness, reflecting the Indian Army's commitment to serving the nation beyond its core responsibilities.

The event was a testament to the Indian Army's dedication to building a cleaner, greener future and spreading awareness

about the benefits of hygienic living. The drive brought together locals, municipal corporation officials, and The Indian Army personnel, demonstrating the power of collective action in driving positive change.

This initiative is part of the Indian Army's broader efforts to promote cleanliness and environmental stewardship, aligning with the government's Swachh Bharat Mission. Launched in 2014, the mission aims to create a clean and hygienic India by promoting widespread awareness and participation in cleanliness activities.

The success of the cleanliness drive in Tattapani serves as a model for similar initiatives across the country, highlighting the importance of community-led efforts in driving sustainable change. As the nation continues to strive toward a cleaner and greener future, the Indian Army remains committed to playing a vital role in this endeavor.

The event concluded with a renewed sense of purpose and commitment to environmental conservation, setting the tone for a year filled with collective action and positive change.

Doda police solves theft case within 24 hours, stolen property recovered, thieves arrested



Top News Report

DODA, Jan 2: In a major breakthrough, Doda Police has worked out a theft case involving huge amount of cash stolen from the temple and arrested the accused within 24 hours.

Giving details police said that on January 1, 2025 a complaint was lodged at police sta

tion Doda by one Ajay Kumar S/O Sewa Ram R/o Ghat Doda regarding theft of cash from Temple near Govt. Medical College Ghat Doda after break opening the lock during the night of night of 31.12.2024. Soon after the receipt of complaint case FIR No.01/2025 U/S 305/331(3)BNS was registered in PS Doda and investigation

started. On the directions of SSP Doda Sandeep Mehta, a special police team was constituted headed by Inspector Parvaiz Ahmed Khanday, SHO PS Doda. During the course of the investigation many suspects were rounded up for questioning besides human intelligence as well as technical assistance was also utilized by the investigating team.

During questioning 02 juvenile (name withheld) have confessed their involvement in the theft case and on their disclosure stolen cash Rs, 13550 was recovered from their possession. Further investigation is going on.

District Administration Kishtwar to organize mega healthy baby competition



Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Jan 2: In order to promote health of new born babies and inculcate the sense of healthy life, the District Administration has launched a wide campaign to select healthy babies and extend medical facilities to the pregnant ladies, lactating mothers and newly born babies across the district.

For the same the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishtwar Rajesh Kumar Shavan organized a meeting of all concerned officers and directed them to organize mega shows across the district.

The event will begin at the Panchayat level, proceed to the Block level, and culminate at the District level in both categories male and female in the age group of 6 months to 6 years. The winners will be felicitated on 26th January 2025, on the occasion of Republic Day 2025,

with citation certificates and incentives.

A committee consisting of AWWs, AWHs, members of the Village Monitoring Committee, and women members of the Pani Samiti will conduct a preliminary survey of healthy babies from 1st to 5th January 2025 in each Panchayat based on specific criteria at Panchayat Level. The Village/Panchayat level committee will submit the selected list of 06 healthy babies (3 Male 3 Female) to the Block Level Committee along with documentation of all events.

The Block Level Committee consisting of BDO, CDPO, BMO, TSWO TSO, will organize an inter-Panchayat competition from 7th to 9th January 2025 and select 06 healthy babies (03 male 03 female) for the District Level Competition.

The District Level Committee consisting of PO ICDS Kishtwar, ACD Kishtwar, CMO

Kishtwar, DSWO Kishtwar, and AD FCS&CA Kishtwar will organize an inter-block competition from 14th to 18th January 2025 and select 02 healthy babies per block (01 male and 01 Female) and those will be the winners of the Competition.

This competition will be closely monitored by the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and the Block Medical Officers (BMOs) concerned, with thorough screening of the newborn children.

The competition, which began on 1st January 2025, has generated significant enthusiasm among mothers, who care for the health and well-being of their babies despite all challenges in the society.

The main objective of the competition is to promote the health and well-being of newborns and to ensure proper care for their mothers also.

accomplishments of these award-winning writers.

A distinctive feature of "Dozens of Dogri Literature" is that it not only presents the literary achievements of these 50 Sahitya Akademi Awardees but also includes interviews with the writers themselves. This offers a rare glimpse into their lives and creative processes. The book also features color photographs of the award-winning works of the authors, as well as images of Dogra heritage sites, including Mubarak Mandi, Amar Mahal, Vaishno Devi, and several other significant locations. Additionally, the book includes photographs of modern-day institutes and landmarks in Jammu and Kashmir, further showcasing the region's diverse history

and development.

The language of the book is simple yet elegant, making it accessible to readers from all backgrounds. It is dedicated to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, as well as to the broader Dogri-speaking community. The book carries messages from prominent personalities, including Dr. Karan Singh, Dr. S.S. Bhoeria, and Padma Shri Dr. Jatendra Udhamपुरi, further elevating its significance.

The book is expected to make a lasting impact by spreading awareness about the unique features of Dogri literature and its esteemed writers, offering valuable insights for both Dogri-speaking and non-Dogri-speaking audiences alike.

New pictorial book on Dogri Literature to launch soon

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: A new comprehensive pictorial book in English titled "Dozens of Dogri Literature" is set to make its debut in the market soon. The book showcases 50 prominent Dogri writers who have received the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award. This remarkable work, authored by veteran journalist and writer O P Sharma, has been the result of years of in-depth research, drawing from authentic records and interviews with these iconic literary figures.

The book features renowned Dogri authors like Ram Nath Shastri, Padma Sachdev, Kehri Singh Madhukar, Dinu Bhai Pant, Dr. Jitendra Udhamपुरi,

Mohan Singh, Prof. Champa Sharma, Ved Rahi, and many others, spanning from 1970 to the present. Sharma, whose mother tongue is Dogri, has long been fascinated by the region's military heritage, cultural traditions, and folk arts. His work sheds light on the contributions of these literary stalwarts, whose creative works have significantly shaped and enriched Dogri literature.

The book is being published by Starline Syndicate Service, a Jammu-based emerging publisher, and promises to attract readers both in India and abroad. It aims to introduce the beauty and richness of Dogri literature to a wider audience, especially those unfamiliar with the language, while also celebrating the

Salman Khan's Sikandar to Aamir Khan's Sitaare Zameen Par, here are the top picks of 2025

As the curtain closes on a relatively underwhelming 2024, trade experts and film exhibitors are pinning hopes on Salman Khan's highly anticipated film *Sikandar*, and a plethora of franchise offerings like *War 2*, *Raid 2*, and *Housefull 5*, which they believe will reignite audience interest at the box office.

The film landscape for 2025 is loaded with diverse content but expectations are high from Salman's *Sikandar*, which is set to release on the occasion of Eid in March.

Among the films heading into theatres are Kangana Ranaut's political drama *Emergency*, Akshay Kumar's war film *Sky Force*, Shahid Kapoor's action-packed thriller *Deva* and Vicky Kaushal-starrer historical drama *Chhaava*, which chronicles the life of Maratha king Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj.

The second half of 2025 has a remarkable lineup of films like

the sequel to popular titles such as *Jolly LLB 3*, *Raid 2*, *Housefull 5*, *War 2*, *Baaghi 4*, *De De Pyaar De*, and *Son of Sardaar 2*.

In addition to this, there are other releases such as Varun Dhawan's romantic-comedy film with father David Dhawan, Shahid Kapoor's actioner which is helmed by Vishal Bhardwaj, a horror-thriller *Dil Ka Darwaaza Khol Na Darling!* Starring Kajol, Jaya Bachchan, Siddhant Chaturvedi, Wamiqa Gabbi and Swanand Kirkire, *Alpha*, Yash Raj Films' next *Spy Universe* movie starring Alia Bhatt and Sharvari, and Aamir's *Sitaare Zameen Par*.

According to Nitin Datar, president of the Cinema Owners and Exhibitors Association of India, and Amit Sharma, MD of Miraj Entertainment Limited, the 2025 lineup looks promising.

"It's tough to guess now which film will do well because publicity has not started. However, 2025 looks good



and I'm looking forward to the release of *Sikandar*, *Housefull 5*, *Jolly LLB 3*, *Emergency* and *Chhaava*. The rest of the films will be slow starters but may pick up," Datar says.

Trade analyst Taran Adarsh says there's an "overdose" of franchise films. He acknowledged

the risk of audience fatigue but is hopeful that each film will attain commercial success.

"It's going to be a strong 2025, there's a good line-up of movies. There's going to be an overdose of franchises and sequels. Let's place our bets on every film that comes in," Adarsh

says.

Trade expert Girish Wankhede feels Salman Khan's *Sikandar* might set the tone for an eventful year, which will also see Aamir Khan's *Sitaare Zameen Par* arriving in theatres by mid-2025.

"In addition to these star-studded releases, the upcoming year will witness a plethora of sequels and prequels, both from the South Indian film industry and Bollywood. Each film is expected to feature stellar casts and possess immense potential to captivate audiences," Wankhede says.

Adarsh underscores the importance of quality content and urged the Hindi film industry to move away from remakes of South Indian films.

"In the coming days, we will see more quality projects and that's because we've learnt an important lesson that we need to concentrate on content, and need to stop making remakes because they are not working.

Priyanka Chopra Jonas: The magic of movie theatres will never fade



Priyanka Chopra Jonas had revealed to us recently she is returning to Indian films soon- and boom, rumours began about her possibly starring in filmmaker SS Rajamouli's next. Even as we wait for the news to be made official in 2025, she is prepping for the

release of *Citadel's* next season.

In times where doubt prevails about theatres surviving amidst the onslaught of OTT, what does Chopra feel? "I think that both, the big screen and OTT, are incredible to have! We're living in an incredible time where we can

access entertainment in every way possible, 24/7," says the 42-year-old.

Praising the "big screen experience", she continues, "I think it will always be special. There's nothing quite like entering a darkened theatre and watching a movie, not just with friends and family, but by a room full of strangers, all connected by the viewing experience. The big screen's scale, sound, and immersive atmosphere add to make it a special experience. I don't think the magic of movie theatres will ever fade."

Chopra, who also co-produced the recent Marathi film *Paani*, also looks at it from a technical point of view, "The advancements in technology ensures that the cinematic experience is only getting better. From 3D to IMAX, and now immersive audio, there is continued innovation in the theatre experience and that will keep bringing people back."

Christina Aguilera slams critics who left hateful comments about her appearance

Christina Aguilera clapped back at haters who had mean things to say about her. Taking to social media on New Year's Eve, the 44-year-old shared a video montage of herself that features a slew of hate comments about her appearance. The Candyman singer set her post to audio about ignoring one's haters and explained in the caption that "no one deserves an explanation" about one's appearance or life.

In the video shared on Instagram, Aguilera shared countless rude comments about her appearance. From "fake" to "where is Christina?" the Genie in a Bottle singer faced strong criticism online. The video then transitions to snippets of her special moments from 2024, set to upbeat music about being self-confident.

"This year, doing something a little different," she wrote in the caption. "This is a reminder to everyone that you are your OWN STORYTELLER in your OWN LIFE," Aguilera went on, adding that "no one else can dictate who you are" and "no



one deserves an explanation."

The Beautiful hitmaker continued to say that she is now "evolved enough to know that nothing comes easy and no one is perfect."

"Everyone will judge you. No matter WHAT you do. And/or what you don't do. Acceptance comes with accepting yourself first," she added.

Aguilera also highlighted the importance of accepting the "difficult journey" that leads to acceptance. "I celebrate everyone taking the time to put one step in front of the next everyday in order to build the next version of themselves for the better," she added before concluding with, "Allowing yourself grace, patience and respect..."

We set our own standards: Guneet Monga Kapoor

Hustle might not be a word you would associate with Oscar winning producer Guneet Monga Kapoor as she once again makes news on the international stage. *Anuja*, a live-action short film, which she has executive produced has been shortlisted for Oscars. But she and Achin Jain, her co-founder of Sikhya Entertainment share how hustle, oodles of hard work, years of love for storytelling across formats coupled with karma is what have led them down the victory path. All the way to the prestigious Oscars, previously won for *Period: End of Sentence*, and *The Elephant Whisperers*.

What makes the academy awards so significant, especially in the Indian context? Guneet comes up with one-liner, "whole of India watches it." Achin, however, is more elaborate and shares, "If you look at the run up to the awards from *Palme d'Or* at Cannes to *Golden Globes*, internationally Oscars are the culmination point."

Anuja, a tale of nine-year-old, working in a garment factory who suddenly faces a life altering choice, has already been to many festivals and won several awards too.



But that does not mean there is really a formula to winning an Oscar. Their instinctive gut feeling, intuition tells them which stories and story tellers to back. Back in time when she produced *The Lunchbox* surprisingly there were no takers for the beautiful film in India. Those of us who are wondering how can her Sikhya Entertainment and Karan Johar's Dharma Productions come together. For on the face of it aren't their sensibilities like chalk and cheese. But she begs to differ and reminds us how when no one was ready

to distribute *The Lunchbox*, Karan Johar came on board and made it a huge success in India. She adds, "We both back good cinema... period." In fact, in future she intends to double down her 'empowering' partnership with him. If this year they have collaborated for two successful projects *Gyaarah Gyaarah* and *Kill*, up next is a thriller series starring Ayushmann Khurrana and Sara Ali Khan.

Interestingly, for a woman who beamed at the Oscars, "We as two women from India stood on that global stage

making this historical win," also believes in the philosophy of "one woman putting the other forward."

So, how does her partnership with member of the opposite gender Achin work? Now it's Achin's turn to come up with a tongue-in-cheek response, "If Guneet remains 70,000 feet high in the sky then I am 35,000 feet under the ground. Somewhere in between and amidst our many fights for the same cause we find a meeting ground."

By the way there are no gender roles to be played here. Action blitzkrieg *Kill* wasn't Achin's choice, rather Guneet who simply loves extreme action was all for it. As a woman nothing is taboo for her except may be a porn film or may be that story too could be told from a woman's perspective.

Beyond their individual tastes, their production house follows a very democratic set up where not just their voices but those of others in the company too matter. In a country where role of producers is never fully understood, Achin agrees, "In a star-obsessed industry, people do wonder if you are not money bags and if you are not stars' relatives then what exactly

are you doing here?"

But producers, they reveal, are directors' best support system and shine a light on the director, actors and the story. When would Guneet, a true blue sardarani, who has more recently given us a documentary on the rise and fall of Punjabi singer Yo Yo Honey Singh, turn her attention towards a Punjabi film? "Someday, when I find the right script," is the succinct answer. Right now, the only one who has caught her eye is Anmol Sidhu of *Jaggi* fame.

What about her promise that she will get us an Oscar for a feature film? She laughs, "Right now a lot of praying is happening." Achin adds, "Not just that, we are reading lots of scripts too." Indeed, 'mehnat aur rhamat' is the key for Guneet. Double down, you bet is another favourite word of hers. No prizes for guessing her gyaarah gyaarah wish is another Oscar, for *Anuja*, produced by Mindy Kaling among others. Can Guneet manifest it again for 1.4 billion Indians? Fingers crossed. First test would be on January 17 when Oscar nominations will be out. And even making it to the final five, feels Guneet will be an honour.

MC Square: 'I incorporate elements of my culture into my songs'

For Delhi-based rapper Abhishek Bensla aka MC Square, music is a direct reflection of an artist's roots, struggles, and aspirations, and it is true, especially in MC Square's case. "Music should resonate first with those closest to you, and then, hopefully, with a wider audience," says MC Square, who feels that his music is not just about crafting catchy beats or delivering intricate rhymes—it's about telling stories that reflect his truth and resonate with the people who share his experiences.

"My lyrics are rooted in my personal experiences, the lives of my friends, and the realities of our surroundings. Therefore, I incorporate elements of my culture and everyday observations into my songs," he says.

MC Square's approach to music is grounded in his belief that it should connect deeply with one's own community before expanding beyond. "The creative process for each of my songs is consistent. I begin by listening to the music and interpreting

its inherent message. Then, I search for relevant cultural or historical references to incorporate, aiming to encourage listeners to explore our cultural history," says MC Square who won the second season of the popular reality show *MTV Hustle*.

This philosophy is evident in almost every track he creates, including his latest release, *Kakori Kaand*. The song is a bold statement, blending the rebellious spirit of India's past with the struggles of modern-day hustlers. He drew inspiration from the historical *Kakori Train Robbery*, a key event in India's freedom struggle, which serves as a backdrop for the song's theme of rebellion and defiance.

"I recognised the righteousness of their actions, understanding they were motivated by a noble cause. But the track is not a direct retelling of the robbery; instead, it channels the revolutionary spirit of those who fought against oppression. The attitude reflected in the song isn't an act; it's an inherited mindset, a way of life passed



down through generations," he explains. The song is also about MC Square's

personal journey in the hip-hop world. His lyrics are inspired by his own experiences, the realities of his community, and the struggles he faces in his quest to make a mark in the music industry. For MC Square, the track is as much about cultural rebellion as it is about carving a space for himself and his roots within desi hip-hop.

"I belong to a community often stereotyped, even today, as thieves. This label has always bothered me," MC Square states adding that the stigma surrounding his community is something he's deeply connected to, and it serves as a powerful influence on his music. "This historical injustice, fuels my perspective. This personal connection to the struggle against unjust labels and the fight for a better future shaped the narrative of the song," he shares.

The authenticity in his work has garnered praise from influential figures in the music industry, including producer Sez On The Beat, who called MC Square's lyrical

style unmatched. "Representing my roots authentically is crucial," MC Square says, emphasising the responsibility he feels to inspire those from his own community. His focus is not solely on global recognition but on empowering others to share their stories.

"I believe I'm the first artist from my specific area, Baislaat village, to reach this level of recognition. Therefore, I feel a responsibility to inspire countless others from my community to share their stories. My focus isn't solely on view counts; it's about connecting with and inspiring the people of Baislaat. Their ability to relate to and find inspiration in my music is my primary goal. That's why incorporating my roots and culture into my work is paramount," he says.

For MC Square, music is more than just sound—it's a powerful act of rebellion and self-expression. Through his journey, he proves that staying true to one's roots can inspire change, challenge stereotypes, and ultimately redefine the future of music.

PM Modi lauds Maha govt's efforts for all-round development in Maoist-affected areas

NEW DELHI, Jan 2 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday lauded the Maharashtra government's efforts to ensure all-round development in the state's remote and Maoist-affected areas.

The prime minister's comments came a day after Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis visited Gadchiroli, a district affected by left wing extremism, and asserted that the dominance of Naxalites in remote areas of the district was ending.

A number of Naxal cadres laid



down their arms during his visit, with Fadnavis also unveiling several development initiatives.

Modi said on X, "I laud the Maharashtra Government's efforts to ensure all-round development in remote and Maoist-affected areas. This will certainly boost 'Ease of Living' and pave the way for even more progress. A special congratulations to my sisters and brothers of Gadchiroli and the surrounding areas!"

He was responding to a post by Fadnavis on his government's efforts to eliminate the violent movement from the region.

45 injured after bus rams into two trucks on Delhi-Mumbai Expressway in Rajasthan's Dausa

JAIPUR, Jan 2 (Agencies): Around 45 passengers were injured when a private bus rams into two trucks, which had already collided with each other on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway in Rajasthan's Dausa district on Thursday, police said.

Nangal-Rajawatan DSP Charul Gupta said that a bus of devotees was going from Ujjain to Delhi when the accident

occurred due to dense fog.

The DSP said around 45 passengers in the bus were injured and more than 20 were admitted to Dausa District Hospital.

Four were referred to Jaipur and some injured left for Noida and Delhi for treatment, she added.

Gupta said the accident took place near Lahdi Ka Bas on the

Delhi-Mumbai Expressway in Dausa district.

The front part of the bus was badly damaged in the accident, police said.

Additional doctors and staff were deployed on the instructions of District Hospital Chief Medical Officer Dr Deepak Sharma following information that a large number of people were injured.

CJI extends new year greetings, asks lawyers to file physical letters for urgent listings

NEW DELHI, Jan 2 (Agencies): Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna on Thursday wished the lawyers and litigants a happy new year as the Supreme Court reopened after its winter vacation, which lasted from December 21, 2024, to January 1, 2025.

"I wish you all a happy new year. May you have a happy new year, your families..." the CJI said at the outset of the day's proceedings.

"I am told the email for mentioning is not working. You can move the physical letters accordingly," the CJI said, adding that such letters would be reviewed in



the afternoon, with necessary orders issued for listing.

After taking charge as the CJI, Justice Khanna had stopped the practice of oral submissions for urgent listing of cases before the apex court benches.

He had said the urgent listing of cases will be

permitted after the lawyers either send emails or write letters for the purpose.

Usually the lawyers mention their cases before the CJI-led bench at the outset of the day's proceedings for out of turn listings and hearing of cases on grounds of urgency.

Mamata Banerjee's big charge: BSF allowing infiltration from Bangladesh

KOLKATA, Jan 2 (Agencies): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee stirred up a hornet's nest on Thursday by accusing the central forces of allowing infiltration from Bangladesh to destabilise the state. Calling it the Centre's "nefarious blueprint", Banerjee alleged that the BSF, which guards the Bangladesh border, was allowing infiltration into Bengal and also torturing women.

Mamata Banerjee's remarks during an administrative meeting come weeks after Union Home Minister Amit Shah asserted that "infiltration from Bangladesh" was disrupting peace in



Bengal. The issue has become the latest flash-point between the TMC and BJP ahead of next year's Assembly election.

"The BSF is allowing infiltration from different areas into Bengal and torturing women. The TMC is not guarding the borders. The border is not in our hands, so if someone accuses the TMC of permitting

infiltration, I will point out that it is the BSF's responsibility," Mamata said.

The fiery Trinamool boss further said that she would instruct the Director General of Police (DGP) to investigate and identify the locations from where the BSF was allowing infiltration.

"The police have all the information, and the

Centre has it too. I have received information from Rajiv Kumar (DGP) and local sources. I will write a strong letter to the Centre regarding this," Banerjee said.

Stressing on her desire for peace in Bengal and neighbouring Bangladesh, Banerjee said, "We have no enmity, but goons are being allowed here. They commit crimes and return across the border. BSF is enabling this, and the Centre has a role in it."

She also warned the Centre of protests if anyone tried to fuel terror activities in Bengal. India and Bangladesh share a 4,096-kilometre border, much of which is porous and dotted with rivers.

Agency, during an investigation, revealed how vast unfenced stretches leave the areas open to infiltration and smuggling activities.

Hitting back at Banerjee, Union Minister Giriraj Singh said that Bengal had become a nursery for Bangladeshi infiltration.

"Whoever is being caught is a Bangladeshi, and most of their addresses are from Bengal. Mamata didi is doing all this out of greed for votes, and turning Bengal into a gateway for Bangladeshi Muslims and Rohingyas. Meanwhile, atrocities against Hindus in Bangladesh are happening, and the whole world is witnessing this," Singh said.

Nitish comes up with cryptic response after Lalu's fresh offer to join INDIA bloc

PATNA, Jan 2 (Agencies): Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Thursday came up with a cryptic response to RJD president Lalu Prasad's offer to return to the INDIA bloc.

"Kya bol rahe hain (What are you saying)" was all the JD(U) boss said in reply to queries from journalists about Prasad's fresh offer.

Kumar had aligned twice with the RJD, a constituent of the INDIA bloc, in the last one decade.

Prasad's son and heir apparent Tejashwi Yadav, however, sought to downplay the remarks made by his father, in an interview to a local news channel, claiming that the RJD supremo had merely tried to satisfy the curiosity of the prying media.

Prasad had said, "Our

doors are open (for Nitish). He should also unbolt his gates. This would facilitate movement of people from both sides".

The remark, coming in the backdrop of Union Home Minister Amit Shah's stance on projecting the JD(U) supremo as NDA's face in the assembly polls due in less than a year, triggered intense speculations in a section of the media here.

Kumar was approached with queries by journalists at Raj Bhavan, where he attended the swearing-in ceremony of Arif Mohammad Khan as the new governor.

Flanked by Khan and Deputy CM Samrat Choudhary (BJP) on either side, Kumar folded his hands and smiled when his com-



ments were sought on the offer from Prasad. Pressed further, he asked, "What are you saying".

When a pointed query was made, as to whether the state government would be able to complete its term, Khan intervened and said, "This is not the occasion for a question of this type. Today is a happy day. Let us only talk about good things".

Later, the posse of journalists approached

Yadav, a former Deputy CM and the current leader of the opposition, who had also come to attend the function.

The young leader, who had on Wednesday declared that the new year will see "departure" of the NDA government headed by Nitish Kumar, said: "I have already made my stand clear".

When probed further, with reference to the utterances of his father, Yadav said, "What would he do if people

like you keep coming to him with the same question? Whatever he said must have been aimed at putting an end to curiosity of you journalists." Meanwhile, when questions about Prasad were posed to Union minister and former JD(U) president Rajiv Ranjan Singh "Lalan", he snapped.

"The NDA is strong. JD(U) and BJP are united. It is a free society and anybody can say whatever he pleases. It is for Lalu ji to say more on his own utterances", he said.

Lalan was perceived to have grown very close to the RJD supremo when Nitish Kumar was out of NDA. It was rumoured to have been the reason why the de facto JD(U) chief chose to take over as the president of the party.

Here is why Arif Mohammad Khan lost his temper after taking oath as Bihar Governor



PATNA, Jan 2 (Agencies): Bihar Governor Arif Mohammad Khan on Thursday frowned upon questions being raised, in a section of the media, over his meeting with RJD president Lalu Prasad, hours before his swearing in.

Khan expressed anguish while interacting with journalists here, after he was adminis-

tered the oath of office by Patna High Court Chief Justice K Vinod Chandran.

He was asked about his visit, Wednesday evening, to the residence of Prasad, shortly after the RJD president's son Tejashwi Yadav, who, incidentally, was also present at the swearing in ceremony, had called on

him at the Raj Bhavan. "You tell me one thing. If you visit a place and you have old acquaintances, would you not like to meet them? Likewise, would I not like to spend some time with those whom I have known since 1975, once I am in their city? I wonder what is questionable in this matter," Khan said.

Urging the media "not to view all things through the prism of politics", Khan said he looked forward to a great tenure in Bihar, where he has come as a "sevak" (servant).

"Bihar is unparalleled in terms of its glorious history. It also has tremendous potential, if we think in terms of the future," he said.

Two killed in fight at beer shop near UP-Bihar border

BALLIA (UP), Jan 2 (Agencies): Two young men were brutally murdered with sharp-edged weapons at a beer shop in a village near the Bihar border in Uttar Pradesh's Ballia on the first night of the New Year, officials said Thursday.

The incident triggered protests by the families and villagers, who briefly blocked the national highway, demanding justice.

According to police, the victims, 23-year-old Prashant Gupta and 24-year-old Golu Verma, had gone to a licensed beer shop in Kotwa Narayanpur village on Wednesday



night when an argument and physical altercation broke out. During the scuffle, assailants attacked both youths with sharp weapons, including an axe, killing them on the spot.

Outraged by the murders, the victims' families and villagers placed the bodies on the national highway, blocking the Ghazipur-Bharauli road.

Protesters raised slogans against the police, causing long queues of vehicles on both sides of the road.

Senior police officials, including Superintendent of Police (SP) Omvir Singh, arrived at the scene and pacified the protesters after discussions, leading to the roadblock being cleared late at night.

"The police have taken both bodies into custody and sent them for postmortem after completing necessary legal formalities. Based on complaints from the families, an FIR has been registered against four named individuals under relevant sections of the law," SP Omvir Singh said.

"Three teams have been formed to apprehend the accused, and legal proceedings are ongoing. Peace has been restored in the area," he added.

Singh also said that the accused are troublemakers from the victims' village and further investigations are underway.

I doubt if Modi Govt will last even for 2 years: Sanjay Raut



MUMBAI, Jan 2 (Agencies): Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Thursday said he is doubtful whether the central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi will survive even for two years till 2026.

If the Modi government fails to complete its term, it would also trigger a political change in Maharashtra and other states, he claimed.

Talking to reporters, Raut also

dismissed speculation that some Shiv Sena (UBT) leaders might jump the ship following the party's poor showing in the November 2024 Maharashtra assembly polls.

He was responding to a question on buzz that Rajan Salvi, the former Rajapur MLA of Shiv Sena (UBT), might quit the Uddhav Thackeray-led party.

In the Lok Sabha polls held last year, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) won 293 seats, comfortably above the majority mark of 272 in the 543-member House, paving the way for PM Modi to be at the helm for a third consecutive term.

The BJP, however, fell well short of the majority and is dependent on allies, after enjoying a comfortable majority on its own in the previous two terms of the Modi government.

"My doubt remains whether the government at the Centre will

survive till 2026. Modi will not complete his term, and when that happens, there will be changes not only in Maharashtra but also in other places (states)," Raut claimed.

On speculation that Salvi might quit the Shiv Sena (UBT), the Rajya Sabha member said he spoke to the party leader, who has expressed disappointment over some local issues.

Raut said Uddhav Thackeray was in touch with Salvi, who had been a multiple-term MLA but lost the 2024 state assembly poll from Rajapur to rival Shiv Sena leader Kiran Samant.

Asked about buzz that some Shiv Sena (UBT) leaders might switch over to other parties, Raut asserted there was no unrest in their party.

"This too shall pass. All days are not the same," he added.

Israeli airstrike kills 10 in Gaza, including three children, officials say

The strike early Thursday hit a tent in an Israeli-declared humanitarian zone known as Muwasi, where hundreds of thousands of displaced people are sheltering in tents during the cold and rainy winter.

DEIR AL-BALAH, Jan 2 (Agencies): Palestinian officials say an Israeli airstrike has killed 10 people in the Gaza Strip, including three children and two high-ranking officers in the Hamas-run police force.

The strike early Thursday hit a tent in an Israeli-declared humanitarian zone known as Muwasi, where hundreds of thousands of displaced people are sheltering in tents during the cold and rainy winter.

It killed three children, three women and four men, according to the Nasser Hospital, which received the bodies.

Among the dead were Major General Mahmoud Salah, general director of the Gaza police, and his deputy, Brig Gen Hossam Shahwan, according to hospital records.



There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military.

The Hamas-run government in Gaza included tens of thousands of police who maintained a high level of public order before the outbreak of the war.

The police have largely vanished from the streets in many areas after being targeted by Israel, contributing to the breakdown of law and order that has hindered the delivery of desperately needed humanitarian aid.

But residents say plain-

clothes Hamas security men still patrol much of the territory, and the group has faced no significant internal challenge nearly 15 months into the devastating war sparked by its October 7, 2023 attack into Israel.

Hamas-led militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted around 250 that day.

Around 100 hostages are still inside Gaza, at least a third of whom are believed to be dead.

Israel's offensive has killed over 45,000 Palestinians in Gaza, according to local health officials, who say women and children make up more than half the fatalities.

The officials do not distinguish between civilians and combatants in their tally.

A gunman who killed at least 12 people in Montenegro dies by suicide

PODGORIC, Jan 2 (Agencies): A gunman who fatally shot at least 12 people, including two children, in Montenegro has killed himself while surrounded by police, officials said Thursday.

At least four others were wounded in the shooting rampage in the western town of Cetinje on Wednesday that followed a bar brawl, officials said.

The shooter, identified as 45-year-old Aco Martinović, killed the owner of the bar, the bar owner's children and his own family members, Interior Minister Danilo Šaranović said.

The attacker, who was fled after the rampage, was later located and surrounded by police. He died after shooting himself in the head, Šaranović said.

Police had dispatched a special unit to search for the attacker in the town, which is located about 30 kilometers (18 miles) northwest of the capital, Podgorica. All the roads in and out of the city have been blocked as police

swarmed the streets. Šaranović said that Martinović had died while being taken to a hospital in the capital and succumbed from the "severity of his injuries."

The government has declared three days of national mourning starting on Thursday, with Prime Minister Miloško Spajić describing the shooting as a "terrible tragedy."

"The level of rage and brutality shows that sometimes such people ... are even more dangerous than members of organized criminal gangs," Šaranović said.

Martinović was at the bar throughout the day with other guests when the brawl erupted, Police Commissioner Lazar Šćepanović said. He said that Martinović then went home, brought back a weapon and opened fire at around 5:30 p.m. "He killed four people" at the bar before heading out, and then continued shooting at three more locations, Šćepanović said.

He said that the sus-

pected received a suspended sentence in 2005 for violent behavior and had appealed his latest conviction for illegal weapons possession. Montenegrin media have reported that he was known for erratic and violent behavior.

The small country of Montenegro, which has a population of around 620,000 people, is known for its gun culture and many people traditionally have weapons.

Wednesday's shooting was the second shooting rampage over the past three years in Cetinje, Montenegro's historic capital. An attacker killed 10 people, including two children, in August 2022 before he was shot and killed by a passerby in Cetinje.

President Jakov Milatović said that he was "shocked and stunned" by the tragedy.

"Instead of holiday joy ... we have been gripped by sadness over the loss of innocent lives," Milatović said in a post on X.

After New Orleans tragedy, mass shooting outside New York's nightclub; 10 injured

NEW YORK, Jan 2 (Agencies): At least 10 people were injured in a shooting outside a nightclub in Queens on Wednesday night, according to the New York City Police Department, the New York Post reported on Thursday.

The incident occurred near the Amazura nightclub in Jamaica, a neighborhood in New York City, just before 11:20 pm.

Law enforcement reported that the victims were taken to nearby hospitals, including Long Island Jewish Hospital and Cohen's Children Medical Center.

None of the victims are in critical condition and all are expected to survive, according to the NYPD, the New York Post reported.

Footage shared on Citizen App showed a large police and ambulance presence outside

the club. Amazura, known for its spacious interior that can accommodate up to 4,000 people, frequently hosts DJs and live events.

The incident of mass shooting in New York City follows the attack in New Orleans that claimed 15 lives.

Earlier, US President Joe Biden said that law enforcement is investigating any possible connection between the New Orleans 'terror' attack and the Tesla Cybertruck explosion outside the Trump International Hotel in Las Vegas.

The vehicles used in both incidents were rented from a car rental site, 'Turo', prompting authorities to look for links between the two events. "We're tracking the explosion of a Cybertruck outside the Trump Hotel in Las Vegas. Law enforce-



ment and the intelligence community are investigating this as well, including whether there's any possible connection with the attack in New Orleans," Biden said.

Biden assured that every resource is being utilised to ensure there is no threat to the American people.

A Tesla Cybertruck exploded outside the Trump International Hotel in Las Vegas, killing one person and injuring seven,

hours after the New Orleans attack, in which a car rammed into a crowd during New Year's celebrations, killing at least 15 people.

The FBI earlier described the attack as "an act of terrorism" and revealed that the driver, Shamsud Din Jabbar, had an ISIS flag and multiple suspected explosive devices in his vehicle. The FBI also confirmed that the vehicle was rented from a car rental platform called Turo.

Chinmoy Krishna Das denied bail by Bangladesh court



DHAKA, Jan 2 (Agencies): A court in Bangladesh on Thursday denied bail to a Hindu priest and a former ISKCON leader in a sedition case.

Chinmoy Krishna Das was not brought to court for the hearing and appeared virtually.

Das, formerly with the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), was arrested at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka on November 25.

At the hearing, "the state objected to the bail, saying that it was a sedition case and the

highest punishment was life in prison," Nazim Uddin Chowdhury, president of the Chattogram District Bar Association, was quoted as saying by BDNews24.com.

"Chattogram Metropolitan Sessions Judge Saiful Islam rejected the bail plea after hearing arguments from both sides for around 30 minutes," Metropolitan Public Prosecutor Advocate Mofizul Haque Bhuiyan told The Daily Star.

Das' lawyer, Apurba Kumar Bhattacharjee, said they plan to appeal to the High Court for

bail, it added.

Now a spokesperson for the Bangladesh Sammilita Sanatani Jagran Jote organisation, Das' bail was rejected on November 26 by Chattogram's 6th Metropolitan Magistrate Kazi Shariful Islam in the sedition case. He was sent to jail.

The decision angered members of the Hindu community, who staged a protest around the prison van outside the court leading to violent clashes during which a lawyer Saiful Islam Alif was killed.

There have been a series of attacks on Hindu community members and their places of worship after the interim government headed by Muhammad Yunus came to power after deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina fled the country on August 5 following a student-led protest.

New textbooks in Bangladesh to alter credit of declaration of independence: Report

DHAKA, Jan 2 (Agencies): Bangladesh has introduced new textbooks that state that Ziaur Rahman declared the country's independence in 1971, replacing the previous ones crediting founding father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with the declaration, according to a media report.

The new textbooks for primary and secondary students have several changes, The Daily Star newspaper said. The textbooks also removed the title "Father of the Nation" for Mujibur Rahman.

The new textbooks for the 2025 academic year will state that "on March 26, 1971, Ziaur Rahman declared the independence of Bangladesh, and on March 27, he made another declaration of independence on behalf of Bangabandhu," the paper quoted Prof AKM Reazul Hassan, chairman of the National

Curriculum and Textbook Board, as saying. The information has been included in the free textbooks where the matter of the declaration was mentioned, he added.

According to the paper, writer and researcher Rakhil Raha, who was involved in the process of making changes in the textbooks, said they tried to free the textbooks from "exaggerated, imposed history".

"Those who revised the textbooks found that it wasn't fact-based information that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman sent the wireless message [declaring independence] while being arrested by the Pakistani army, and so they decided to remove it."

Earlier, in the textbooks of classes one to 10, the information on who made the Declaration of Independence was changed according to the government in power, the

paper said.

It is widely believed among supporters of Awami League that Mujibur Rahman had made the announcement and that Ziaur Rahman, who was an Army major and later a sector commander of the Liberation War, merely read out the declaration upon Mujib's instructions. Earlier, Bangladesh decided to start the process of erasing the image of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from its currency notes as it phases out the old notes.

The move came after the ouster of his daughter Sheikh Hasina as prime minister on August 5. His statues and murals bearing his image were targeted as his daughter fled to India.

The interim government also cancelled a national holiday on August 15, marking the assassination of Mujibur Rahman.

Impeached South Korean president issues defiant message

Impeached South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol has issued a defiant statement to his rightwing supporters gathered outside his residence in the capital of Seoul

SEOUL, Jan 2 (Agencies): Impeached South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol issued a defiant statement to his conservative supporters gathered outside his residence in the capital of Seoul, vowing to "fight to the end" against what he called "anti-state forces," as law enforcement prepared to detain him over last month's martial law decree.

The Corruption Investigation Office for High-Ranking Officials has a week to execute its detention warrant against Yoon, issued by a Seoul court on Tuesday. The warrant came after Yoon defied several requests to appear for questioning and blocked searches of his office, hindering an investigation into whether his short-lived power grab on Dec. 3 amounted to rebellion.

Oh Dong-woon, the anti-corruption agency's chief prosecutor, has indicated that police forces might be deployed if Yoon's security service resists the detention attempt, which could occur as early as Thursday. But it remains unclear whether

Yoon can be compelled to submit to questioning.

Yoon's legal team issued a statement on Thursday warning that any attempt by the anti-corruption agency to use police mobile units for his detention would exceed their legal authority. The lawyers further said that police officers could face arrest by either the "presidential security service or any citizens" if they try to detain him.

In a message to hundreds of supporters gathered outside his residence Wednesday evening, Yoon said he would continue to fight against anti-state forces "violating our sovereignty" and putting the nation in "danger." He applauded his supporters for their efforts to protect the country's "liberal democracy and constitutional order" and said he was watching their protests on live YouTube broadcasts, according to a photo of the message shared by Yoon's lawyers.

The liberal opposition Democratic Party, which drove the legislative vote that impeached Yoon on Dec. 14 over the martial law imposition, accused the president



of trying to mobilize his supporters to block his detention and called for law enforcement authorities to execute the warrant immediately.

A growing number of Yoon's supporters were again gathering near his residence on Thursday morning amid a heavy police presence, waving small South Korean and American flags and holding signs opposing his impeachment.

Yoon's lawyers have argued that the court's detention warrant is "invalid,"

claiming that the anti-corruption agency lacks legal authority to investigate rebellion charges. They also accuse the court of bypassing a law that says locations potentially linked to military secrets cannot be seized or searched without the consent of the person in charge.

Some experts believe the anti-corruption agency, which is leading a joint investigation with police and military authorities, would not risk clashing with Yoon's security service, which has said it will provide security to Yoon in accordance with the law. The office may instead issue another summons for Yoon to appear for questioning if they are not able to execute the detention warrant by Jan. 6.

Yoon's presidential powers were suspended following the National Assembly vote to impeach him on Dec. 14 over his imposition of martial law, which lasted only hours but has triggered weeks of political turmoil, halted high-level diplomacy and rattled financial markets. Yoon's fate now lies with the Constitutional Court, which

has begun deliberations on whether to uphold the impeachment and formally remove Yoon from office or reinstate him.

To formally end Yoon's presidency, at least six justices on the nine-member Constitutional Court must vote in favor.

The National Assembly voted last week to also impeach Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, who had assumed the role of acting president after Yoon's powers were suspended, over his reluctance to fill three Constitutional Court vacancies ahead of the court's review of Yoon's case.

In the face of growing pressure, the country's new interim leader, Deputy Prime Minister Choi Sang-mok, appointed two new justices on Tuesday, which possibly increased the chances of the court upholding Yoon's impeachment.

Cho Han-chang, one of the newly appointed court justices, said Thursday that he begins his job with a "heavy heart." Jeong Gye-seon, the other new justice, expressed hope that the remaining vacancy would be filled.

When will Abdullah govt implement its poll promises: Sunil Sharma

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: Reminding the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, that more than two months have passed but not even a single poll promise as contained in the election manifesto of NC is implemented, Sunil Sharma, Leader of Opposition, said that Omar Abdullah should take pity on the people and start doing something constructive in the UT.

Sunil Sharma said that the NC had misled the innocent people of Jammu and Kashmir during the 2024 assembly election campaigning on false promises projecting itself as a master with magic stick who would bring down moon and establish jannat here. He said that after winning election and forming government, both the NC and the Chief minister have utterly failed to realize the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and take effective steps to provide any kind



of relief.

Sunil Sharma said it seems that the Chief Minister and others enjoying ministerial posts are satisfied and happy that they achieved what have been their dreams of assuming power and that they have no accountability now.

Leader of Opposition further said that simply holding media interaction and making no announcement relating to the poll promises itself speaks that the Chief Minister is not in mood to start any work aimed at public welfare and development, which is very unfortunate. He said that people are eagerly looking towards the CM daily and waiting to hear anything good from him but are feeling betrayed.

"The people have seen the real face of NC and feeling cheated as there is not any signal of something good going to take place in near future", Sunil said, adding that the voters had voted NC with very high hopes but all dashed to ground which is visible from the working of the government.

Sunil Sharma appealed to the people not to get misled again in the future assembly bi-election and Panchayat, ULB elections and teach NC lesson for ditching them.

BJP to reach booth level under "Samvidhan Gourav Abhiyan" in J&K



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: Under party's nationwide initiative aimed at promoting awareness and appreciation of the Indian Constitution (Samvidhan) among citizens, Jammu and Kashmir BJP activists, will highlight the values enshrined in the Constitution, such as justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity, while emphasizing the importance of adhering to its principles for a harmonious and progressive society.

Sat Sharma (CA), president, Jammu and Kashmir BJP, along with Ashok Koul general secretary (organization), said this while chairing a meeting and discuss the course of action for this campaign and also constituted a team to oversee the smooth and effective conduct of the entire exercise at different levels which will

culminate on January 25, the 75th Constitution Day.

It was announced in the meeting that party vice president & MLA, Sham Lal Sharma, would head the party's UT team as its Convener, with Ayodhya Gupta, Brijeshwar Rana, Neha Mahajan and Rajinder Singh Chib as co-convenors.

Similar pattern will be followed for district and mandal teams, wherein, district team will have a convener and three co-convenors and Mandal teams will have convener and two co-convenors, to oversee the "Samvidhan Gourav Abhiyan" in the UT. The party activists will take this campaign at booth level too.

Sat Sharma (CA) said that the party in Jammu and Kashmir is undertaking an important campaign between January 1st to 25th, under which varied programmes such as public

meetings, workshops, debates, essay writings, quiz competitions and cultural programmes that focus on the Constitution's history, significance, and its role in shaping India's democratic framework, are to be highlighted. The role of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in framing the constitution, his efforts for the social upliftment of the SCs, women and marginalized sections will also be shared by the party activists during the campaign.

Sat Sharma said that other key aspect of "Samvidhan Gourav Abhiyan" is to instill constitutional values in younger generations and foster a sense of pride and responsibility among citizens to uphold the democratic ethos. The campaign also seeks to promote inclusivity, unity, and respect for diversity.

This meeting was attended by Priya Sethi, NEM, Rakesh Mahajan, Sangathan Parv Incharge, Nanaji Deshmukh Library In charge Ptof. Kulbhushan Mohtra and spokesperson Balbir Ram Rattan, besides UT co-convenors for Samvidhan Gourav Abhiyan team.

RSETI concludes 30-day training programme for women

Top News Report

RAMBAN, Jan 2: Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI) Ramban of the State Bank of India under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Ramban successfully conducted its 30-day Tailor Training Program for Women, aimed at empowering women through skill development and promoting self-employment.

The valedictory ceremony was graced by Additional District Development Commissioner, Ramban, Roshan Lal, as the Chief Guest. During his address, the ADDC shared his personal experiences of perseverance during challenging times, inspiring the trainees to embrace self-employment opportunities. He encouraged participants to leverage government schemes such as PMEGP (Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme), Mudra, and HADP (Holistic Agriculture Development Program) for their entrepreneurial endeavors.

Director RSETI Ramban, Harvinder Singh, briefed the Chief Guest on the institute's mission and its pivotal role in fostering self-employment across the region. The program concluded with a vote of thanks by Senior Faculty Member, marking the culmination of the event. Expressing their

gratitude, the trainees thanked RSETI Ramban for providing them with the opportunity to acquire valuable skills and boost their confidence to pursue tailoring as a livelihood.

During the training program different skills were learned by the trainees i.e Entrepreneurship Competencies, Effective Communication Skills, Marketing Management, Problem Solving Time Management, Banking, Government Schemes, Behavioral Game, Introduction of Dress Designing Basic of stitching & measurement, Saree skills vertices of frill theory paper cutting & practical, Nighties, Night Suits, Night Gowns, Fancy Nighties theory & practical, School Uniforms for girls blouse & skirts theory & practical, Baby Frock, Saree Zigzag, Chudidhar, Punjabi, Patiyala, Arabic, Rajasthani Pushup, Anarkali Top, Apple Cut Top, Sahraw theory & practical and Basics of Sewing Machine Repairs etc.

RSETI Ramban continues to play a crucial role in empowering rural communities, particularly women, through comprehensive training programs, aligning with national and regional initiatives to create sustainable livelihoods.

At the end, Senior Faculty Amrik Singh Raju concluded the program with a vote of thanks.

KCCI calls upon J&K Bank to remove all monetary caps, ceilings from special one-time settlement scheme

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 2: The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) has called upon Jammu & Kashmir Bank to remove all monetary caps and ceilings from its recently announced special one-time settlement scheme, known as "Karz-se-Mukti."

The Chamber stressed that the scheme must operate without any upper limits to effectively address the diverse needs of borrowers across all segments of the business community.

The existing scheme's ceiling of Rs 5 crore has been identified as a major impediment to its effectiveness. The Chamber maintains that such arbitrary caps fundamentally restrict the scheme's ability to provide meaningful relief to larger borrowers who equally require assistance. This limitation, along with the restrictive three-month time frame, represents a significant departure from the comprehensive relief measures discussed with Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

In its detailed review of the scheme, the Chamber has identified several critical areas requiring immediate modification. Of particular concern

is the scheme's stance on cases where recovery suits have not been filed, which are currently excluded from eligibility. The Chamber argues that this exclusion creates an unwarranted distinction among borrowers and should be reconsidered.

The Chamber also raises concerns about the treatment of collateral in the current scheme. Many borrowers have offered their homes and other properties as collateral in good faith, yet the scheme imposes higher payment demands on these cases despite the presence of sufficient collateral. This approach, according to the Chamber, penalizes borrowers who have demonstrated commitment by providing substantial security.

Regarding pending cases, the Chamber notes that RBI guidelines permit their inclusion in one-time settlement schemes with Board approval. Given that the special OTS scheme itself has received Board approval, the Chamber advocates for the inclusion of these cases, while maintaining that any ongoing proceedings should continue as required by law.

The Chamber further emphasizes the importance of including cases

currently under investigation where no adverse orders have been issued. Their position is that the bank can take a commercial approach to these cases while safeguarding public money, with the provision that investigating agencies be informed upon OTS sanction.

On the temporal aspect, the Chamber strongly recommends extending the scheme's duration to a minimum of one year, with provisions for minimal interest charges on repayments extending beyond three months. The KCCI advocates for a more flexible approach to determining relief, based on factors such as account ageing and bank comfort, without rigid security requirements.

The modifications we propose are essential for creating a truly effective one-time settlement scheme.

KCCI appeals LG Shri Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister, Mr Omar Abdullah, Chief Secretary, Mr. Atal Duloo, CEO, MD J&K Bank Mr. Amitava Chatterjee to reconsider this scheme in a way so that the account holders become eligible to avail this scheme and at the same time J&K Bank bank to further improve its NPA ratio.

SFCAC approves 23 new cases in Kishtwar

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, JANUARY 2: In a significant step towards ensuring welfare for orphaned children, District Magistrate (DM) Kishtwar, Rajesh Kumar Shavan chaired a meeting of the Sponsorship and Foster Care Approval Committee (SFCAC) today. The meeting focused on deliberations and approvals of new cases under the welfare schemes aimed at providing financial support to orphans.

The Committee approved 23 new cases, taking the total number of beneficiaries under these schemes to 223, against a target of 201. The committee had earlier approved 200 cases following a meticulous verification process.

The focus of the dis-

cussion revolved around saturating the target and ensuring that no eligible child is left out of the benefits provided under these schemes.

The Sponsorship and Foster Care Schemes, implemented under the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), aim to provide financial assistance to children in need of care and protection. The Sponsorship Scheme provides monetary support to families or guardians to ensure proper upbringing of children, while the Foster Care Scheme allows children to live with foster families, ensuring a nurturing environment for their holistic development.

DM Kishtwar emphasized the importance of achieving 100% saturation of the target to extend the benefits of these schemes to all eligible

orphans in the district. He directed the committee to ensure the inclusion of every orphan in Kishtwar under the schemes and instructed for robust verification to eliminate any discrepancies.

Besides the participants discussed strategies for effective implementation and evolving workable follow-up mechanisms for the schemes. The committee decided to streamline the application process further and ensure timely disbursement of benefits.

The meeting was attended by the District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) Zubair Ahmed, Chairperson of the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), and other committee members. Representatives from stakeholder agencies and NGOs running orphanages in the district were also present.

FROM PAGE 3

We will fulfill promises made to people during our 5-year term in office: Omar Abdullah

provide 200 units of free electric power to consumers, he said, "We will be able to provide 200 units of electricity for free only if meters are installed. When we roll out this scheme in March/April, only those will benefit who have meters installed."

When asked about the alleged recruitment scam in appointments in fire and emergency services, he said, "We also want justice, but let the investigation process be completed. We can't cut short the investigation process. Deserving candidates shall get justice."

"If Pulwama does not want NIT, we will relocate it," the chief minister said in reply to a question about protests in Pulwama over the location of the proposed NIT.

He defended the right of NC MP Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi to protest outside the chief minister's residence.

"Protests are now allowed at my gate. These were not allowed before," he said.

He reaffirmed the administration's flexibility in the face of public opinion.

The Chief Minister dismissed rumours that the Central government or the BJP was putting pressure on him or his ministers.

"These rumours are false," he said replying to a question.

Three found dead in Bhandarwah Guest

House; SIT formed to investigate

constituted to conduct autopsies of the deceased.

Meanwhile, inquest proceedings under Section 174 of the CrPC have been initiated to ascertain the exact cause of the deaths.

Police attach property of drug peddler under NDPS Act

relevant legal procedures, the property including a house and land valued in lakhs has been attached under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act."

"A series of strong legal actions by Srinagar police is to convey a message to one and all involved in drug-related crimes that long arm of law would catch up with them sooner or later," police warned and said, "We target not only offenders for the crimes they commit, but also their unlawfully acquired assets would be attached and seized under law of the land."

Police have again appealed to the general public to assist them in the fight against drug trafficking by sharing any relevant information.

Will make Jammu AIIMS beacon of hope, trust & excellence in health-care: CEO

Counseling and Study Centre. We also plan to invite nationally and internationally renowned guest faculty to enrich our patient care, academic, and research arenas. Our upcoming Centres of Excellence including Telemedicine, Nursing, Cancer Care, and Hospital Administration will position us as a leader in healthcare and education," he said.

He added that AIIMS Jammu is indebted to the people of Jammu and Kashmir various stakeholders, well-wishers, and State and Central Administrative authorities for their trust and unwavering support.

Sharing achievements of 2024, he said that since launching OPD services on August 1, 2024, successfully catered to over 87,497 outpatient cases, including 65,993 new patients and 21,504 follow-ups, achieving an outstanding 99.61 per cent patient satisfaction rate.

In Inpatient and Emergency care, AIIMS Jammu has already managed 679 patients in 100 operational beds, and we are set to expand to 250 beds within a month and 750 beds within six months, he said adding that the Trauma and Emergency Department has efficiently managed 3,135 cases, with 289 ICU admissions and 54 dialysis sessions performed to date.

"Surgical services have also shown remarkable progress at initiation, with 281 successful surgeries performed across multiple specialties since the launch of OT services on September 17, 2024," he added.

The state-of-the-art diagnostics at AIIMS Jammu, including 3 Tesla MRI, 128-slice CT, and advanced screening technologies, have supported over 3,409 USG scans, 554 MRI scans, 896 CT scans, and 5,926 X-rays, ensuring that our patients receive timely and accurate diagnoses, said the

CEO.

"In 2025, we aim to further enhance innovation and collaborative research in actual patient care settings to set new benchmarks in healthcare excellence," said Dr Gupta.

He also extended gratitude to the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi for visionary leadership in sanctioning and commissioning AIIMS Jammu, Jagat Prakash Nadda, Union Health Minister, Lieutenant Governor of UT of Jammu and Kashmir Manoj Sinha for the constant motivation and unwavering encouragement.

Fresh snowfall lashes Kashmir Valley, More likely between January 4-6

Srinagar recorded minus 2.6 degrees Celsius, Gulmarg minus 8.6 degrees Celsius and Pahalgam minus 4 degrees Celsius as the minimum temperatures on Thursday.

Jammu city registered 7.4 degrees Celsius, Katra town 9 degrees Celsius, Batote 4.6 degrees Celsius, Banihal 2.9 degrees Celsius and Bhandarwah 1.6 degrees Celsius as the night's lowest temperature.

The 40-day-long period of intense winter cold called the 'Chillai Kalan' started on December 21 and will end on January 30. Most lakes and other water bodies are presently frozen partially in the Valley.

Doctors have advised people not to expose themselves to long periods of cold. Children and elderly people have been especially warned to guard themselves against cold which constricts blood vessels resulting in myocardial infarction.

"This is responsible for heart attacks and heart failures globally in countries with cold

weather. The risk becomes very high if a patient has respiratory ailments," they said.

MLA Pulwama Waheed Para challenges CM Omar Abdullah's claim on satellite townships

Omar Abdullah's claim that no proposal for satellite townships is under consideration, his own Housing Department is actively identifying land. In fact, Tehsildar Budgam held a meeting on 30 Nov 2024 regarding the same. CM Sahab may throw some light on this?."

Para who shared a letter of Jammu & Kashmir Housing Board to Tehsildar Budgam/Chadoora dated 09.10.2024 stated that the Board has been entrusted to develop an integrated satellite township across the Ring Road at Srinagar with 500 meters depth on each side of Ring Road of area falling in Srinagar and Budgam districts.

"The Divisional Commissioner Kashmir has been requested to issue necessary directions to the concerned revenue authorities for furnishing of title of the land, khasra number, area etc, or the land across ring road falling in Srinagar and Budgam districts with 500 meters dept on each side of the ring road, for assessment of feasibility of the proposed township project at ring road Srinagar," the letter reads.

"Sheikh Javeiria, Naib Tehsildar Housing Board shall coordinate with your office for preparation of requisite information in a time bound manner," the letter which is signed by Collector J&K Housing Board, Mushtaq Ahmad (JKAS) reads.

Earlier chief minister Omar Abdullah while addressing a press conference at SKICC Srinagar dismissed oppositions' allegation of a satellite colony proposal, stating there was no such proposal on the table so far.

He highlighted plans to build townships to decongest Srinagar, saying, "It is for those people who want to move to the suburbs. There are four to five families living in one house in downtown."

Dr Jitendra hails universal Ayushman health cover for all citizens above 70

Top News Report

ANDHRA PRADESH, Jan 2: Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has hailed the universal Ayushman health cover for all citizens above 70 years of age regardless of their socio-economic status and described it as a part of the government's highly sensitive policy planning with the personal indulgence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

All through an eventful here today as part of his three-day visit under the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP), the Minister's visit aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's direction urging Union Ministers to actively engage with aspirational districts, spending significant time on the ground to evaluate progress and guide strategies for future growth.

The Aspirational Districts Programme, launched in 2018, aims to transform underdeveloped regions into models of inclusive and sustainable development. Dr. Jitendra Singh's visit underscored the government's unwavering commitment to this mission.

Beginning the day with a detailed briefing on the district's progress, Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized

addressing core issues such as health, nutrition, education, and infrastructure. In his remarks, he highlighted the transformative potential of collaborative governance and accountability in bridging developmental divides and improving the quality of life for citizens.

Dr. Jitendra Singh's first stop was Nagreddipalle in C.K. Dinne Mandal, where he inspected the Ayushman Arogya Mandir—a model village health and wellness clinic. This facility represents a critical step in making healthcare accessible to rural populations, ensuring that essential medical services are within reach of every citizen.

During his visit, Dr. Jitendra Singh interacted with healthcare workers and beneficiaries, gaining firsthand insights into their challenges and the transformative impact of such initiatives. He applauded the clinic's role in addressing preventive and primary healthcare needs, which is crucial for achieving universal health coverage in rural areas.

The Minister visited the Anganwadi Centre in Buggalapalli, where he reviewed the implementation of nutrition programs aimed at



combating malnutrition among children and women. The Centre's initiatives, including midday meals, health check-ups, and nutritional education, were highlighted as vital tools for fostering a healthier community. The Minister engaged with Anganwadi workers and local women, emphasizing the need for continued focus on child and maternal health to build a stronger foundation for future generations.

Dr. Jitendra Singh's next destination was the agricultural fields at Buggalapalli, where he observed progressive farming practices. He visited sites showcasing tissue-cultured banana plantations,

chrysanthemum cultivation, and a permanent pandal with a bottle gourd field. These innovations, supported by government programs, exemplify how modern techniques are driving productivity and enhancing farmers' incomes. Local farmers shared success stories of adopting these methods, underscoring the importance of government-backed agricultural advancements in ensuring sustainable rural livelihoods.

The Minister also reviewed water conservation initiatives, a key component of the district's sustainable development strategy. Demonstrations of rainwater har-

vesting systems, micro-irrigation techniques, and watershed management projects highlighted the district's commitment to preserving water resources while supporting agricultural and domestic needs. Dr. Jitendra Singh praised the community-driven approach to water management, emphasizing its role in mitigating water scarcity and ensuring long-term ecological balance.

Dr. Jitendra Singh met with beneficiaries of the Namo Drone Didi scheme and engaged in a detailed interaction to understand its impact on their livelihoods. The scheme, which aims to empower women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) by equipping them with drone technology for agricultural services, has been instrumental in providing new avenues for income generation. Under this initiative, 15,000 Women SHGs will be equipped with drones between 2024-25 and 2025-26 to offer rental services to farmers for agricultural purposes, such as the application of liquid fertilizers and pesticides. Each SHG is expected to earn an additional income of at least 1 lakh per year, fostering economic empowerment and sustainable

livelihoods. The Minister advocated for the active utilization of the scheme to maximize its benefits and encouraged wider adoption to enhance agricultural productivity and rural development.

Throughout his engagements, Dr. Jitendra Singh reiterated the goals of the Aspirational Districts Programme: reducing disparities, promoting inclusive growth, and empowering communities to take charge of their development journey. He commended the collaborative efforts of district officials, local bodies, and citizens in translating these goals into tangible outcomes.

Dr. Jitendra Singh's morning engagements in YSR Kadapa provided a holistic overview of the district's development trajectory under the Aspirational Districts Programme. His interactions, observations, and insights will play a crucial role in shaping future strategies and ensuring that the district's progress aligns with the broader vision of a developed and equitable India. The visit reaffirmed the government's dedication to fostering innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability across the country's aspirational districts.

Tehsildar Zachaldara conducts surprise inspection of Health facilities amid inclement weather

Top News Report

HANDWARA, Jan 2: In compliance with directives from Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ms. Ayushi Sudan (IAS), Tehsildar Zachaldara, Syed Basharat Rasool, carried out a surprise inspection of healthcare facilities within the jurisdiction of Tehsil Zachaldara.

The inspection aimed to evaluate the quality of healthcare services provided to the public and ensure the availability of essential medical resources. Tehsildar Zachaldara engaged with patients, hospital staff, and administrators to assess the adequacy of medical facilities, equipment, and the supply of essential medicines.



Speaking on the occasion, Tehsildar Zachaldara emphasized the administration's dedication to ensuring transparency, accountability, and improved service delivery in public healthcare. "This surprise inspection reflects our commitment to monitoring public services and addressing any gaps in healthcare delivery. By directly engaging with patients and healthcare providers, we aim to iden-

tify areas for improvement and strengthen the healthcare infrastructure in the Tehsil," he said.

He further noted that regular assessments of hospitals and healthcare centers are essential to enhance service quality, upgrade infrastructure, and ensure comprehensive care for the public. This initiative, he added, reinforces the administration's priority of safeguarding the well-being and welfare of the people, particularly during challenging weather conditions.

The surprise inspection has been welcomed as a proactive step towards improving healthcare services in the region and ensuring that the needs of the community are met effectively.

Tehsildar Handwara conducts market checking drive to regulate prices

Top News Report

HANDWARA, Jan 2: In line with the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan, Tehsildar Handwara, Zee-shan Khan, along with a team from the Revenue Department, conducted a market-checking drive in Handwara on Thursday.

The drive aimed to regulate the prices of essential commodities, curb hoarding, and ensure the availability of fresh produce in the market. Tehsildar Khan



visited several marketplaces to inspect the pricing and quality of essential items being sold.

Speaking during the drive, Tehsildar Khan stated, "The purpose of this market-checking initiative is to pre-

vent exorbitant pricing, ensure the availability of essential commodities, and discourage hoarding practices. This is part of the administration's efforts to safeguard the interests of consumers."

Erring shopkeepers

were fined on the spot for violations and were instructed to maintain fair pricing and ensure fresh vegetables and other essentials are readily available to the public.

The initiative has been widely appreciated by locals, who have welcomed the administration's proactive measures to protect consumer rights and maintain market discipline. The administration has assured continued monitoring to ensure compliance with market regulations.

Drug peddler arrested, contraband recovered

Top News Report

HANDWARA, Jan 2: In its continued efforts to combat the menace of drugs in society, Handwara Police arrested a drug peddler in Langate and recovered contraband substances from his possession.

Acting on specific information, a police party from Police Post Langate, led by the In-Charge of the post, established a checkpoint at Kuhroo Bridge. During routine checking, a suspicious individual, identified as Hilal Ahmad Tantray, son of Mohammad Yousuf Tantray, a resident of Takiya Langate, attempted to evade the police. He was promptly intercepted, and a search led to the recovery of 55 grams of a Charas-like contraband substance from his possession.

The accused was immediately arrested and shifted to Police Station Handwara for further investigation. A case under relevant sections of law has been registered, and an investigation is underway to ascertain the source of the contraband and any possible links to a larger drug network.

Handwara Police have reiterated their commitment to eradicating the drug menace from society and have urged the public to report any instances of



drug peddling or other crimes by contacting the nearest police station or dialing 112.

"We appeal to the community to support our efforts in curbing the drug problem and safeguarding the future of our younger generations. The police will take strict action against offenders and ensure the law is upheld to eliminate this social evil," a police spokesperson said.

The proactive efforts of Handwara Police have been widely appreciated by locals, who have expressed hope for a drug-free society.

Director Agriculture Jammu inaugurates first harvest of Shiitake Mushrooms

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: Director Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Jammu Arvinder Singh Reen, inaugurated the first harvest of the Shiitake mushrooms (Lentinula edodes), here today at the Shiitake lab of the Spawn Production Office, Krishi Bhawan, Jammu.

Shiitake mushrooms, known for their strong medicinal properties including anti-cancer, immune-boosting, and anti-allergic effects, required a specialized cultivation environment. These mushrooms can only grow on sawdust blocks made from hardwood, with a cultivation cycle ranging from 120 to 180 days and a biological efficiency of 20-30% on a wet weight basis.

In his address, Director Arvinder Singh Reen emphasized the immense potential of Shiitake mushroom cultivation as a high-value crop for Jammu and Kashmir. He stated that this initiative will not only foster employment generation but also



open new avenues for startups, particularly among the region's unemployed youth. Additionally, the project supports the diversification of existing mushroom cultivation activities within the UT.

The key raw material for Shiitake cultivation is sawdust, and Jammu and Kashmir is uniquely positioned to benefit from this, with its abundant supply of sawdust and wooden chips generated by the Jammu and Kashmir's cricket bat industry. Furthermore, the ideal temperature range of 20-28°C (68-82°F) for Shiitake growth is well-suited to

the region's climate, making it an ideal location for large-scale production.

The Directorate of Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Jammu has successfully initiated the commercial cultivation of Shiitake mushrooms for the first time in the region. The Spawn Production Laboratory at Talab Tillo Jammu has successfully achieved spawn production and spawn run, following the protocols established by the Directorate of Mushroom Research, Chamba Ghat, Solan (H.P.). Additionally, 1,000 ready-to-fruit blocks have

been procured from District Project Manager-JICA, ODA Palampur, and are being supplied to progressive mushroom growers and DCTCs across the Jammu Province to encourage commercial cultivation of Shiitake mushrooms. Fruit initiation in these blocks has also been successfully achieved across the Jammu division.

The programme was attended by Deputy Director Central Dr. Ashwani Sharma, Agriculture Chemist Dr. Aman Jyoti Sharma, Spawn Production Officer Verinder Dogra, Mushroom Development Officer Raghbir Pal Kochar, SMS-RL Dharmesh Vaid, SMS-SDL Kewal Krishan Sharma, along with the staff from the Spawn Production and Mushroom Development Offices.

This groundbreaking project is poised to pave the way for sustainable agricultural practices, increased employment opportunities, and a prosperous future for the mushroom cultivation industry in Jammu and Kashmir.

Assessment Camp for Divyangjan organized by CRC Jammu

Top News Report

SAMBA, Jan 2: Composite Regional Centre (CRC) Jammu, in collaboration with the PMDK and Indian Army Battalion Headquarters, 4 Rashtriya Rifles (Bihar) at Sarna, Bhadarwa, organized a special assessment camp for Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan).

Approximately 100 beneficiaries from the region were assessed during the camp, where various aids and appliances, including tricycles, wheelchairs, hearing aids, walking sticks, and axillary crutches, were provided to eligible individuals. These aids will significantly enhance the mobility and independence of the



beneficiaries, improving their overall quality of life. The success of the camp would not have been possible without the able guidance of Dr. Rohnika Sharma, Director, CRC Jammu and invaluable support of Colonel Yogesh Chauhan and Major Shivam Dixit, whose dedication and commitment to the cause were instrumental

in the smooth execution of the event.

This initiative, aimed at improving the lives of Divyangjan, is a part of the ongoing efforts by CRC Jammu under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, to ensure that persons with disabilities receive the support and assistance they deserve.

Debates in dressing room should stay there; honest words have been said: Gambhir

Amid speculation of unrest in the dressing room, the feisty head coach sought to douse the fire by declaring that they were "just reports, not truth"

SYDNEY, Jan 2 (Agencies): Asserting that "debates" in the dressing room should not come out in public domain, India head coach Gautam Gambhir on Thursday said he has had some "honest" conversations with his players as only performance can help them stay in the set-up.

Gambhir also side-stepped queries on whether out-of-form skipper Rohit Sharma will get a place in the final XI for the fifth and final Test against Australia starting on Friday.

Amid speculation of unrest in the dressing room, the feisty head coach sought to douse the fire by declaring that they were "just reports, not truth".

"Debates between coach and player should remain in dressing room. Stern words. They were just reports not truth," Gambhir said in the pre-match press meet here.

"Indian cricket will be in safe hands till honest people stay in



the dressing room. Only thing that keeps you in the dressing room is performance," he added.

"There were honest words and honesty is important," he asserted.

Gambhir refused to say whether Rohit will get a place in the team. The question thrown at him was why the captain

had not come to address the match-eve press conference as is the norm and if he is there in the final XI.

"Everything is fine with Rohit. The head coach is here and that should be enough. We will decide on the playing XI after looking at the pitch," Gambhir said.

The former opener also said

his discussions with senior batter Virat Kohli and Rohit have only been about strategies to win the ongoing Test series.

"Every individual knows what are the areas to work on. We have only had one conversation with them (and that is) how to win Test matches," he said.

Gambhir also confirmed that pacer Akash Deep will miss the New Year Test with a stiff back, though he refrained from naming a replacement for him.

Although he refused to analyse individuals when asked about the questionable shot selection of players like Rishabh Pant in crunch situations, Gambhir did assert that the team's interest is paramount.

"I don't want to talk about individuals. Team first ideology matters. People can play natural game but in team sport, individuals only contribute," he said.

We will meet when you get better, Kapil Dev tells an emotional Vinod Kambli



MUMBAI, Jan 2 (Agencies): Legendary all-rounder Kapil Dev has promised former India batter Vinod Kambli, who walked out of a Thane hospital here, to visit him at the earliest.

Kambli was admitted to ICU on December 21 due to health complications which included urinary infection and cramps but doctors later said the 52-year-old also had clots in his brain.

On Wednesday, Kambli moved out of the hospital appearing physically frail but high in spirits, and posed for photographs with the

hospital staff, besides playing a short game of cricket.

Shailesh Thakur, director of Akruti Hospital, said during Kambli's hospitalisation, he had also made a video call to former India captain Kapil Dev whose batch of 1983 World Cup winners have also extended their offer to help the Mumbai cricketer.

"Hi Kapil paaji how are you," replied an emotional Kambli to Kapil's greeting through the call.

The World Cup-winning captain then spoke to his one-time teammate for a brief while.

"I will come and see

you. You are looking good, you have coloured your beard. Don't rush. If you need to stay (in the hospital) for a few more days, please don't rush. Tell the doctors it is fine if there is a need to stay on for two more days," Kapil said.

"Take care. When you will better and come out, I will come to meet you. Look after yourself, love you," Kapil added.

Kapil also thanked Thakur. "Thank you Shailesh, (for) you are looking after him. He is looking good, look after him."

Thakur said the hospital will extend all possible help to Kambli.

"I have been a fan of Kambli sir all my life and it was tough to see him struggling because of his health issues. We brought him to our hospital and we will also take care of his medical expenses and hospitalisation in the future," Thakur told agency.

India vs Australia: Stiff back forces pacer Akash Deep out of BGT finale

SYDNEY, Jan 2 (Agencies): India pacer Akash Deep was on Thursday ruled out of the fifth and final Test against Australia starting here on Friday owing to a stiff back.

Akash had taken five wickets from two Tests in Brisbane and Melbourne so far. He was a bit unlucky to not get more as multiple catches were dropped off his bowling during the two games.

"Akash Deep is out with back issue," India coach Gautam Gambhir said in the pre-match press conference here.

Gambhir said the playing XI would be decided after taking a look at the pitch.



The 28-year-old right-arm pacer bowled a total of 87.5 overs across two Test matches and his niggle could be a result of the heavier than usual workload he has endured.

The hard Australian grounds can cause knee, ankle and back

issues for pacers.

Either Harshit Rana or Prasidh Krishna could make it to the eleven in place of Akash.

India trail 1-2 in the five-match series and need to win the fifth and final game to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy (BGT).

Sri Lanka beats New Zealand by 7 runs in third T20 but New Zealand wins series 2-1

NELSON, Jan 2 (Agencies): Kusal Perera scored Sri Lanka's fastest Twenty20 international century - from 44 balls - on Thursday to spur his team to a consolation win over New Zealand by seven runs in the final match of the three-match series.

Perera's career-best score in a century partnership with captain Charith Asalanka lifted Sri Lanka to 218-5 - its second-highest T20 score, as it batted first for the first time in the series.

New Zealand held a winning 2-0 lead in the series after winning the first match by eight runs and the second by 45 runs.

New Zealand needed to achieve its highest run chase in T20s to complete a clean sweep



of the series and was given a good start by Rachin Ravindra who made 69 from 39 balls. But it fell just short, held to 211-7.

The Black Caps began at a pace to match Sri Lanka, reaching 60-0 in the six-over power play. But Asalanka slammed the brakes on the New Zealand innings when he dismissed Ravindra, Mark Chapman (9) and Glenn Phillips (6) in quick succession.

Asalanka had figures

of 3-25 after those dismissals but Daryl Mitchell hit four consecutive sixes from his final over to wreck his analysis and bat New Zealand back into the game.

Wanindu Hasaranga then dismissed Mitchell Hay (8) and Michael Bracewell (1) in the 16th over to tip the match back in the visitors' favor. Asalanka took a superb diving catch to remove Bracewell and managed his bowlers well in a superb all-

round performance.

"I think it's a good win for us," Asalanka said. "I think throughout the series we've played good cricket but couldn't manage to get a win. Finally we got it. I hope this is a momentum shift for us. Adapting to these conditions has been a key for us."

New Zealand came to the last over, bowled by Binura Fernando, needing 22 to win. After taking six runs from the first three balls, one of which was a wide, Zak Foulkes hit the fourth ball for six, leaving New Zealand needing 10 from the last two balls.

It was too much and the New Zealand batters managed only three more runs.

The start of the match was delayed by 30 min-

utes by a wet outfield and when it began Sri Lanka lost the toss but had the chance to bat first on a good pitch at Saxton Oval.

The tourists lost both openers, Pathum Nissanka and Kusal Mendis, inside the power play.

But Perera powered up the Sri Lanka innings in an outstanding batting performance, hitting 13 fours and four sixes in his 101 from 46 balls.

One of the keys to victory was the 75 runs Perera and Asalanka hit between the 14th and 18th overs which proved vital in making the run chase just too much for New Zealand.

The teams meet in the first of three one-day internationals in Wellington on Sunday.

Mitchell Marsh dropped, Starc declared fit for BGT finale

SYDNEY, Jan 2 (Agencies): All-rounder Beau Webster will replace an out-of-form Mitchell Marsh in Australia's squad for the fifth and final Test against India, home skipper Pat Cummins said here on Thursday.

The 33-year-old Marsh scored only 73 runs in seven innings across four Tests and Cummins cited this as the reason for his axing.

He has bowled merely 33 overs in the series so far, claiming just three wickets.

"We have one change in our side. Beau Webster comes in place of Mitch Marsh. Mitch knows that he hasn't scored enough runs," Cummins said at the pre-match press conference.

"Mitchie obviously hasn't quite got the runs or perhaps wickets said he would have liked this series. So, it felt like it was time for a fresher up and Beau's been with the squad. He's been great. But I feel like now is a good week for Beau to get a chance."

and taken 148 wickets in first-class cricket.

Webster has been in good form in the Sheffield Shield as well and averaged over 55 last season.

"He's just been one of those star performers for Tasmania with the bat or ball, or in the field. He always seems to have a big impact, quite aggressive. (He) can change the game, like we've seen Mitch Marsh or Travis Head or Alex Carey do in that middle order."

Cummins admitted that Webster's crafty bowling played a role in the decision, "That was definitely a factor. It's always nice to have a fifth bowler that bowls quite a lot for Tasmania. So if we need to call on that, we can."

"Firstly, you're going to bat six, you picked for your batting, which he's shown in Shield over the last couple years when he takes the game on, and he's really changed some games for Tasmania. That pace bowling of Beau's going to be handy," said Cummins.

However, Cummins asserted that the Boxing Day match will not be Marsh's last Test for



Australia. "Particularly here in Australia, when a batter misses out or gets dropped, it's always seen as a big thing, but it's not the case. We love pulling a squad of players together who we can call on at different times, and we thought the time was right for Mitchy to have a fresher-up and miss this one."

"But doesn't mean that he won't be back in the team at some point," the skipper said.

Starc fit Cummins also put to rest the speculation surrounding Mitchell Starc's fitness, saying the left-arm pacer will play the game.

"He went for scans yesterday. But he got the all clear to play this match. He is good to go," Cummins said.

The 34-year-old's fitness was the main concern for the hosts after he battled through sore ribs in the Boxing Day Test but still managed to bowl effectively with help from the team's physios.

"There's always considerations. But yeah, it's a big game in the context of series, World Test Championship. It's a home game. So yeah, he was never going to miss this one unless he absolutely had to," Cummins added.

A victory or a draw in the fifth Test here is crucial for the hosts as it will help them regain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy for the first time since 2014-15.

A win will also assure Australia of a spot in the World Test Championship final against already-qualified South

Africa. However, if India win the game, they will retain the BGT trophy, winning the series for a record-extending fifth straight time.

Cummins was effusive in his praise for Starc, claiming the left-hand quick is an "absolute dream as a captain" to have in the side.

"Personality-wise, just his resilience. He's bowled 145 (kmph) for 15 years now, and a lot of overs. You just don't do that without always dealing with different niggles or setbacks. He just grits his teeth and gets on with it."

"He's the one player who just refuses ever to talk about being rested or rotated. He just wants to go out there and play for Australia. Even if he's had some quiet games in the past and people are out to get him or whatever, he's still just wants to turn off and play."

"I just have huge admiration for him from that point of view as a bowler. He's an absolute dream as a captain, because you feel like you've got five different bowls in one," Cummins said.

Pakistan board worried due to incomplete renovation work at Karachi Stadium



KARACHI, Jan 2 (Agencies): The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is in a scramble to complete the renovation work on the National Stadium ahead of next month's Champions Trophy and has moved all matches scheduled at the venue to other places.

The stadium will play host to the opening match of the ICC marquee event between Pakistan and New Zealand on February 19.

"Due to the ongoing construction and renovation work, it was decided against holding any matches at the NSK as it would only further delay the work and also

disturb the players," one official said.

The Quaid-e-Azam Trophy final, the premier first-class event in Pakistan, began on Thursday at the smaller UBL Complex here after getting shifted from the National Stadium.

The PCB has also announced that the two-Test series against the West Indies later this month would be held in Multan after scheduling the first Test in Karachi after continuing delay in the renovation work remained a cause of concern.

Some of the construction work, which was scheduled for a December 15 finish, was com-

pleted at the deadline and fresh instructions have been issued to the construction company to push the job schedule.

The PCB is carrying out massive construction work worth Rs 12 billion at all three venues scheduled to host the Champions Trophy, including Lahore and Rawalpindi. It includes renovation of the main NSK building, new dressing rooms, media centres, hospitality boxes and board offices. A new electronic scoreboard is also being installed along with new chairs in enclosures and the fencing around the ground is also being replaced from scratch.

Seminar on 'Cancer and holistic ways to manage it' held at SCI Jammu



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: A seminar titled "Cancer and holistic ways to manage it" was held at the State Cancer Institute (SCI) in Jammu, with a focus on raising awareness about cancer, its causes, and alternative methods of managing it through holistic approaches.

The event was organized to educate the public on both conventional medical treatments and natural, lifestyle-based solutions to support cancer treatment.

Dr. Shreyansh Kumar Jain, the State Yoga Commissioner and President of Vichar Kranti International, was the key speaker.

He explained the science behind cancer, including how genetic mutations, unhealthy lifestyles, and exposure to carcinogens contribute to its development.

Dr. Jain also highlighted the stages of cancer progression, including rapid cell growth, immune evasion, and metastasis, providing attendees with a deeper understanding of the disease.

In addition to discussing medical treatments such as radiation, che-

motherapy, surgery, and immunotherapy, Dr. Jain emphasized the importance of holistic management strategies.

These strategies include making lifestyle changes, managing stress, and improving diet to support overall well-being. He also elaborated on the role of yoga and meditation in healing.

Dr. Jain demonstrated key yoga asanas such as Shavasana, Bhujangasana, Vrikshasana, and Matsyasana, and recommended pranayama techniques like Anulom-Vilom, Bhastrika, and Nadi Shodhana for relaxation and mental clarity.

A significant portion of the seminar also covered dietary recommendations, with Dr. Jain advocating for the consumption of antioxidant-rich foods, including fruits and vegetables, as well as natural remedies such as wheatgrass to boost immunity and detoxify the body. He advised against processed foods, tobacco, and excessive caffeine, while recommending supplements like turmeric, tulsi, and aloe vera for added health benefits.

Lifestyle changes

were another key focus of the seminar. Dr. Jain suggested regular exercise, sufficient sleep, and stress-free living as essential factors to enhance recovery and strengthen the immune system during cancer treatment.

The seminar was graced by several dignitaries, including Dr. Deepak Kumar, Deputy Superintendent and Officiating Superintendent of the State Cancer Institute; Krishna Devi, Matron; Satvinder Kour, Supervisor; and Sandeep, an Arogya Mitra.

Dr. Deepak Kumar expressed his gratitude towards Dr. Jain and his team, including Narinder Wadhwa and Mohinder Rana, for their valuable contributions to the event.

The session concluded with a special moment, as Dr. Deepak Kumar's birthday was celebrated with a heartfelt life sketch composed by Dr. Jain in his honor, marking the occasion with a personal touch. The seminar successfully blended medical science with holistic practices, offering attendees a well-rounded perspective on cancer management.

JKBS members congratulate Rattan on his retirement



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: Members of Jammu and Kashmir Batwal Sabha who joined here today, congratulated Rattan Batwal on his retirement from the Government Polytechnic College Batala after attaining the age of superannuation.

Members said to Rattan, "Retirement is about embracing the time to pursue your hidden passions and dreams. May your retirement be the key that unlocks the door to new opportunities and adventures."

On the occasion, the JKBS General Secretary RL Kaith said, "Rattan has contributed tirelessly in all aspects of voluntary service whether it's practical assistance to others or biradari activities or raising funds for charity. He has a soft heart. He doesn't raise his voice ever and treats everyone with kindness. Infact, he is a unique personality who serves as a good citizen.

His personality has made us admire and respect him the most."

Water accumulated to the hardship of people of Laxmipuram Sector B-2



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: Kuldeep Kumar Rao, who contested from 79-Jammu North Assembly constituency in the recently conducted Assembly election, in a press statement issued here said that the lot of water has got blocked in way between the Chowk near the residence of Om Parkash Kotwal and Modern

Secular Institute of Education Laxmipuram Sector-B-2, in JMC, ward No.62, as a result the public of the area is facing lot of inconvenience. It is therefore requested to Dy. Chief Minister, Surinder Kumar Chaudhary and the concerned MLA Jammu North, Sham Lal Sharma, to kindly direct the concerned to visit on spot; asses the

position and take immediate remedial steps at the earliest without any further delay, so that problems of the inhabitants of the area are ventilated. The public also demanded the lanes & drains from the Chowk near the Residence of Om Parkash Kotwal & Modern Secular Institute of Education Laxmipuram Sector-B-2 to Ashram.

The Department of R&B have constructed drains from Modern Secular Institute of education Laxmipuram, without proper planning & left the work half-way for the reason not known.

Tarigami urges CM Omar Abdullah to expedite clearance of pending cases

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 2: In light of the rising number of cancer cases in Jammu and Kashmir, Member Legislative Assembly Kulgam, M. Y. Tarigami has called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to fast-track the clearance of pending cases, under the Cancer Treatment and Management Fund for the Poor (CTMFFP).

Tarigami's appeal comes after he revealed that financial assistance under the scheme has been halted since July 2024, leaving many poor cancer patients struggling to afford the necessary treatment.

"Amidst the ballooning number of cancer cases in J & K, the financial assistance pro-



vided to patients under Cancer Treatment and Management Fund for Poor (CTMFFP) scheme has been halted since July 2024, leaving poor patients struggling to afford

treatment. I Urge Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to expedite the clearance of pending cases and ensure that adequate funds are allocated to support these patients," Tarigami said.

The suspension of funds has exacerbated the difficulties faced by families already burdened by the high costs of cancer care.

With a growing number of patients requiring immediate assistance, Tarigami emphasized the urgent need for adequate allocation of resources to ensure that these patients receive the support they desperately need.

He urged the government to prioritize healthcare funding, particularly for cancer patients, and to resolve the financial obstacles hindering treatment. san 2-2.

BJP announces plan to overthrow Kejriwal govt at Dalit Samman Sammellan



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 2: At the Dalit Samman Sammelan organized by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Scheduled Caste Front in Shadipur Assembly constituency, Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal addressed a large public gathering, accusing the Congress party of consistently neglecting and exploiting Dalits and backward classes. Meghwal highlighted that the BJP has always respected Dalit icons such as Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar, Lord Valmiki, and Guru Ravidas, whereas Congress has failed to support the Dalit community. He then announced that the time has come to oust the Kejriwal government from Delhi, accusing it of misleading and exploiting the people with false promises.

Meghwal criticized Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's government for claiming to offer free services like electricity and water, only to deceive the people of Delhi. He pointed out the rampant corruption within the government, stating that several ministers

and MLAs are currently in jail, undermining the stability of the administration. He further claimed that Kejriwal's government is "unsustainable" and being run by individuals who are out on bail, urging the public not to trust the current leadership.



Mohan Lal Gihara, State President of the Delhi Pradesh Scheduled Caste Front, also spoke at the event, accusing the Kejriwal government of misleading the Balmiki community by using the broom, a tool associated with sanitation work, as an electoral symbol. He claimed that the Balmiki community is now awake to the truth and will play a pivotal role in the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections by rejecting Kejriwal's government. Gihara also condemned the treatment of Dalit Safai Karamcharis in Delhi, claiming they are being exploited by corrupt middlemen and are not being made permanent in their jobs despite years of service.

District President of the Scheduled Caste Front, Meenakshi Sood, took to the stage, criticizing the Kejriwal government for failing to

honor Dalit leaders by building memorials in their names. She compared this to the BJP, which has built religious sites and memorials for Dalit communities. Sood accused the Kejriwal government of playing divisive politics, while the BJP has consistently worked for the development and empowerment of Dalits and backward classes.

The event also saw the participation of key BJP figures such as Lajpat Rai (State General Secretary), Ramesh Kumar (Former Scheduled Caste Front President), Ram Kumar Verma (Former Rajya Sabha MP), and Raju Chandel (Media Co-Chief). The gathering was a significant display of BJP's commitment to the Dalit community, with leaders reaffirming their mission to uplift Dalits and ensure their rights are protected.

The Dalit Samman Sammelan ended on a high note, with BJP leaders promising continued support for Dalit empowerment and announcing their intentions to change the leadership in Delhi. The event showcased the party's focus on the welfare of the Dalit community and its resolve to challenge the current governance in Delhi.

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