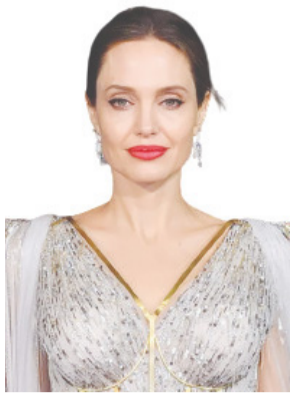


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RNI No. JKENG/2010/39369

Regd. No. JK-435

Vol.-16 Issue-04 Pages-12 Rs.-2/-

BRIEFLY

Boy dies of suffocation in south Kashmir's Kulgam, mother hospitalised

KULGAM, Jan 4 (Agencies): A young boy died due to suspected suffocation caused due to charcoal fumes while his mother has been hospitalised at a hospital in south Kashmir's Kulgam district.

The duo was admitted in the hospital on January 2 and the boy breathed his last Saturday morning while his mother is admitted and her condition is reported to be critical, reported news agency JKNS.

The deceased has been identified as Nisar Ahmad Khan, and his mother as Fameeda Akhter, both hailing from the Gudder area of Kulgam district.

Notaries asked to submit annual returns for 2024

JAMMU, Jan 4 (Agencies): The Department of Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs, J&K, has directed all enrolled notaries to submit their annual returns for 2024 in Form XIV under Rule 14 of the Notaries Rules, 1956.

As per a circular issued by the Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs Department, the returns must be filed within the first week of January each year.

Defaulters are given a seven-day grace period to send their returns to law-jk@nic.in, failing which appropriate action will be taken under the rules.

Thick fog in Kashmir Valley hits flight operations at Srinagar Airport

SRINAGAR, Jan 4 (Agencies): Flight operations at the Srinagar airport were hit on Saturday due to dense fog that engulfed parts of the Kashmir valley, officials said. Jammu and Kashmir tourism

A thick layer of fog engulfed Srinagar, in the morning, they said. Poor visibility due to the fog affected

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"Needs to be taken seriously": Pawan Khera on China's move to establish two counties in Ladakh

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Congress leader Pawan Khera has strongly criticised the government's response to China's establishment of two new counties in Hotan prefecture, incorporating Ladakh's territory and urged the Centre to take the issue seriously.

Khera said that the "perfunctory objection" raised by the Ministry of External Affairs in Friday's press conference over the issue is "notwithstanding."

He urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to introspect the issue and said "Casual objection by EAM would not work." Khera alleged that China's confidence in making such moves stems from the "clean chit" given by PM Modi.

Speaking with ANI, Khera said, "The perfunctory objection raised by MEA is notwithstanding. China draws its confidence from the clean chit the PM gave on 20th June 2020 after the Chinese incursions in our territory. Now that China has created two counties in Hotan prefecture, it is an area which has been traditionally, historically been ours and we have been very consistent about our claim on the area."

Khera emphasized that the area in question has historically been part of India and that the govern



ment needs to take a stronger stance. He feels that the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) objections are inadequate and that more decisive action is required.

"This needs to be taken seriously and casual objections by the EAM would not work. PM must introspect that he can't go about distributing clean chits to neighbours who are hostile to our interests," he added.

Furthermore, Khera expressed concerns about China's plan to build a mega-dam on the Brahmaputra river, which could impact Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. He argued that this project undermines India's interests in the northeastern region.

"The dam on the Brahmaputra

river again undermines and creates havoc for our interests in the northeastern region. This reflects very poorly on our foreign policy," said the Congress leader.

The MEA has also addressed this issue, urging China to ensure that downstream states are not adversely affected by the dam project and also lodged a protest with China, stating that parts of the new counties fall within Ladakh's territory.

The Ministry of External Affairs on Friday, addressing the issue, said that India has lodged a strong protest with China over the establishment of two new 'counties' in the region that includes the region under the Union Territory of Ladakh, and asserted that New Delhi has never accepted the "illegal occupation" by Beijing.

"We have seen the announcement pertaining to the establishment of two new counties in Hotan Prefecture of China. Parts of the jurisdiction of these so-called counties fall in India's Union Territory of Ladakh. We have never accepted the illegal Chinese occupation of Indian territory in this area," MEA Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in a press conference.

He further emphasised that the creation

Turn to page 9

Demotion of J&K to UT level unacceptable, GoI should restore full statehood: Karan Singh

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Senior Congress leader and veteran politician Karan Singh has demanded the immediate restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and said that the current status of the region is an "unacceptable" diminution of the "crown of India".

In a recent interview to agency Videos, Singh, a three-time Rajya Sabha MP and Sadr-i-Riyasat (constitutional head) of the erstwhile state, also voiced his concerns over the changes following the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution.

He noted that before this constitutional change, the entire debate used to revolve around how much autonomy was to be accorded to the state.

"The whole game has changed after the abrogation of (Article) 370," Singh said.

He said Jammu and



Kashmir's transition to a union territory is a diminution of the erstwhile state and it is "unacceptable".

Singh noted that a former Indian ambassador to the US said that the current status of Jammu and Kashmir has put it behind states like Himachal Pradesh and Haryana in terms of governance efficiency. "(Hum) toh mukut hai Hindustan ke (We are the crown of India)," he said.

Asked about statehood restoration, the former Union minister said, "Definitely. Full statehood."

He also advocated for

domiciliary laws similar to those in Himachal Pradesh, which restrict land ownership to locals. "These are the domiciliary laws that we want," he said.

However, Singh feels not everything about the abrogation of Article 370 is negative.

He said the abrogation scrapped a law that took away the property rights of women from the state who married outsiders and also enabled many people who migrated from Pakistan to exercise their franchise.

"So I took a very nuanced view. Some things are positive in it," he said.

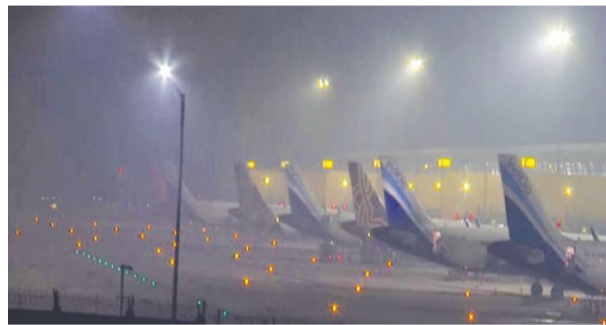
Decades ago, Singh had proposed trifurcation of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. He proposed that Jammu should be merged with Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh should be made a union territory and Kashmir should

Turn to page 9

19 flights diverted, over 200 delayed as dense fog hits operations

NEW DELHI, Jan 4: As many as 19 flights were diverted at the Delhi airport early Saturday morning and more than 200 flights delayed as low visibility due to dense fog impacted operations for the second straight day.

The country's largest airline IndiGo had temporarily put arrivals and departures on hold at the airport early in the morning.



An official said 19 flights were diverted at the airport between 12.15 am and 1.30 am due to reduced visibility.

Out of them, 13 were domestic, 4 international and 2 non-scheduled flights. More than 200

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MeT warns of heavy snowfall in Kashmir, Chenab Valley from tonight

SRINAGAR, Jan 4 (Agencies): The Meteorological Centre Srinagar today warned of light to moderate snowfall at most places of Jammu and Kashmir from tonight.

From January 4-6, there is a forecast of generally cloudy with light to moderate rain (plains in Jammu division), while snow at most places of Jammu and Kashmir, with peak activity during January 4 night to January 5 late night or January 6 morning, leading temporary disruption of surface and air traffic particularly on January 5, the officials said.

"There is a possibility of heavy snow over middle and higher reaches of Kashmir, and Chenab valley during January 4

night to January 5 late night or January 6 morning," the officials said.

They said the weather will improve from January 6 afternoon.

The weather will remain generally dry and cloudy from January 7-10, the officials said.

They said from January 11-12, there will be generally cloudy with light snow at isolated to scattered places of Jammu and Kashmir.

From January 13-15, the weather will remain dry likely, they added.

The officials advised tourists, travelers and transporters to plan their travel accordingly and follow advisories from administration and traffic department.

Police arrest two drug peddlers, including woman in Baramulla

SRINAGAR, Jan 4 (Agencies): Police arrested two alleged drug peddlers, including a woman, in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district on Saturday and seized contraband substances from them.

Police said a suspect was intercepted

at a checkpoint at Bela Crossing Boniyar in Uri, and during his search, 50 grams of a charas-like contraband substance was recovered.

He was subsequently identified as Rafiq Ahmad Sheikh, a resident of Hundi Nowshera, and arrested.

A case under relevant sections of the law was registered at Police Station Boniyar, and an investigation was initiated.

"During sustained interrogation, the accused disclosed that he had procured the contraband from a woman identified

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TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief & sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt Usha Pandita** W/o Late Sh. Ram Krishan Pandita originally resident of Habba Kadal Srinagar on 1-1-2025 presently residing at House No. 82, Lane No 1, Pritam Nagar Paloura Dhok Jammu.

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed on 09-01-2025 (Thursday) at Akhnor Ghat & Mourning Assembly will be held at Muthi Ghat near Directorate of School Education at 11.30 AM.

Grieving Loved Ones
Son & Daughter-in-law
Rakesh Pandita & Rakha Pandita
Daughter & Son-in-law
Machu Ganjoo & Rajinder Ganjoo
Grand Children: Aastha, Namita & Naman
Mob. 7889949658, 9596749279, 7006362475




Smt Usha Pandita

10TH DAY

With profound grief & sorrow, we inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **Sh. Rattan Lal Kaul** S/o Lt. Sh. Sham Lal Kaul originally resident of (Zainapora, Shopian) presently at 1061, H.I.G Duplex, Sector 9, Vasundhara, Ghazalbad, UP who left for heavenly abode on 29th of December 2024.

10th Day will be performed at bank of Ganga Murad Nagar, Ghazalbad on 07-01-2025 (Tuesday). **Assembly** will be held at our residence at 12:00 noon.

GRIEF STRICKEN:
Kalpana Kaul (Wife)
+91-9582052688
Mayur Kaul (Son)
+91-7290932441
Samast Kaul, Dhar and Pandita Parivaar



Sh. Rattan Lal Kaul

10TH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt. Sita Parihar (Retired Teacher)** wife of late Sh. Mohan Lal Parihar (Retired Chief Prosecution Officer) of Kuleed Kishitwar, at present 24-P, Sector-5, JDA HOUSING COLONY UPPER ROOP NAGAR JAMMU, on 27th December 2024.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed at Jio Pota Ghat, Akhnor JAMMU on 5th January 2025 (Sunday) at 10.30 AM.

13TH DAY KRIYA and GAYATRI PUJAN shall be performed at our residence at Roop Nagar, Jammu on 8th January 2025 at 12.30 Noon.

GRIEVING LOVED ONES
Sister in law
Santosh Parihar
Daughter and Son-in-law
Dr. Jyoti & Rajive Rathore
Sons & Daughters in law
Dr. Ritu & Sanjay Parihar (Distt & Sessions Judge)
Bindu and Ajay Parihar
9419154659, 9419205550,
Grandchildren:
Anmol Rathore (IAS), Prajwal, Shreya, Puneet and Adhyayan.



Smt. Sita Parihar (Retired Teacher)

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt. Gunwati Wangoo** W/o Lt. Sh. Racha Krishan Wangoo R/o Drangabal, Pampore, at present H.No 501, Vinayak Nagar Muthi Jammu who left for heavenly abode on 27th Dec. 2024.

The **Tenth Day Kriya** will be performed on 5th of January (Sunday) 2025 at Muthi Ghat near Director office at 11.00 AM.

Mobile no. 9622079330/ 7889517455

GRIEF STRICKEN:-
Lt. Sh. Ashok Kumar Wangoo - **Son**
Sh. Ramesh Kumar Wangoo - **Son**
Smt. Vijay Wangoo - **Daughter-in-law**
Smt. Pushpa Wangoo - **Daughter-in-law**
Smt. & Sh. Baby Koul - **Daughter**



SMT. GUNWATI WANGOO


TENTH DAY

With profound grief & sorrow, we regret to inform about the sad demise of **Smt. Lalita Sharma** W/o Lt. Sh. Ghan Shyam Raina R/o 35 Choughan Fattu Jammu on 22nd Dec. 2024.

Tenth Day will be performed on 31st Dec. (Tuesday) from 11 AM to 12 NOON at Rani Park Jammu.

Rasam Pagni/Uthala will be performed on 10th Jan. 2025 (Wednesday) from 4 PM to 5 PM at Mahajan Hall, Shalimar Road, Jammu.

GRIEF STRICKEN
Sister-in-law & Brother-in-law
Smt. Sudarshan Sharma W/o R.P. Sharma
Sons & Daughters-in-law
Smt. Lovely Raina W/o Sh. Anil Raina
Sh. Sunil Raina & Vandana Raina
Sh. Ashwani Kr. Raina & Vishal Raina
Sh. Deepak Raina & Asha Raina
Sh. Subash Raina & Arti Raina - **Nephew & Niece in law**
Grand Daughter & Grand Son-in-law
Paridhi & Suyash
Grand Children : Sudhanshu, Deevun, Tej svi, Danish, Akshit, Utkarsh, Arya, Sarthak, Adhyan




Smt. Lalita Sharma

TENTH DAY / KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform sad demise of our beloved Father **Karamyogi Sh. Lassa Bhat** S/o Late Sh. Prem Nath Bhat originally from Umanagri, Baramulla, Kashmir presently residing at H.No. 491, Paloura Top, Saraksha Vihar Phase-III, Jammu on 28/12/2024.

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed at Muthi Ghat near Director Education Office Jammu on 5/1/2025 (Sunday) at 10.30 am.

GRIEF STRICKEN
Smt. Binla Bhat (Wife)
(Son & Daughter-in-law)
Sh. Sunil Bhat & Smt. Basanti Bhat
Sh. Vinod Bhat & Smt. Dimple Bhat
Sh. Veerinder Koul & Smt. Ranu Koul (Daughter and Son-in-law)
Sh. Avtar Krishan Bhat & Smt. Jaya Bhat (Brother & Bhabhi)
Sh. Rattan Lal Bhat & Smt. Teja Bhat (Brother & Bhabhi)
Grand Sons & Daughters
Vanishka, Dya, Sneha, Prakriti, Jeevika and Nitin Koul
RSVP: Samast Bhat and Koul Parihar
Mobile: 9796468265, 9419263172, 9419255991



Karamyogi Sh. Lassa Bhat

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the sad demise of our father **Sh. Dwarka Nath Dhiman** R/o 162 New Plot Jammu who expired on 26-12-2024.

Tenth Day will be performed at Girls School near Water tank Galli No. 6, New Plot Jammu on Saturday 04-01-2025 at 11.00 am and **Kriya** will be performed on Sunday 05-01-2025 at 12.00 Noon at our residence New Plots.

Grief Stricken
Dhiman Family
7006287538, 8803248667, 9086029212



Sh. Dwarka Nath Dhiman

10TH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform you about the sad demise of our beloved **Master Yuvraj Khajuria** S/o Advocate Rakesh Khajuria and Meenakshi Sharma R/o Lakhnupur Kathua

Tenth Day will be performed on 4-1-2025 (Saturday) at our residence at 11.00 AM.

Kriya will be performed on 5-1-2025 (Sunday) at our residence at 12.30 PM.

GRIEF STRICKEN
Smt. Krishna Khajuria - **Dadi Ji**
Sh. Rakesh Khajuria - **Father**
Smt. Meenakshi Khajuria - **Mother**
Sh. Kamal Kishore Khajuria - **Tau Ji**
Smt. Monika Khajuria - **Tai Ji**
Brother & Sister: Ansh, Abhiraj & Avni
Mobile No: 9419129196, 9796222809



MASTER YUVRAJ KHAJURIA

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Smt. Reeta Bhat** W/o Sh. Kanya Lal Bhat R/o Wadwan Budgam, Present Address Neel Sheel Vihar Paloura Near Sacred Heart College Paloura Jammu who left for heavenly abode on 30 Dec, 2024.

The **Tenth Day Kriya** will be performed on 8th of January (Wednesday) 2025 at Muthi Ghat near Director office at 10.30 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-
Sh. Kanya Lal Bhat (**Husband**)
Smt. Rama Bhat (Bhabhi) w/o Lt. Roshan Lal Bhat
Mr. Ajay Bhat and Anu Bhat (**Son & Daughter-in-law**)
Rahul Bhat (**Son**)
Mr. Rohit Bhat & Rakhi Bhat (**Son & Daughter-in-law**)
Grand Children: Vansh, Aashi, Riyanshi
Mob. +91 99069 42971, 9419688620



SMT. REETA BHAT

OBITUARY

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW, WE REGRET TO INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED **SMT. SHARDA BAKSHI** W/O LATE SH. JAWAHAR LAL BAKSHI (RETD. DRILLING ENGINEER GEOLOGY AND MINING DEPTT. J&K) R/O 295 JILAKHA MOHALLA JAMMU, WHO LEFT FOR HEAVENLY ABODE ON 30TH DECEMBER AT 4.30 AM CREMATION WAS HELD AT JOGI GATE, JAMMU ON 30TH DECEMBER 2024.

10TH DAY KRIYA WILL BE PERFORMED ON 7TH JANUARY 2025 AND MOURNING ASSEMBLY WILL BE HELD AT MUTHI GHAT NEAR DIRECTORATE OF SCHOOL EDUCATION JAMMU AT 11.30AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN
SH. OM PARKASH BAKSHI (SON) Mob. 9419141979
(DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND SON)
MRS. MUKTI AND MR. RAM KRISHAN BAKSHI
Mob. 9797377764, 9419117827
MRS. URMIL AND MR. RAVINDER MATTOO (DAUGHTER AND SON-IN-LAW)
MRS. VEENA AND MR. PRAN NATH KAUL (SISTER-IN-LAW AND BROTHER)
MRS. NANCY AND MR. AVTAR TICKU (SISTER-IN-LAW AND BROTHER)
MRS. KRISHNA AND MR. PRAN NATH RAZDAN (SISTER AND BROTHER IN-LAW)
MRS. BILMA RAINA (SISTER)
MRS. MAHAK AND MR. ABHISHEK BANGROO (GRAND DAUGHTER AND GRAND SON-IN-LAW)
AKSHAY, AYUSH, ARYAN, MOKSHA (GRAND CHILDREN)
BAKSHI TICKU AND ZUTSHI PARIWARS



SMT. SHARDA BAKSHI


10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of **Sh. Anchal Singh** S/o Late Sh. Dhamul Singh (R/o H.No. 153 Narwal Pain Ward no 1 Jammu Cantt., Satwari) on 24th Dec. 2024.

10th Day will be performed on 2-1-2025 (Thursday) at our residence (H.No. 153 Narwal Pain Ward No 1 Jammu Cantt., Satwari) at 10 am.

Kriya will be performed on 5-1-2025 (Sunday) at our residence.

Grief Stricken
Smt. Ratno Devi - **Wife**
Sons and Daughters in law
Sh. Inderjit Singh and Smt. Chandan
Sh. Prem Singh and Smt. Naresh
Sh. Kamal Singh and Smt. Anita
Sh. Rameshwar Singh and Smt. Jyoti
Daughter and son-in-law
Smt. Sushma and Sh. Kuldeep Singh
Contact: 9906327104




Sh. Anchal Singh

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt. Unawati (Yaya Miji)** wife of well-known renowned personality Late Sh. Ram Jee Pandita from Villagam (Kupwara) Kashmir A/P Sharda Colony, Pooni Chak Jammu on 28-12-2024. The **Tenth Day Kriya** will be performed at Devangan Mata Bhaderkali Asthapan Thalwad Prathali Mandir Jammu (Gps 32.709417, 74.778657) on 6th January 2025 (Monday) at 9:30 AM followed by **ASSEMBLY** at 11 AM at our Jammu residence near Sharda Mandir Pooni Chak Jammu.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-
Sons & Daughters-in-Law
Sh. Vinod Ji Pandita & Smt. Kiran Pandita (7006879359)
Sh. Ashwani Pandita & Smt. Priya Pandita (9618840312)
Sh. Rajesh Pandita & Smt. Veena Pandita (9796065233)
Daughters & Sons-in-Law
Smt. Phooja Ji Bhat W/o Lt. Sh. Kanya Lal Bhat
Smt. Meenakshi Reshi & Sh. Vijay Kumar Reshi (7006372576)
Grand-Great-Grand Children: Arti & Sandeep Koul, Vikram & Neha, Dushant Bhat & Neha, Anil Reshi, Annu Reshi, Ashish, Ankush, Ruchika, Samksha, Aaryansh



Lt. Smt. Unawati Pandita
07-06-1934 - 28-12-2024

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief & sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Tej Krishan Zadoo (Bairaj)** S/o Late Sh. Jia Lal Zadoo, originally resident of Nai Sarak, Gunde Ahelmaar, Srinagar at present H no 26, Lane No. 4, Sector B-2, Laxmipuram, Chinrore (Near Posh Babh Ashram) Jammu on 1st Jan 2025.

Tenth Day Kriya shall be performed on 9th January, 2025 (Thursday) at Akhnor Ghat and Assembly shall be held at our residence at 10.30 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-
Smt. Vijay (Nee Ganju) Zadoo - **Wife**
Son & Daughter-in-law
Sh. Chetan and Smt. Ruchika Zadoo
Brother: Sh. Ratan Lal and Smt. Kirti Zadoo
Sister: Smt. Usha Handoo (W/o Late P.N Handoo)
Sister: Smt. Lalita and Sh. Balj Revoo
Sister: Smt. Meera and Sh. Mahesh Krishen
Brother-in-Law: Sh. Ramesh Ganjoo
Brother-in-Law: Sh. Satish and Smt. Sunil Ganjoo
And Samast Parivar Zadoo's, Handoo's, Revoo's, Pandita's, Raina's, Ganjoo's.




SH. TEJ KRISHAN ZADOO (BAIRAJ)

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved Father **Sh. Pyaray Krishan** S/o Lt. Sh. Tara Chand R/o Chandrigam, Aishmuqam, Anantnag at present Vasud Vihar, Near J&K Bank, Paloura, Jammu.

Tenth Day will be performed on Friday 10/1/2025 at Akhnor Ghat and **Mourning Assembly** at our residence at 11.30 am.

GRIEF STRICKEN
Smt. Raina Ji (Wife)
(Son & Daughter-in-law)
Sh. Sanjay Kumar Soha and Smt. Baby
(Daughter & Son-in-law)
Smt. Sweetly Koul W/o Lt. Sh. Sunil Koul
Smt. Jyoti Koul W/o Sh. Kuldeep Koul
Grand Children: Anu, Binny, Ritik, Madhu, Sonu, Sachin & Rohit
Mob: 9797105749



Sh. Pyaray Krishan

BHOG AND ANTIM ARDAS

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **S. JAGJIT SINGH** S/o Late S. Kirpal Singh R/o H. No. 3/11 Bahari Colony Jammu, who left for heavenly abode on 28 December 2024.

In Loving memory of the departed soul **Arambh Sri Akhand Path Sahib** on 3rd January 2025, Friday at our Residence at 9:00 am
Bhog Sri Akhand Path Sahib on 5th January 2025, Saturday at our Residence at 9:30 am
Kirtan and Antim Ardass at Gurudwara Katighora Sahib, 3C Road, Bahari Colony, from 10:30 am to 12:00 Noon.

Grief Stricken
JATHEDAR FAMILY
Harbhajan Singh Retd. IAS (Brother)
Lohan Singh (Brother)
Tirth Singh (Brother)
Sunder Singh (Brother)
Jasbir Singh (Brother)
Amrpal Singh (Son)
Gurbinder Singh (Son)
Diljit Singh (Son-in-law)
Phone No. :- 9419112835, 7006873455




S. JAGJIT SINGH

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform that our beloved **Shri Kanaya Lal Kasid**, husband of Smt. Veena Kasid, S/o Late Sarvanand Kasid, originally from Karfali Mohala, Habbakadal, Srinagar and presently residing at Flat No. 1029, Tower 2, GH-07 Crossing Republic Ghazalabad, left for heavenly abode on 27/12/2024.

10th Day will be performed on 05/01/2025, Sunday 10.00 am at Chota Haridwar, Murad Nagar.

GRIEF STRICKEN
Veena Kasid (Wife)
Ashwani Kasid (Son)
Anisha and Ashwani Ganju (Daughter and Son in law)
H L Kasid (Brother)
B L Kasid and Santosh Kasid (Brother and Sister-in-law)
S K Kasid and Rajni Kasid (Brother and Sister-in-law)
Kasids, Razdans, Dhars, Ganjus, Kawas, Kotrus, Kouls
Phone No: 9999724567, 9958092192, 9810867990, 9818069202



Shri Kanaya Lal Kasid

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform that our beloved mother **Smt. Kushilya Raina (Pyari)** W/o Late Sh. Amar Nath Raina of Nanil, Anantnag at present H.No 101, Phase -2nd Lower Muthi Akapur Road, Near Vishwa Bhabhi School Jammu, who left for heavenly abode on 1st of January 2025.

The **TENTH DAY KRIYA** will be held on 10th of January 2025. The **ASSEMBLY** will be held at Directorate Education Muthi at 12 Noon.

GRIEF STRICKEN:
SONS & DAUGHTERS IN LAW-
Ranjini Raina w/o Lt. Pradaman Krishen Raina
Purna Raina & Kamal Ji Raina
Reeta Raina & Bharat Ji Raina
DAUGHTER & SON IN LAW-
Bimla Koul & Chand Krishen
GRAND CHILDREN -
Priya Raina W/o Nishant Ticku; Meenu W/o Rahul Raina; Naveen, Neha, Amav, Sudanshu, Sakshi, Aditya & Rudhur
GREAT GRAND CHILDREN: Tanisha & Iyana
Mob: 9419278635, 7006285236, 9906392641




Smt Kushilya Raina (Pyari)

TENTH DAY KRIYA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW, WE REGRET TO INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED FATHER **SH. RAKESH ROSHAN BHAT** ORIGINALLY RESIDENT OF KAKRAN KULGAM, PRESENTLY RESIDING AT H.NO-5, LANE-3A, ROOP NAGAR ENCLAVE JAMMU.

TENTH DAY KRIYA WILL BE PERFORMED ON WEDNESDAY 08-01-2025 AT AKHNOOR GHAT & **MOURNING ASSEMBLY** WILL BE HELD AT MUTHI GHAT NEAR DIRECTORATE OF SCHOOL EDUCATION AT 11:00 AM.

GRIEVING LOVED ONES.
SMT. SUNITA BHAT (WIFE)
PRANVA BHAT (DAUGHTER)
RISHAB BHAT (SON)
LT. SH. SK BHAT & SMT. KANTA BHAT - **BROTHER & SISTER-IN-LAW**
SH. CHAND JI BHAT & SMT. KANTA BHAT - **BROTHER & SISTER-IN-LAW**
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From Parivar Parv to Sangathan Parv; NC, INC needs to learn lesson: Dr. Jasrotia



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: From Parivar Parv to Sangathan Parv; NC, and INC need to learn the basic lesson of true democracy, said Dr. Abhijeet Jasrotia, Spokesperson, J&K BJP.

Jasrotia accompanied by Dr. Pradeep Mahotra, Media Incharge, J&K BJP, was addressing a press conference at the BJP Headquarters in Jammu today.

Dr. Abhijeet Jasrotia strongly criticized the National Conference (NC) and Indian National Congress (INC) for eroding democratic principles in their organizational and leadership structures. He contrasted their approach with the BJP's commitment to fostering democracy through its Sangathan Parv.

Dr. Jasrotia said that the NC and INC don't

believe in democracy and don't follow it. They use the word 'democracy' to hoodwink masses and workers to enjoy power corridors themselves.

Dr. Jasrotia highlighted a historical instance of undemocratic decision-making in Congress. "In the 1946 Congress Working Committee (CWC) elections, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel received 12 votes, while Jawaharlal Nehru received just one. Yet, Nehru was selected as India's first Prime Minister, disregarding the democratic mandate. This set the precedent for a system of selected rather than elected leadership in the Congress," he stated.

He also accused the NC of replicating similar undemocratic practices in Jammu and Kashmir, which alienated the grassroots and created

a culture of dynastic politics. "Both NC and INC have betrayed the democratic spirit by sidelining grassroots voices in favor of dynastic and elitist agendas," Dr. Jasrotia added.

In stark contrast, he praised the BJP's Sangathan Parv as a model of true democracy. He explained how the party's internal elections begin at the booth level and move through the mandal, district, and state levels, culminating in the election of the national president. "This process ensures leadership reflects the will of the party workers and the grassroots," he emphasized.

Dr. Jasrotia also addressed the recent controversy over Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's bag story, calling it a biased narrative designed to distract from pressing political issues. He urged the media to remain objective and focus on substantive matters.

The press conference concluded with Dr. Jasrotia urging the people of Jammu and Kashmir to reject the outdated and undemocratic practices of NC and INC and embrace a new era of participatory politics under the BJP.

Social Welfare Department celebrates Braille Day at Blind School

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: The Social Welfare Department, Jammu, organized a Braille Day celebration at a blind school to honor the legacy of Louis Braille, whose invention has transformed the lives of visually impaired individuals globally.

The event was inaugurated by Sanjeev Verma, Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare Department, who lit the ceremonial lamp and paid homage to Louis Braille.

Rupesh Kumar, Director Social Welfare Jammu, graced the occasion as the Guest of Honor.

Speaking on the occasion, Verma emphasized the department's commitment to empowering specially-abled individuals, particularly children residing in

Child Care Institutes (CCIs).

He briefed about skill development initiatives taken by SWD in to help them excel in various fields and lead independent lives.

Rupesh Kumar interacted with the residents of the blind home, praising their creativity and resilience.

"The Social Welfare Department is dedicated to creating an inclusive society where every individual is given equal opportunities to succeed," he said.

The inmates presented cultural performances, including songs, dances, and poetry, which showcased their exceptional talent and spirit.

The program concluded with a renewed commitment from the department to support and uplift differently-abled individuals.

IIM Jammu hosts S.K. Garg, Airport Director Jammu

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu was privileged to host S.K. Garg, Airport Director, Jammu, for a special visit to its campus.

S. K. Garg was warmly received upon arrival and given an extensive tour of the Institute, showcasing its state-of-the-art classrooms and the renowned Nalanda Library.

During his visit, S.K. Garg, Airport Director, Jammu, engaged in fruitful discussions with Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, exploring synergies between IIM Jammu and the Airport

Authority of India. The discussions focused on fostering collaborative opportunities, including potential partnerships that would provide IIM Jammu students with hands-on exposure to airport management and operations. This alignment is expected to create valuable learning experiences while driving mutual growth and innovation.

Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu emphasized the importance of fostering synergies between educational institutions and industry leaders to provide students with real-world experiences and enhance their learning

outcomes.

S.K. Garg, Airport Director, Jammu expressed his admiration for the infrastructure and facilities at IIM Jammu, highlighting its commitment to excellence in education.

On this occasion, S.K. Garg, Airport Director, Jammu was felicitated by Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu as a token of appreciation.

This visit marks another step toward building strong collaborations that benefit both IIM Jammu and industry partners, strengthening the Institute's commitment to bridging academia and industry for mutual growth.

AJBRCEAK delegation meets MLA Marh to present their demands



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: A delegation from the All Jammu Based Reserved Category Employees Association Kashmir (AJBRCEAK), led by President Anil Radha, met with Surinder Kumar Bhagat, MLA from Marh Constituency, to present their concerns and demands.

The delegation emphasized the need for the early notification of a Comprehensive Transfer Policy, highlighting t

hat an empowered committee has already been formed to address this matter.

During the meeting, Hemraj Lakhotra, the Drafting Secretary of AJBRCEAK, raised the issue of pending leave settlements for employees across various departments.

Additionally, Vijay Kumar, another member of the association, highlighted the urgent need for safe and secure accommodation for all Jammu-based

Reserved Category Employees at the district level.

The delegation also requested their adjustment in safer zones and district headquarters within the Kashmir Valley.

The delegation included other key members Ram Krishan Salgotra, Surinder Mohan, Amarnath, Ajay Kumar, Rakesh Kumar, and Mangat Ram Bhagat, all of whom contributed to the discussions on the pressing issues faced by the employees.

Monish Chopra appointed Chairman YLA Election Committee

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: With the successful completion of the Jammu & Kashmir High Court Bar Association, Jammu (J&KHCBAJ) elections, the process for conducting the Young Lawyers Association (YLA) elections is now underway with great enthusiasm.

The YLA, representing advocates with less than 10 years of practice and under the age of 35, constitutes a sig-

nificant segment of the J&KHCBAJ membership.

In preparation for these elections, Advocate Monish Chopra has been appointed as the Chairman of the Election cum Scrutiny Committee, as announced by the President and Returning Officer of YLA Advocate Rohit Sharma.

The election process will be conducted under the overall supervision of the President, J&KHCBAJ, with the

Vice President acting as the Convenor while, Advocate Monish Chopra will lead a distinguished team of lawyers to oversee critical aspects of the electoral process, including voter list preparation, candidate scrutiny, and the smooth conduct of the elections. The elections, tentatively scheduled for March 15, 2025, have already sparked enthusiasm among contestants, with campaigns gaining momentum.

Jammu Bar condemns brutal attack on Adv Kanav Sharma

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: The J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu held a press conference in the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and strongly condemned the brutal and life threatening attack on its member, Advocate Kanav Sharma, at New Plot, Jammu on January 3, 2025.

While addressing the press conference, K. Nirmal Kotwal, Advocate & President, J&KHCBAJ emphasised that strict measures shall be taken to ensure the security and safety of the Advocates inside as well as outside the court premises. Further he led emphasises on protection of the common masses and general public.

He requested the Police and Administration to ensure the measures and promptness in each case.

Addressing the media, Kotwal thanked the Police and Doctors who actively stood upon their toes and ensure arrest of culprits and saving the life of Advocate.

A shutdown of work was observed in all the Courts of Jammu Province in solidarity of the incident.

Team of J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu thanked the office bearers of periphery Bar Associations including Kathua, Samba, R.S. Pura, Akhnoor, Bishnah, Udhampur, Reasi, Doda, Kishtwar, Ramban, Poonch and Rajouri for standing together and calling against the increased crimes against public in general and Advocates in particular.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI(PHE) MECH. DIVISION
KATHUA
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e- NIT No. 117/JSPHEMK of 2024-25 dated: 02-01-2025

Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division Kathua, on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, invites tenders by e-tendering mode from registered/ reputed firms.

Name of the Work	Name of the Division	Cost of Tender Document/Tender Fee (In Rs)	Earnest Money	Estimated Cost	Bid Validity
1	2	3	4	5	6
Providing and filling of transformer oil for Topping up of transformer at various stations under Mahanpur Sub Division.	Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Division Kathua	Rs. 200.00 (Non-Refundable) In the shape of Treasury Challan in favour of the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division Kathua & also mentioned the e-NT No. and date	2% (pledged to Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division Kathua)	0.7038 lac	Bid shall be valid for 180 days

- Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 02-01-2025 (06:00PM) and uploaded from 02-01-2025(6:00 PM) to 08-01-2025 (04:00 PM). The complete bidding process will be online <http://jktenders.gov.in>.
- Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 3 & 4 of the table.
- The bid shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 180 days from the date of opening of bids. If any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender before the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the tenderer shall be debarred from participating in tendering process for a period of 1 year.
- The Technical Bids of the tender document received shall be opened online in the office of Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Department PHE Mechanical Division Kathua on 09-01-2025 at 01:00 P.Mor any other day convenient to the Ex. Engineer in the Office chambers of Executive Engineer, PHE Mechanical Division Kathua.
- The Financial Bids of the tender document of the qualified bidders shall also be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Department PHE Mechanical Division Kathua during office hours and shall be communicated separately.
- Other details can be seen inside the detailed tender document.

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EDITORIAL

Cyber Crime: A Growing Threat

Cybercrime refers to criminal activities that involve the use of computers, networks, or the internet. With the rapid growth of the internet and digital technologies, cybercrime has emerged as one of the most significant threats to individuals, businesses, governments, and societies worldwide. From identity theft and financial fraud to hacking and cyberterrorism, the scope of cybercrime is vast and continually evolving.

Identity Theft is one of the most prevalent forms of cybercrime, identity theft occurs when a criminal steals personal information such as Social Security numbers, bank account details, or passwords. This information is then used for fraudulent activities, including opening bank accounts, making purchases, or even taking out loans in the victim's name.

Phishing is a method by which criminals attempt to trick individuals into revealing sensitive information, such as passwords or credit card numbers. This is often done through fraudulent emails or websites that appear to be from legitimate sources like banks or popular e-commerce sites.

Hacking involves gaining unauthorized access to computer systems or networks. Hackers may exploit vulnerabilities in software or hardware, allowing them to steal data, disrupt operations, or even install malicious software (malware) on the target system. The motivations behind hacking can range from financial gain to political activism or even revenge.

Malware is a broad term that encompasses any malicious software designed to harm a computer system. This includes viruses, worms, spyware, and ransomware. Ransomware, in particular, has become a growing threat, where criminals lock users out of their files or systems and demand a ransom for their release. High-profile attacks, such as the WannaCry ransomware attack in 2017, have shown just how damaging these attacks can be to businesses and governments.

Cybercriminals often target online shopping platforms, banking apps, and payment systems to steal funds or commit fraud. This includes fraudulent transactions, stealing credit card information, and conducting illegal activities like money laundering.

The rise of social media and online communication platforms has led to an increase in cyberbullying and online harassment. Victims may face emotional distress due to offensive comments, threats, or inappropriate content. In extreme cases, cyberbullying has led to severe consequences, including suicide.

A more severe form of cybercrime, cyberterrorism involves the use of the internet to cause widespread disruption or harm. This could include attacking critical infrastructure such as power grids, financial institutions, or even government databases. The goal is often to cause panic, financial loss, or political instability.

Cybercriminals also target intellectual property, including patents, trademarks, and copyrights. They may illegally download, share, or sell copyrighted materials such as movies, music, software, or research data, causing significant financial losses to the creators and companies involved.

The impact of cybercrime is far-reaching, affecting individuals, businesses, governments, and economies. For individuals, cybercrime can lead to financial loss, identity theft, and emotional distress. The theft of personal data, for example, can ruin credit scores, deplete savings, and take years to recover from.

For businesses, cybercrime can result in significant financial losses, especially if sensitive customer data or trade secrets are stolen. Cyberattacks can disrupt operations, damage reputations, and lead to the loss of customer trust. Companies that fall victim to data breaches may also face legal consequences, regulatory fines, and class-action lawsuits.

Governments are not immune to cybercrime either. Attacks on government agencies can compromise national security, interfere with elections, or expose sensitive information about national defense and intelligence. In extreme cases, cyberterrorism can disrupt essential services such as healthcare, transportation, and communication, posing a threat to public safety.

On a global scale, cybercrime has a substantial economic impact. According to a 2020 report by Cybersecurity Ventures, the global cost of cybercrime is expected to reach \$10.5 trillion annually by 2025. This staggering amount includes direct financial losses, as well as the costs associated with mitigation, recovery, and lost productivity.

The Inspiring Journey of Bilqees Ara: A Young Woman Blood Donor

By: Farhan Kitab

In a world where the needs of the community are often overlooked, stories of individuals who rise to the occasion and make a difference serve as a beacon of hope. Bilqees Ara embodies this spirit of altruism and courage. As a young woman dedicated to the cause of saving lives through blood donation, she has become an inspiring figure for many in her community.

Bilqees' journey into the realm of blood donation began a many years ago. Motivated by a desire to help those in need, she first learned about the critical importance of blood when her son needed blood to save life. Hearing stories of patients whose lives were saved thanks to generous donors struck a chord in her heart. It was then that she decided to take action and make a tangible difference.

Bilqees has donated blood numerous times, each experience reinforcing her commitment to this vital cause. She understands that one donation can save up to three lives, and this knowledge drives her passion. "I remember the first time I donated," she recalls. "I was nervous, but I felt an overwhelming sense of purpose. Knowing that I could help someone in need made it all worthwhile."

Her journey as a blood donor has not only impacted the lives of those who receive her donations but has also inspired many young people in her community. Bilqees actively participates in local campaigns, using social media to raise awareness about the importance of blood donation. She shares her personal experiences and encourages others to join this lifesaving endeavor. "We often take our health for granted," she says. "But there are people

out there who need our help. If you are healthy, you have the power to save a life."

Bilqees has faced challenges along the way. Blood donation can sometimes be met with misconceptions and fears, especially among young people. Many are hesitant due to fear of needles or they simply don't understand the process. In response, Bilqees has taken it upon herself to educate her peers. "I organize informational sessions where we discuss what to expect when donating blood," she explains. "I want to ensure that everyone feels comfortable and informed about their decision."

Despite her busy schedule, Bilqees prioritizes her commitment to blood donation. She demonstrates that being a responsible and active citizen does not come at the expense of your personal goals; instead, it can enhance your life and the lives of those around you.

Bilqees Ara's story serves as an inspiration for young women everywhere. She challenges stereotypes and shows that compassion and bravery know no age. Her unwavering commitment to blood donation is a testament to the power of one individual to spark change in their community.

In a world where our individual actions can sometimes feel insignificant amidst larger societal issues, Bilqees' story reminds us that even small steps, like donating blood, can create ripples of impact. For anyone considering becoming a blood donor, Bilqees offers a simple yet powerful piece of advice: "Do it for those who need it most. You have so much to give."

In this way, Bilqees Ara is not just a blood donor; she is a beacon of hope and a reminder of the incredible power of kindness and generosity.

Tips to Study Effectively for Board Exams in less time

By: Vijay Garg

If you have to study for an upcoming exam, but you have less time for preparation then follow these tips and tricks to study well for the exam. Know here some important tips to study for exams in less time.

Date sheets are being announced for final exams, students are preparing themselves to score well in the exams. However, most students are confused about how to prepare for the exams as they have to cover the complete syllabus of one year in few weeks. Don't worry! If you have to study for an upcoming exam, but you have less time for preparation then follow these tips and tricks to study well for the exam. These tips are helpful even if you have few months or if you few days time for exams.

here the tips to study for exams in less time -

1. Analyse the previous years' question papers - You already have less time left to study each and every thing, so to score good marks in exams, you need to utilise your time efficiently. You need to begin with analysis of past years' question paper as per the syllabus for your upcoming

exams. For this you need to do the following -

1. Collect previous years 'question paper for at least 5-10 years

Cross-check the weightage of questions from different chapters, so as to identify chapters with more weightage and less important chapters

You will get to know the questions and chapters which are of tough, average and easy level.

This will help you understand important topics from every chapter which you must study for exams.

2. Set a Study Schedule as per the priority - Now you need to set priority for the important chapters as per the number of questions, marks weightage and difficulty level.

Determine time for each chapter as per the priority list and start with chapters with more weightage or easy chapters, so that you can save your time and efforts for difficult chapters' preparation.

Most important thing, do not make changes to your time table/study plan frequently. Just set a study schedule as per the priority list and follow it for better results.

3. Make points while studying - When you start your preparation,

read the topic which you need to learn, and then make pointer sentences to learn easily. To make it simpler, you can use bullets, numberings, special symbols, or mind mapping i.e. diagram to represent the answers and related topics.

4. Keep only the things you need while studying - Generally, it happens that students take their mobiles, laptops, tablets along with them while studying which constantly distract them. You should never keep such devices while studying, it affects your concentration and you end up wasting your time. You should take only the things you really need to study like notebook, syllabus, question papers and stationery etc. Also, keep the things you need at one place so that you don't have to get up or leave your studies in between to get them.

5. Do not take frequent or longer breaks while studying - It is generally advised by experts to take breaks in between your preparation, but the time duration and number of breaks is not mentioned by any of them. Ideally, you should take 15 minutes of break every 45 minutes round of study.

Also, not split the 15 minutes break in to 10+5, 5+10 or 5+5+5 because you'll be distracted by this. So, to maintain the concentration while studying take small break in one hour i.e. 60 minutes = 45 minutes of study+15 minutes of one break

6. Sleep well and eat healthy - Most important thing to remember is that you must eat healthy and rest well to keep yourself attentive while studying. For this,

You should sleep for 6-7 hours

Eat healthy like fruits, veggies, fruit juice/smoothies only

Take time to do some physical exercise and meditation, it helps you improve physical and mental fitness

Also, please avoid junk food, sugar coated products and caffeine as these things makes your body more tired and you cannot focus while studying.

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

Mohanlal Gihara's promise to Prime Minister Modi that he will win Delhi



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: State President of Bharatiya Janata Party Scheduled Caste Front, Mohanlal Gihara, while meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi today in village

Joshi, promised that he will hoist the flag of Bharatiya Janata Party by making lotus bloom in Delhi and will form the BJP government.

He said that Delhi has 40% population of Scheduled Caste Dalit

people who are completely with BJP and this time they have agreed that they will uproot the Kejriwal government and I also promise you that this time we will wipe out the Kejriwal government from Delhi and will not rest until BJP's lotus blooms. Our BJP workers are working day and night with hard work and dedication by going door to door to reach the people and giving information about the failure of Kejriwal government and the achievement of BJP government. After knowing all the things, the people of Delhi have made up their mind this time to bring BJP

to power and oust the Kejriwal government.

Mohanlal Gihara told Modi that the entire young generation and the entire Dalit class of the country are impressed by your liberal policy and the slogan of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas that you are following. You have made the country a world power, an economic power and self-reliant. Under Make in India, the country has been placed at great heights. In the coming few years, every child of the country will be successful and our country will become a world leader under your leadership.

JKECC warns of protest on Jan 17 over unresolved employees' issues

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 4: The Jammu and Kashmir Employees Coordination Committee (JKECC) on Saturday warned of a peaceful protest on January 17 if the government fails to address their demands.

Addressing a press conference, JKECC President Shah Fayaz expressed concern over the government's lack of seriousness regarding employee issues, particularly related to

Dearness Allowance (DA), House Rent Allowance (HRA), and discrepancies in salaries of NHM employees and contractual college lecturers between the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

He highlighted other unresolved issues, including the pay anomaly of horticulture employees, reorganization of the fisheries department, concerns of agriculture technology management employees,

vocational trainers, helpers, Anganwadi AAYAs, CPWs' wages, gender coordinators, and leave salaries for teachers involved in the Yuva Mission survey, among others.

"We have a long list of unresolved issues, with minimum wages being a top priority. After thoroughly deliberating on these matters, we have decided to hold a peaceful protest demonstration on January 17 as a last resort to get our issues resolved,"

Shah said.

He further said, "While we understand that policy matters take time, daily routine issues of employees should not be neglected. We do not seek confrontation, but the non-resolution of these issues has left us with no option but to protest."

Shah urged all employees to gather at Sher-e-Kashmir Park, Srinagar, on January 17, from where they will proceed towards the Press Colony.

18th Christmas Gold Cup Football Tournament Nagrota FC, Pegasus FC win via tie breakers



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: The 18th Christmas Gold Cup Football Tournament 2024-25, 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, is currently underway at the Mini Stadium Parade Ground in Jammu.

The event has brought together some of the finest local football teams in a display of skill and competition.

The first match of the day saw Pegasus FC face off against Surankot FC. The match ended in a 1-1 draw after regular time, leading to a penalty shootout. In the tie-breaker, Pegasus FC tri

umphed by a narrow 5-4 margin. Goals for Pegasus FC were scored by Arjun, Mahi, Ahassan, Sarmad, and Vishal. For Surankot FC, the goals came from Ayan, Umar, Dawood, and Yasir.

In the second match, Nagrota FC played against Katra FC. The game also ended in a 1-1 draw after full-time. However, Nagrota FC emerged victorious with a 4-3 win in the penalty shootout, securing their spot in the next round.

The chief guest for today's matches was Kuldip Singh, a Senior National Player and Senior Vice President of DFA Jammu. He was accompanied by other prominent persons including Ramesh Chander, an Interna

tional Player, Yousaf Don, the Organizing Secretary, Satpal Singh, the Manager of Parade Ground Jammu, David Masih, a Football Coach, and several other distinguished guests, including Rajesh Sumbria, Kamaljeet Kumar, Mohd Shuja, Rattan Lal, and Charanpreet Singh.

The matches were officiated by a team of referees, including Dheeraj Meenia, Rohitdeep Singh, Aman Sudan, and Kartik Sharma, who ensured fair play throughout the games.

The tournament continues tomorrow with two exciting fixtures. The first match will feature Churchill Bros FC against Param FC at 12:00 PM, followed by a match between Young Heroes FC and Nagrota FC at 2:00 PM.

Health Minister says inquiry launched into "delayed surgery" incident at private hospital

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 4: Reacting strongly to a recent incident allegedly involving a delayed surgery at a private hospital, Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo Saturday said that there will be "no compromise" on patient care.

Talking to reporters after visiting CD Hospital Srinagar, the minister confirmed that an inquiry

has been launched into the matter and assured strict disciplinary action against any medical professional found guilty of misconduct.

"Whether in private or government hospitals, doctors must uphold the highest standards of care," she said.

She said that the health and well-being of patients should remain the foremost priority in the medical profession.

NHM Employees Association condemns remarks by MLA Ramban

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: The All Jammu and Kashmir National Health Mission Employees Association (Jammu Division), under the leadership of its Provincial President Dr. Vikas Sharma, has strongly condemned the derogatory remarks made by MLA Ramban, Arjun Singh Raju, against ISM Doctors and the AYUSH healthcare system during his recent visit to PHC Rajgarh in District Ramban.

In a statement issued to the media, the association has expressed deep disappointment over the MLA's irresponsible statements, which not only undermine the contributions of AYUSH but also mislead the general public about its effectiveness. Such remarks can sow mistrust among innocent and underprivileged communities, who rely on AYUSH as an integral part of holistic

healthcare services. Dr. Vikas emphasized that both Allopathy and AYUSH systems play a vital role in delivering comprehensive healthcare. "These systems complement each other, and it is imperative for public representatives to promote unity and respect in the healthcare sector rather than creating divisions or spreading misinformation," he said.

The association demands a public clarification from Arjun Singh Raju on his irrelevant and baseless statement, as well as an apology for his remarks. They also called on society at large to recognize the value and contributions of AYUSH in improving public health.

The NHM Employees Association reiterated its unwavering commitment to supporting all healthcare systems and ensuring the delivery of quality healthcare to every individual.

Sandeep Katoch assumes charge of SHO Miran Sahib



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 4: Inspector Sandeep Singh Katoch assumed charge of SHO Miran Sahib. The Inspector remained posted in PHQ J&K and being Law graduate he was deputed to NIA Chandigarh where he solved number of heinous

cases of different states and for his hectic efforts and sincerity he has already been awarded with DGP Commendation Medal and other Medals from time to time.

The officer is hard working, intelligent and performs his duties with great zeal and zest. Wishing him all the best for new posting as SHO Miran Sahib Jammu.

The officer is son of Retired DySP Jaswant Singh Katoch (one of the best investigation officer of his times and remained reputed officer of the department).

VC SKUAST-J inaugurates winter season tranquil zones at Central Library Chatha

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: The Vice Chancellor of SKUAST Jammu, Dr. B N Tripathi in a significant move towards establishing State of Art Infrastructure in the University Library inaugurated few winter season tranquil zones as library facility for the students at Central Library, Chatha on the eve of New Year.

These zones are established with UV harvest orientation in the Introvert area of the Central Library of SKUAST Jammu.

The newly developed user-friendly sitting zones with a scenic research farm view are well-illuminated and equipped with electronic gadgets.

Dr. Tripathi expressed his satisfaction that

our digital library with Koha-RFID integration is transforming with the changing scenario to meet the knowledge needs of students and faculty.

It has come out as an efficient centre for effective delivery of appropriate information to the end users in a convenient environment.

Dr. Tripathi congratulated librarian Dr. R K Samnotra and other members of the library staff for the initiative and conveyed that such measures are important to help our library users in their preparation.

The facility shall be opened to the students of the university, as a part of University's commitment towards excellence. The library patrons and community members thanked the Vice Chancellor for this

facility, and applauded the initiatives of the varsity.

Dr. R K Samnotra, University Librarian speaking on the occasion said such move would serve as a vital intervention for innovative library services as a part of institutes' best practices for library users.

He advised all stakeholders to make full use of this newly established facility and advised the students to pursue knowledge and endeavour for higher avenues of excellence and make the best use of the resources available at SKUAST Jammu.

University Library members including students & staff members of library from Central Library, Chatha and Faculty Library, R S Pura participated in the inaugural function.

SHRD Public School celebrates 8th Annual Function



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: SHRD Public School celebrated its 8th Annual Function with great fervor and excitement on January 4, 2025, at its campus in Mandal, Jammu. The event was marked by vibrant performances and enthusiastic participation from students, showcasing their diverse talents and creativity under the guidance and supervision of Chairman SHRD School, Sant Sri Hare Ram Das ji Maharaj who dedicated his life for the upliftment of weaker section.

The program began with the traditional lighting of the ceremonial lamp, symbolizing wisdom and prosperity,

followed by a devotional invocation.

Principal Prof. Aekta Gupta presented a detail Annual report of the school emphasized the initiatives taken by school for the holistic development of students.

The Chief Guest, Jugal Kishore, Member of Parliament, lauded the school's efforts in shaping well-rounded individuals and commended the dedication of the staff and students. He emphasized the role of education in building a strong and progressive society.

The event was further graced by the presence of distinguished dignitaries: Vikram Randhawa (MLA Bahu Block); Surinder Bhagat

(MLA Marh Block); Sat Sharma, (State President BJP); Gangadhar Maharaj Ji; and Advocate Abhinav Sharma Ji, (former president of BAR Association). Their encouraging words added great value to the occasion.

All dignitaries expressed their heartfelt appreciation to our Chairman Sant Sri Hare Ram Das ji Maharaj for revitalizing the heritage and significance of Sanskrit.

They also extended their warm regards, commending the remarkable efforts of all the members of Sri Shiv Mandir Nyas Trust in spreading education while nurturing moral values in the lives of young learners.

NCC AIR Wing (Boys & Girls) raised at SKUAST Jammu

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: In a landmark initiative under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Prof. B.N. Tripathi, Vice Chancellor, SKUAST Jammu, the university proudly announced the raising of NCC AIR Wing for both boys and girls.

This marks a significant step towards fostering discipline, instilling nationalism and creating a platform for unparalleled opportunities among the youth.

Highlighting the significance of the initiative, Prof. Tripathi emphasized that the establishment of the NCC AIR Wing would serve as a vital tool in shaping responsible citizens and future leaders.

He commended the enthusiasm of the students and the meticulous efforts of the organizing team in making

this initiative a success.

The rigorous selection process for the cadets was carried out by Wing Commander Nitin Yadav, Commanding Officer, NCC AIR Squadron, Udampur and his team.

The process included ground tests, a written examination, and interviews. Over 200 students participated in the selection drive, out of which 41 cadets -23 girls and 18 boys were successfully chosen to form the first cohort of the unit.

The event was organized under the supervision of Prof. Rajinder Peshin, Director Education, and coordinated by Prof. Sanjay Guleria, Incharge Counselling and Placement Cell.

Dr. Susheel Sharma, Associate Professor and Care Taker Officer (Boys), Dr. Sahabat

Gazal, Assistant Professor and Care Taker Officer (Girls) and Dr. Veena Gupta, Technical Officer played pivotal roles in mobilizing the students and facilitating the selection process.

The ground test witnessed the presence of senior officials including Dr. S.K. Gupta, Director Research; Dr. Vikas Tandon, Dean, Faculty of Horticulture and Forestry; Dr. Sudhakar Dwivedi, Dean Students Welfare and Dr. Anil Gupta, Medical Officer reflecting the collective commitment of SKUAST Jammu to this noteworthy endeavour.

This initiative underscores SKUAST Jammu's dedication to holistic student development and its unwavering commitment to fostering a sense of duty, leadership, and patriotism among its students.

The year brings fresh ammo for the critics of Nepo kids as Aryan Khan, Ibrahim Ali Khan, Rasha Thadani and Shanaya Kapoor are poised to make their debut



Censure and appreciation both come to them in equal measure. As if the scene is already not crowded enough with star kids, many more with filmy connections are likely to make their debut this year.

The year begins with not just one but two debutants Aaman Devgan and Rasha Thadani, who owe their entry into films to their relatives in the industry. Azaad, directed by acclaimed director Abhishek Kapoor, features not only Ajay Devgn's nephew Aaman but also Raveena Tandon's daughter Rasha. If the mom still looks ravishing, the daughter has but naturally inherited her genes. Of course, trying to fit into the shoes of the 'mast mast' actress will not be an easy proposition.

Yet another star son who will have to face comparisons, fair and unfair is Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh's son Ibrahim Ali Khan. With father Saif still very much in the reckoning, can the son who bears uncanny resemblance with him, carve his own niche? His debut film Sarzaamen, co-starring Kajol and Prithviraj Sukumaran, directed by Kayoze Irani, is slated to release on Republic Day. The patriotic drama set in Kashmir explores the combustible issue of terrorism.

Whether Sanjay Kapoor's daughter Shanaya Kapoor can stun her fans in her big screen outing or not, she has already

been turning heads. Earlier, she was to debut in Karan Johar film which got shelved. Now, she will be launched in the film Aankhon Ki Gustaakhiyan, based on a short story The Eyes Have It by Ruskin Bond. Vikrant Massey may have announced his long break but in this romantic drama the talented actor of 12th Fail will be paired opposite her. Shanaya is also expected to be seen in a Telugu-Malayalam film Vrushabha, headlined by superstar Mohanlal. Her father Sanjay may have tasted success as an actor in prime years of his life, can the daughter crack the success code with her initial forays? Well, she certainly has the looks for the glamour world.

Chunky Panday's daughter Ananya Panday has been the pet peeve of trolls. Until she delivered in Gehraiyaan and last year in Vikramaditya Motwane's CTRL, no one took her seriously. Will the naysayers be kinder to her cousin Aahaan Panday? Nevertheless, he is on a strong footing and is being backed by none other than YRF films and in a movie directed by Aashiqui 2 and Ek Villain fame Mohit Suri.

Behind the camera Most star kids have chosen the conventional path and are making their acting debuts that too mostly in the safe genre of love stories. Only king of romance Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan treads a different ground. Ready to make the

director's cut with no less than a web-series which looks at the ups and downs of stardom, he is one star kid whose career graph will be interesting to watch.

Beauty queen in action Of course, Bollywood is not only open to those who have a filmy lineage, but is a natural destination of beauty queens as well. Harnaaz Sandhu, 2021 Miss Universe will be seen in Baaghi 4. In an action driven franchise riding solely on its action hero Tiger Shroff, hope she gets her place in the movie and under the Bollywood sun.

Old hands, new turf Interestingly those who have already made a name for themselves are looking at fresher pastures as well. Rajkumar Hirani's last theatrical release Dunki went unappreciated, if not unnoticed. His digital debut as a showrunner of a cyber-crime thriller series titled Pritam Pedro does sound more exciting though.

After a successful stint in the theatres, director-producer Siddharth Anand's hit film Fighter went on to become the most watched Hindi film on Netflix. Now, the producer in him is eyeing direct to OTT release. Jewel Thief, starring Saif Ali Khan and Jaideep Ahlawat, is scheduled to drop on Netflix.

From South to North The North-South demarcation is blurring so fast that it's hard to draw a firm line. Yet, Bollywood

debutants of South Indian stars always create a buzz. Powerhouse of talent Malayalam actor Fahadh Faasil, whose unhinged antagonist act we so loved in the Pushpa franchise, is likely to floor us with yet another knockout performance in an unconventional love story. Coming from the balladeer of love in all its complexities Imtiaz Ali, the unusual pairing of Fahadh with Tripti Dimri will be another reason to root for the film.

In 2024, director Rajkumar Periasamy created a heartfelt tribute to braveheart Major Mukund Varadarajan in Amaran. If he hit the ball out of the park with his much acclaimed Tamil film Amaran, the ball might have landed in the Bollywood court and he is likely to start his Bollywood innings this year. Grapevine has it that Bhushan Kumar has signed him for a pan-Indian film.

Telugu superstar Jr NTR is certainly not an unfamiliar name for Hindi speaking audiences. But he makes his true blue Bollywood debut as he joins the YRF spyverse in action thriller War 2 starring Hrithik Roshan and Kiara Advani.

As Meister Eckhart said, "Be willing to be a beginner every single morning." Here is to new beginnings and fresh starts. Whoever said 'first time is the charm' was not off the mark. Get ready to be smitten.

Angelina Jolie debuts bangs in first event since divorce proceedings wrap up

Hollywood star Angelina Jolie is glowing after the divorce battle between her and Brad Pitt reached a settlement.

The actress recently posed for photos at the Palm Springs International Film Festival on January 3, which marked her first major event since she and Brad Pitt, 61, reached a settlement in their divorce, reports 'People' magazine.

She dazzled in an all-white blazer and pants, and nude heels. The actress parted her long, blonde hair to the side along with her new bangs. She kept her makeup neutral with a rosy, pink lip.

As per 'People', the 'Girl, Interrupted' accepted the Desert Palm Achievement Award, which recognises her acclaimed performance as the titular opera singer in the

Netflix biopic Maria.

"Jolie's extraordinary portrayal captures the heart and complexity of an artist whose life was as captivating as her music", said Nachhattar Singh Chandi, the Palm Springs International Film Festival's chairman, in a press release.

As Jolie has collected praise for her emotional portrayal of Maria Callas' final days in Paris in the 1970s, she garnered her biggest headlines last week when news broke that her and Pitt's lawyers officially signed off on the pair's divorce, concluding eight years of strained negotiations that included a battle over custody of their six children as well as the \$164 million French estate and winery they shared.

The actress filed for dissolution of marriage on September 19, 2016, citing irreconcilable differences mere days after a flight on which Jolie has claimed Pitt was abusive to her and their six children. After an investigation at the time, authorities did not charge the actor and Jolie declined to press charges.

In January 2017, the pair agreed to seal sensitive documents related to their children, Maddox, 23, Pax, 21, Zahara, 19, Shiloh, 18, and twins Vivienne and Knox, now 16. They were declared legally single in 2019 after they had their divorce bifurcated, and Pitt has been romantically linked to jewelry executive Ines de Ramon, 34, since 2022.



Hema Malini pens an emotional birthday note for her mom

Actress Hema Malini has shared a heartfelt tribute to her mother, Jaya Lakshmi, on her birthday. In an emotional note, Hema expressed her love, admiration, and gratitude for the woman who has shaped her life in more ways than one.

Taking to her Instagram handle, the 'Sholay' actress shared a priceless memory from their Kathak dance days with her mother and wrote in the caption, "It is that day of the year closest to my heart!"

Hema added, "My darling mother's birthday, which I never fail to celebrate, thanking her for all that she's done for me.

Her amazing personality and the rapport she was able to create with all she met, both in the industry and beyond, is what shaped my career and made me what I am. Thank you, Amma. I love you. #mother #happybirthday."



In reaction to Hema's heartfelt post, her daughter and actress Esha Deol shared a heart and folding hands emoji in the comments section.

Hema's mother, Jaya Chakravarthy, was a renowned producer and costume designer. Last year, the actress also penned a beautiful

note to mark her mother's birthday.

Hema wrote, "Today is so special for me! It is my darling mother's janam din—a day I celebrate every year since she left me.

I introspect so much on this day, recalling how much she has contributed to my life and career, and how I owe her everything I am today. Thank you, Amma. My love always."

On the professional front, Hema made her acting debut in 1963 with the Tamil film "Idhu Sathiyam" and later ventured into Hindi cinema with the 1968 film "Sapno Ka Saudagar."

Her most recent appearance was in the 2020 film "Shimla Mirchi," alongside Rajkumar Rao and Rakul Preet Singh.

In addition to her acting career, she currently serves as a member of the Lok Sabha, representing Mathura for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Big B on returning from holiday: Joy of solitude now converts to joys of work



Megastar Amitabh Bachchan, who has returned from his New Year holiday, is now back on work mode as he said his joy of solitude has now converted to the joys routine.

The megastar took to his blog, where he wrote: "And so we leave this morn(ing) to our home destination .. and the joy of solitude now converts to the joys of work and routine blessings .. routines become a legacy of the aged."

"The place the thing the instrument the seat the prop the utensil

.. the many where placed, be it remain on the designated place .. and within reach ... age has its idiosyncrasies .. yes indeed .. age .. is aged .. but in the gratitude for all."

On January 3, the thespian remembered the great personalities the nation lost in 2024, including entrepreneur Ratan Tata, tabla virtuoso Zakir Hussain, former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, and acclaimed filmmaker Shyam Benegal.

He posted a tribute in the form of a cartoon by artist Satish Acharya, which honoured the lives of these four legends.

"The picture says it all," he wrote as the caption.

The caption of the post read: "A Parsi, a Muslim, a Sikh, and a Hindu passed away in 2024, and the entire nation mourned them, remembering them only as Indians."

It was on December 26, when former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh passed away in Delhi at the age of 92, following complications from age-related illness. Just hours before his death, he was admitted to AIIMS Delhi when his health began to decline.

On December 23, renowned filmmaker Shyam Benegal passed away at the age of 90 due to chronic kidney disease.

Indian business magnate Ratan Tata, the former chairman of the Tata Group, passed away in October 2024 at the age of 86. Another significant loss was that of Zakir Hussain, the world-renowned tabla maestro, who passed away at the age of 73.

On the acting front, the cine icon was recently seen in the project "Vettaiyan," where he shared the screen with superstar Rajinikanth, Fahadh Faasil, and Rana Daggubati.

Aishwarya Rai, Abhishek Bachchan squash divorce rumours with family airport return

Abhishek and Aishwarya got married in 2007, the couple welcomed Aaradhya in November 2011

Putting all rumours about their divorce to rest, star couple Aishwarya Rai, Abhishek Bachchan and their daughter Aaradhya have returned to Mumbai after their holiday.

The three were seen exiting the airport as Aishwarya and Aaradhya walked behind him. They even wished the shutterbugs standing outside the airport a "Happy New Year."

In the clip, Abhishek could

be seen dressed in a sweat-shirt paired with black pants and white shoes. Aishwarya and Aaradhya too wore black while they made their way out from the airport.

The camera persons also requested Abhishek to stop for pictures with his wife Aishwarya, however, the two kept walking towards their car.

In another video, Aishwarya is seen asking her daughter if someone "pushed" her as



Aaradhya suddenly jumped while walking.

Abhishek could be seen waiting next to their car. After

his wife and daughter sat, he too could be seen taking the front seat.

In December, the couple were seen attending their daughter Aaradhya's school annual day. A video capturing their presence went viral on social media.

In the video that surfaced online, Aishwarya was seen wearing a black outfit paired with a sling bag, while Abhishek looked effortlessly cool in a casual

green ensemble. The couple shared smiles as they walked toward the gate, with Aishwarya holding her mother's hand.

On the first day of the event, Amitabh Bachchan also joined to watch his granddaughter's performance.

This was the first time Aishwarya Rai and Abhishek were seen together publicly since the rumours started circulating.

Speculation about trouble in their marriage has been ongoing, especially after their separate appearances at a wedding earlier last year. The latest round of rumours gained traction when Aishwarya's name was listed without the "Bachchan" surname at a Dubai event.

Abhishek and Aishwarya got married in 2007. The couple welcomed Aaradhya in November 2011.

Some people trying to spread venom in society in name of caste: PM Modi

Inaugurating the Grameen Bharat Mahotsav, the Prime Minister said his government has been focusing on rural development since 2014 and villages will play a key role in realising the dream of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday attacked Opposition for spreading venom in society in the name of caste and asked people to thwart such conspiracies with a view to strengthening the shared culture and heritage of villages.

Inaugurating the Grameen Bharat Mahotsav, the Prime Minister said his government has been focusing on rural development since 2014 and villages will play a key role in realising the dream of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

In an oblique reference to Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and other INDIA bloc leaders, Modi said some people are trying to spread venom in society in the name of caste and weaken the social fabric.

"We have to thwart these conspiracies, and preserve and strengthen the common heritage of our villages," he stressed.

Opposition leaders including Gandhi and Akhilesh Yadav have been continuously demanding caste census.

Modi said that since 2014, he has been constantly in the service of rural India.

"Ensuring a dignified life for the people of rural India is the priority of my government," the Prime Minister said and added that the vision of the government is to ensure an empowered rural India, provide ample opportunities for villagers, reduce migration and ensure ease of life to the people of villages.

Talking about the schemes to provide basic amenities in villages, Modi said toilets have been made as part of Swachh Bharat Mission, and crores of people in rural India have been given pucca houses as part of PM Awaas Yojana.



He said safe and clean drinking water is also being provided through Jal Jeevan Mission. "Today, healthcare facilities are being provided in more than 1.5 lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs to the people," said the Prime Minister.

He added that telemedicine, assisted by digital technologies, has ensured the option of best doctors and hospitals to villages. Crores of people in rural areas have benefited from the telemedicine through e-Sanjeevini, he further added.

The Prime Minister highlighted the importance of creating economic policies to strengthen the rural economy.

He said the vision of his government is to empower rural India by transforming villages into vibrant centres of growth and opportunity.

"Our government's intentions, policies and decisions are empowering rural India with new energy," he said.

He noted that through the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, farmers have received approximately Rs 3 lakh crore in financial assistance. Noting that over the past 10 years, the amount of agricultural loans has increased by 3.5 times, he mentioned that now livestock and fish farmers are being provided with Kisan Credit Cards.

In addition, more than 9,000 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) in the country are receiving financial assistance. He further underlined that the government has consistently increased the MSP for several crops over the past 10 years.

"When intentions are noble, the results are satisfying," Modi said and added that the country is now reaping the benefits of the hard work done over the past 10 years.

Citing a recent large-scale survey that revealed several important facts, the Prime Minister noted that compared to 2011, consumption in rural India has nearly tripled, indicating that people are spending more on their preferred items.

He noted that previously, villagers had to spend more than 50 per cent of their income on food, but for the first time since independence, the expenditure on food in rural areas has fallen below 50 per cent, and are now spending on other desires and needs, improving their quality of life.

Highlighting another significant finding from the survey, which revealed that the gap in consumption between urban and rural areas has decreased, the Prime Minister remarked that it was previously believed that urban individuals could spend

more than those in villages, but continuous efforts have reduced this disparity.

He noted that these achievements could have been realized during previous governments' tenures, but for decades after independence, lakhs of villages were deprived of basic necessities.

He pointed out that the majority of SC, ST, and OBC populations reside in villages and were neglected by previous governments. This led to migration from villages, increased poverty, and a widening gap between rural and urban areas.

In his speech, Modi also mentioned a recent study by the State Bank of India, which revealed that rural poverty in India has decreased from approximately 26 per cent in 2012 to less than 5 per cent in 2024.

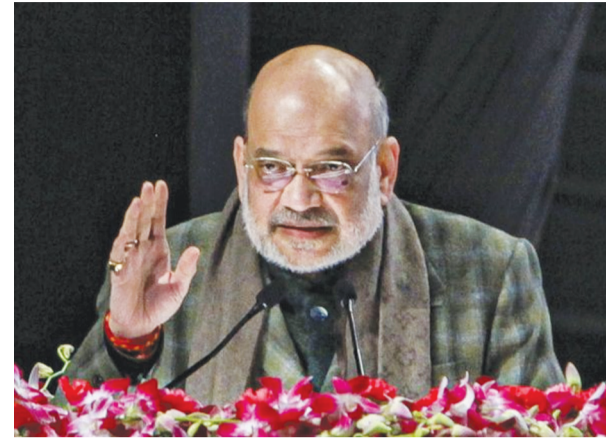
In an apparent jibe at opposition parties, Modi said that while some people have been chanting slogans to eradicate poverty for decades, the country is now witnessing a real reduction in poverty.

Speaking at the occasion, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said banks have undertaken saturation drive for 16 government schemes including Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, PM Mudra and PM SVANidhi.

Celebrating Rural India's entrepreneurial spirit and cultural heritage, the Grameen Bharat Mahotsav 2025 is being organised from January 4 to 9 with the theme 'Building a Resilient Rural India for a 'Viksit Bharat 2047'.

The Mahotsav, through various discussions, workshops and masterclasses, aims to enhance rural infrastructure, create self-reliant economies, and foster innovation within rural communities.

Instead of creating infra in Delhi, Kejriwal built 'sheesh mahal': Amit Shah



NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday slammed Arvind Kejriwal for building a "sheesh mahal" for himself instead of creating infrastructure in the capital during his nearly 10-year term as Delhi chief minister, saying the AAP convenor will have to give an account for it.

Addressing an event after inaugurating a working women's hostel — Sushma Bhavan — of the New Delhi Municipal Corporation, Shah listed a host of expensive items and appliances used in Kejriwal's official residence as the chief minister, saying he had never heard of some of those things.

When Kejriwal entered politics, he vowed not to take a government car or bungalow, and promised to herald a new kind of politics, Shah said.

But the AAP leader could not be satisfied by one, two, three or four bungalows, and instead built himself a "sheesh mahal" spread across 50,000 square yards of land, costing

people of Delhi Rs 45 crore, he added.

The BJP has been using the term "sheesh mahal", a colloquial Hindi term for an opulent house, to target Kejriwal.

The home minister said the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Delhi could not build a system to supply water to the residents, but Kejriwal spent "Rs 14 crore on a water plant for his family of four".

"Kejriwal Ji, you will have to give an account to the people of Delhi. They are demanding answers from you," Shah said.

He alleged that over Rs 6 crore was spent on designer marbles, Rs 6 crore on motorised curtains, Rs 70 lakh on automatic doors, Rs 50 lakh on carpets and Rs 64 lakh on smart TVs at the chief minister's residence when Kejriwal occupied it.

Taking a swipe, Shah said he had suggested to Kejriwal on X that he should allow people of Delhi to take a tour of the "sheesh mahal" so that they could see what kind of home their chief minister lived in.

Some young per-

sons had come to see him and when he told them that Kejriwal has done nothing for Delhi, they retorted that he was being unjust as the AAP leader built a "sheesh mahal", the senior BJP leader said in sarcasm.

The Union minister further accused Kejriwal of overseeing a series of corruption scandals, including in Delhi's liquor policy, Mohalla Clinics, CCTV installations, and bus purchases.

Shah also invoked the legacy of late BJP leader Sushma Swaraj, whom he described as a "fighting opposition leader" remembered for her service in various key ministries.

Shah emphasised that while Swaraj's contributions to the foreign and health ministries would be remembered in Indian parliamentary history, Kejriwal's legacy would be tainted by corruption and self-interest.

"People of Delhi are smart, and they will not be deceived. Kejriwal must answer for his actions," Shah said, adding that the BJP was committed to providing "honest and accountable" governance in the national capital.

As the Delhi elections approach, the battle for control of the city is expected to intensify, with both the BJP and AAP pulling no punches in their campaign rhetoric.

The Assembly elections in Delhi are expected to take place in February.

Rijiju offers 'chadar' at Ajmer Sharif Dargah on PM Modi's behalf

JAIPUR, Jan 4 (Agencies): Union Minister for Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju on Saturday offered a ceremonial 'chadar' sent by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Ajmer Dargah on the 'Urs' of Sufi saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti.

At the dargah, he read out the prime minister's message which called on people from across religions to work together in harmony.

The minister also launched the web portal of the dargah, the 'Garib Nawaz' app for pilgrims and an operations manual for the conduct of 'Urs'.

Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti is also known as Garib Nawaz.

"Today I have come to the dargah with Prime Minister Modi's 'chadar'. I have had the good fortune of coming here to Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti Dargah. I prayed for peace," Rijiju told reporters after presenting the 'chadar'.

"The message from Ajmer Dargah goes to the whole world. Along with presenting the prime minister's 'chadar', I read out his message," he said.

In his message, the Prime Minister has said that every sect and every religion should come together and work together for the country, society and world peace, the minister said.

Lakhs of people come here and they should



get a chance to offer prayers peacefully, especially the elderly, women and children, he said.

"There should be a system for that. A manual has been launched for that and I will try to provide all possible help from my ministry to improve the system," he said.

"Come here and feel how much impact the dargah has on our lives," he added.

Representatives from the dargah committee, 'khadims' and other stakeholders were present on the occasion.

Elaborate security arrangements were made for the visit of the minister, who took a flight to Jaipur and then proceeded to Ajmer by road. He was received by the BJP's state minority morcha leaders at the airport.

"On this auspicious occasion of Urs, we want that a good atmosphere should be created in the country. No one should do anything that can affect the harmony of our country," Rijiju told reporters at the airport.

Be it a Hindu, Muslim,

Sikh, Christian, Parsi, Buddhist or Jain, everyone is welcome at the dargah, he said.

Asked about a petition in a local court claiming that the dargah has been built over a Shiva temple, Rijiju said, "I have just come to offer 'chadar'."

"I have not come here to show or tell anyone, I am going with the message (of PM) for the country that all the people in our country should stay well," he said.

In November, a court in Ajmer admitted a petition claiming that the dargah was built over a Shiva temple and issued notices to the Ajmer dargah committee, the Ministry of Minority Affairs and the Archaeological Survey of India.

Hindu Sena president Vishnu Gupta, who filed the petition, had called on the PM to not send a 'chadar' this time.

'Urs' is held at the Ajmer Dargah to commemorate the death anniversary of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti. The prime minister has been annually sending a 'chadar' to the dargah.

BJP has vested interest in keeping Manipur on boil, PM cannot escape culpability: Kcharge

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 (Agencies): After fresh violence erupted in Manipur, the Congress on Saturday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said he could not escape the constitutional culpability of not following "rajdharna".

In a post on X, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge alleged that the BJP had some vested interest in keeping the border state on the boil.

"The BJP is the matchstick which burnt Manipur!" he said in his post. He also shared a screengrab of a news report about the latest violence.

The Congress chief said in the post, "Narendra Modi ji, your last visit to Manipur was for seeking votes for the BJP, way back in January 2022. Violence erupted



in the state on May 3, 2023." "More than 600 days have passed, and media reports through satellite images have now revealed that villages after villages have been wiped off in the state," he added.

Kharge said fresh violence was witnessed recently when a mob attacked the Kangpokpi district superintendent of police, resulting in injuries.

"Your incompetent and shameless chief minister has expressed regret

but has conveniently brazened out your absence in the state," he alleged.

"We are repeating with utmost responsibility that the BJP has some vested interest to keep the beautiful border state on the boil, with more than 250 innocent deaths and 60,000 being displaced. People are still living in camps for 20 months," Kharge claimed.

Even the Supreme Court has said it was the primary responsibility of

the Union and the state governments to ensure peace and normalcy, the Congress president noted.

"On December 6, INDIA (bloc) parties in Manipur had made three specific and simple requests to you. Visit Manipur before 2024 ends, but you did NOT. Call representatives of all political parties at your office in Delhi, but you HAVEN'T. Involve yourself directly in Manipur, but it DOES NOT seem that you have," he said.

"Even if you do either of the above, you cannot escape the constitutional culpability of not following rajdharna," Kharge added.

The superintendent of police in Manipur's Kangpokpi district was injured after a mob attacked his office on

Friday over the officer's alleged failure to remove central forces from Saibol village, bordering the Imphal East district, officials have said.

Several others, including police personnel and protesters, also suffered injuries during the clash between security forces and attackers.

Kuki organisations have been protesting against the alleged baton charge on women by security forces in Saibol village on December 31.

The attackers on Friday threw stones and other projectiles towards the office to vent their anger over the continued deployment of central forces, particularly the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), in the village.

6 Dead in explosion at fireworks factory in Tamil Nadu's Virudhunagar

VIRUDHUNAGAR, Jan 4 (Agencies): Six people died and many more were injured in an explosion at a fireworks factory in Tamil Nadu on Saturday morning. The incident took place in the Virudhunagar district, where majority of the state's firecracker factories are located.

According to the police, the number of victims is likely to rise as the condition of several injured people remains critical,

reported news agency. The fire department has extinguished the blaze and is currently engaged in rescue operations, officials said.

While the exact cause of the explosion has not been identified, cops suspect a power leakage or friction between explosives during the preparation of firecrackers may have triggered it.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin expressed his condolences



over the loss of lives. He also announced a compensation of Rs 4 lakh for the families of the victims.

Last year, Virudhunagar witnessed 17 accidents in the firecracker factories, killing at least 54 people. In September, Stalin visited the area and urged fireworks factory owners to take safety measures to prevent such accidents.

The fireworks industry reportedly employs nearly four lakh workers across 1,150 factories in Virudhunagar, with Sivakasi alone accounting for 70 per cent of India's firecracker production.

Fire at a food market in northern China kills at least 8 and injures 15

BEIJING, Jan 4 (Agencies): A fire at a food market Saturday in northern China killed at least eight people and injured 15 others, state media said.

The fire at the Liguang market in the city of Zhangjiakou broke out midday Saturday and was mostly extinguished by 2:00 p.m. (0600 GMT), Xinhua News Agency reported, citing a government official in Qiaoxi District where the market is located.

The cause of the fire is under investigation, the report said.



Such traditional markets are often tightly packed with shoppers seeking prices lower than at supermarket chains.

Fire sources can range from gas bottles to charcoal used to roast meat and discarded cigarettes while

aging infrastructure, such as underground gas lines, has also been blamed for fires and explosions.

Zhangjiakou, located in Hebei province bordering Beijing, hosted events during the 2022 Winter Olympic Games.

5 injured in Washington DC shooting after 'dispute between known parties'

WASHINGTON DC, Jan 4 (Agencies): Five people were injured in a shooting in Washington DC following a "dispute between known parties", police said. The injured included four men and a woman.

The incident occurred in the 1500 block of Harry Thomas Way NE. Preliminary investigation by police said four people - three men and a woman - were found "conscious and breathing" and rushed to a hospital.

"Shooting investigation in the 1500 block of Harry Thomas Way NE. Preliminary: Adult male and adult female located at the scene, transported



conscious and breathing. Two additional adult males arrived at a hospital, both conscious and breathing," Washington DC Police Department wrote on X.

Police said a fifth

patient, a male, was also injured in the incident. "Preliminarily, this shooting stemmed from a dispute between known parties," police added.

The shooting came

three days after the US was rocked by three attacks on New Year's Day.

A suspect, Shamsuddin Jabbar, 42, a US Army veteran, rammed a crowd in New Orleans

with a truck and then opened fire at people, killing 15 and injuring at least 30 others. He was subsequently killed in a shootout with police after the incident.

Hours after the New Orleans attack, Matthew Livelsberger, a 37-year-old Armyman, died after he blew up a Tesla Cybertruck outside the Trump International Hotel in Las Vegas. Police said Livelsberger died from a self-inflicting gun wound.

In a third incident, at least 11 people were injured in a mass shooting at a nightclub in Queens in New York City.

Myanmar to release prisoners to mark Independence Day

Myanmar's military government will release more than 6,000 prisoners and has reduced other inmates' sentences as part of a mass amnesty to mark the 77th anniversary of independence from Britain

NAYPYIDAW, Jan 4 (Agencies): Myanmar's military government will release more than 6,000 prisoners and has reduced other inmates' sentences as part of a mass amnesty on Saturday marking the 77th anniversary of independence from Britain.

It wasn't immediately clear if those released would include any of the thousands of political detainees locked up for opposing army rule since the military seized power in February 2021 from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi. That takeover was met with massive non-violent resistance, which has since become a widespread armed struggle.

State-run MRTV television reported that Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, the head of the military government, granted amnesties covering 5,864 prisoners

from Myanmar, as well as 180 foreigners who will be deported. Mass prisoner releases are common on holidays and other significant occasions in Myanmar.

The foreigners to be released could include four Thai fishermen who were arrested by Myanmar's navy in late November after patrol boats opened fire on Thai fishing vessels in waters close to their maritime border in the Andaman Sea. Thailand's prime minister has said she expects the four to be released on Independence Day.

The terms of release warn that if the freed detainees violate the law again, they will have to serve the remainder of their original sentences in addition to any new sentence.

In a separate report, it said Min Aung Hlaing had commuted the life

sentences of 144 prisoners to 15 years imprisonment. The report provided no details about them.

The report also said that all other prisoners will have their sentences reduced by one sixth, except those convicted under the Explosive Substances Act, the Unlawful Associations Act, the Arms Act and the Counter-terrorism Law, all laws which are often used against opponent military rule.

Myanmar did not release many details of the prisoners being freed, but many were held on charges related to protests, including Section 505(A) of Myanmar's penal code, which makes it a crime to spread comments that create public unrest or fear or spread false news.

Prisoner releases began on Saturday but

can take a few days to be completed. At Insein Prison in the country's biggest city of Yangon, which is notorious for decades for housing political detainees, relatives of prisoners gathered at the gates from early morning.

There was no sign that the prisoner release would include Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been held virtually incommunicado by the military since its seizure of power.

The 79-year-old Suu Kyi is serving a 27-year sentence after being convicted of a series of politically tinged prosecutions brought by the military.

Her supporters and independent analysts say the cases against her are an attempt to discredit her and legitimize the military's seizure of power while keeping her from taking part in the military's

promised election, for which no date has yet been set.

According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, a rights monitoring organization, 28,096 people have been arrested on political charges since the army takeover.

Of those arrested, 21,499 people were still in detention as of Friday, agency reported. At least 6,106 civilians have been killed by security forces in the same period, the group says. Its tally does not include all casualties from combat.

Myanmar became a British colony in the late 19th century and regained its independence on Jan. 4, 1948.

In the capital Naypyitaw, Myanmar's military government celebrated the anniversary with a flag-raising ceremony at City Hall.

Japanese woman who was world's oldest person at 116 has died



TOKYO, Jan 4 (Agencies): Tomiko Itooka, a Japanese woman who was the world's oldest person according to Guinness World Records, has died, an Ashiya city official said Saturday. She was 116.

Yoshitsugu Nagata, an official in charge of elderly policies, said Itooka died on December 29 at a care home in Ashiya, Hyogo Prefecture, central Japan.

Itooka, who loved bananas and a yogurt-

flavoured Japanese drink called Calpis, was born on May 23, 1908. She became the oldest person last year following the death of 117-year-old Maria Branyas, according to the Gerontology Research Group.

When she was told she was at the top of the World Supercentenarian Rankings List, she simply replied, "Thank you."

When Itooka celebrated her birthday last

year, she received flowers, a cake and a card from the mayor.

Born in Osaka, Itooka was a volleyball player in high school, and long had a reputation for a sprightly spirit, Nagata said. She climbed the 3,067-metre (10,062-foot) Mount Ontake twice.

She married at 20, and had two daughters and two sons, according to Guinness.

Itooka managed the office of her husband's textile factory during World War II. She lived alone in Nara after her husband died in 1979.

She is survived by one son and one daughter, and five grandchildren. A funeral service was held with family and friends, according to Nagata.

According to the Gerontology Research Group, the world's oldest person is now 116-year-old Brazilian nun Inah Canabarro Lucas, who was born 16 days after Itooka.

US judge says no prison term for Trump in 'hush money' case

NEW YORK, Jan 4 (Agencies): The judge in the "hush money" case has said that President-elect Donald Trump will escape a prison sentence while upholding his conviction.

Judge Juan Marchan said that he would give Trump an "unconditional discharge" when he comes up for sentencing on January 10, just 11 days before taking over as the US President.

Upholding the conviction, he dismissed Trump's lawyers' contention that a Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity applied to this case because his actions were not official.

The case was brought by local Manhattan prosecutor Alvin Bragg, who was elected to the post as a Democrat, accusing Trump of violating the law by showing on account books the payment he made to a porn star as legal expenses.

The payments were made through his lawyer to buy the silence of Stormy Daniels who had claimed she had a tryst with him.

Bragg made each check that was cut for the payments as a separate offence to show that Trump was convicted of 34 crimes.

Although Vice President Kamala Harris, who ran against Trump in last year's election, and her supporters made that a major campaign point, voters ignored it and elected Trump.

Trump presented himself as a martyr hounded by politically-motivated prosecutions.

But Marchan's ruling puts the cloud of criminal conviction over Trump when he is sworn in as President on January 21.

Trump would have faced a maximum sentence of four years - an absurdity given that he would be President elect-



ed by a majority of voters.

Reacting on Truth Social, Trump called Marchan upholding the conviction an "illegitimate political attack" and "a Rigged Charade".

He said that Marchan put a gag order limiting what he can say about the case "just so I cannot expose his and his family's disqualifying and illegal conflicts".

Marchan's daughter is the president of a company that did campaign work for Kamala Harris, the Vice President who ran against Trump in last year's election.

Two federal cases brought against him by a special counsel have been dropped.

One accused him of violating the Official Secrets Act by retaining records after leaving office.

Another was about election interference because of his alleged role in instigating the January 6, 2021, riots while President Joe Biden's election was being certified by the Congress.

Another local case in Georgia accusing him of election interference has been snarled by accusations of impropriety by the prosecutor, an elected Democrat, who hired an inexperienced lawyer who was then her boyfriend to prosecute the case.

NSA Sullivan to visit India to finalise important ongoing initiatives: White House

WASHINGTON, Jan 4 (Agencies): Outgoing US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan will travel to India on January 5 and 6 for a final round of talks with his counterpart Ajit K Doval and other top government officials on a wide range of bilateral, regional and global issues and to finalise some ongoing initiatives.

His visit to India comes as the Joe Biden administration prepares to wrap up its four-year term.

Sullivan, 48, the youngest national security advisor when President Biden appointed him on January 20, 2021, would also deliver a major India-centric foreign policy speech at IIT, New Delhi during his last trip to India before leaving office.

Congressman Michael Waltz would succeed him on January 20, when Donald Trump is sworn in as the 47th President of the United States.

"National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan will be travelling to New Delhi, India, on January 5 and 6 for a capstone meeting with Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval," White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby said.

"It will span a range of issues across the breadth of our partnership with India, from space, defence, and strategic technology cooperation, all the way also to shared security priorities in the Indo-Pacific and beyond," he said.

During the visit, Sullivan will also meet External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and other Indian leaders. "He will also visit the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, where he will be able to meet with young Indian entrepreneurs and give a speech outlining the significant steps that the United States and India have taken together to strengthen our innovation alliance under the US-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology, otherwise known as iCET," Kirby said.

This will be Sullivan's final trip to the Indo-Pacific region as National Security Advisor.

"He's very excited and looking forward to these conversations at this critical time," Kirby

said.

The main purpose of Sullivan's visit will be a capstone engagement and dialogue with his counterpart, a senior Biden administration official told reporters during a conference call Friday afternoon.

The two national security advisors will take stock of the progress that the two countries have made over the last four years, which has been a historic and transformative period in the bilateral relationship, the official said.

They will also "continue to finalise some ongoing initiatives that were important priorities for us to wrap up to continue our technology cooperation through the end of the administration and to identify new opportunities that we hope with an upcoming team, will continue to take forward," said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "From the views of the Biden administration, the US-Indian relationship has not only been one of the bright points and a real foreign policy priority and an area of legacy achievement for the Biden administration, but it is also a relationship where they have seen continued bipartisan support and momentum from administration to administration in the United States," said the official.

Sullivan's speech at IIT Delhi will highlight India's importance to US priorities in the Indo-Pacific region and worldwide. "We see this as a partnership that is really not subject to huge partisan swings in the United States but has had a really enduring basis of support that we expect will continue to move forward," said the official.

The US delegation led by Sullivan will also have members from other government departments. "We will have the opportunity to meet with business leaders as well as young entrepreneurs in India, and really emphasise how much the progress that we have made in this relationship under the Biden administration is not only due to the work that has been done at a government to government level, but I think increasingly, due to the fantastic and strong relationships that exist at the people-to-people

level, at company-to-company level, between the United States and India," said the official.

"Overall, the message that we intend to leave with at the end of this trip is one of real gratitude for the friendship and the close partnership that President Biden and Prime Minister Modi have enjoyed over the last four years," the official said.

"We see a lot of opportunity in the future for the things that we have started with over the last four years, whether that is commercial space cooperation, looking at opportunities in the future for civil nuclear cooperation and more cooperation on green energy technology," the official said.

"We think all of these are poised, really, for exponential growth in the future. We are really proud that the Biden administration has put down such a solid foundation and made further growth possible," the official said.

A second senior administration official told reporters that Sullivan will be taking up several issues with Indian officials on this trip.

The first one is advancing the civil nuclear partnership, looking at ways to advance cooperation around small modular reactor technology and other forms of civil nuclear cooperation.

The second issue involves addressing China's overcapacity, whether in the context of legacy chips or biopharmaceutical supply chains. It also includes aligning strategies on risks related to information and communication technology, as well as implementing protection measures focused on cyber technology. The third includes discussions around artificial intelligence and national security following the conclusion of their own national security memorandum on AI and other regulations, the official said.

The fourth point to be discussed is promoting the new commercial space cooperation as the US finalised amendments to its own Missile Technology Control Regime for licensing policies. Another issue to be discussed is unlocking funding for the US-India R&D partnerships under the university-based local challenges institute, the second official said.

Modi Govt's technology driven initiatives empowered all sections seamlessly: Dr Rajeev

Top News Report

BISHNAH, Jan 4: MLA Bishnah Dr Rajeev Bhagat Saturday emphasized that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the J&K administration has implemented a series of strategic initiatives that have transformed the region. These initiatives have significantly reduced violence, fostered development opportunities, dismantled discriminatory provisions, strengthened grassroots democracy, improved quality of life, and ensured fair representation. This was stated by MLA Dr Rajeev after inaugurating development works in different Panchayat including Pandorian, Laswara and Chack Avtara amounting to Rs.61.50 lacs to upgrade the living standards of the people by providing facilities at their door steps.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Rajeev also highlighted the urgency of addressing developmental challenges to improve the quality of life in the area. Responding to the concerns, MLA assured the residents of his unwavering commitment to resolving their problems. "For the next five years, as your MLA, I am fully

dedicated to the development of every section of society, irrespective of caste, colour or religion. My mission is to ensure holistic progress across all corners of my constituency and your trust fuels my determination," he said.

Dr Rajeev stated that these developmental initiatives would address the longstanding demand of the people of Pandorian, Laswara and Chack Avtara panchayats by renovation of passenger shed, construction of ladies bathroom, irrigation channels, construction of culvert and lane and drains ensuring a cleaner, healthier living environment impacting both hygiene and the overall quality of life. He underscored the Modi government's unwavering commitment to leveraging technology as a catalyst for socio-economic transformation. He highlighted the array of innovative schemes and programs initiated under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, designed specifically to uplift and empower women from all walks of life. He emphasized that technology has emerged as a powerful tool for driving inclusive growth and narrowing gender disparities



in various sectors. By harnessing the potential of digital platforms, all sections are not only gaining access to new avenues of employment and entrepreneurship but also breaking barriers and shattering stereotypes in traditionally male-dominated fields.

"The vision of Prime Minister Modi for the economic development of women through technology is both progressive and empowering," Dr Rajeev said, adding "By leveraging digital innovations, we are creating a conducive environment where women can thrive and contribute meaningfully to the nation's growth trajectory. In addition to Prime Minister Modi's broader vision for women's empowerment, Dr Rajeev highlighted the groundbreaking initiative of "Lakhpati Didi" (Millionaire Sister). She elaborated on this visionary program aimed at economically

uplifting women by fostering entrepreneurship and financial independence. He emphasized that "Lakhpati Didi" embodies the spirit of self-reliance and prosperity envisioned by Prime Minister Modi, empowering women to become job creators and leaders in their communities. By providing access to financial resources, training, and mentorship, this initiative not only transforms individual lives but also contributes to the overall socio-economic development of the nation.

Dr Rajeev observed that J&K has witnessed a phenomenal surge in investment, with a staggering 300% increase since 2019, adding that this surge is a direct consequence of the improved security situation and the government's initiatives to promote economic growth. The influx of investment has fueled job creation, infrastructure

development, and overall economic prosperity, he added. Dr Rajeev asserted that tourism, a vital sector for J&K's economy, has also experienced a remarkable revival. Tourist arrivals have doubled since 2019, indicating a renewed confidence in the region's safety and appeal. This growth in tourism has not only generated revenue but also showcased J&K's rich cultural heritage and natural beauty to the world, he added. "The government's commitment to J&K's development is further evident in the initiation of infrastructure projects worth over Rs. 1 lakh crore since 2019. These projects encompass the construction of roads, bridges, hospitals, schools, and other essential infrastructure, laying the foundation for sustainable growth and improved living standards," Dr Rajeev added.

Dr Rajeev asserted that subsequent strategic initiatives have undoubtedly set J&K on a transformative journey. The region is poised for a brighter future, characterized by peace, prosperity, and integration with the rest of India, he added.

SMVDNSH achieves milestone of 100 Cochlear Implant Surgeries

Top News Report

KATRA, Jan 4: Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspecialty Hospital (SMVDNSH) proudly announces the successful completion of 100 cochlear implant surgeries, a testament to its commitment to delivering advanced medical care and transforming lives.

Among the notable achievements, the hospital is proud to share that the youngest recipient of a cochlear implant is just 10 months old, having received bilateral implants. This landmark case not only showcases the hospital's dedication to addressing hearing loss from an early age but also highlights the effectiveness of early intervention in improving the quality of life for young patients. Additionally, the hospital has performed the highest number of bilateral cochlear implants in the region, underscoring its role as a centre of excellence in this field.

The remarkable achievement was made possible through a collaborative approach. The Shri Mata Vaishno

Devi Shrine Board has been a steadfast supporter of this initiative, funding many of these life-changing surgeries and ensuring that patients from underserved communities could access this advanced technology. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) also contributed significantly, extending support to further widen the reach of these transformative healthcare services.

Under the expertise of Dr. Rohan Gupta, ENT and Cochlear Implant Surgeon, the hospital has emerged as a center of excellence for cochlear implants, offering comprehensive care from evaluation and surgery to post-operative care.

Dr. Yashpal Sharma, Executive Director of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Institute of Medical Excellence, highlighted the crucial role of the Shrine Board, stating, "The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board has been a vital partner in this journey. Their continued funding for a significant number of cases has ensured that

we can provide world-class medical care to patients who otherwise could not afford it. This partnership is a shining example of how community-focused organizations can create lasting change."

Dr. M. M. Mathavan, Facility Director of SMVDNSH, added, "Reaching this milestone is a proud moment for us. It reflects our commitment to clinical excellence and our dedication to making advanced healthcare accessible. The support from the Shrine Board and IOCL has been instrumental in helping us achieve this success."

The hospital's ongoing outreach efforts, including its monthly OPD in Srinagar, continue to bridge the gap in specialized follow-up care, easing access for patients across the region.

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspecialty Hospital remains steadfast in its mission to provide exceptional healthcare and bring hope to families through transformative medical interventions.

'Snow clearance plan in place, resources ready for emergencies: SMC Commissioner

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 4: The Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) Commissioner Dr Owais Ahmad stated on Saturday that the corporation is fully prepared to address weather and snowfall challenges, with comprehensive measures implemented to ensure smooth operations throughout the winter season.

Speaking to selected news reporters in Srinagar, the SMC Commissioner stated that the corporation is responsible for clearing approximately 1,500 km of roads, along with 5,500 lanes that are manually cleared.

The Commissioner highlighted that the

SMC's priority system is structured into three categories: Priority 1 includes 500 km of crucial roads, connecting hospitals and essential public services, which are cleared immediately, even during snowfall. Following that, Priority 2 and Priority 3 cover other roads and residential areas.

He stressed the continuous nature of the snow clearance operation, explaining that as snow accumulates, the clearing process is repeated. Additionally, to prevent water inundation, the SMC has upgraded 100 drainage stations with power backup and deployed 127 drainage pumps.

The Commissioner assured the public

that SMC's snow clearance plan is in place, with resources ready to tackle any emergency or priority needs. Extra machinery has been hired, including modified JCBs, snow clearance machines, and small robotic snow blower machines designed for tight spaces.

He said that in a bid to speed up the manual snow clearance process, the SMC has also ordered hand-held snow blowers, which are currently being tested.

The Commissioner appealed for public cooperation, urging residents to report any issues via the control room or social media handle of the corporation.

Dr Jitendra hosts Media Lunch, seeks informal feedback on different issues

Top News Report

JAMMU/NEW DELHI, Jan 4: Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh hosted at his residence an informal Media lunch for print and electronic journalists from various known publications and channels, wherein he sought an informal feedback on different issues.

Dr Jitendra Singh has been, over the last several years, holding such media get-togethers at regular intervals of time, the one held today being the first of its kind in the New Year. According to him, an event like this provided an opportunity for exchange of views on a wide range of varied subjects and sharing of ideas on several current topics.

The luncheon meeting saw a vibrant exchange of views, with journalists offering their inputs on various policy matters and current affairs. The Minister sought feedback on areas where collaborative efforts could enhance governance, public service

delivery and wider awareness about the success stories, particularly in the scientific arena.

The gathering was marked by an atmosphere of constructive dialogue, where the Minister engaged directly with journalists on a range of topics concerning his Ministries. The interactive session allowed for insightful conversations that delved into the government's initiatives, recent legislative Assembly elections in J&K and the broader vision for the nation's development as envisaged by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Welcoming the guests, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, MoS Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Dr. Jitendra Singh said "I am delighted to have this opportunity to engage with all of you today. Your role as journalists is

vital in a democracy and informal conversations like these are essential to understand each other better and work towards our common national goals."

Expressing contention on ISRO's Space Docking Experiment (SPADEX) the mission as a milestone, Dr Jitendra Singh shared an ambitious timeline: January 2025: NAVIC advancements and the launch of a US satellite for mobile communication in February 2025: Vyomitra, a female robot, will undertake astronaut-like tasks for the Gaganyaan mission. 2026: First crewed Gaganyaan mission. 2035: India's own space station, Bharat Antariksh Station. 2040: First Indian astronaut to land on the moon.

Dr. Jitendra Singh appreciated the crucial role played by the media in informing the public and shaping public opinion. When asked about the new reforms of Modi Govt. 3.0, he highlighted the newly launched BIO-E3 (Biotechnology for Econ-

omy, Employment, and Environment) Policy, which was recently approved by the Union Cabinet under Prime Minister Modi's leadership. This forward-thinking policy marks a significant milestone for India's biotechnology sector, reinforcing its potential to shape the country's economy, employment landscape, and environmental sustainability in the years to come.

Beat journalists covering Science and Technology, Space and Earth Sciences wanted to know about India's Space Missions, Deep Sea Mission and next generation Technologies, emphasizing the importance of a "whole of Science, whole of Government, and whole of Nation" approach.

He highlighted ongoing initiatives such as the Deep Sea Mission, which Prime Minister Modi has referred to on multiple occasions and the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (NRF), which was passed in 2024 and is set to foster innovation in 2025.

FROM PAGE 3

"Needs to be taken seriously": Pawan Khera on China's move to establish two counties in Ladakh

of new counties will not affect India's stance on sovereignty over the area, nor will it legitimize "China's illegal and forcible occupation."

"The creation of new counties will neither have a bearing on India's long-standing and consistent position regarding our sovereignty over the area nor lend legitimacy to China's illegal and forcible occupation of the same. We have lodged a solemn protest with the Chinese side through diplomatic channels," he added.

Last week, Chinese media Xinhua reported that the government of northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region announced the establishment of two new counties in the region: He'an County and Hekang County.

The establishment of the counties, both administered by Hotan Prefecture, has been approved by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council. The county seat of He'an is Hongliu Township, while the county seat of Hekang is Xeyidula Township, the report added.

Demotion of J&K to UT level unacceptable,

Govt should restore full statehood: Karan Singh

remain a state. "Everyone jumped at me and the proposal was rejected. Today things are different. Jammu has its own personality now," he said.

Asked if he had any such radical proposal now, he said, "I think that now the only radical suggestion is the reinstatement of statehood plus domiciliary laws to safeguard the people of the state and a genuine attempt to strike a fair balance between Jammu and Kashmir regions."

The only way to do this is to have a peaceful relationship between the Centre and the Jammu and Kashmir government, he underlined.

On August 5, 2019, the Centre revoked Article 370 of the Constitution, stripping Jammu and Kashmir of its special status and dividing it into two union territories — J&K and Ladakh. While the former has a legislative assembly with limited authority, Ladakh operates without one.

In December 2023, the apex court upheld the Centre's decision but reiterated the need for the swift restoration of statehood. During the interview, Singh also reflected on his relationship with the Abdullah family, particularly with Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, the first chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir.

He described Sheikh Abdullah as a "remarkable" Kashmiri leader who significantly influenced the region's political landscape, but acknowledged the complexi-

ties of their interactions given the historical tension between the monarchy and the emerging democratic forces.

Recalling the time when Jammu and Kashmir's first assembly was constituted, Singh said his father Maharaja Hari Singh and many of his loyalists thought that he should not take up the role of 'Sadr-i-Riyasat' because Sheikh Abdullah had insulted the Dogras and the Maharaja.

"So that was where the tension in a way began. I suppose it was an inevitable fallout of politics. You see, I realised that the monarchy had lost its importance. That the future lay in democracy. I wanted to be part of that democracy," he said.

Singh credited National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah for bringing him back into politics after a 12-year hiatus.

"After the four elections that I won from Udhampur, I changed my constituency, went to Jammu and lost. After that I really gave up politics. I was out of politics for 12 years... he got me back into politics," he said.

He also recalled the NC's support in his election to the Rajya Sabha.

Singh described Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, the third generation of the Abdullah family to occupy the office, as a "balanced individual" with the potential for a successful political future.

"I think he'll go far. I hope he will because, you know, he has got a second chance now," the former minister said.

19 flights diverted, over 200 delayed as dense

fog hits operations

flights were delayed and operations have returned to normal now, the official added.

"While landing and takeoffs continue at Delhi Airport, flights that are not CAT III compliant may get affected. Passengers are requested to contact the airline concerned for updated flight information. Any inconvenience caused is deeply regretted," the Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) said in a post on X at 6.56 am.

CAT III facility allows aircraft to operate in low visibility conditions. Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in the national capital is operated by DIAL.

"#6ETravelAdvisory: Departures and arrivals at #DelhiAirport are currently on hold due to reduced visibility," IndiGo said in a post on X at 1.05 am on Saturday.

Air India said in an update on X at 1.16 am that poor visibility due to dense fog was impacting flight operations in Delhi and parts of northern India.

A thick blanket of fog had enveloped Delhi on Friday as well, delaying more than 400 flights.

In an update on X at 10.58 am, IndiGo said dense fog continued to affect visibility in Delhi, Chandigarh, Amritsar, Srinagar, Guwahati and Patna, even during daytime.

"We assure you that our teams are working diligently to assist all impacted customers, ensuring your journey resumes as soon as the weather improves," it said in another post at 11 am.

Police arrest two drug

peddlers, including woman in Baramulla

as Shameema Begum, a resident of Lari Kasi Boniyar. Acting on this lead, a police team, accompanied by the concerned magistrate, conducted a search of the woman's residence," police said.

"The search led to the recovery of 62 grams of a charas-like substance and 1 kg of charas powder. The woman was immediately arrested."

Police said further investigations are underway to uncover the broader nexus of this illegal activity.

Thick fog in Kashmir Valley hits flight operations at Srinagar Airport

operations at the airport and all morning flights were delayed, they added.

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The officials said, "Due poor visibility at Srinagar airport, no flight operations have taken place so far."

All airlines have rescheduled their morning operations till the visibility improves.

This is the second consecutive day of fog affecting flight operations at Srinagar airport. On Friday, morning flights were delayed while one was diverted due to low visibility. Operations resumed around noon after the visibility had improved.

Army organizes plantation drive at Makhidhar

Top News Report

REASI, Jan 4: The Indian Army organized "Ek ped Maa ke Naam" campaign, a tree plantation drive in Makhidhar, District Reasi, as part of its ongoing efforts to promote environmental conservation and community engagement.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from local residents and school children reinforcing the collective commitment to safeguarding nature.

During the drive, saplings of native and fruit-



bearing tree species were planted in designated areas to enhance green cover and combat environmental degrada-

tion. The initiative aligns with the Indian Army's broader objective of fostering sustainable

development and raising awareness about ecological preservation among the local population.

The event, emphasized the importance of protecting the environment for future generations and encouraged participants to nurture the planted saplings.

The plantation drive also served as an opportunity to strengthen the bond between the Indian Army and the community.

The Indian Army remains dedicated to contributing to the region's ecological well-being and supporting initiatives that benefit both people and nature.

Army conducts lecture on drug awareness at Bhala



Top News Report

DODA, Jan 4: As part of an ongoing initiative to educate and empower local youth, the Indian Army conducted a comprehensive lec-

ture on drug awareness at Bhala.

The campaign aimed to shed light on the dangers of drug abuse and its profound consequences on individuals, families, and communi-

ties. During the session, Satish Kumar delivered an insightful and detailed presentation, covering various aspects of drug abuse.

He explained the harmful effects of commonly abused substances such as tobacco and nicotine, club drugs, cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, synthetic marijuana, methamphetamine, cold medicines, salvia, steroids, and other drugs that are frequently misused.

Army conducts medical patrol at Solki

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Jan 4: The Indian Army extended healthcare services to the remote parts of Rajouri district through a mobile medical patrol in the village Ched to address the medical needs of the locals, as well as the Gujar and Bakarwals in the area.

The inhabitants of the area, often cut off from mainstream healthcare facilities due to their isolated geographic location and challenging terrain, benefited immensely from this initiative, which contributed to the overall well-being of the locals who often suffer from disparities in healthcare, leading to higher morbidity and mortality rates.

The mobile medical patrol, equipped with essential medical supplies and services, reached these areas to provide healthcare with compassion for local vil-



lagers, as well as Gujar and Bakarwals.

The primary objective was to provide on-the-spot medical care and check-ups, which included basic health check-ups, treatment of common ailments, and the distribution of necessary medicines.

The team emphasized preventive healthcare by offering immunizations and disseminating information about hygiene, nutrition, and disease prevention. The response from the local population has been overwhelmingly positive.

The local population expressed deep gratitude for the Indian Army initiative, which brings much-needed medical services directly to their doorsteps, with a special focus on women's healthcare.

Beyond the immediate medical benefits, the mobile medical patrol played a crucial role in building and strengthening the relationship between the Indian Army and the local communities. A total of 23 villagers (12 males, 8 females, and 3 children) benefited from the mobile medical patrol.

Army organises coaching classes at Kotranka

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Jan 4: Indian Army has always been in the forefront to propagate the importance of education amongst the awam and in this series Indian Army at Samote organised coaching classes for Gujar and Bakarwal Children in the higher reaches areas of Rajouri District.

Dera Migration commence with the onset of summers when the Gujar and Bakarwals move to the higher reaches of Pir Panjal Range in search of the greener pastures for their livestock.

The family moves along with its livestock, locally known as



Dera including children.

Due to the migratory pattern of these families, the prime sufferers are the children who have to remain absent from their schools for six to eight months.

Considering their difficulties, Indian Army at Samote organised coaching classes for these children at higher reaches of Pir Panjal Range.

These classes were aimed

at ensuring no loss of studies to these children of Gujar & Bakarwals during migratory season.

Around 65 children were benefited by this initiative through which it is ensured that children of these regions have access to education and regain their interest in studies.

The civil administration has acknowledged this exceptional inventiveness and conveyed their appreciation for the whole-hearted efforts of Indian Army, which is bound to yield results and assist the young children in quest of a bright and better future in the present competitive world.

No compromise on patient care in hospitals; doctors must treat patients with respect: Health Minister

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 4: Jammu and Kashmir Health Minister Sakina Masood Itoo said on Saturday that the government will not tolerate any compromise on patient care in hospitals.

"Patient care is crucial, and we will never allow any compromise on it in hospitals. My recent visit to healthcare facilities was to address the ongoing issues faced by both patients and medical staff," Sakina Itoo told reporters after visiting Chest Disease Hospital Srinagar.

Sakina Itoo acknowledged complaints from the public about inadequate services, particularly regarding the availability of hospital beds and the quality of doctor-patient interactions. "The purpose of this visit is to give care to the patients who go to the hospitals. People expect the government to listen to their concerns, and we are here to solve these problems," she said.

A key issue highlighted during her visit was the shortage of accommodation for patients.

Itoo noted that cer-

tain hospitals lacked proper infrastructure, such as lifts and ramps, which made it difficult for sensitive patients to receive care. Additionally, she stressed the importance of positive doctor-patient relationships. "Doctors are intelligent, but patient counseling and a compassionate approach are essential. We need to ensure that doctors treat patients respectfully," she added.

The Health Minister also addressed concerns regarding private medical practices,

describing them as a form of injustice to patients. She assured that the government would investigate and regulate private practices to ensure that healthcare services are delivered fairly and equitably. Reacting to a recent incident involving a delayed surgery, the Health Minister stated that no compromise would be tolerated when it came to patient care. She confirmed that an inquiry had been initiated, and disciplinary action would be taken against any doctor

found guilty of misconduct. "Whether in private or government hospitals, doctors must uphold the highest standards of care," she said, as per KINS.

The Minister concluded by assuring the public that the government would continue to improve healthcare facilities, including increasing bed availability and providing essential medical supplies. "We will take the necessary steps to ensure people receive the facilities they deserve," Itoo added.

KCCI calls upon CM Omar Abdullah to address pressing challenges tourism stakeholders

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 4: The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) has called upon the Chief Minister, J&K Omar Abdullah to address pressing challenges tourism stakeholders face regarding renewing tourism registration certificates.

The Chamber expresses serious concerns over the recent notification (No. Reg/1129/581/DTR dated 21-12-2024) issued by the Director of Tourism, Kashmir, urging that the process be streamlined to mitigate hardships for the tourism and hospitality sectors.

The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) had previously brought the issue to the attention of the Chief Minister during a meeting held on October 29 at the Civil Secretariat in Srinagar. At that time, the Chamber submitted a memorandum and later also sent a letter to the Chief Minister, detailing the challenges faced by tourism stakeholders.

Although the authorities had assured the KCCI that they would work together to find a solution, the Chamber have expressed disappointment that no meaningful consulta-

tion took place before the latest notification was issued, leaving the concerns of stakeholders unaddressed.

Tourism stakeholders, including hoteliers, houseboats, guest-house operators, restaurants, tour & travel sectors are grappling with an unnecessarily complex and time-consuming system for renewing their registration certificates.

The process requires multiple clearances and NOCs from various departments, forcing stakeholders to endure endless office visits, extended waiting periods, and a growing list of formalities.

The chamber is disappointed that the introduction of an online renewal system did not simplify the process as intended. Instead, stakeholders are still required to obtain NOCs from various departments, despite these departments having independent mechanisms to seek compliance.

The Chamber had proposed delinking the renewal process from NOC requirements, drawing comparisons to efficient practices in departments such as Income Tax, GST, and Commercial Taxes, where inter-departmental clearances are not

mandated. Adopting a similar approach in the tourism sector would greatly alleviate the burden on stakeholders and encourage compliance.

KCCI emphasised the difficulties faced by hotels and guest houses constructed decades ago under earlier regulatory frameworks but are being asked to comply with regulations enforced later on.

KCCI urged the government to suspend the notification until a workable solution is devised in consultation with stakeholders.

Furthermore, in light of the significant decline in tourism arrivals in Kashmir since July 2024, the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) urges the government to intensify its efforts to promote tourism.

KCCI emphasised the urgent need to revitalise the sector through targeted marketing initiatives.

By doubling down on meaningful promotional activities, the government can help to revitalise the industry, attract more visitors, and ultimately boost the local economy, which has been impacted by the recent downturn in tourism despite huge available inventory.

Drug peddler held with narcotics from Khellani

Top News Report

DODA, Jan 4: Jammu and Kashmir Police, District Doda in a statement said that a drug peddler was arrested in Khellani area of Doda District and seized heroin like substance from his possession.

Official sources said that, today, during routine checking of vehicles by Police Party of PP Khellani led by IC PP Khellani PSI Manish Singh, one bus bearing Reg No. JK02CN/0087 on its way from Jammu towards Baderwah

when stopped at Naka for routine checking one person namely Babur Ahmed, son of Shah Mohd, resident of Bhalesa Doda at present Bhalla stepped out of bus and fled towards Khellani market. After seeing his suspicious movement police party chased him and caught him after a distance and conducted his personal search. During his frisking approximately 10 grams of Chitta like substance recovered from his possession. The peddler was arrested on the spot and a case FIR



No 04/2025 under section 08/21/22 NDPS act registered at PS Doda and investigation of the case has been started.

Doda Police has continued its drive to tighten its noose on the drug peddlers as an effort to eradicate the menace of drug. SSP Doda Sandeep Mehta has appealed the general public to cooperate with Police and provide inputs if any drug peddling or any drug addiction is noticed in their neighborhood so that action could be taken against such offenders.

We are fully prepared to tackle winter vagaries across Kulgam: AEE MED

Top News Report

KULGAM, Jan 4: In view of the Meteorological Department prediction for snowfall from today evening, the district administration Kulgam has geared up its snow preparedness keeping its men and machinery ready, officials said on Saturday.

Talking to Top News Jk correspondent, Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) Mechanical Engineering department (MED) Kulgam, Khurshid Abdullah said

that department is all geared up and has made all arrangements to ensure smooth clearance from all roads in the district.

"We have stationed 25 snow clearance machines to address any issue arising from the forecast weather conditions, out of which 5 emergency-based snow cutters are also in place to ensure smooth snow clearance in Kulgam district", he said.

"As far as the upper reaches are concerned like Kund we have already kept one machine

pre-positioned in the Kund belt for effective and smooth clearance, adding they have also set-up two control rooms one at Chawalgam, Kulgam, and the other at Bathipora, D.H.Pora to monitor and manage operations effectively in the district", he said.

He also said that "585 kilometres of 162 roads in the district fall under our department with 430.57 kilometres (74 roads) fall under priority 1 and 154.66 kms (88 roads) fall under priority 2",

"We urge people to cooperate with the us and not to park their vehicles on the roadside during the snowfall", he added.

MET department forecast moderate to heavy snowfall beginning from Saturday evening till Monday morning. "The main activity would be between January 5 to 6. We are expecting good snowfall as the Western Disturbance (WD) is presently active over J&K." They said.

Border-Gavaskar Trophy: Decisive Sydney Test heads for exciting finish after Pant's breathtaking fifty

India finished the second day at 141 for 6 for an overall lead of 145

SYDNEY, Jan 4 (Agencies): Staying true to his aggressive style of play, generational talent Rishabh Pant conjured up a spectacular 33-ball-61 to somehow keep India afloat even as Australia remained in driver's seat in the fifth Test, which is poised for an intriguing finish.

It was largely due to Pant's breathtaking knock that India finished the second day at 141 for 6 for an overall lead of 145.

Pant entrained the packed SCG with four monstrous sixes and six boundaries.

His back-to-back sixes off Mitchell Starc into the heritage Ladies Members Stands were for posterity.

Pant's knock prevented the Indian second innings from falling apart with the visitors' top and lower order struggling to negotiate the Aussie attack on a track that was aided seam and bounce.

This was after the unheralded bowling duo of Prasidh Krishna (3/42) and Nitish Reddy (2/32) complemented Mohammed Siraj (3/51) and Jasprit Bumrah (2/33) to shoot Australia out for 181.

On a difficult track, Virat Kohli (6) and his top-order colleagues found Scott Boland (3/38) too hot to handle.

Kohli lost his wicket on outside the off stump line for the eighth successive time in this series.

The match is certain to end on the third day but if India will be able to defend the total will very much depend on whether skipper Jasprit Bumrah is fit to bowl full tilt.

Bumrah underwent precau-



tionary scans for an unspecified injury after he left the field in the post-lunch session in which he bowled just one over.

If even a half-fit Bumrah bowls, it won't be easy for Australia to chase even a 175-run target on a track with variable bounce and widening cracks.

Pant Power Having curbed his natural instinct to attack during a sedate 40 in the first essay after being torn to shreds by the most important member of the Indian coaching staff for indiscreet shot selection at the MCG, Pant perhaps cleared his mind about what he needed to do.

He came in at a time when not just Boland but even debutant Beau Webster was getting the ball to move a proverbial mile off the deck.

There was steep bounce available at the Randwick End (far end) where Kohli got out.

Boland pitched it on hard length and got both seam and bounce.

The result was a now familiar dab towards slips as Kohli's future beyond 123 Tests looks

doubtful.

This was after both KL Rahul and Yashasvi Jaiswal got a couple of rippers.

However once Pant came out, he was a man-on-a-mission as the first ball disappeared into the long-on stand.

The fallen pull shot also came out of the closet. It was exhilarating stuff.

Pant rode on bounce and hit Webster over point but the two sixes off Starc do take the cake.

It was understood that Pant was mentally not in frame due to unsolicited sermons from a coaching staff member, who despite knowing the dashing southpaw's game told him to play otherwise.

At one point, a clueless Pat Cummins was forced to put six fielders near the boundary ropes.

The skipper himself who saw the back of Pant, inducing edge from a ball that rose.

Indian and Australian fans gave a standing ovation to the diminutive southpaw.

Third pacer steps up In the post lunch session,

Prasidh and Reddy more than made up for skipper Bumrah's absence as India took 51 overs to bowl out the hosts.

Steve Smith's (33) dismissal off Prasidh just before lunch disturbed Australia's rhythm.

Post lunch, Prasidh came from round the wicket from the Paddington End and removed Alex Carey (21) with an angled-in delivery.

Carey was looking good but once Karnataka speedster found his length, he was literally unplayable.

Debutant Webster (57) justified his selection with a half-century but it was Reddy, coming for his second spell, sparked a collapse with wickets of Cummins and Mitchell Starc, both done in by subtle movement off the surface.

The final blow was dealt by Prasidh.

He used the uneven bounce and cracks off the surface to get one bounce awkwardly at Webster and Jaiswal snaffled the catch.

Siraj was menacing during his first spell, grabbing two wickets with perfectly pitched outswingers before Prasidh sent back in-form Smith after he was involved in a nice little 57-run stand for the fifth wicket with Webster.

Brief Score: India 1st innings: 185 all out. Australia 1st innings: 181 all out in 51 overs (Beau Webster 57, Steve Smith 33; Prasidh Krishna 3/42, Mohammed Siraj 3/51, Nitish Reddy 2/32). India 2nd innings: 141 for six in 32 overs (Rishabh Pant 61, Scott Boland 4/42).

Rohit Sharma breaks silence on Sydney absence, dismisses retirement rumours

Says I am not going anywhere, I just stood down from this Test



SYDNEY, Jan 4 (Agencies): Senior India batter Rohit Sharma on Saturday announced that he has not retired from cricket and just took a break from one test match. "I am sensible, mature man and father of two. I know what I am doing. We are made of steel. We are not bothered about media reports but people sitting somewhere with a laptop and a camera will not decide any player's future," he said talking to commentators at Sydney during a tea-break.

Taking a dig at the reports, Rohit firmly dismissed his retirement rumours, saying he is "not going anywhere" and offered poor form as the reason for him "standing down" from the ongoing Sydney Test against Australia.

"As it is, in our batting, the form of the boys is not that good. So you cannot carry a lot of out of form players in the team. This simple thing was going on in my mind. I am not going anywhere," he said.

The 37-year-old said the team management and selectors backed his decision.

"I wanted to tell the coach and the selector that this is what is going on in my mind. They backed my decision. They said that you have been playing for so many years. You know what you are doing.

"So for me, it was difficult to take this decision. But if everything is kept

in front, then this decision was sensible. I will not think much further," he added.

In Rohit's absence, Shubman Gill was included in the India eleven for the crucial fifth match of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy as India is trailing 1-2.

The Mumbaier endured a tough time in Test cricket in 2024, accumulating just 619 runs in 26 innings across 14 matches averaging 24.76.

Before standing down, he had scored just 31 runs across five innings in three Tests in this series after joining the team following the Perth Test.

Rohit's bold call triggered speculations that he might pull the plug on his Test career after this series.

"This is not a retirement decision. I am not going to leave the game. There is no such decision. But I am out of this game because the bat is not working.

"But there is no guarantee that the bat will not work after 5 months. There is no guarantee that the bat will not work after two months or six months down the line," Rohit said.

He hoped for a turnaround in his fortunes sooner than later.

"We have seen a lot in cricket. Every minute, every second, every day life changes. So, I have a belief that things will change.

"But, at the same time, I have to be realistic as

well. So, if a person has a mic inside, or a laptop, or a pen, what he writes, what he says, it does not change our life. We have played this game for so many years.

"So, these people cannot decide when we should go or when we should not play. I am a sensible man. I am a mature man. I am the father of two children. So, I have a little brain to decide what I want in life," he noted.

Asked if he took this decision after the Melbourne Test defeat, Rohit said: "No, I took this decision after coming to Sydney. Because after the match, we had only two days in between. And one day was New Year's eve. So on New Year's, I did not want to tell this to the coach and the selector.

"But it was running in my mind that I am trying and trying. But it is not happening. So I have to accept that it is not happening. And it was important for me to step aside.

"Whenever I am captaining, I don't believe in what is going to happen after 5 months or 6 months. What do you want in the immediate future, it is important to focus on this thing.

"Our entire focus was on these 5 matches. We had to retain the trophy, we had to win. So, when we take such decisions, we do it keeping the team in front of us," he added.

Rohit also heaped praise on Bumrah saying he has been impressed by the latter's leadership qualities.

"The way he (Bumrah) sets standards with the ball, he is absolute class. When I saw him for the first time in 2013, his graph has gone really high ever since and has gone from strength to strength," he said.

Ind vs Aus 5th Test: Bumrah returns to dressing room after precautionary scans

SYDNEY, Jan 4 (Agencies): The Indian team heaved a massive sigh of relief after skipper Jasprit Bumrah returned to the dressing room after undergoing precautionary scans for an unspecified niggle, which forced him to leave the field on the second day of the fifth Test here, Saturday.

The premier pacer bowled just one over in the post-lunch session and left the field after experiencing some discomfort, which appeared to be a side strain.

Bumrah was away from the field for three hours and 20 minutes, but his return eased worries in the Indian camp ahead of Australia's second innings as his presence would be key to defending the target.

Senior batter Virat Kohli led the side in the absence of Bumrah.

Bumrah has taken 32 wickets in the series so far. He had figures of 2/33 in 10 overs, having removed Marnus Labuschagne in the morning session with a peach of a delivery.

Bumrah spoke to Kohli before leaving the field and later official broadcasters showed him moving out of the venue with team's security liaison officer and the team doctor.

The Fox Sports visuals showed him leaving the stadium in a SUV.



"Nonsense...": Rohit Sharma blasts Sam Konstas over clash with Jasprit Bumrah in 5th test

SYDNEY, Jan 4 (Agencies): India skipper Rohit Sharma was at his absolute best as he spoke to the host broadcasters during the lunch break on Day 2 of the ongoing fifth Test against Australia in Sydney. Rohit missed the fifth and final game of the five-match series and handed over the captaincy to star pacer Jasprit Bumrah. On the cusp of stumps on Day 1, Bumrah got involved into a heated argument with Australia opener Sam Konstas and that incident grabbed everyone's attention.

Bumrah, who is known for his calm and composed nature, completely lost his cool after the Australian teenager passed some comments on him from the non-striker's end. The wicket of Usman Khawaja on the final ball of the day led to a beautiful show of unity from the Indian team as the likes of Virat Kohli, KL Rahul also

joined Bumrah.

Now, even Rohit gave his blunt take on the incident and backed his players by stating that the Australian star poked Bumrah first.

"Humare ladke jab tak shaant hain tab tak shaant hain. Agar aap ungli kar rahe ho, tab thodi na koi shaant baithega. Cricket khelo, yeh faaltu ki cheezein, yeh bol bachchan karna shobha nhi deta hai. (Our boys are silent only till a particular time. If you are going to poke them, then they will retaliate. We all are here to play cricket. Please don't do such nonsense. These antics doesn't look nice.)

"Humare ladke classy hain. Hum zyada iss baat pe focus karte hain ki humara kaam kya hai. Humare liye uss time zaroori tha ki ek-do wickets lene taaki jab morning session shuru ho tab Australia pe pressure bana rahe. (Our boys are very classy. We

only focus on the given task and nothing else. It was important for us to scalp one or two wickets at that moment, in order to keep the pressure on Australia.)

Talking about the incident, it took place on the penultimate delivery of the day when Khawaja took a little time to get ready at the striker's end, resulting in Bumrah's rhythm getting disturbed. However, the non-striker Konstas involved himself in the incident by uttering a few words to Bumrah, riling up the pacer.

On the next delivery, Bumrah got Khawaja caught in slips, thanks to KL Rahul's brilliant effort.

After taking the wicket, Bumrah charged at Konstas at the non-striker's end as a part of his celebratory act. Kohli, who is known to wear his heart on his sleeve, also came running from the slip cordon and seemingly charged at Konstas.

Coach of the hour: Deepali delighted with 'very special' recognition

CHENNAI, Jan 4 (Agencies): Away from prying eyes, Deepali Deshpande has had quite a sojourn in the last decade or so. The former rifle shooter-turned-coach has been part of the ups and downs the sport has experienced during that period. She has endured rainy days along with the shooters, most notably during the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, and she has also been the first to recognise their moments in the sun. In short, she has been one of the vital cogs behind the sport's upswing in the country. Fittingly, Deepali is now in the spotlight. Her dedication to the sport that she is passionate about has been recognised as she is set to be handed the prestigious Dronacharya Award soon.

Deepali is naturally filled with gratitude at the moment and welcomes this recognition. "Nobody works for the award. We work for wins and medals. But Arjuna, Dronacharya Awards have a his-



tory. It has been there for a long time. For the people outside your sport, everyone identifies you through this achievement. That's what makes it very special. Once you get it, everyone identifies that with the work that you have put in. That is very important and it's more important for your family and friends, who are not into the field, but always rooting for you," the amiable coach, who's also passionate about painting, said.

Having joined the national setup as a junior coach in 2012, it's no exaggeration to say that Deepali has had a hand in transforming numerous young potential shooters into champions. In the Paris Olym-

end, everything comes around and everything falls in place," she noted.

One of the primary reasons why she is reaping the fruits of her hard work and dedication is her family. She's grateful to have that support system.

"As a coach, I travelled much more than I used to do as an athlete. My daughter was also growing up and I couldn't keep up with social obligations most of the time. All my family members have been really supportive. My brothers have been a rock as well."

Apart from her family, her friends from the sport have been pivotal in her overall development. She has a strong memory and recalled in detail the dates and events spent with her friends. Those days have certainly handed her a strong perspective on numerous things and made her the top professional that she is today. She also thanked fellow coach, Jaspal Rana, who has also had a notable hand in trans-

forming shooting.

"We (she and her friends) were always a group and we always operated like a team. If there was any problem, we would speak up together. We had one voice. Had they not been there, I might have left the sport a long time ago. Of course, I made other friends as well. I worked with Jaspal for eight years and he had already been supportive. During the Paris Games phase, we both were sailing on the same boat and he was as supportive as always."

Her travels are bound to remain as high as ever as she aims for more in the coming years. "The Paris Olympics has shown that we can do well. Now, we should prepare and aim for a gold medal. We have that kind of talent pool and expertise as well."

With Deepali's invaluable experience and knowledge of the sport, the shooters are in good hands to try and pull off that feat in the LA 2028 Olympics.

NSS National Integration Camp 2025 enters day 2

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: The second day of the National Service Scheme (NSS) National Integration Camp (NIC) 2025 unfolded with an inspiring blend of physical wellness, creativity, and cultural engagement, uniting around 17 contingents from various states at Government College for Women (GCW) Gandhi Nagar.

Participants from Assam, Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Ladakh, and Tamil Nadu gathered to celebrate unity and talent through learning.

The day began with an invigorating yoga session led by Dr Vijendra Sharma, Head of the Sanskrit Department at GCW Gandhinagar. Dr. Arun and Dr. Neha from Ayurvedic Hospital Jammu were the resource persons.

This session focused on promoting physical fitness and mental well-being, engaging participants in various yoga asanas, breathing exercises, and mindfulness techniques. Following this refreshing start, attendees enjoyed a nutritious breakfast that emphasized the importance of a balanced diet, providing a healthy foundation for the day's activities.

The schedule continued with a series of activities at the GCW Parade Ground, including a spirited Tug of War Competition organised by Sports Committee.



The event witnessed enthusiastic participation, with 22 teams from 17 States comprising 152 participants competing fiercely for the title.

The competition was intense, showcasing teamwork, strategy, and determination. After several thrilling rounds, Team JK06 emerged as the winner, demonstrating exceptional coordination and strength.

Team JK04 claimed the runner-up position, putting up a commendable fight throughout the event.

Dr. S.P Sarswat and Dr. Ravender Kumar Tickoo, Principals of Host Colleges were the chief guests of the event. Winning teams were felicitated with medals.

Creativity flourished during the painting and sketching competition, themed around Economic Empowerment among Women, which showcased extraordinary talent as evaluated by Jury

members.

The winners of the event were felicitated by Ankush Kesar, Artist/ Print maker, Deptt. of Painting, Jammu University and Mahua Gupta, Visual Artist, Jammu.

In the afternoon, NSS volunteers attended an insightful orientation session. Dr. Bindu Sangra, Sr. Assistant Professor in Law at the University of Jammu, delivered a lecture on "Legal Rights of Women."

Drawing on her extensive experience in academia and research, Dr. Sangra emphasized the importance of legal rights such as equality, education, employment, property inheritance, reproductive rights, and protection from violence in empowering women worldwide.

The second session of the orientation program was led by Dr. Gurpreet Kour, NSS NIC Camp Commander and NSS Program Officer, GCW Parade Ground,

Jammu. Dr. Kour highlighted the significance of the "My Bharat Portal 1," a digital platform designed to promote national initiatives and engage the youth in India's cultural preservation and development.

The portal serves as a comprehensive online resource showcasing India's arts, traditions, festivals, and languages, with the aim of fostering national unity and pride.

The day concluded with a cultural evening featuring a tapestry of dance and music performances by Contingents of Assam, Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh celebrating India's rich cultural heritage and fostering connections among participants.

The successful events of the day not only enhanced personal growth but also exemplified the spirit of collaboration and creativity that defines the NSS community.

MLA Banihal visits remotest snow-bound Mahu village, addresses public concerns at Gram Sabha



Top News Report

BANIHAL, Jan 4: National Conference leader and MLA Banihal today visited the remotest snow-covered village of Mahu to address the pressing issues faced by the residents during the harsh winter months. The MLA braved adverse weather conditions to personally interact with villagers and assess the challenges they encounter due to the severe cold and heavy snowfall.

During the visit, the MLA attended a Gram Sabha convened by the Rural Development Department (RDD), which saw enthusiastic participation from

local residents and Panchayat members. The Sabha focused on developmental initiatives and the immediate needs of the community. Villagers expressed their concerns about the lack of road connectivity, disruptions in electricity supply, and the availability of essential commodities. The need for improved healthcare services to deal with winter emergencies was also highlighted.

Speaking at the Gram Sabha, the MLA assured the residents of his strong commitment to their welfare. He directed the concerned officials to expedite the restoration of utility services and repair dam-

aged power infrastructure to restore connectivity and electricity in all the remaining areas of Banihal-Gool constituency at the earliest. He also emphasized the importance of ensuring an uninterrupted supply of ration and fuel to sustain families during the harsh weather.

"The hardships faced by the people of Mahu and other snow-bound villages are a priority for our government. We are working tirelessly to resolve these issues and ensure that development reaches even the remotest corners of the constituency," the MLA said during his address.

The visit also included an on-ground review of various ongoing developmental projects in the region. The MLA instructed officials to expedite work on critical projects and called for enhanced coordination between local representatives and the administration to address the unique challenges faced by the area.

Man dies, mother in critical condition due to suffocation in Gudder

Top News Report

KULGAM, Jan 4: A mother and son were found unconscious at their home in the Gudder area of Kulgam due to suffocation caused by charcoal fire fumes.

The son died in the hospital this morning, while the mother remains critical, officials said.

An official told that the mother and son from Gudder, Kulgam, were found unconscious on January 2 at their residence and were immediately shifted to the hospital for medical aid.

He said that son passed away this morning, while his mother is in critical condition.

The official identi-

fied the deceased as Nisar Ahmad Khan age 25 and his mother as Fameeda Akhter.

More details regarding the incident are awaited, and authorities have urged people to exercise caution while using charcoal heaters indoors, especially during the ongoing harsh winter season.

Dimple holds protest against construction of two counties inside LOC in Ladakh



Singh, Billo Pahlwan, Mohan Lal, Kewal Kumar, Akash Singh, and Rashpal Singh, all of whom voiced similar

concerns over the perceived threats to the region's sovereignty and security.

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 4: Sunil Dimple, President of Mission Statehood, led a protest to express opposition to the construction of two counties inside the Line of Control (LOC) in Ladakh, Indian territory.

The demonstration focused on the growing concern over China's and Pakistan's alleged illegal occupation of land in Ladakh and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK).

Addressing the protesters, Dimple called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, stating that the boundaries of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and Ladakh are shrinking due to illegal

incursions by China and Pakistan. He accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of weakening Jammu and Kashmir's status by revoking its special status in August 2019, dividing it into two union territories, and undermining the region's sovereignty.

Dimple demanded the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir as a Dogra state, calling for the unification of Jammu, Ladakh, Kashmir, POK, and Gilgit-Baltistan into one state under Indian control.

He criticized the BJP government's handling of relations with China and Pakistan, alleging that its weak policies had allowed for continuous Chinese incursions

into Ladakh, with China already occupying 80,000 square kilometers of Indian land.

He urged the central government to take a strong stance, demanding the initiation of military action to reclaim POK, Gilgit-Baltistan, and other occupied regions from Pakistan and China, and to restore Jammu and Kashmir's full territorial integrity.

Dimple also condemned the role of China and Pakistan in fostering terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, citing the ongoing violence and attacks on security forces over the past 35 years.

The protest was supported by other leaders, including S Kala

Ajeet Bhagat congratulates DySP, SHO Kishtwar for DGP medal award



Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Jan 4: Senior National Conference leader Ajeet Bhagat has extended congratulations to Ishan Gupta, DSP Headquarter Kishtwar, and Firdous Ahmed, SHO Kishtwar,

for being awarded the prestigious DGP Medal. Bhagat praised their exemplary work in maintaining peace and order in the city, especially highlighting their efforts in tackling drug-related activities. He emphasized that such officers, who are committed to serving the public and enforcing the law, are rare and deserving of recognition.

Bhagat commended the professionalism of both officers, noting their ability to listen to all parties involved and resolve issues calmly. He expressed confidence that their ongoing efforts in combating drug-related crimes will continue to gain momentum. Bhagat further added that such honest and dedicated police officers deserve not only accolades like the DGP Medal but also promotions for their exceptional service.



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