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BRIEFLY

Cold conditions intensify in Kashmir amid clear sky; Pahalgam shivers at minus 10.4 Deg C

SRINAGAR, Jan 9 (Agencies): Minimum temperatures plummeted several degrees below the freezing point at most places in Kashmir owing to a clear sky as cold conditions tightened its grip over the Valley, officials said on Thursday.

Night temperatures dropped in most parts of the Valley owing to a clear sky with bright sunshine witnessed for the past few days, the Met office said. Barring Gulmarg in north Kashmir, minimum temperatures across the Valley dropped by several notches as cold conditions intensified in Kashmir.

In Pahalgam, the minimum temperature settled at minus 10.4 degrees Celsius against the previous night's minus 8.2 degrees, making it the coldest in the Valley. The minimum temperature in Srinagar settled at minus 4.4 degrees Celsius, down from the previous night's 1 degree, the Met office said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 9.6 degrees Celsius, marginally up from the previous night's minus 9.8 degrees, it said.

Qazigund, the gateway town to the Valley, and Konibal in Pampore town logged an identical low of minus 6.2 degrees Celsius, it added.

Kupwara in north Kashmir recorded a low of minus 4.6 degrees Celsius, while at Koker-nag in south Kashmir, the mercury settled at minus 5.6 degrees Celsius.

The Met office has forecast mainly dry weather over the next two days, with the possibility of light rain/snow at isolated places on Saturday.

It also said the minimum temperature is likely to drop further in the Valley, and forecast an isolated cold wave over the few days ahead.

Kashmir is currently in the grip of 'Chillai-Kalan' — the harshest period of winter — that began on December 21. During the 40 days of 'Chillai-Kalan', the chances of snowfall are the highest and the temperature drops considerably.

'Chillai-Kalan' ends **Turn to page 9**

Crowd crush at India's Tirupati temple kills six as thousands seek entry

NEW DELHI, Jan 9 (Agencies): At least six people have been crushed to death and dozens injured as a crowd surged at one of the most visited Hindu religious sites at Tirupati town in India's southern state of Andhra Pradesh.

A huge crowd gathered to collect free entrance tokens to visit the town's Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple when the crush happened on Wednesday night.

"The unfortunate incident... has claimed the lives of six devotees. I pray to God to give



peace to the departed souls," Prem Kumar Jain, spokesman of the state's ruling Telugu Desam Party, told reporters. Since early on

Wednesday, devotees from across India had begun to congregate for a 10-day festival at the temple that starts on Friday. Authorities had set up

counters to distribute free tokens from Thursday to visit the almost 2,000-year-old temple but the crowd pushed and jostled, according to the office of N Chandrababu Naidu, chief minister of the state.

In a post on social media platform X, Naidu said the deaths "grieved me intensely".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi offered condolences to the families of the deceased. "My thoughts are with those who have lost their near and dear ones," his office said on X.

"Govt should look into the way people were killed": Farooq Abdullah on Tirupati Stampede



JAMMU, Jan 9 (Agencies): A day after six people were killed at a stampede at Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh, former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah underlined the importance of religion in India and said that arrangements should

be in place at religious gatherings to prevent loss of lives.

"People go (to religious places) not to die but to pray for their safety, nation and family. The government should look into the way people were killed in the stampede. And take steps to oversee arrangements at such places thronged by a large number of people and to ensure such incidents do not happen again," he told reporters in Jammu.

"It is important as **Turn to page 9**

Security Forces arrest man in Kulgam, Recover Weapons

SRINAGAR, Jan 9 (Agencies): Security forces said on Thursday that in a joint operation, one person has been arrested with arms and ammunition in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district.

The man was arrested on Wednesday and warlike stores were recovered from his possession, said officials here.

Srinagar- **Turn to page 9**

Dream Big, Strive to become changemakers, leaders of Tomorrow: Army Chief urges NCC Cadets

NEW DELHI, Jan 9 (Agencies): Recalling his days as an NCC cadet, Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Thursday urged the youth to dream big and strive to become the "changemakers, innovators and leaders" of tomorrow.

Addressing a gathering of cadets and officers during his visit to the ongoing National Cadet Corps (NCC) Republic Day Camp at Delhi Cantonment, Gen Dwivedi also wished his best to an NCC expedition team that will attempt to scale Mount Everest later this year.

"Being part of NCC is a way of life. The forma



five years as a cadet will forge a unique identity for each one of you, and shall form the edifice of your achievements later in life," the army chief said.

It is also encouraging to know that in 2024, 100 boy cadets and 10

girl cadets joined the army's pre-commissioning training academies through NCC's entry schemes, while more than 8,800 NCC cadets joined the force as Agniveers, Gen Dwivedi said.

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J&K Govt asks staff to attend R-Day, 'Beating Retreat'

JAMMU, Jan 9 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir Government has asked its staff to attend January 26 func-

tion and 'beating retreat ceremony' as a part of their official duty.

The main function of the Republic Day, 2025

is being held at Maulana Azad Stadium, Jammu, where the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor will preside over and take the

salute. All the officers/officials of the Government and Public Sector Undertakings, stationed at Jammu, are called **Turn to page 9**

If INDIA Bloc was only for Parliamentary Polls, Better wind it up: Omar Abdullah



JAMMU, Jan 9 (Agencies): Asserting that there was no time limit attached to the INDIA bloc, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday expressed dismay over the lack of clarity regarding its leadership and agenda, saying the alliance should be wound up if it was meant only for the parliamentary elections.

Abdullah said the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP),

Congress, and other political parties on the ground will decide how to effectively compete with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

"After the Assembly elections in Delhi, they should call all the alliance members for a meeting. If this alliance was only for the parliamentary elections, it should be wound up, and we will work separately. But if it is meant for Assembly elections

as well, we will have to sit together and work collectively," Abdullah told reporters here.

The National Conference leader was replying to a question about an RJD leader's statement that the INDIA bloc was meant only for Lok Sabha elections.

"As far as I remember, no time limit was set for this. The issue is that no meeting of the INDIA bloc is being convened," he said.

Claiming that there is no clarity regarding the main leadership, the party, or the agenda for future strategy (in the INDIA bloc), he said, "Whether this alliance will continue is also unclear."

Abdullah also said that perhaps the members of the INDIA bloc will be called for a meeting after the Delhi

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Lieutenant Governor reviews implementation of Three New Criminal Laws in UT of J&K

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today chaired a high-level meeting to review the implementation of Three New Criminal Laws-Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023 and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam 2023, in the UT of Jammu Kashmir. The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary, Shri Atal Dulloo; DGP, Shri Nalin Prabhakar; Principal Secretary Home, Shri Chandraker Bharti; DGP Prisons Department, Shri Deepak Kumar; ADGP Hqs/Coordination, Shri M.K Sinha; Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor, Dr Manddeep K. Bhandari; IGP Hq



PHQ, Shri Bhim Sen Tuti and IGP Crime, Dr Sunil Gupta. He emphasised on dedicated efforts to strengthen the Criminal Justice System and increasing the rate of conviction especially in heinous crimes, anti-national activities and terror-related incidents. We must ensure transparency in action taken by the police and meet the timelines set for speedy investigation and trial as underlined in the new criminal laws,

the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor further directed for comparative study of pre and post era of new criminal laws, and preparing a calendar for the Public Awareness Camps in collaboration with various departments including Information, Education, Social Welfare and Legal Services Authority for increasing aware-

ness among the public regarding the new criminal laws. The meeting also discussed the progress achieved under various Technological interventions, notification of SoPs and Guidelines, translation of new laws in Dogri and Kashmiri languages, procurement of FSL vans and training of forensic experts, prison personnel and judicial officers. Secretary, Health and Medical Education, Dr Syed Abid Rasheed Shah; Secretary, Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Shri Achal Sethi; Director J&K Judicial Academy, Ms Sonia Gupta; SIO NIC, Shri Jaskaran Singh Modi and other senior officials also attended the meeting.

Farooq, Omar convey condolences

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah and Chief Minister J&K, Vice President JKNC Omar Abdullah expressed grief over the passing away after a brief illness of Mohd Mustaq Dar Senior Vice President Block Sangaldan JKNC and conveyed condolences to the bereaved family. In their messages, Dr Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah prayed for peace to the departed soul and expressed solidarity with other members of the family. In the condolence message, General

Secretary Haji Ali Mohammed Sagar, Dr Sheikh Mustafa Kamaal, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra Additional General Secretaries, Khalid Najeev Suharwardhy Vice President Jammu, Sheikh Bashir Ahmad Provincial Secretary Jammu, Sajjad Kichloo former minister and Zonal President Chenab Valley, Sajjad Shaheen MLA Banihal, Arjun Singh Raju MLA Ramban, Dr. Shamshad Shan DDC Chairperson Ramban, Arif Mir Provincial Secretary Jammu, Abid Magrey District President Ramban have also expressed grief and prayed for peace to the departed soul.

15 Bn ITBP Udhampur awarded Best Border Battalion Trophy



Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Jan 9: The 15th Battalion of Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) stationed at Paranoo, Udhampur, has been awarded the prestigious Best Border Battalion Trophy during the 63rd Force Raising

Day Parade held at 41 BN ITBP, Bhubaneswar. The award was presented by Nityanand Rai, Minister of State for Home Affairs of India, in recognition of the exceptional performance, dedication, and commitment demonstrated by the battalion in safeguarding the nation's borders and fulfilling other assigned duties. Paras Thapa, Commandant of 15 BN ITBP, received the trophy on behalf of the battalion. This achievement highlights the tireless efforts, professionalism, and hard work of the personnel who have been serving in challenging terrains and adverse conditions. The ITBP Raising Day Parade, an annual event, honors the sacrifices and contributions of ITBP personnel while showcasing the force's discipline and operational efficiency.

YAIKS organizes Margdarshak Sammelan to discuss future of KPs in J&K

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: The Youth All India Kashmiri Samaj (YAIKS) organized a day-long Margdarshak Sammelan in Jammu to discuss the future of Kashmiri Pandits in the current political landscape of Jammu and Kashmir. The event saw the participation of community leaders, opinion makers, and prominent citizens. The program was presided over by Pt. R K Bhat (@RamAvtar), President of YAIKS, and aimed at addressing the pressing issues facing the community.



various political systems and urged immediate action. While acknowledging the Central Government and Delimitation Commission for reserving two Assembly seats for displaced Kashmiri Pandits, YAIKS emphasized the need for a transparent election process to elect representatives for these reserved seats. The organization proposed that internal community elections be held under government supervision to ensure grassroots leadership and prevent manipulation by vested interests. The protection and restoration of Kashmiri Pandit temples and

shrines were discussed in depth. YAIKS urged the government to ensure the preservation of cultural heritage by safeguarding these religious sites in the Kashmir Valley, which would help reconnect the community with its roots. YAIKS demanded 15,000 additional jobs under the Prime Minister's employment scheme for the unemployed youth of the displaced community, including those from the LOC (Line of Control) aspirants. A one-time compensation of Rs. 35 lakhs was demanded for the over-aged section of the community, including traders

who have been victims of displacement. This would cover one lakh for each year of their displacement. YAIKS proposed an increase in cash assistance from Rs. 108 per day to Rs. 500 per day per individual for relief holders, ensuring better survival prospects for the displaced community. The organization also demanded better facilities for Valley Posted Migrant Employees (VPME), including 2BHK accommodations and central schooling provisions for their children at transit accommodations. The Sammelan further resolved the formation of an Apex Committee of Kashmiri Pandits with the involvement of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to address the community's short-term and long-term goals effectively. YAIKS also called for a review of the PM's Return & Rehabilitation Package to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

Prominent Kashmiri Pandit leaders such as Kuldeep Kashmiri (Thinkers Forum), Ashok Dhar (President, TRT Buta Nagar), Sundari Lal (PNBMT), M K Yogi (Apni Party), and Shri Shadi Lal Bhat (VDPC) also participated in the Sammelan. The welcome address was delivered by YAIKS Advisor D N Sadhu, while Rohi Dhar presented the vote of thanks. The stage was managed by YAIKS senior leader Shri Sanjeev Koul. This gathering marked an important step towards addressing the challenges faced by the Kashmiri Pandit community and shaping a collective vision for their future.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir
Office of the Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti (I & FC) Department, Jammu
(Tel/Fax-0191-2582164, E-mail-ijcmu@gmail.com/Website-www.jkircf.com)

Subject: Closure of Major Canals including their distribution network for annual desilting/Maintenance works.

NOTIFICATION

As per consent conveyed by Director Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Jammu vide his letter No: Dev-32/2024-25/7497 dated: 04-01-2025, all the Major Canals (including their distribution network) of Jammu province i.e. **Ranbir Canal, New Partap Canal and Kathua Canal** including their network shall be closed from **10th January 2025** for execution of annual desilting/other works. The date for opening of canals shall be notified separately. All the concerned Superintending Engineers and Executive Engineers are directed to ensure completion of all these works well before the scheduled opening of the Canals.

No:IFCJ/Works/17810-62
Dated: 8/1/2025 DIP/J-9009/24

(Er. Manoj Gupta)
Chief Engineer,
Jal Shakti (I&FC) Department,
Jammu

During the Sammelan, Naresh Raina, a senior leader of YAIKS, presented the YAIKS Vision Document 2025, calling for a joint action plan to address the needs and aspirations of the community. The gathering discussed and passed several long-term and short-term resolutions, which were aimed at shaping the community's future in the region. Pt. R K Bhat, in his passionate appeal, called for a Comprehensive Return Policy for Kashmiri Pandits, who have been displaced for over 35 years. He urged the government to go beyond symbolic gestures and implement direct-action programs for their rehabilitation. He expressed hope that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the community's return to Kashmir could become a reality. YAIKS criticized the lack of discussion in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly regarding the return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits. The organization called on the Omar Abdullah-led Government to introduce a resolution in the Assembly for their comprehensive return. Pt. Bhat questioned why the community's return had never been prioritized in

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL & HOSPITAL DIVISION JAMMU

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (Short Term)

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EDITORIAL

ADDRESSING
PUBLIC ISSUES

Public issues often reflect the concerns and needs of communities, and it is essential to acknowledge and address them to ensure social stability and development. These issues, ranging from economic concerns to education, health, and governance, have a profound impact on the quality of life of individuals and communities. This article aims to highlight some key public issues and the ways in which they can be effectively addressed.

One of the primary public issues that persist in many regions is the state of education. Inadequate infrastructure, outdated curricula, and lack of trained teachers contribute to poor educational outcomes. Teachers, who are the backbone of the education system, face challenges such as delayed promotions, lack of job security, and inadequate professional development opportunities.

Unemployment is a persistent issue affecting a large portion of the population, particularly the youth. With the rapid pace of technological advancements, there is a growing need for new job opportunities and skill development programs. In many regions, youth face difficulties in securing stable jobs, which exacerbates economic instability and can lead to social unrest.

Governments need to prioritize job creation, especially in sectors such as manufacturing, technology, education, and healthcare.

Healthcare is another critical public issue that affects the well-being of individuals and communities. Access to quality healthcare services, particularly in remote and underserved areas, remains a challenge in many parts of the world. High healthcare costs, insufficient healthcare infrastructure, and a shortage of medical professionals contribute to the problem.

Governments must focus on strengthening healthcare systems by investing in primary healthcare facilities, expanding insurance coverage, and ensuring that medical services are affordable for all citizens. Additionally, there is a need for greater investment in mental health services, which often remain neglected despite growing awareness of mental health issues.

In Jammu and Kashmir, where health infrastructure is still evolving, addressing the needs of displaced communities and providing healthcare facilities for migrant workers should be prioritized. Welfare programs for migrant employees, as well as adequate healthcare facilities in transit accommodations, can go a long way in improving the quality of life for displaced individuals.

Governance and accountability are central to resolving many public issues. In many regions, citizens face a lack of transparency in government processes, corruption, and inefficient public services. To address these concerns, it is essential to implement stronger accountability mechanisms and ensure that public officials and institutions are answerable to the people they serve.

The preservation of cultural heritage and religious sites is an important public issue that often gets sidelined in the face of modernization and urbanization. In Jammu and Kashmir, the Jammu Kashmir Teachers Forum raised the issue of the protection, preservation, and restoration of temples and shrines in the Kashmir Valley. The protection of such sites is not only essential for maintaining the cultural identity of communities but also for fostering a sense of pride and belonging among local populations.

Governments should take active measures to safeguard cultural and religious sites, ensuring that they are preserved for future generations. This includes providing financial support for restoration projects, creating legal frameworks to protect heritage sites, and promoting public awareness about the importance of cultural preservation.

Infrastructure development is a cornerstone of economic growth and social well-being. Poor infrastructure, including inadequate roads, public transport systems, water supply, and sanitation facilities, hinders development and affects the daily lives of citizens.

In regions like Jammu and Kashmir, where geographical challenges exist, infrastructure development is critical for improving connectivity, trade, and access to basic services. Addressing infrastructure gaps in both urban and rural areas, especially in remote districts, can significantly enhance the quality of life and stimulate economic activity.

Addressing public issues requires a multi-faceted approach that involves collaboration between governments, communities, and civil society organizations. By prioritizing issues such as education, employment, healthcare, governance, and cultural preservation, governments can create an environment conducive to social stability and progress. Public concerns must be met with proactive solutions, and efforts must be made to ensure that every citizen has access to the opportunities and services they need to lead a fulfilling life. As highlighted by various forums and community leaders, including the Jammu Kashmir Teachers Forum, public issues must be addressed in a time-bound and transparent manner to achieve lasting positive change.

Veer Savarkar: Why the controversy over the name of the college?

By: Prof. Mahesh
Chand Gupta

Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently laid the foundation stone of a new college in the name of the great freedom fighter Vinayak Damodar Veer Savarkar in Delhi University. With this, politics has started on the name of Savarkar. Congress has started protesting on the name of Savarkar. Congress is advocating to name this college after former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, while the leftists are in favor of naming the college after the country's first teacher Savitribai Phule. The big question is why does Congress get upset over the name of Veer Savarkar?

The Congress leaders, who enjoyed power for decades in the country, are very disappointed and frustrated after the formation of the Modi government at the Center. The more they are struggling to return to power, in reality power is going further away from them. When the Congress party was in power, it shaped the country's politics according to the Nehru-Gandhi family for a long time. Everyone knows how Congress promoted nepotism, showed favoritism in naming the institutions of the country and marginalized leaders like Sardar Patel, Ambedkar and Lal Bahadur Shastri. Earlier Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi dominated the Congress and now the dominance of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi is clearly visible. This has limited the opportunity for talented leaders to move forward within the party. In trying to do politics only in the name of the Gandhi family, Congress has not only been badly defeated but has also gone to the abyss.

As long as Congress was in power, all the institutions, schemes and programs of the country were named after the members of the Gandhi-Nehru family. If we look at these names only in Delhi, we find Jawaharlal Nehru University, Indira Gandhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru

Stadium, Kamala Nehru College, Indira Gandhi National Cultural Centre, Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Hospital, Indira Gandhi International Airport, Rajiv Chowk, Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan and many more roads, other buildings, squares, etc., which have been named after Congress leaders. Many schemes of the central and various state governments have also been named after the Nehru-Gandhi family. This glorification of Congress leaders has been done by sidelining our great freedom fighters and other big leaders.

Although Congress gets irritated when any building, institution or scheme is named after any non-Congress leader, but Congress leaders get most upset when Veer Savarkar is named. In fact, Congress, which is an expert in the game of appeasement, has a special animosity towards Hindutva. This is the reason why Congress does not even like the names of those great revolutionaries and leaders who have become symbols of Hindutva. The situation is such that from a small Congress worker to Rahul Gandhi, everyone is busy criticizing Veer Savarkar. Congress has not hesitated to tarnish Savarkar's image by accusing him of apologizing to the British, flattering colonial officials and insulting women, but despite the venom spewed by Congress, the nationalist public pays homage to Savarkar who devoted his entire life for the freedom of the country. Congress has no answer to the question that if Veer Savarkar was not fighting for the freedom of the country, then why did the British sentence him to life imprisonment twice? Why was Savarkar sentenced to Kala Pani and kept in the dungeons of Andaman? Why were Savarkar subjected to ruthless atrocities? As long as Congress was in power, it did not let the saga of bravery of great leaders like Savarkar come before the public. It put all its efforts to prove Nehru as the 'Yug Purush'. But Congress has no answer to why Nehru was never sentenced to Kala pani?

Congress never gave Savarkar and

other great freedom fighters like him the respect they deserved and today when a college has been named after Savarkar, they are unable to digest this too.

The people of the country have now learnt to differentiate between Congress' appeasement and Veer Savarkar's great personality. People know that Congress has been opposing Hindutva and Hindu leaders only because of its policy of appeasement. People have not forgotten that in the year 2003, Congress had strongly opposed the installation of Savarkar's picture in the central hall of the old Parliament House. Congress had then argued that Savarkar was not an MP, so his picture should not be installed in the Parliament House. Whereas the reality is that before that, the pictures of Mahatma Gandhi and Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak had been put up in the Parliament despite them not being MPs. Clearly, Congress had an objection to the picture of a great Hindu leader being put up in the Parliament.

Congress and leftists believe that the purpose behind naming the college after Savarkar is to promote polarization in the current political environment. It is being said that by doing this, an attempt is being made to impose its ideology in the field of education. But the question is that if people in the country do not follow the nationalist ideology, should they follow the path of appeasement, which the Congress likes? It is also being said that educational institutions should be kept away from politics. Such naming will affect the objective of education. The question is that when universities were named after Nehru and Indira Gandhi, would the objective of education not have been affected by it?

By blabbering over naming the college after Savarkar, the Congress is just doing politics. Naming the college after him is a tribute to Veer Savarkar as a freedom fighter and a token of gratitude towards him, which should be done repeatedly. Savarkar, who dedicated his life to the freedom struggle, should have

received this honor long ago. Congress and the leftists may be doing politics on this issue, but the statement of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in this regard is worth noting. While addressing the first 'Samarpan Samaroh' of Delhi University Foundation, he rightly said that Savarkar was a great nationalist but a section of the society has a colonial mindset, which objects to the naming of a DU college after him. Pradhan said that we do not want to change history, but want to make history bigger. History is a mirror for the future and DU is playing a big role in it.

What the Union Education Minister has said is absolutely correct. If we take pride in great revolutionaries like Savarkar, then certainly our history will become bigger and its glory will increase. Why only one college, various universities, colleges, prestigious institutions, institutions, schools, airports, bus stations, railway stations in the country should also be named after Savarkar and other great men and freedom fighters. This will not only felicitate great personalities but will also give direction to our young generation. During the rule of Congress, history has been distorted by the leftists. Foreign invaders are called great. On the contrary, if today Savarkar is being given this honour under the BJP rule, then it is a matter of pride for the entire countrymen. Certainly, the name of Veer Savarkar will inspire the students and make them aware of their history. Naming the college after Savarkar is a symbol of correct evaluation of historical personalities. It should not be made a subject of meaningless debate and controversy.

(The author is a renowned educationist, thinker and speaker. He has been a professor at Delhi University for 44 years)

Reservation issue Hogging limelight in J&K politics

By: Omkar Dattatray

The issue of reservations in government services and admission to professional courses has become a political issue and it has hogged the limelight in Jammu and Kashmir politics. In fact one can surmise that reservations have become a political, vote bank and appeasement issue and it has marred efficiency and had given rise to inefficiency in administration and governance. At the time of the framing and implementing of our constitution, it was thought proper to give reservations to SC's, ST's and OBC's for a period of ten years. But the irony of our politics and governance is that the reservations are continuing even after 75 years of freedom and self rule. Reservation has become a reality of our politics and political system that no party musters the courage to touch and scrap it again for vote bank politics. These days, reservation has become a subject of debate and talk of the town in JK UT. The chief minister Omar Abdullah has sought six months time to sort out the intricate issue of reservations. Jammu and Kashmir's new reservation policy has sparked protests and legal challenges. Critics say it reduces opportunities for some groups while benefiting others. The changes introduced after the revocation of Article 370, impact quotas for government jobs and educational institutions. Under the revised policy, open merit - general category reservations have been cut from 57% to 33%. The changes implemented have reduced the Reservations for Residents of Backward Areas -RBA from 20 percent to 10 percent. In contrast, the share for Scheduled Tribes (ST) has doubled from 10 percent to 20 percent and reservations for Socially Backward Castes (SBC) have increased from 2 percent to 8 percent reservations for people living near the Line of Actual Control and Physically Challenged -PHC have been slightly raised from 3 percent to 4 percent. The new reservation policy also introduces new reservation categories, which include children of defense personnel -3%, children of police personnel -1% and achievers in sports -2%. A significant addition is a 10% reservation for the newly recognized Pahari ethnic groups, along with other communities like Paddari tribe, Koils, and Gadda Brahmins by the parliament at the behest of the BJP. Gujjar and Bakerwal communities, who were granted ST status in 1991 vehemently opposed the

ST status of Paharis and others on the contention that they do not meet the criteria to be granted an ST quota. They argued that the move has reduced their chances of seeking admissions and government jobs. The policy is also under legal challenge. The court has asked the J&K government to respond within three weeks. Regional parties say the reservation should be based on fairness and at expense of those who do not enjoy reservation. The J&K government has set up a three-member panel to review the policy but has not given a timeline for its conclusions. With ongoing protests and legal challenges, the future of the policy remains uncertain. The reservation policy for jobs and admissions was introduced by the lieutenant governor -led administration before the assembly elections this year. Several political leaders and hundreds of students have gathered outside the residence of Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah to seek a review of the reservation policy, which was introduced by the LG -led administration earlier this year. Present with the protesting students was Abdullah's own party [National Conference] member and MP Ruhullah Mehdi. In a post on X on Sunday, he had called for a protest at Cupkar Road outside the CM's residential office to demand rationality in reservation policy. Opposition leaders from PDP, Waheed Para and Iltija Mufti along with Awami Itihad Party leader Sheikh Khurshi {brother of Er Rashid} have also joined the protest. On the top of all this, Abdullah's son also stepped outside to join Mehdi and the students. Meanwhile, Mufti spoke to students and later told reporters, "We are not here to do politics." She said the politics in the valley revolves round Article 370 and restoration of statehood, with no one talking about the "youth." They have very basic demands - like the reservation must be equitable and not discriminatory - We hope the government that came to power with a huge mandate and with a promise that they will rationalize the reservation -we hope the NC government fulfills their promises in a time bound manner." Mufti told ANI. Hours after the protest began, chief minister Omar Abdullah called in the students and spoke with them in his office. In March, the Administrative council met under the LG Sinha and approved the proposal of the social welfare department to amend the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Act, 2023, dated 15-12-2023, Constitution [Jammu and Kashmir] Scheduled Castes

Order [Amendment] Act 2024, Constitution [Jammu and Kashmir] Scheduled Tribes Order [Amendment] Act 2024 and recommendations of Jammu and Kashmir Socially and Educationally Backward Classes Commission. The reservation policy introduced by the LG Manoj Sinha -led administration, before the assembly elections early this year, reduced the reservation percentage for general category and increased those for the reserved categories in jobs and admissions. The then administration had approved 10% reservations for Paharis and three other tribes, taking the total reservation under the Scheduled Tribe -ST category up to 20%. It also granted 8% reservation to other backward classes -OBC's, besides adding 15 new castes to the list of OBC's as recommended by the Socially and Economically Backward Classes -SEBC Commission. The parliament, in February, had approved reservations for Pahari ethnic tribe and other tribes during the budget session. This reservation policy did not go down well among politicians and students alike. Calls for review and reversal of the policy were being sounded across the valley. While NC MP Ruhullah had promised the students to join their outcry in November, he clarified that the reason for the new government not taking any action over the reservation policy was because of a confusion between the devolution of power between the newly elected Omar Abdullah -led government and the LG Sinha. "I told that there is some confusion about the distribution of the rules of business on many issues between the elected government and other undemocratically imposed office and this subject is one among them. I am assured that the government will take a decision to rationalize the policy soon," he added. On December 10th J&K government formed a three-member panel to review the reservation policy in jobs and admissions. The panel comprises health minister Sakina Itoo, forest minister Javad Ahmad Rana, and Science and Technology minister Satish Sharma. So far no deadline has been set for the committee to submit its report. Two days later, the J&K high court, while hearing a fresh petition challenging the reservation policy, sought response on the same from the government within a time period of three weeks. The court also clubbed the previous petition with the recent one. Chief minister Omar Abdullah on Sunday said that while government has formed a committee to review the reservation policy, it will abide by the court direc-

tions on the matter. Explaining that he understands the emotions surfacing over the reservation issue, Abdullah affirmed that his party JKNC is fully committed to reviewing all the aspects of its manifesto. "It is a continuation of this commitment that a cabinet sub-committee was constituted to move towards fulfilling this promise. That sub-committee was only recently notified and is in the process of starting its work by engaging with all stakeholders," Abdullah said in a post on X. He noted that the policy has been challenged in the High Court, saying that his government will surely be bound by any judgment when the final legal options have been exhausted. The CM however further said, "It has come to my attention that a protest is being planned in Srinagar to highlight the sense of injustice surrounding the reservation policy. Peaceful protest is a democratic right and I would be the last person to deny anyone that right but please protest knowing that the issue has not been ignored or swept under the carpet. He assured people that everyone would be heard and a fair decision would be taken after due procedure. Tensions are raising over the recent reservation policy changes in J&K, as the High Court has issued notices to the local government following a petition challenging these guidelines. Filed by local resident Dawar Ali and backed by the J&K civil society, the petition raises serious concerns about the fairness and logic behind the current reservation framework. Advocates argue the policy violates principles of rationality and requests the court to annul it entirely. Legal analysts and observers note how the changing reservation guidelines signal not just local effects - these alterations could serve as new precedents for other regions facing similar socio-economic challenges. Now that the High Court is seized of the matter of change in reservations, the best course is to wait the final outcome of the judiciary. Till then the issue should be kept in cold storage and not politicized.

(The author is a columnist, social, KP activist & freelance writer.)

Army organizes Agniveer Registration & Training Camp in Doda



Top News Report

DODA, Jan 9: The Indian Army successfully conducted an Agniveer Registration and Training Camp in Doda, with 50 enthusiastic youth participating in the program.

This initiative is part of the Army's efforts to support the Indian Government's Agniveer Scheme, aimed at inspiring and preparing young individuals for a transformative journey of service, skill development, and nation-building.

The camp focused on creating awareness about the Agniveer scheme, motivating participants to enroll as Agniveers, and equipping them with essential knowledge to excel in upcoming recruitment drives.

By integrating this initiative into its broader commitment to national development, the Army aims to empower the youth, promote patriotism, and foster community engagement.

Speaking about the program, Army officials emphasized the dual

benefit of the Agniveer scheme, which provides youth with an opportunity to serve the nation while developing skills that will enable them to contribute significantly to society upon reintegration.

The participants expressed their gratitude for the opportunity, praising the camp for its motivational sessions and practical guidance. Many attendees voiced their hope for such events to be conducted regularly, highlighting their importance in preparing aspirants for future recruitment rallies.

This initiative reflects the Indian Army's dedication to nurturing a skilled, patriotic youth population while strengthening the bond between the Army and the local community.

On Aga Rahullah remark: Farooq says J&K Govt can't fight with Centre

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 9: National Conference (NC) president Dr Farooq Abdullah on Thursday stressed the importance of cooperation between the Centre and the Jammu and Kashmir government, saying both have to work together instead of engaging in conflicts.

Responding to recent remarks by NC MP Aga Rahullah, who alleged that Omar Abdullah was perceived as a "Centre's man," Farooq Abdullah dismissed the claim. "Let him say what he thinks. But Omar Abdullah is the people's Chief Minister. He is not working on anyone's directives. Do you want that we should fight with the Centre," he told reporters.

The NC chief high-

lighted the necessity of maintaining a working relationship with the Centre for the region's progress. "We don't want confrontation with the Centre. If we start fighting, how can we resolve people's issues? We are not with the BJP, but we have to work with the Centre government for the development of Jammu and Kashmir. If we start fighting with the Centre then how can we build up schools and hospitals," he asked.

Farooq Abdullah also addressed the controversy surrounding a BSF Commandant accused in a paper scam, who reportedly sought to join the National Conference. "I was not aware that he is accused in some case. He can't join NC until he gets a clean chit," he clarified.

Randhawa felicitates medal winners of National Strength Lifting Championship

Highlights Modi Govt's push for Sports Development



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: Senior BJP leader and MLA Bahu Constituency, Vikram Randhawa today felicitated the medal winners of the 34th National Strength Lifting and Inclined Bench Press Championship held recently in Loharu, Haryana.

In his address, Randhawa extended his heartfelt congratulations to the J&K Strength Lifting Association and the winners, praising their dedication, hard work, and discipline that led to their national-level success. He underscored the vital role of physical and mental fitness in personal growth and nation-building, emphasizing that a healthy and active youth is key to the country's progress.

Randhawa also high-

lighted several transformative initiatives undertaken by the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to boost sports infrastructure and opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir. He elaborated on the establishment of 100 Khelo India Centres across 20 districts, specialized Excellence Centres for Fencing and Water Sports, and the construction of 300 sports fields and indoor stadiums at district and panchayat levels under the PMDP and Khelo India schemes.

The senior BJP leader also commended the impact of programs like "My Youth My Pride" and "Khelo India", which have significantly engaged the youth and enhanced J&K's sports profile on national and

international stages. Acknowledging over 22 years of dedicated service by the J&K Strength Lifting Association, Randhawa lauded its role in promoting strength lifting and organizing prestigious championships. He expressed optimism that continued efforts, including grassroots competitions, seminars, and educational programs, will further develop young talent and inspire more participation in strength sports.

The event concluded with a warm expression of gratitude to officials, coaches, athletes, and supporters for their collective contribution to the advancement of sports. The ceremony served as a powerful reminder of the importance of collaborative effort in fostering a vibrant and dynamic sports culture in the region.

Mungerilal Kejriwal's palace will break into pieces: Mohan Lal Gihara

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: BJP Scheduled Caste Front's Delhi State President Mohanlal Gihara while addressing a public meeting today said that no matter how much support all the leaders of Alibaba Forty Thieves gang give to Kejriwal, this time Kejriwal's glass palace of Mungerilal's beautiful dreams will break into pieces and this time Kejriwal government will have to pack up and leave Delhi and all its ministers will be in Tihar jail because Kejriwal himself is out on bail right now.

Mohan Lal Gihara said that no matter how hard the opposition tries, this time we will not rest until we oust the Aam Aadmi Party from power, no matter how much they lure the people,



no one is going to fall for their words. Kejriwal government has made the Scheduled Castes a part of the government whatever the Kejriwal government has done, it has done for the capitalists, it has done to fill its own pockets, nothing has been done for the poor people in Delhi, it is all a hoax. Now the people of Delhi will not be deceived by Kejriwal. The people of Delhi

have understood everything. When the Kejriwal government did not give Rs 1000 to the women of Punjab, which it had promised there, then what will it give in Delhi? The Maulanas of the mosques have not been paid salaries for a long time. The poor Maulanas are crying, then how will they give to the priests and granthis in Delhi? This is just an election gimmick.

The people of Delhi, the Pandits, the Pujaris, the Granthi, everyone has understood that this is an election gimmick.

They are not going to get anything. That is why the Kejriwal government is being ridiculed everywhere. They should be ashamed and the Kejriwal government should not make such announcements that hurt public sentiments.

He said that the Kejriwal government first gave so many wrong statements about temples and God, how many times did they give wrong statements about the temple of Lord Ram, Kejriwal never acknowledged Lord Ram and his existence. It is accepted that after the elections, the temple priests are misleading the granthis of the Gurudwara for the sake of vote bank.

Ex-Servicemen Rally in Baramulla on Jan 14 to support veterans, Veer Naris

Top News Report

BARAMULLA, Jan 9: In an effort to reach out to Veterans and Veer Naris residing in areas under the jurisdiction of Dagger Division, an Ex-Servicemen rally will be organized at Baramulla on 14 Jan 2025.

The Ex-Servicemen Rally will be organized for Baramulla District of Jammu & Kashmir. Various functions will be organized at Baramulla to mark our solidarity towards the Veterans and Next of Kin of our brave hearts as a mark of their selfless duty and sacrifices towards the Nation.

The event will be graced by senior military officers & senior civil dignitaries. As the rally is expected to be attended by a large number of Veterans, Veer Naris & their dependents, this is also seen as an opportunity for the Armed Forces to guide, edu-

cate our Veterans and their Next of Kin in their day to day problems. The event is likely to be attended by approximately 350 Ex-Servicemen.

The rally will be aimed at providing assistance to Veterans and Veer Naris regarding relevant post retirement beneficial information, facilitate redressal of grievances and overcome documentation anomalies in co-ordination with representatives of various Record Offices & Bank Officials. Representatives of agencies involved in welfare of ex-servicemen such as SPARSH Service Centre, ZSB & ECHS will also be in attendance. A medical camp will also be established under the aegis of Dagger Division to provide necessary medical cover to the attendees.

IGNOU offers M.Sc Analytical Chemistry Programme in Jan 2025 Cycle

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: IGNOU is offering M.Sc. Analytical Chemistry (MSCANICHEM) programme in the ongoing January 2025 admission cycle. The advanced programme is tailored for aspiring learners and professionals seeking to deepen their knowledge and build careers in the dynamic field of Analytical Chemistry.

The programme provides a strong foundation of fundamental concepts of chemistry. It also deals with the basic principles and applications of various analytical techniques such as separation methods including chromatographic techniques, spectroscopic methods,

electro analytical methods and other methods of analysis.

Graduates with a B.Sc. (Major/Honours) Degree from a recognised university in Chemistry or B.Sc. Degree (or equivalent) with Chemistry as one of three science subjects with equal weightage or B.Sc. Degree from an Open University with a minimum of 20 credits in Chemistry courses can apply for this programme.

"This programme is designed to equip learners with in-depth knowledge and skills, opening diverse career avenues, including Higher education opportunities in Chemistry and Analytical Chemistry, Employ-

ment prospects in analytical/industrial laboratories, Upgradation of qualifications for enhanced career growth and Career pathways in research and teaching in the domain of Chemistry and Analytical Chemistry", said Dr. Sandeep Gupta, Regional Director, Regional Centre Jammu.

Admissions are open twice a year, in the July and January admission cycles, through the official SAMARTH portal of IGNOU <https://ignouadmission.samarth.edu.in> in the link of which is available on National website of IGNOU www.ignou.ac.in and the last date for admission has been fixed for January 31, 2025.

PWD daily wagers asks Govt to release their wages promptly

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 9: The daily wagers of the PWD (R&B) Department in Kashmir Valley's various divisions have expressed their frustration and distress over the non-receipt of their December 2024 wages.

Speaking to media reporters in Srinagar, they highlighted the severe hardships faced by their families due to the lack of funds, emphasizing that most

of them come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

The daily wagers stated that their families are suffering as they struggle to manage basic necessities.

They appealed to the concerned authorities to release their wages promptly, warning that if their December wages are not disbursed soon, they will escalate the matter by approaching the Chief Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir.

Live purposeful life with divine blessings of Satguru: Saint Rakesh Chandana

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: Sant Nirankari Branch Jammu organised a grand congregation at Sant Nirankari Satsang bhawan Shastri Nagar Jammu the congregation was presided over by Rev saint Rakesh Chandana.

While addressing a mammoth gathering, he said that most poise, true and highest relation in this world is that of a disciple (Gursikh) and the true master (Satguru).

He said that every human passes through thick and thins in one's life facing pains and pleasures in this mortal world which is a natural phenomenon and one must accept them

gladly.

He further emphasized that ups and downs in life have their great significance as we often see that even a straight line in ECG is clear indicator of death of a person. So even while passing through all the zigzag one can lead a purposeful life free from foes and fears under the spiritual guidance and blessings of the True Master Satguru by imbibing and practising three most sacred and valuable virtues i.e. Sewa, Satsang and Simran.

He further said, company of spiritually enlightened saints even for while makes a man free from all sins and sorrows provided it is not merely physical

presence but to attend the congregation of saints with spirit of complete surrender and an ego less mind.

While giving much emphasis to knowledge of one Supreme God that is prime need of all humans, he said those who have attained this treasure of God knowledge, they should speak to others also to become spiritually enlightened and attain the most prominent stage which is salvation with the mercy of the true master.

Guru Ka Langar was also served to all devotees.

Saints from Jammu and nearby branch Domana, Gura Brahmana, Khara Madana, Bishnah, Miran Sahib, Pounchak, Akhnoor also attended.

Teachings of Guru Ravidass continue to inspire: Balbir



was discussing the life and teachings of Guru Ravidass with Ashok Gandhi, a staunch follower of Guru ji.

Balbir Ram Rattan said that Guru Ravidass dedicated his life to eradicating social inequalities and promoting brotherhood and oneness of humanity.

He further said that each one of us should honour legacy of Guru Ravidass by embracing his ideals and working towards creating a

society rooted in equality, love, and mutual respect.

Ashok Gandhi, while sharing his views on life of Guru Ravidass, said that this Indian saint advocated for a society where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. His teachings, preserved through devotional hymns and verses, carry significance.

"Begampura concept of Guru Ravidass envisions an ideal society free from sorrow, injustice, and discrimination, Gandhi added.

Both, Balbir Ram Rattan and Ashok Gandhi, also appreciated different organisations in India and abroad for their relentless efforts in reaching the people to make them aware about teachings of Guru Ravidass.

Actor Shreyas Talpade is looking forward to his upcoming film Emergency

He has been in the industry for almost two decades, but 2024 was special for actor Shreyas Talpade—he was the Hindi voice of Allu Arjun in the second outing of the blockbuster Pushpa franchise! And, 2025 has also started on a bright note. Come January 17 and his film *Emergency*, headlined by Kangana Ranaut, will stream on Zee 5. “I play the late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in the film. Working with Kangana Ranaut and other cast members was amazing. I am hoping that audiences like me in that role,” he says.

Well, while we leave it to time and critics to decide the fate of his upcoming project, we can't let go of the topic of Pushpa as his powerful dubbing has once again resonated with audiences, earning him widespread praise for bringing the iconic character of Pushpa Raj to life in a new language. “It feels great as new records are being created. I am glad people like my work and happy that Pushpa is creating history,” he beams. When it all began with the first part, Shreyas had no clue that a film like Pushpa was being made. “After I saw Allu Arjun's work in the film, I was really impressed.



That's how I became a part of the dubbing process.” There were many challenges, but Shreyas saw an opportunity in each of them. “I thought it was quite a difficult film to make and dub, but I took it on. The rest, the audience decides.”

Packed schedule

The year has been really good for Shreyas and he thanks the Almighty for all the projects that came his way in 2024. “I was already working on *Welcome*, when *Housefull* and *Baaghi* happened, *Pushpa* and *Mufasa* too. *Emergency* is due for a release soon. Hindi thriller *Kartam Bhugtam* and another Marathi film were also released in 2024. God has been kind and

I am thankful.”

Franchise funda

Having been a part of popular franchises like *Housefull* and *Welcome*, are sequels and threequels the recipe for success nowadays? Shreyas says, “I think with a particular franchise, people somewhere know what to expect and if you are able to give them exactly that, then they are very happy. *Golmaal*, *Housefull*, *Dhamaal* and *Welcome* are therefore a hit. However, whether it is a franchise film or a new one, the pressure of performing well is always there.”

There is a method that Shreyas follows as far choosing his characters is concerned. “It

all depends on how excited I am about the role coming my way. If it does not excite me enough, I let it pass. Quality of my work matters more to me than quantity.”

Precisely the reason he keeps selecting different genres. “Sometimes I play characters that might look very small in scale, but I find them interesting because they give me an opportunity to explore myself as an actor and try something that I haven't done before.”

Patience is the key

As for the most difficult part of being an actor, Shreyas says one word—patience. “You have to learn to wait, whether it is waiting for a great part to come your way or to develop a great part for yourself as a producer, director or actor. I think most of us really give up around the time when something is about to be done.” In 2025, there is much more on his platter and he is keen about the coming times. “All these projects that I am doing right now will probably release one after the other. I am also reading a couple of scripts and there are some interesting shows lined up.” Like he said, it all depends on how excited Shreyas is about the roles!

Don't like legacy and milestone: Hrithik Roshan on 25 years in Bollywood



Bollywood star Hrithik Roshan says he is still as shy and anxious as he was 25 years ago when he debuted as a leading man in Hindi movies with the blockbuster “Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai”.

Directed by his filmmaker father Rakesh Roshan, the 2000 romantic-drama also starred Ameesha Patel in her acting debut. It is set to re-release in theatres on Friday, coinciding with Hrithik's 51st birthday.

Talking to the media during a meet-and-greet event on Tuesday evening, the actor said he doesn't like to use words like “legacy” and “milestone” to describe his silver jubilee moment in cinema.

“It's been 25 years, I don't like words like legacy, and milestone, and I'm not here to say, ‘25 years yeah’. I'm not doing that,” Hrithik said.

“I remember when ‘Kaho Naa Pyaar Hai’ was released I was so shy and anxious that I didn't do a single interview. I didn't step out of my house to do anything; I just skipped the entire promotional event.

25 years have passed and unfortunately, that side of me has not changed, I'm still as shy, and just as anxious as always,” he added.

Post his debut, Hrithik delivered several commercially successful and award-winning movies such as “*Mission Kashmir*”, “*Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham*”, “*Dhoom 2*”, “*Jodha Akbar*”, “*Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*”, “*Super 30*”, “*War*” and “*Vikram Vedha*”.

Hrithik expressed gratitude to the media and fans for their unending love and support.

“I truly feel all of you've helped me become the actor and human that I am in these 25 years. Through all the interactions, questions and answers, I have grown. Sometimes you made me feel responsible, and sometimes you made me feel accountable,” he said.

“Through all of that, you helped me search inside myself as to what kind of human I want to be in this world,” he added.

Hrithik will next be seen in “*War 2*”, a sequel to his 2019 action thriller, and “*Krishi 4*”.

Sky Force song Maaye pays a tribute to brave Indian soldiers

The much-awaited song *Maaye* from Akshay Kumar's upcoming historical action thriller *Sky Force* has been released.

The song shows the heart of the movie—balancing the passion of risking lives for the country with the strong emotional ties of family. The film also stars Veer Pahariya, Sara Ali Khan and Nimrat Kaur. *Maaye* has been sung by B Praak, with music by Tanishk Bagchi and lyrics by Manoj Muntashir.

Sky Force, set for a release on January 24, stars Akshay Kumar as an Air Force officer, who is on a revenge mission following the death of fellow soldiers.

At the trailer launch, Akshay shared his connection with the



uniform, saying, “My father was in the Army, so this feeling is inbuilt

in me. When I wear a uniform, it imbues me with strength.”

Kangana Ranaut terms Indira Gandhi a product of nepotism

Kangana Ranaut is currently busy promoting her much-awaited political drama *Emergency*. The film will see the diva essaying the role of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

During an interaction, Kangana shared her views on the Gandhi family and nepotism. Throwing light on Indira Gandhi and her privileged background, Kangana stated, “Clearly, Indira Gandhi was a product of nepotism. But what happens is when I meet certain people, like in our film industry, who I don't like or don't want to be like, still I will play a character with utmost sensibility because being an artiste means not having any coloured perception.”

The actress added, “I may come from a party that belongs to the people, as the name suggests, but I can



still have a very sensitive approach to someone who comes from a privileged background. Indira Gandhi came from

one. She was a three-time Prime Minister and daughter of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. She became the secretary

and got all the best ministries, what more privilege can you ask for? Yes she is privileged, but that does not mean I cannot have a sensible portrayal of her.” Kangana Ranaut also talked about extending an invitation to Priyanka Gandhi for *Emergency*.

She was quoted, “I actually met Priyanka Gandhi in the Parliament. And the first thing I told her was, ‘You should watch *Emergency*’. She was very gracious. She said, ‘Yeah may be’. So let's see if they would want to watch the film. I think it's a very sensitive and sensible portrayal of one episode and one personality also. And I have taken great care to portray Mrs Gandhi with great dignity.” *Emergency* is scheduled to be out in theatres on January 17.

‘Not a political film’ Actress-director Kan-

gana Ranaut, who is set to essay the role of former Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi, in her upcoming directorial *Emergency*, has said that it's not a political film and it won't influence the choice of voters. The actress opened up about the film and its narrative structure.

The film is based on the 21-month period from 1975 to 1977 when former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declared a state of emergency across the country by citing internal and external threats. Kangana said, “Actually, this is not a political film. It's a story. It has nothing to do with politics. You may find it very bizarre right now. Eventually, it is not about any party. You will come out feeling that, you just saw the film, you won't come out feeling who you will vote for.”

Singer-actress Paris Hilton ‘heartbroken beyond words’ after losing home in LA wildfires

Singer and actress Paris Hilton is one of the celebrities who were affected by the ongoing LA wildfire in Pacific Palisades. Despite not being harmed physically, the actress was heartbroken as she watched her house burn in the fire on a news channel.

Taking to her Instagram handle, Paris shared a video of a news broadcast that showcased her house burning in Malibu. The actress felt ‘heartbroken’ and said that no one should go through such an experience as per *Deadline*.

“Heartbroken beyond words. Sitting with my family, watching the news, and seeing our home in Malibu burned to the ground on live TV is something no one should ever have to experience,” Hilton shared on Instagram.

The actress recalled her precious memories linked to the house.

“This home was where we built so many precious memories. It's

where Phoenix took his first steps and where we dreamed of building a lifetime of memories with London. While the loss is overwhelming, I'm holding onto gratitude that my family is safe. My heart and prayers are going out to every family affected by these fires. To all the people who have lost their homes, their memories, and their beloved pets. My heart aches for those still in harm's way or mourning greater losses. The devastation is unimaginable. To know so many are waking up today without the place they called home is truly heartbreaking,” wrote Paris Hilton.

The ‘*2 Broke Girls*’ star further mentioned that her team was contacting local organizations to figure out how to help the people impacted by the fires. She also shared her gratitude “to the brave firefighters and first responders risking their lives to



protect us—you are true heroes.”, as per *Deadline*.

“Please, everyone, stay safe and follow evacuation orders,” she added. “Let's protect one another and hold onto hope that

these fires will soon be contained. Sending so much love and strength to all of you. We're in this together, LA. Hug your loved ones a little tighter tonight. You never know when everything could change.”

Priyanka Chopra hails brave first responders as wildfires ravish California

Pacific Palisades, Los Angeles is under the heat of immense wildfires raging across the entire neighborhood and extending further. Being an affluent neighborhood, carrying a median home price between \$3-4 million dollars, the damages caused by the fire are already looking to mount an extensive and expensive loss.

Bollywood and Hollywood actress Priyanka Chopra, a resident of California herself, has hailed the response carried out by the first responders. In a video posted to her Instagram story, she captioned, “My thoughts are with everyone affected. Hope we are all able to be safe tonight.”

She also shared a photo of a helicopter dousing the flames, on her story. Expressing gratitude, she captioned, “A huge shout out to the incredibly brave first responders. Thank you for working



tirelessly overnight and continuing to help families affected.”

Janisse Quiñones, the chief executive officer

and chief engineer of Los Angeles' Department of Water and Power, said there has been “tremendous demand on

our (water) system in the Palisades,” resulting in tanks being emptied three times in less than 24 hours.

“We pushed the system to the extreme, four times the normal demand was seen for 15 hours straight which lowered our water pressure. We were pushing 75 CFS (cubic feet per second) on our trunk line to try to keep water pressure in the system,” she explained.

This water usage is sure to put strain on the water system on the state. With fires continuing to rage over California, over 100,000 citizens in the state have been forced to evacuate their residences prompting overcrowding in hotels.

California governor Gavin Newsom has declared a state of emergency in Los Angeles. Safe to say, until the fires are contained, the state is going to suffer tremendous monetary and human losses.

Distressed to know loss of lives due to stampede in Tirupati: President Murmu

NEW DELHI, Jan 9 (Agencies): President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday said she was distressed to know the loss of lives of devotees due to a stampede in Tirupati, and offered her heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families.

She also prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

"Distressed to know that a stampede in Tirupati led to loss of life of many devotees. I extend my heartfelt condolences to the



bereaved families and pray for speedy recovery of the injured," Murmu said in a post on X.

At least six devotees died and dozens were injured in the stampede on Wednesday night as hundreds of them jostled for tickets for Vaikunta Dwara Darshanam at Lord Venkateswara Swamy temple on Tirumala Hills.

4 Karnataka pilgrims killed in road accident in Tamil Nadu



RANIPET, Jan 9 (Agencies): At least four pilgrims from Karnataka were killed when the bus they were travelling in was involved in an accident with a vegetable-laden truck and another heavy vehicle here on Thursday, police sources said.

The victims, mostly hailing from Kolar, were returning home in a KSRTC bus

after visiting a temple near Chennai, the sources said.

About 30 persons were injured in the accident.

The accident happened when the KSRTC bus was heading towards Bengaluru with around 55 passengers, and the driver overtook a tipper lorry.

The bus rammled into the vegetable-laden truck coming from opposite direction. The tipper lorry also hit the KSRTC bus from the behind. TV visuals showed the bus having suffered severe damage under the impact.

All the four deceased persons were killed on the spot. The injured have been referred to nearby hospitals, they said.

Future does not lie in war, but in Buddha: PM Modi at Pravasi Bharatiya Divas event

Modi said the world today listens to India, which not only presents its own views strongly but also those of the Global South.

BHUBANESWAR, Jan 9 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said that the future of the world lies in Buddha's teaching of peace and not in war. Inaugurating the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention here, the Prime Minister said that world should take to the path of peace and not war in the interest of the entire mankind.

The Prime Minister said when the world conquered each other with swords, Samrat Ashok chose the path of 'peace and righteousness' here in Odisha. It is because of this that India sends a message that the future is not in yuddha (war), but in 'Buddha', he added.

Stating that the entire world is witnessing the development of India, the Prime Minister said the people of the country felt proud when Chandrayaan reached the Shiv Shakti point.

"Every sector is breaking records to touch the sky be it renewable energy, electric mobility, metro network, or bullet train project. Today, India is making 'Made in India' fighter jets and transport aircraft. The day is also not too far when you all will come on Made in India plane to attend the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas," he added.

The Prime Minister said today India not only asserts its stance strongly but also amplifies the voice of the Global South with full force.



When India proposed making the African Union a permanent member of the G20, all members supported the initiative, he added.

Stating that India is now the 'most young' and 'skilled country' in the world, the Prime Minister said the entire world is welcoming skilled youths from India, he said India will meet the skill demand of the world.

Highlighting the significance of the country's heritage and democratic ethos, the Prime Minister said India is not just the 'mother of democracy,' but democracy is ingrained in our way of life."

The Prime Minister said Odisha represents the heritage of India. "Every step we take, be it Udayagiri, Khandagiri caves, or the famous Konark Temple. In ancient days, Odisha sailors used to go to Bali, Indonesia and till today, Odisha celebrates Bali Yatra. It is also home to

Dhauli, which is the symbol of peace," he added.

Praising the Indian diaspora for their contribution to the development and growth of India, the Prime Minister said they serve as the ambassadors of the country in the entire world.

"I am happy when I meet NRIs across the globe. So, I want to thank every one of you. I want to thank you because it is because of you I get the chance to walk with my head high in pride. In the last 10 years, I have met several leaders across the world, and everyone has only heaped praises on Indian diasporas because we have social values," he added.

The Prime Minister acknowledged the significant role of the Indian diaspora in India's independence in 1947 and remarked that the diaspora continues to contribute to India's growth, making India the world's top recipient of

remittances. He emphasized the goal of making India a developed nation by 2047.

Modi highlighted the importance of the GIFT CITY ecosystem in meeting the financial services and investment needs of the diaspora and encouraged them to leverage its benefits to strengthen India's journey towards development.

"Every effort by the diaspora contributes to India's progress", he added.

President of Trinidad and Tobago Christine Carla Kangaloo also spoke on the occasion through video conference as the chief guest. She praised the Prime Minister for the help extended by India to her country at the time of the Covid-19 pandemic.

PM Modi also remotely flagged off the Pravasi Bharatiya Express, a special tourist train under the Pravasi Teertha Darshan Yojana. Departing from Nizamuddin Railway Station in Delhi, the train will take Indian diaspora members to various religious and tourist destinations across the country over three weeks.

External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar, Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan, and Ashwini Vaishnaw, among others attended. The event began with a performance by three-time Grammy Award winner Ricky Kej.

Three Naxalites killed in encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Sukma

SUKMA, Jan 9 (Agencies): Three Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district on Thursday, state Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma said.

The security forces have achieved success in the anti-Naxal operation in Sukma, he said. So far, bodies of three Naxalites have been recovered and the search operation is still underway, Sharma, who holds the Home portfolio, told reporters in Raipur.

Referring to the IED blast triggered by Naxalites on January 6

wherein eight security personnel and a civilian driver of their vehicle were killed in Bijapur district, the deputy CM said, "There is huge anger among security forces after what Naxalites have done."

"I have met them (security forces). I reiterate that with the strength and courage of our jawans, the (Naxal) menace will be eliminated within the stipulated time," he said.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday vowed to eliminate Naxals from the country by March 2026 and asserted that the sacrifice of those killed by the



extremists in Chhattisgarh will not go in vain.

On Thursday morning, the encounter broke out in a forest along the border of Sukma and Bijapur districts when a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxalite operation, police said.

Personnel belonging to the District Reserve Guard, Special Task Force and CoBRA (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action- an elite unit of CRPF) were involved in the operation, they said. With this, nine Naxalites have been killed in

separate encounters in the state so far this year.

During a three-day anti-Naxal operation by security forces in Abujmahd on the border of Narayanpur-Dantewada-Bijapur districts which concluded on January 6, five Naxalites, including two women, were killed.

On January 3, a Naxalite was killed in an encounter with security forces in Gariaband district, which falls in Raipur division.

Last year, 219 Naxalites were neutralised by security forces in separate encounters in the state.

Farmer attempts suicide at Shambhu border, dies at Patiala hospital



PATIALA, Jan 9 (Agencies): A 55-year-old farmer protesting at the Shambhu border allegedly committed suicide on Thursday by consuming a poisonous substance, farmer leaders said, the second such incident at the agitation site within three weeks.

Resham Singh, who was from Pahuwind in Tarn Taran district, took the extreme step at the Shambhu border point between Punjab and Haryana where farmers have been protesting

for almost a year now, pressing the Centre guarantees Minimum Support Price (MSP) for crops.

Resham Singh was taken to the Rajindra hospital in Patiala where he died, the farmers said.

Farmer leader Tejvir Singh said Resham Singh was upset with the Central government for not resolving the issues despite their protracted protest.

Another farmer, Ranjodh Singh, committed suicide at the Shambhu border on December 18.

Ranjodh Singh was distressed by the deteriorating health of farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal (70), who has been on a fast-unto-death since November 26 at the Khanauri border.

Under the banner of Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, farmers have been camping at Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana since February 13 after their march to Delhi was stopped by security forces.

ITBP jawan dies under suspicious circumstances in Greater Noida



GREATER NOIDA, Jan 9 (Agencies): A jawan from the 39th battalion of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force (ITBP) died under suspicious circumstances in a toilet of a complex set up by the battalion in Greater Noida, police said on Thursday.

The deceased has been identified as Sajjan Singh (59), who was posted as an Assistant Sub-Inspector in the 39th battalion of ITBP, located in the Surajpur police station area.

The police station in-

charge, Inspector Vinod Kumar, said Singh, who had gone to the washroom this morning, was later found dead there under suspicious circumstances.

He added that upon receiving the information, the police reached the spot, took possession of the body and sent it for the post-mortem examination.

While Singh's family had been informed, the exact cause of death would be determined only after the post-mortem report was received, Kumar said.

Kejriwal targets Centre, demands inclusion of Delhi's Jat community in Central OBC list

NEW DELHI, Jan 9 (Agencies): As Assembly elections draw closer in Delhi, AAP convenor and former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday accused the BJP-led Central government of reneging on its promise to provide reservation to the capital's Jat community.

Speaking at a press conference, Kejriwal said he wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, demanding the inclusion of Delhi's Jat community in the Central OBC list.

He also accused the Centre of misleading the community for the past decade, and failing to deliver on its promises.

"In 2015, the BJP invited Jat leaders to the prime minister's



residence and assured them that Delhi's Jat community would be included in the Central OBC list. Union Home Minister Amit Shah promised the same in 2019. However, nothing has been done to fulfil these promises," Kejriwal said.

Drawing comparisons, he questioned why Jat students from Rajasthan benefit from reservations in Delhi University (DU), while

Jat students from Delhi are denied the same.

"Thousands of children from the Jat community in Delhi are unable to secure admission in DU because they are not part of the Central OBC list," he said.

Kejriwal also alleged that despite Delhi's Jats being recognised under the OBC category in the state, the Central government has refused to extend

the benefits to them.

"This is nothing but betrayal. The Centre must include Delhi's Jat community in the OBC list to ensure they receive reservations in Central government institutions, including for jobs and college admissions," the AAP supremo said.

Central agencies like the MCD, DDA, and PWD operate extensively in Delhi, and including Jats in the OBC list would open up significant opportunities for them, Kejriwal said, as he vowed to continue the fight until the community's demands are met.

The 70-member Delhi Assembly will go to polls on February 5. The results will be out on February 8.

World situation appears 'uncertain and volatile': Jaishankar



NEW DELHI, Jan 9 (Agencies): External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, on Thursday, said the world's situation appears "more uncertain" and "even more volatile" at present.

During his address to Indian diaspora at the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) in Odisha's Bhubaneswar, held by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), he said, "We are all assembled at a time when the world may look more uncertain and perhaps even more volatile."

In his address to the diaspora, he said, "However, the message that you will take away from this occasion is of a Bharat that is more confident, modernizing and inclusive. Where tradition and technology go hand in hand".

He said that the journey towards 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India) is ongoing, adding, that the Indian diaspora can also contribute to the realization of this goal.

“We’re prepared to do anything”: Joe Biden on California wildfires

In response to the wildfires in Southern California, US President Joe Biden pledged federal support for relief and recovery efforts.

WASHINGTON DC, Jan 9 (Agencies): In response to the wildfires in Southern California, US President Joe Biden pledged federal support for relief and recovery efforts.

Biden also announced the approval of Governor Gavin Newsom's request for a major disaster declaration and assured that the federal government would provide necessary assistance to affected communities.

Sharing a post on X, Biden wrote, “We’re prepared to do anything and everything, as long as it takes, to contain the Southern California fires and help reconstruct. But we know it’ll be a hell of a long way. The federal government is here to stay as long as you need us.”

In another post, he wrote, “I’ve approved Governor Newsom’s request for a major disaster declaration and ordered Federal assistance to supplement response efforts in areas affected by wildfires, ensuring impacted communities and survivors have immediate access to funds and resources to begin their recovery.”

Meanwhile, the death toll has risen to five following wildfires



that swept through Southern California, fuelled by dry and windy conditions, according to a report by The New York Times.

Nicole Nishida, a spokeswoman for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, confirmed on Wednesday afternoon that five people have died. Nishida further said that over 25,000 acres have burned.

According to power outage, us, 1.5 million customers were without power in Los Angeles County as of Wednesday afternoon.

Earlier, the death toll was two. While addressing a press conference on Wednesday, LA

County Fire Chief Anthony Marone had said that two people were killed and there have been a high number of injuries due to the Eaton Fire.

More than 1,000 structures have burned in the Palisades Fire, making it the most destructive in Los Angeles history, according to CalFire, the state fire agency. More than 100,000 people were under mandatory evacuation orders, according to a report by The New York Times.

US President Joe Biden in a post on X wrote, “Over 100,000 people have been ordered to evacuate communities impacted by the Southern California wild-

fires. At least two people have been killed. And many more are injured - including firefighters. It's devastating. To the residents of Southern California: We are with you.”

The Eaton Fire, which broke out miles away from the Palisades Fire in California's Altadena, has burned 2,227 acres with zero per cent containment. The Hurst Fire broke out and spread northeast of California's San Fernando, burning at least 500 acres.

The National Weather Service said that another round of high winds may arrive by Thursday afternoon, which will continue till Friday morning, with possible isolated gusts in the mountains reaching 70 miles per hour (mph).

In the wake of the deadly wildfires in Los Angeles, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has extended the Oscar nomination voting window.

Voting for the nearly 10,000 Academy members opened on January 8 and was originally set to close on January 12. However, the deadline is now January 14, as per Variety.

China discovers cluster of new mpox strain



HONG KONG, Jan 9 (Agencies): Chinese health authorities said on Thursday they had detected the new mutated mpox strain clade 1b as the viral infection spreads to more countries after the World Health Organization declared a global public health emergency last year.

China's Centre for Disease Control and Prevention said it had found a cluster outbreak of the 1b sub-clade that started with the infection of a foreigner who has a history of travel and residence in the Democratic Republic of the

Congo.

Four further cases have been found in people infected after close contact with the foreigner. The patients' symptoms are mild and include skin rash and blisters.

Mpox spreads through close contact and causes flu-like symptoms and pus-filled lesions on the body. Although usually mild, it can be fatal in rare cases.

WHO last August declared mpox a global public health emergency for the second time in two years, following an outbreak in the Democratic Republic

of Congo (DRC) that spread to neighbouring countries.

The outbreak in DRC began with the spread of an endemic strain, known as clade 1. But the clade 1b variant appears to spread more easily through routine close contact, including sexual contact.

The variant has spread from DRC to neighbouring countries, including Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda, triggering the emergency declaration from the WHO.

China said in August last year it would monitor people and goods entering the country for mpox.

The country's National Health Commission said mpox would be managed as a Category B infectious disease, enabling officials to take emergency measures such as restricting gatherings, suspending work and school, and sealing off areas when there is an outbreak of a disease.

Mozambique opposition leader returns from exile as police fire tear gas at his supporters

MAPUTO, Jan 9 (Agencies): Mozambique's main opposition leader returned from exile Thursday as security forces fired tear gas at hundreds of his supporters who gathered near the main international airport to welcome him home.

Venancio Mondlane was seen walking off a plane at Mavalane International Airport in the capital, Maputo. He had left the country in October following a disputed election that has sparked months of violent protests and thrown the country into turmoil.

Mondlane said he left Mozambique fearing for his life after two senior members of his opposition party were killed in their car by unknown gunmen in a late-night shooting in the aftermath of the election.

Police on Thursday also blocked roads leading to the airport after Mondlane said on social media earlier this week he would return to the southern African country. Tear gas drifted over the airport and surrounding roads and a helicopter hovered overhead.

Thousands of Mondlane's supporters were expected to gather in Maputo for his return, prompting the clampdown by security forces.

More than 100 people have been killed by security forces since Mozambique erupted in protests that Mond-



lane called for after the long-ruling Frelimo party was declared the winner of the Oct. 9 election. Mondlane and other opposition candidates accused the ruling party of rigging the election and international observers reported irregularities in the vote and the alteration of some results.

Mozambique's Constitutional Council upheld Frelimo's victory last month, making its candidate, Daniel Chapo, the president-elect. He is due to be inaugurated next week to succeed President Filipe Nyusi, who has served the maximum two terms.

Frelimo has been in power in Mozambique for 50 years since the country gained independence from Portugal in 1975. The party has often been accused of rigging elections since Mozambique held its first democratic vote in 1994. The latest street protests in several major cities have been the biggest threat to Frelimo's rule.

Taiwan demonstrates sea defenses against potential Chinese attack as tensions rise with Beijing

KAOHSIUNG, Jan 9 (Agencies): Taiwan on Thursday demonstrated its sea defenses against a potential Chinese attack as tensions rise with Beijing, part of a multitiered strategy to deter an invasion from the mainland.

The island's navy highlighted its Kuang Hua VI fast attack missile boats and Tuo Chiang-class corvettes in waters near Taiwan's largest port of Kaohsiung, a major hub for international trade considered key to resupplying Chinese forces should they establish a beachhead on the island.

The Kuang Hua VI boats, with a crew of 19, carry indigenously developed Hsiung Feng II anti-ship missiles and displayed their ability to take to the sea in an emergency to intercept enemy ships about to cross the 44-kilometer (24-nautical mile) limit of Taiwan's contiguous zone, within which governments are permitted to take defensive action.

China routinely sends ships and planes to challenge Taiwan's willingness and ability to counter intruders, prompting



Taiwan to scramble jets, activate missile systems and dispatch warships.

Taiwan demanded on Wednesday that China end its ongoing military activity in nearby waters, which it said is undermining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and disrupting international shipping and trade.

Mountainous Taiwan's strategy is to counter the much larger Chinese military with a relatively flexible defense that can prevent Chinese troops from crossing the strait.

Landing sites are few on Tai-

wan's west coast facing China, forcing Beijing to focus on the east coast.

Hsiao Shun-ming, captain of a Tuo Chiang-class corvette, said his ship's relatively small size still allows it to “deliver a formidable competitive power” against larger Chinese ships. The Tuo Chiang has a catamaran design and boasts high speeds and considerable stealth ability.

Taiwan has in recent years reinvigorated its domestic defense industry, although it still relies heavily on U.S. technology such as upgraded fighter

jets, missiles, tanks and detection equipment.

U.S. law requires it to consider threats to the island as matters of “grave concern,” and American and allied forces are expected to be a major factor in any conflict.

Thursday's exercise “demonstrates the effectiveness of asymmetric warfare, and Taiwan's commitment to defense self-reliance,” said Chen Ming-feng, rear admiral and commander of the navy's 192 Fleet specializing in mine detection. “We are always ready to respond quickly and can handle any kind of maritime situation.”

China's authoritarian one-party Communist government has refused almost all communication with Taiwan's pro-independence governments since 2016, and some in Washington and elsewhere say Beijing is growing closer to taking military action.

China considers Taiwan a part of its territory, to be brought under its control by force if necessary, while most Taiwanese favor their de facto independence and democratic status.

Filipino Catholics pray for good health and peace in huge procession venerating Jesus statue

MANILA, Jan 9 (Agencies): Hundreds of thousands of mostly barefoot Catholic worshippers marched Thursday in an annual procession in the Philippines that venerates a centuries-old black statue of Jesus. Some said they prayed for good health for their families, an end to tensions in the South China Sea, and for incoming U.S. President Donald Trump to be kinder to Filipino immigrants.

The procession marks the feast of Jesus Nazareno and is a major annual Catholic event in Asia. The image was previously called the Black Nazarene, but church officials appealed for a change, saying the former name was not founded in history and evoked a racial slur.

The procession in Manila began before dawn, with organizers putting the early crowd at around 250,000. Their

number swelled later in the day, but there was no immediate updated crowd estimate. Last year, at least 2 million devotees joined the 15-hour procession, with some estimates of the crowd as high as over 6 million.

Gaspar Espinocilla, a 56-year-old Manila city employee and a devotee of Jesus Nazareno for the last 20 years, said he is praying for his family, including his sister who has ovarian cancer. He is also praying for an end to tensions in the West Philippines Sea, a part of the South China Sea claimed by the Philippines, where China has been harassing Filipino fishermen and coast guard vessels.

“I hope China will ease up on us, they cannot seize everything as theirs,” said Gaspar, who was wearing a maroon T-shirt printed with face of Jesus Nazareno. “It is ours,



not theirs.”

Renato Reyes, a garbage scavenger who has been a Jesus Nazareno devotee for more than three decades, said he prays for a better life for his family, for the Philippines to be free from calamities, as well as for wars overseas to end. He also said he will include in his prayers Filipinos who may be affected by Trump's planned mass deportation of

illegal immigrants.

“I hope they will not implement that because our countrymen are there just to earn a living for their families,” he added.

Thousands of police and plainclothes officers were deployed, along with drone surveillance and commandos positioned on rooftops along the nearly 6-kilometer (3.7 miles) route of the proces-

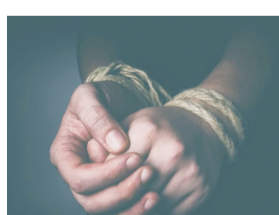
sion. Many nearby roads were closed and cell phone signals were blocked.

More than a dozen devotees were seen being carried on stretchers as ambulances were on standby for people who would fall ill.

The statue of Jesus carrying the cross was brought to the Philippines from Mexico on a galleon in 1606 by Spanish missionaries. The ship that carried it caught fire, but the charred statue survived, according to some accounts. Church historians, however, said the statue's color owes to the fact that it was carved out of mesquite wood, which darkens as it ages.

Many devotees believe the statue's endurance, from fires and earthquakes through the centuries and intense bombings during World War II, is a testament to its miraculous powers.

16 labourers abducted in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province



PESHAWAR, Jan 9 (Agencies): At least 16 labourers were kidnapped by unknown armed men in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Thursday, local police said.

The labourers working on a government installation have been abducted from a vehicle enroute to a construction site.

Later, the abductors set the vehicle on fire in the Qabal Khel area.

No group claimed responsibility for the abduction.

The banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is active in the area and has been blamed for such abductions in the past.

The TTP, set up as an umbrella group of several militant outfits in 2007, is believed to be close to al-Qaeda. The group has been blamed for several deadly attacks across Pakistan.

Separately, the bomb disposal unit has defused a 25-kilogram bomb planted near Mehboob Ziarat checkpoint in the Tank district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The bomb was planted on the route on which a security forces convoy was about to move, local Police said.

Adv. Purnima Sharma slams NC leadership for baseless allegations against BJP

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: Adv. Purnima Sharma, Spokesperson BJP J&K and former Deputy Mayor of Jammu, strongly criticized National Conference (NC) leader Dr. Farooq Abdullah for his baseless allegations against the BJP-led Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC). She emphasized that the BJP JMC has brought unprecedented development and transformation to Jammu, setting benchmarks for progress and governance.

Purnima Sharma accompanied by Balbir Ram Rattan, spokesperson, Dr Pardeep Mahotra, Media Secretary, and Rajneesh Jain Incharge Dept of Publications was addressing in a Press Conference at BJP headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

Highlighting the achievements under the BJP-led JMC, Adv. Purnima Sharma credited the leadership for turning

Jammu into a Smart City, with projects aimed at urban development, improved infrastructure, and citizen-friendly initiatives.

During her tenure as Deputy Mayor of Jammu, significant strides were made in transforming the city.

The Tawi Riverfront Development Project, inspired by the Sabarmati Riverfront in Gujarat, is being developed to promote tourism and serve as a recreational hub under the Smart City initiative.

A walkway along the banks of the Ranbir Canal, enhancing accessibility and offering a serene space for citizens, has been developed as part of urban beautification efforts. Diversion of the Nallah starting from Bahu Fort to Channi and covering other areas under a comprehensive Sewage Treatment Project, addressing sanitation and water management. Development of a vertical garden under



the city flyover, providing an aesthetic and eco-friendly enhancement to urban spaces. Deployment of modern machinery for cleaning Jammu city, ensuring higher standards of cleanliness and hygiene. Establishment of open gyms in all wards of Jammu city, promoting health and fitness for all residents. Installation of over 60,000 street lights, significantly improving illumination and safety across the city. Implementation of the Gondola project connecting Peer Kho to Bahu Fort, boosting connectivity and tourism. Installation of a musical fountain at Bagh-e-Bahu, creating a new attraction for

tourists and locals alike. Equal and inclusive development across all wards of Jammu city, ensuring no area or community is left behind.

Adv. Sharma also pointed out that initiatives under the BJP's leadership had significantly enhanced revenue collection, making the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) self-sustaining. Transparency and efficiency in JMC's operations were also prioritized, along with improved garbage collection systems.

She reiterated that the transformation of Jammu into a Smart City is a testament to the BJP's commitment to modernization and progress. Projects such as the Tawi Riverfront, Ranbir Canal Walkway, and urban beautification efforts reflect the party's vision for making Jammu a model city in the Union Territory.

She enumerated various steps taken for the Beautification of Jammu like Open Gyms, Intel-

ligent Traffic Management System, Multi Level Parking at Panjirthi, Revenue Management, Building Permission, Enforcement of Building Bye Laws, Integrated Command and Control Centre.

In conclusion, Adv. Purnima Sharma lambasted the National Conference for its failure to deliver on its promises during its decades of rule. She asserted, "The NC, despite ruling J&K for over 60 years, could not bring transparency, equitable development, or modernization. In stark contrast, the BJP has not only worked tirelessly to fulfill its promises but also laid the foundation for a prosperous and progressive Jammu and Kashmir."

Adv. Purnima Sharma reaffirmed that only the BJP has the vision and resolve to transform the region into a hub of development, tourism, and prosperity, with Jammu shining as a Smart City and a beacon of progress.

Training prog for Legal Services Unit for Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities begins

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Jammu under the aegis of J&K Legal Services Authority, organized a two days Training Programme for the Legal Services Unit for Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (LSUM) constituted under the NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024 which was held on Thursday at Conference Hall Lawyer's Chamber District Court Complex Janipur Jammu under the Chairmanship of Sh. Y. P. Bourney, Chairman District Legal Services Authority (Pr. District & Sessions Judge), Jammu and supervision of Smriti Sharma, Secretary District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Jammu.

The resource person and our Mentor of the

training programme was Sunit Gupta, Retired District Judge.

Smriti Sharma, Secretary District Legal Services Authority Jammu, in her address to the gathering, welcomed the Mentor of the training programme and all the participants.

Secretary DLSA Jammu highlighted the importance of the training programme in understanding the various provisions of the NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024.

The training programme was attended by Assistant Legal Aid Defense Counsels namely Adv. Ajatsharu Kohli & Adv. Sourav Gupta, Adv. Gurdeep Singh Gill, Adv. Deepali Arora, Adv. Shahla Rafiqi, Adv. Upasana Thakur, Adv. Rita Kumari are all Panel Lawyers of District Legal Services Author-

ity Jammu and PLVs Bhajan Singh, Rakesh Kumar, Sunil Bogal, Sahil Khosla, Joginder Lal, Gourav Sharma, Happy Sharma, Ankush Singh Chib, Parminder Kour and Suman Lata.

The aim of two days training programme is to enhance the understanding and implementation of the NALSA Scheme 2024 and ensuring access to Justice for Mental Illness and Intellectual Disabilities Persons.

The mentor and Advisor of the committee, Sunit Gupta highlighted the importance of the scheme in ensuring access to justice for individuals with mental and intellectual disabilities.

He emphasized while addressing the participants that the need for effective implementation of the scheme and provided valuable insights on the role of LSUMs in bridging the gap between the legal system and vulnerable individuals.

VRS Union Jammu protests against delayed payments, appeals LG for intervention



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: A demonstration and Secretariat Gherao rally was organized on Thursday under the leadership of Dev Raj Bali, President of the VRS Union of RTC Jammu, at Maharaja Hari Singh Park, Jammu.

The protestors voiced their strong discontent against the Finance Department and the higher authorities of the Transport Department for alleged delay in releasing long-pending payments.

Speaking at the rally, the protestors criticized the "unnecessary delaying tactics" being adopted by these departments, despite the availability of funds.

According to the VRS/GHS and retired

employees of JKRTC, all necessary bills have already been prepared and forwarded to the Civil Secretariat, but the payments remain inexplicably withheld.

The protestors highlighted the tragic loss of 75 employees who passed away during this prolonged struggle, unable to afford proper medical treatment due to the lack of funds. They lamented that their families, along with those of surviving employees, are enduring immense hardships, with no other source of income or pension to rely on.

The protestors appealed to Lt. Governor of J&K and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to intervene and address their grievances.

Their demands include

release of COLA arrears from 1999 to December 31, 2005, 6th Pay Commission arrears from January 1, 2006, to March 2012 and DA arrears from April 2012 to March 2021.

The demonstration witnessed participation from notable members, including Sat Bhushan Singh, Surinder Singh, Balwinder Singh, Ramesh Bhau, Ram Paul, and Shiv Kumar, among others.

The protestors urged the government to take immediate action to release their dues and alleviate their suffering.

The VRS Union has called for compassion and justice from the administration, urging the Finance and Transport Departments to expedite the release of their payments.

Election Committee clarifies election process for All J&K Sadguru Kabir Sabha leadership

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: The Election Committee of the All J&K Sadguru Kabir Sabha addressed concerns regarding the ongoing election process for the posts of President and General Secretary during a press conference at the Press Club Jammu. The Committee emphasized its commitment to a transparent and democratic election process and clarified the official schedule and recent developments.

The Committee outlined that the official election notification was issued with the following timeline: nomination forms were available from December 5-14, 2024, and the submission period was from December 11-15, 2024. The election date was initially set for December 29, 2024. Nomination forms were obtainable at the Sabha's headquarters or through an online request, and candidates were required to pay a fee of Rs. 10,000/- for the President post and Rs. 5,000/- for the General Secretary post.

Despite this schedule, no completed nomination forms were received by the deadline. In response, the Election Committee



extended the deadline for submissions to January 18, 2025, following consultations with community members. A fresh notification was issued, and the Committee confirmed that the election process is still ongoing. As of now, no nominations have been submitted, and the Committee has urged eligible community members to file their nominations before the new deadline.

The Committee also addressed misleading media reports regarding individuals claiming to have been elected unopposed as President and General Secretary.

These claims were firmly rejected as false and baseless. The Committee clarified that no individual can unilaterally declare themselves elected to these positions and stressed that the election process must be followed

Free Medical Camp held for driver community at Ramban

Top News Report

RAMBAN, Jan 9: As part of the ongoing Road Safety Month, the Motor Vehicle Department (MVD), Ramban, in collaboration with the Health Department, organized a free medical camp exclusively for the driver community under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary.

The camp, held at Koubagh Ground, Ramban, focused on promoting the health and well-being of drivers, who play a vital role in ensuring road safety. Medical professionals conducted comprehensive health check-ups, including blood pressure and blood sugar tests, and provided free consultations. Additionally, necessary medications were distributed to

attendees at no cost.

Addressing the gathering, ARTO Ramban, Sheetal Sharma, highlighted the importance of the initiative, stating, "Road safety begins with healthy and alert drivers. Through this medical camp, we aim to support their health and encourage a safer driving environment for all."

The event witnessed the active participation of over 180 drivers and conductors, who expressed gratitude for the effort to address their health concerns as part of Road Safety Month.

The ARTO further reiterated the commitment of the Motor Vehicle Department to organize similar initiatives in the future to improve driver health and contribute to safer roads in the district.

Free MEDICAL Camp

FROM PAGE 3

"GOVT SHOULD LOOK INTO THE WAY PEOPLE WERE KILLED": FAROOQ ABDULLAH ON TIRUPATI STAMPEDE

religion is considered of utmost importance in India," he remarked.

Security Forces arrest man in Kulgam, Recover Weapons

headquartered Chinara Corps of the Army said on X, "On 08 January 2025, based on specific intelligence input, a joint CASO was launched by Indian Army and Police at Thokarpura mohallah, Qaimoh, Kulgam. During search, one suspected individual has been apprehended along with recovery of 01xAK Rifle, 04xAK Magazines, 120xAK Rounds, 02xHand Grenades and other war like stores."

Further Investigation by police was in progress, said the officials.

Dream Big, Strive to become changemakers, leaders of Tomorrow: Army Chief urges NCC

Cadets

The army chief was welcomed by the NCC cadets upon his arrival at the camp. Later, he also interacted with some of them in the flag area, and presented mementoes to those who delivered excellent briefings.

He was also treated to culture performances in the auditorium at the venue.

"Seeing all of you proudly donning your uniform makes me nostalgic as I recall my NCC enrolment number — 73727 — which I had for seven years, and the cherished days I spent as an NCC cadet," he told the gathering.

Gen Dwivedi, an alumnus of Sainik School in Rewa, Madhya Pradesh, also said he felt proud being part of the NCC Alumni Association.

"Dear cadets, as I look at you today, I see not just the leaders of tomorrow, but the custodians of our country's heritage and future. As young citizens of this great nation, you are an integral part of India's transformation and growth story," he said in his address.

"Leadership roles in diverse fields shall soon come your way. Therefore, dream big, and strive to become the changemakers, innovators and leaders of tomorrow," he added.

The army chief also urged the cadets to believe in themselves, equip themselves with determination and fortitude, and "let hardwork and dedication be your companion in your pursuit of excellence".

Gen Dwivedi also praised the noble efforts of the cadets in community service,

blood donation programmes, environment conservation, and spreading awareness on social issues, and urged them to "demonstrate the strength of youth towards making a tangible difference towards nation-building".

"I know that a team of NCC cadets will attempt to scale Mount Everest this year, and I am happy to note that they are currently training at the Army Mountaineering Institute in the Siachen Base Camp. My best wishes are with the expedition team," the army chief said, adding that he will eagerly look forward to "see a glimpse of the NCC summit flag atop Mt Everest".

Stating that the Indian Army takes great pride in its association and support to the NCC, Gen Dwivedi said at one time, more than 12,500 army personnel stood posted as staff in the NCC.

As part of training support, more than 30,000 NCC cadets have done attachment training with army units thus far, including 4,000 cadets — boys and girls — undergoing attachments with military hospitals, the army chief said.

A total of 2,361 NCC cadets from around the country are taking part in the month-long Republic Day camp, which began on December 30 and will culminate with the PM Rally on January 27.

The annual event is also witnessing the participation of 917 girl cadets, the largest contingent so far.

J&K Govt asks staff to attend R-Day, 'Beating

Retreat'

upon to attend the function as a part of their official duty.

All Heads of Departments and Chief Executives of Public Sector Undertakings shall ensure their own participation and also of the employees subordinate to them in the function.

Meanwhile, according to a separate circular, Beating Retreat Ceremony of the Republic Day Celebrations shall be held on 29 January, 2025 at 04:30 p.m. at Maulana Azad Stadium, Jammu. All the officers/officials of the Government Departments stationed at Jammu are directed to attend the Beating Retreat Ceremony. It is also impressed upon all the Heads of the Departments and Chief Executives of the Public Sector Undertakings to ensure their own participation and also of the employees subordinate to them in the said function.

If INDIA Bloc was only for Parliamentary Polls, Better wind it up: Omar Abdullah

elections, and a clarity would emerge.

Replying to another query on increasing support for AAP ahead of next month's Delhi elections, Abdullah said, "I cannot say anything about this at the moment because we have no involvement with Delhi polls. The Aam Aadmi Party, Congress, and other

political parties on the ground will decide how to compete with the BJP strongly."

Stating that AAP succeeded twice in Delhi previously, Abdullah said, "This time, we will have to wait and see what the people of Delhi decide."

The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly is convening an orientation programme here on Thursday for the newly-elected legislators. "Many of us have been members of this House before, but that was when Jammu and Kashmir was a state. The system is different today. We need to understand how we are going to work and what the powers of this Assembly are," Abdullah said. The chief minister also said that to familiarise everyone with the procedures of this system, the speaker has organised the orientation programme.

"The deputy chairman of Rajya Sabha also participated in this exercise. I believe the experience of the senior members will prove beneficial. In the upcoming sessions, the MLAs will represent the people better and raise their issues effectively," he added.

Cold conditions intensify in Kashmir amid clear sky; Pahalgam shivers at minus 10.4 Deg C

on January 30, followed by a 20-day 'Chillai-Khurh' (small cold), and a 10-day 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold).

ADC Ramban reviews preparations for 76th Republic Day celebrations

Top News Report

RAMBAN, Jan 9: To review the arrangements for the upcoming 76th Republic Day celebrations, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Ramban, Varunjeet Singh Charak, convened a meeting with the concerned officers today.

The meeting was attended by ACD Shrinath Suman, ACP Ashfaq Ahmad, Chief Education Officer (CEO), District Youth Services and Sports



Officer (DYSSO), Tehsildar, Executive Engineer PWD, and other officials from various departments.

During the meeting, the ADC reviewed the preparedness for cul-

tural programs and other related events. He directed the officers to ensure that all necessary arrangements are made in line with the directives issued by Deputy Commissioner

Ramban, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, during the previous planning meetings.

The ADC emphasized the importance of meticulous coordination among all departments

to ensure a successful and grand celebration of Republic Day in the district. He further instructed the concerned departments to finalize arrangements for security, seating, stage setup, and other logistical aspects at the earliest.

The meeting concluded with the assurance of collective efforts from all departments to make the 76th Republic Day celebrations a memorable and patriotic event for the people of Ramban.

Army conducts lecture on Safe Drive and Traffic Rules at Doda



Top News Report

DODA, Jan 9: "In an effort to promote road safety and educate the locals on traffic regulations, the Indian Army conducted an awareness lecture on 'Safe Driving and Traffic Rules' for the youth and residents of Goha.

This initiative comes in response to the recent surge in road accidents in the region, emphasizing the need for community awareness and adherence to road safety measures.

The event witnessed overwhelming participation from locals, with a total

of 50 attendees joining the interactive session. The lecture highlighted critical aspects of road safety, including the importance of following traffic rules, road symbols, and maintaining road etiquette.

The speakers, Ganesh Dutt, Sub Inspector, and ESM Sher Khan, SM, addressed the participants on various topics such as understanding road markings, wearing seat belts and helmets, and avoiding practices like drunken driving.

They also explained offenses related to traffic violations and the corresponding penalties, urging everyone to contribute towards making roads safer for all.

This awareness campaign by the Indian Army aims to instill a sense of responsibility among drivers and pedestrians alike, ensuring a safer environment for the community."

JKTF delegation meets DSEJ Official to discuss issues

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: A high-profile delegation from the Jammu Kashmir Teachers Forum, affiliated with the All India Secondary Teachers Federation, met with Manisha (JKAS), the Personal Officer at the Directorate of School Education Jammu (DSEJ) on January 9, 2025. The delegation was led by Mohammad Amin Khan, Chairman of the Jammu Kashmir Teachers Forum, and included State President Mohammed Ashraf Sheikh and Vice Chairman Showket Ali Beg. The meeting provided a platform to discuss several key issues impacting the teaching community in Jammu and Kashmir.

During the discussion, the delegation raised several important demands aimed at improving the working conditions and welfare of teachers. Among the key issues discussed were the promotion of eligible teachers and masters, the release of an additional DPC (Departmental Promotion Committee) for teachers to masters, and the issuance of a mutual transfer list for



teachers, especially ReTs. The delegation also called for the provision of staff according to the class-teacher ratio, promotion of eligible masters to headmasters, and filling vacant posts of ZEOs and Principals. Other demands included permission for teachers who have acquired graduation degrees during service, proper implementation of the Annual Transfer Drive (ATD) with a change in Zonation, earned leave for teachers working during winter/summer vacations, conversion of RReTs to teachers grade II/III, and a revised transfer policy for teachers appointed under the ReT scheme.

In response, Manisha assured the delegation that their concerns were valid and would be addressed in a time-bound manner. She confirmed that a new DPC list for teachers to mas-

ters would be released soon. The delegation thanked Manisha for her positive and constructive response and expressed hope that the issues raised would be resolved promptly. After the meeting, the delegation also visited various sections of the DSEJ to inquire about pending issues of teachers and masters from different districts.

The delegation was also joined by other prominent members, including Neetan Kalyan, UT Additional General Secretary; Jallil Sheikh, Provincial General Secretary; District Presidents Imtiaz ul Haq (Kishtwar), Rail Singh (Reasi); Senior Vice Presidents Nasir Ahmed Mir (Ramban), Parshotam Singh (ZP Arnas); and other leaders such as Danish Ahmed, Shah Din, Mujeeb ul Rehman, Jagdev Singh, and Mohd Rafiq Bhat.

Convey BJP's message, PM's vision to grassroots level: Pawan to party workers

Top News Report

POONCH, Jan 9: Senior BJP leader and Incharge returning officer for Poonch district, Pawan Sharma, addressing party workers following the election of BJP Mandal Presidents for District Poonch, exhorted them to work tirelessly and with dedication to convey the BJP's message and the Prime Minister's vision to the grassroots level, ensuring the party's triumph in future elections and consolidating BJP's position as the preeminent political force in Poonch.

He expressed gratitude for the support extended by the people of Poonch to the BJP during the recently held assembly elections, which led to a significant rise in the party's vote share. Nevertheless, he stressed the importance of introspection to convert this support into electoral victories.

Discussing the future prospects of Poonch district, Sharma highlighted the significant untapped potential of religious tourism, urging the Jammu and Kash-



mir government to focus on its development. He pointed out the presence of world-renowned pilgrimage sites of various religions in the district, including Dashnami akhara, Nangali Sahib, Gurudwara Dherisab Chakan Da Bag, Ziarat Sain Baba Miran Sahib (Gunthrian), Ziarat of Chote Shah (Mendhar), Ram Kund, Lohar Devta Mandir, Baba Budha Amarnath, and Navgreh Mandir.

He pointed out that Poonch district also possesses considerable potential for eco and nature tourism, featuring majestic snow-capped mountains, serene lakes, meandering streams, lush

forests, and historical monuments. Notable tourist attractions in the region include: Noori Chamb, Nandishool, Beram Galla, Dera Gali, Girjan Valley, Dhoks and Seven Lakes: Neel Sar, Bag Sar, Katoria Sar, Nandan Sar, Gunn Sar, Sukh Sar, and Kaldashni Sar (situated at an altitude of 12,000 feet)

Sharma stressed that the government should prioritize the development of infrastructure and all-weather road connectivity to these destinations, which he is convinced will have a profound impact on Poonch's socio-economic landscape by providing employment

opportunities for local youth.

Sharma highlighted the district's strategic location as a border area and strongly requested the government to enhance the security grid in Poonch to ensure peace, stability, and the safety of its residents. He stressed the significance of robust security measures to facilitate development and tourism in the region.

He also stressed the smooth implementation of centrally sponsored schemes in sectors such as Jal Shakti, roads, and electricity in Poonch. He reiterated BJP's pledge to improve the road network and

attain rail connectivity in the region, which is currently under active consideration and expected to be realized soon.

Sharma acknowledged the BJP government's accomplishment of granting ST status to the Pahari community, a long-pending demand and notable achievement.

Mandal Presidents who were elected for 19 Mandals of District Poonch include, Jugal Kishore for Urban Mandal Poonch, Jameel Ahmed Kohli for Poonch Rural, Tahir Mehmood Tahir for NSSB, Aurangzeb for Sathra, Tariq Ahmed for Mandi Sawjian, Mohd. Aslam for Kehnu-Arai, Ketan Bali for Jhulass, Maqsood Ahmed for Bufliaz, Majeed Malik for Draba, Sanjeev Sharma for Surankot, Tahir Ahmed Khan for Gunthal, Mannan Khan for Lassana, Mohd. Azad Qureshi for Khanetar, Sanjeev Kumar Fancy for Mendhar, Sohrab Ahmed Bastami for Nard, Mohd. Iliyas for Kalaban/Chhatral, Moheem Khan for Mankote and Manawer hussain Khan for Bala-kote.

Army distributes shawls, bedsheets at Sarotha

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Jan 9: In an exemplary demonstration of goodwill and community outreach, Indian Army conducted a Sadbhavna activity by distributing shawls, bedsheets with pillow cover to Gujar and Bakkarwals in its area of responsibility.

A total of 40 Shawls & 40 Bedsheets with pillow cover were distributed.

This noble initiative undertak-



en as part of the Army's ongoing efforts to foster harmony

and support. The local population, highlight-

ed the humanitarian role played by the Indian Army beyond their core duties.

This effort by the Indian Army will build bridges of trust and goodwill between the Army and the local population, reinforcing the spirit of unity and shared responsibility.

The activity culminated in a promise to move hand in hand in a noble cause of maintaining peace and bring more harmony in coming years.

Army conducts 'Recruitment Training for Youth' at Pir Topa



Top News Report

POONCH, Jan 9: Keeping in view the Indian Army's core objective of maintaining cordial relations with local citizens, the Indian Army is conducting "Recruitment Training for Youth" at Village Pir Topa, from 08 January 2025. It is essential to equip youth with the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitude to excel in their future careers and make informed decisions about their professional paths.

Recruitment training refers to the process of educating and developing the skills of recruitment professionals and providing experience for candidates. The aim of the training is to provide guidance to unemployed youth in Village Pir Topa and nearby areas.

A total of 08 youth are attending the Recruitment Training. By participating in recruitment training programs, youth can gain a competitive edge, increase their confidence, and develop a stronger sense of purpose and direction.

It provides a Launchpad for unemployed youth and young individuals to join the defence forces, offering them an opportunity to serve the nation. Par-

ticipants are trained under the supervision of a well-qualified training team, along with a civil instructor.

Preparation for the physical fitness test, medical test, and written test will be carried out through a well-structured training program, which helps the younger generation to perform well during various aspects of the tests in recruitment rallies.

Activities like these undertaken by the Army will go a long way in establishing peace, providing career options to youth, and contributing to the overall development of the backward rural area, helping them join the mainstream.

This gesture and effort by the Army has been highly appreciated by the local population. This initiative by the Army to reach out to populations residing in remote areas, where civil administration has limited accessibility, will go a long way in developing and strengthening trust between the Jawan and Awam.

The event also served as a platform to strengthen the bond between the Army and the people of this region. It showcased the Army's commitment to serving the nation.

Minati Mohapatra Cycling Velodrome inaugurated at KIIT-KISS Campus by Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya

Top News Report

J A M M U / B H U - BANESWAR, Jan 9: The Minati Mohapatra Cycling Velodrome was inaugurated today at the KIIT-KISS campus by the Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Mansukh Mandaviya. The velodrome, named in honour of Minati Mohapatra - Odisha's first Arjuna Awardee in cycling.

Inaugurating the Velodrome, the Union Min-

ister reflected on the significance of the occasion. "Today is an important day for me," he said, "what I witnessed aligns with the dream of Prime Minister Narendra Modi - a nation where education and sports go hand in hand."

Quoting Acharya Chanakya, the minister emphasized the importance of education in shaping a nation's future. "I am satisfied that the country's future is in the capable hands of educationists like Dr.

Samanta. KIIT, KISS, and KIMS are nurturing students who will grow into responsible citizens. Wherever I go, I will share the best practices I observed here," Mandaviya added.

Dr Samanta, Founder of KIIT, KISS, and KIMS, expressed his gratitude for the minister's visit and highlighted plans to double the sports infrastructure at KIIT and KISS in the coming years. "With the minister's blessings, we

aim to expand our facilities further and provide more opportunities for budding athletes," he remarked.

Maninder Pal Singh, Secretary General of the Cycling Federation of India, lauded the minister's passion for sports. "The minister is a cycling enthusiast himself, and his contribution to promoting sports across the country is remarkable," he said.

Minati Mohapatra,

visibly moved by the honour, expressed her gratitude. "I am speechless. People say Dr. Samanta is like a god to us. This is the greatest honor of my life," she said.

KIIT Vice Chancellor Prof. Saranjit Singh highlighted the minister's achievements during his tenure as Union Health Minister, and KISS Vice Chancellor Prof. Deepak Kumar Behera delivered the vote of thanks.

India's Champions Trophy squad: BCCI eyeing star who's been out of action for 417 days, Jasprit Bumrah uncertain

The Champions Trophy starts on February 19, while India's first match is on February 20

NEW DELHI, Jan 9 (Agencies): The Champions Trophy squad announcement deadline is January 12. The tournament starts on February 19, while India's first match is on February 20. All eyes will be on India's squad, especially after the Border Gavaskar Trophy debacle. Focus will be on veterans like Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Jasprit Bumrah among others. In the midst of this, there is some positive news. Mohammed Shami, who last played an international match on November 19, 2023 (417 days ago from today), is expected to make a return, according to a report in Cricbuzz. Shami has been out of action since the 2023 ODI World Cup, where he was the top wicket-taker. The report said that Shami's is being closely monitored by the BCCI's medical team. Shami underwent a surgery in



his ankle after the World Cup. Then a knee swelling delayed his return and he missed the Border Gavaskar Trophy. Now, the report said that there is 'optimism' in the BCCI corridors over his return. A fitness clearance from the National Cricket Academy (NCA) is mandatory for Shami to be available. Shami bowled regularly for his state team Bengal in the

Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy and the Vijay Hazare Trophy. A NCA physio is accompanying him while BCCI selectors will assess him further during the Vijay Hazare Trophy knockout matches in Baroda. Bumrah uncertain
The report also said that Jasprit Bumrah is still not a certainty for the Champions Trophy. Bumrah suffered a back spasm

during the fifth India vs Australia Test in Sydney. He immediately went for a scan in a hospital. The BCCI selectors are awaiting a report from the NCA regarding the pacer. He is also expected to report to the NCA. Former Australian captain Michael Clarke has termed the incomparable Jasprit Bumrah the greatest all-format fast bowler after his Player-of-the-Series performance in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. "I know a lot of great fast bowlers, Curtly Ambrose, Glenn McGrath, didn't get to play T20 cricket, so I'm not talking about those guys, but in regards to anyone who has played all three formats, I think he might be the best ever," he said. "He's actually that good in any conditions, that's what makes him great; any conditions, any format, this guy's a freak."

ISL 2024-25: Guwahati to host Kolkata derby on January 11



KOLKATA, Jan 9 (Agencies): Mohun Bagan Super Giant have announced that the Kolkata derby against East Bengal FC scheduled on January 11 has been moved to Guwahati from Kolkata. "Saturday blockbuster 'Boro Match' will now be played at Guwahati. See you, Mariners," the club said in a statement. Mohun Bagan SG will head into the Kolkata derby in red-hot form having won eight out of their last ten matches. The Mariners have also never lost to their city rivals in the ISL and would look to

keep that run going. However, the Red and Gold brigade have witnessed an upturn in fortunes since the arrival of head coach Oscar Bruzon and have won four games in the league under him. Jose Molina's team emerged victorious in the earlier Kolkata derby of the season and will be keen to extend their strong record against their arch-rivals. The fixtures only get tougher for East Bengal FC this month. They will face an in-form FC Goa, a team that has handed them five

straight defeats in the ISL. Matches against Kerala Blasters FC (KBFC) and a return clash with Mumbai City FC add to their woes. While East Bengal FC's record against the Blasters is marginally better, this game carries extra weight as both teams are battling for playoff contention, making it a crucial six-pointer. January presents a true test of character for the Red and Gold Brigade. Bruzon has brought belief and stability, but if East Bengal are to bridge the gap to the playoffs, every department—from defensive discipline to attacking sharpness—must rise to the occasion. For East Bengal FC, January isn't just another month; it's a turning point. Success over the next few weeks could reignite their playoff aspirations, while failure to seize this opportunity may see another season of promise fade into disappointment.

Yuva Kabaddi Series: Ayan Lohchab shines on debut; Palani Tuskars, Sonipat Spartans extend their lead in Division 1

COIMBATORE, Jan 9 (Agencies): The 11th Yuva Kabaddi Series - Division 1, held at the Karpagam Academy of Higher Education in Coimbatore, saw debutant Ayan Lohchab deliver a stunning performance for the Sonipat Spartans, leading them to a commanding 60-32 victory over the Karpagam Raiders. Lohchab recorded an impressive 17 raid points, while Ankit Saharwa added 14 raid points. In defence, Naveen Sharma stood out with six tackle points. For the Raiders, Gowtham R contributed nine raid and two tackle points, and Surendhiran Ganapathy R scored a Super 10, but their defensive struggles proved costly. The third game saw the Aravalli Arrows

edge past the Chennai Tamizhans 36-33. Vishnu Sharma registered a Super 10 to steer the Arrows to victory. For Chennai, Stanly Packiaraj delivered a valiant effort with eight raid points and one tackle point but fell short of turning the tide. In the final match of the day, the Palani Tuskars reaffirmed their dominance with a 34-26 win over the Kurukshetra Warriors. Vishva Asalan led the charge with 12 raid points, while M Esakkiraja secured six tackle points. Despite Mandeep Kumar's eight raid points for the Warriors, they lacked adequate support to challenge the Tuskars.

recent Border-Gavaskar Series. Spinners Matt Kuhne-mann and Todd Murphy also make a return for the tourists, though the team will miss Josh Hazlewood with his calf injury and Mitchell Marsh, with the pair focussing on the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy. The likes of Glenn Maxwell, Adam Zampa and Peter Handscomb, who were all thrown up

Steve Smith named interim captain as Australia announce squad for Sri Lanka Test series

CANBERRA, Jan 9 (Agencies): Right-hand batter Steve Smith has been appointed as the interim skipper of the national side as team Australia announced a 16-player squad for their two-match Test series against Sri Lanka, which will begin on January 29. Smith will lead the side in the absence of Pat Cummins, who is both on paternity leave and dealing with a slight ankle issue during the recent home summer. There is a first Test squad call-up for former Australia U19 Cricket World Cup captain Cooper Connolly, while fellow youngster Nathan McSweeney has been recalled despite missing the Melbourne and Sydney Tests in the



vides several ways to structure the XI depending on what type of wickets we may encounter in each match," George Bailey said as quoted by the ICC official website. "We are excited about the opportunity ahead for the squad members who are at the start of their Test careers to continue to grow their games in subcontinent conditions where we have a number of important tours in coming years," former Australia skipper added. Whilst the two matches form part of the World Test Championship 2023-2025 cycle, final spots are already taken, with Australia (63.73% of possible points) and South Africa (69.44% of possible points) unable to be moved from the

top two spots. The Australians will face South Africa from June 11 at Lord's in defence of the World Test Championship mace, with the Proteas closing out their spot thanks to a victory over Pakistan in late 2024. Sri Lanka Test series v Australia: January 29 to February 2 - Galle. February 6 to February 10 - Galle. Australia Squad: Steve Smith (c), Sean Abbott, Scott Boland, Alex Carey, Cooper Connolly, Travis Head (vc), Josh Inglis, Usman Khawaja, Sam Konstas, Matt Kuhne-mann, Marnus Labuschagne, Nathan Lyon, Nathan McSweeney, Todd Murphy, Mitchell Starc, Beau Webster.

Ahmedabad set to be 2036 Olympics hotspot as India considers multi-city Games

NEW DELHI, Jan 9 (Agencies): After submitting its letter of intent to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), expressing interest in hosting the 2036 Olympics, the country is gearing up to stage the biggest sporting spectacle in multiple venues. The aim is to utilise established sports hubs and provide world-class facilities for the multi-sport spectacle. India is bidding to host the Olympic Games for the first time in history. India last hosted a major multi-sport tournament in 2010 -- the Commonwealth Games were held in New Delhi. Given the scale of the Olympics, events are expected to be hosted in different cities based on their expertise and infrastructure. For instance, Odisha, which is widely recognised as the hub of hockey, is likely to host the majority of hockey matches. Similarly, rowing events are expected to take place in Bhopal, while canoeing and kayaking are likely to be staged in Pune. Notably, the IOC approved proposals to allow multi-city hosts in 2014 in a bid to reduce the cost of hosting the biggest sporting spectacle. THREE CITIES IN CONTENTION FOR CRICKET Talks are ongoing between the government and the Sports Ministry regarding the venues for cricket, wrestling, and badminton. For cricket, three cities are in



contention -- Delhi, Mumbai, and Ahmedabad -- with their respective stadiums being evaluated for suitability. Meanwhile, sources indicate that a significant portion of indoor events will likely be held at the Ahmedabad-based sports complex, which has advanced facilities designed to accommodate such large-scale competitions. Concerned authorities are already working on a detailed plan and proposal, which will soon be submitted to the IOC for approval. To accommodate athletes, the government is also discussing the establishment of a primary Athletes' Village in Ahmedabad, which will serve as the base for participants. This would ensure that athletes and officials have access to top-tier facilities and a comfortable stay during the event. A senior official commented: "Once we hear from the IOC about

our bid, we will ensure that we offer the best facilities to athletes and visitors alike. Hosting the Olympics is a matter of immense pride for us, and we are committed to showcasing India's capabilities on the global stage." Los Angeles in the USA will host the 2028 Summer Olympics, and Brisbane, Australia, will host the 2032 Games. International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach has said interest in hosting 2036 has so far attracted cities in the double digits. India joined nine other nations in vying for the 2036 Olympics, including Mexico, Indonesia, Turkey, Poland, Egypt, and South Korea. The competition among these countries will go through a rigorous selection process, led by the IOC's Future Host Commission.

Top Indian riders, Johann, Kavin join Gaman Racing; set to train in Spain for 2025

CHENNAI, Jan 9 (Agencies): Promising Indian riders Geoffrey Emmanuel, Kavin Quintal, and Johann Emmanuel, along with a lady rider, Nadine Balaji, have joined Gaman Racing, and will be honing their skills in Spain for the competitive 2025 season as the Spanish outfit inked an agreement with top Indian team Gusto Racing India, to build and promote Indian talent. This collaboration marks a turning point for the four Chennai riders offering world-class training and a platform to shine on the international stage. Under the leadership of former racing star Emmanuel Jebaraj, the Chennai-based team, Gusto Racing India, has partnered with Spain-based Gaman Racing Global Service to develop and nurture young Indian riders. The initiative is designed to strengthen India's presence in global motorsports and to foster grassroots talent in Chennai. "Our vision is to create a strong pipeline of



future champions. This partnership with Gaman Racing is our vision to train and create Indian riders of international standard," said Emmanuel Jebaraj as quoted in a Gaman Racing press release. For the 2025 season, Geoffrey, Kavin, and Johann will train at MotorLand Aragon, Gaman Racing's state-of-the-art facility in Spain. They will undergo rigorous physical preparation and skill development. The four riders achieved notable milestones in 2024, where Geoffrey Emmanuel competed in the Moto2 European Championship at FIM JuniorGP, with five podiums in the

Supersport 600 class at the Qatar Superstock Championship (QSTK). Kavin Quintal became the first Indian in WorldSBK's Supersport 300 class, and achieved success in the FIM JuniorGP STK class. Finished first and third in his first wildcard race in Round 4 of the Qatar Superstock Championship (QSTK). He also excelled in the Asia Road Racing Championship (AP250 class). While Johann Emmanuel delivered good performances in the European Talent Cup (FIM JuniorGP) and the Thailand Talent Cup, with multiple wins in QSTK's Supersport 300 class, the lady rider,

Nadine Balaji secured podium finishes in the Indian National Motorcycle Racing Championship and impressed in QSTK's Supersport 300 category. "India has immense potential in motorcycling, and this partnership is an investment in the country's future as a motorsports powerhouse," said a spokesperson for Gaman Racing. "This collaboration between Gaman Racing, Spain and Gusto Racing India is a promising step for Indian motorsport, positioning rising stars to make a significant impact on the global stage," said Jebaraj as the release concluded.

ADG JK&L Dte NCC Reviews Training at NCC Academy Nagrota



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: Major General Anupinder Bevli, VSM, Additional Director General, JK&L Directorate NCC, visited the NCC Training Academy Nagrota to review the ongoing Combined Annual Training Camp. The camp, culminating on 11 January, saw

General Bevli interact with cadets during Firing, lunch and delivering an inspiring motivational talk emphasizing the importance of integrity, discipline, and respect for women. He also shared the ongoing achievements of the Republic Day Contingent of JK&L Dte and motivated the

cadets to aspire to be part of this in the next year showing their dedication and determination.

During his visit, General Bevli commended the exceptional professionalism and dedication of the training team and cadets. He acknowledged the government's initiatives to strengthen the NCC and appreciated the support for infrastructure development, which will enhance training and living standards for cadets.

The visit concluded with General Bevli expressing his appreciation for the candid feedback from cadets, which will contribute to improving training methods and addressing administrative needs.

Shiv Sena extends helping hand to unemployed youth

Launches online employment, complaint and assistance facility

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu and Kashmir unit today launched the party's website regarding placement, complaint and assistance facilities.

In a program organized at Jammu Press Club, party state chief Manish Sahni launched a website named "Shivsenajk.in" regarding the said facilities.

Sahni said that increasing unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir is a matter of deep concern. Today we are at the next position in terms of unemployment after Lakshadweep and Andaman Nicobar.

The total unemployment rate of Jammu and Kashmir has reached 11.8 percent. According to the data of July-September quarter of 2024, 32 percent of the youth between 15 to 29 years are unemployed. Sahni



said that this effort will work to curb unemployment to a large extent. Sahni said that the needs of the corporate and industry sector will be fulfilled through the applications received. This facility will be completely free.

Along with this, public issues, complaints and help facilities have also been provided on the website. Anyone can reach us with your legitimate complaints against any government and private departments through the website. Every possible effort

will be made to resolve them. If the complainant wishes, his name and identity will be kept completely confidential. Sahni appealed to the youth and the public to give him a chance to serve and to spread the website to other people through social media so that more and more people can take advantage of this facility.

On this occasion Meenakshi Chhibber, Bharat Mahajan, Vikas Bakshi, Balwant Singh, Raj Singh, Sanjeev Kohli, Rajesh Jandial, Rohan Malwal were present.

Jammu Railway Division Heralds New Era of Growth: Varinderjeet Singh

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: The establishment of Jammu's own Railway Division has finally become a reality, fulfilling a decades-long demand that promises to transform the region's connectivity and economic landscape. Championed tirelessly by Varinderjeet Singh, Senior Vice President BJP Jammu & Kashmir and Chairman National Sikh Front, this milestone underscores years of advocacy and vision.

The 70th division of Indian Railways, carved from the Ferozpur Division, will oversee the crucial 742-kilometer Pathankot-Jammu-Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail corridor. Positioned as a critical transportation hub, the Jammu Railway Division is set to enhance freight movement, improve passenger services, and serve as a cornerstone for regional development. Calling the announcement a "game-changing moment," Varinderjeet Singh emphasized that it is "not just a victory for Jammu but a leap for



ward for its prosperity and integration."

During his tenure on the Railway Advisory Board, Singh relentlessly advocated for the division while also pressing for direct train routes to Anandpur Sahib in Punjab and Sri Hazaar Sahib in Maharashtra to meet the aspirations of the Sikh community. His leadership within the National Sikh Front ensured that these demands gained momentum over the years, reflecting his unwavering commitment to Jammu's progress.

The division's benefits extend beyond logistics. By simplifying trade routes and enhancing access to key markets, it is set to boost industries, agriculture, and commerce across the region. Tourism, particularly reli-

gious tourism, will see new heights as sites like Mata Vaishno Devi become more accessible. Singh underscored that the project's ripple effect will uplift not only Jammu but also Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, and Punjab, integrating them more deeply into India's development framework.

Aligning with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for modernized railways and regional empowerment, this move is a cornerstone of national growth. Varinderjeet expressed heartfelt gratitude to all who stood behind the cause, reiterating optimism for the realization of other demands such as dedicated trains to major religious destinations.

"This division is not just about connectivity—it's about opportunity, unity, and a brighter future," Singh said, calling the project a long-awaited stepping stone toward a self-reliant Jammu & Kashmir. With this historic development, Jammu has firmly cemented its place on India's map of progress and innovation.

3-day training programme for MLAs begins in Jammu

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: A three-day training programme for newly elected MLAs of Jammu and Kashmir commenced on Thursday.

The orientation programme, scheduled from January 9 to 11, 2025, is being held at the Central Hall of the J&K Legislative Assembly in Jammu. It is being organized in collaboration with the Parliamentary Research and Training Institute for Democracies (PRIDE), Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi.

A source said that the Speaker stressed the importance of imparting training to the newly elected legislators to enable them to effectively present matters of public interest before the House.

The programme, organized by the J&K Legislative Assembly Secretariat in collaboration with PRIDE, aims to equip the new legislators with essential knowl-

edge of parliamentary practices, procedures, and the conduct of business in the House. This initiative holds particular significance as the Legislative Assembly was constituted on October 8, 2024, and over 50 of the current members are first-time legislators. The programme seeks to prepare them to fulfill their legislative responsibilities effectively.

Key topics to be covered during the orientation include legislative processes, budgetary procedures, executive accountability, the committee system, and effective legislative practices. Eminent parliamentarians such as Dr. Sanjay Jaiswal, NK Premchandran, and Dr. Satyapal Singh will lead discussions, alongside senior officers from the Lok Sabha Secretariat. Participants will also gain insights into the National e-Vidhan Application (NEVA), a digital initiative aimed at streamlining legislative processes.

Rajesh Gupta calls on Minister Javed Rana



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 9: Rajesh Gupta, NC leader, on Thursday called on Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Environment and Ecology of Jammu and Kashmir Javed Ahmed Rana and discussed the problems faced by the community and others in Jagti area of Jammu.

Highlighting the plight of people due to phlegmatic attitude of the helmsmen and snarling development scenario during LG rule.

Gupta apprised Javed Rana about the complete failure of BJP run

proxy govt, in carrying out development works as well as addressing the problems of the people.

Gupta alleged that LG administration has miserably failed to implement the development schemes meant for the people of Jammu. "Due to callous attitude of the officers/people sitting at the helm of affairs, the funds sanctioned for the implementation of development schemes are getting lapsed. Gupta further said by betraying the Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir is a huge loss.

After giving a patient

hearing to Rajesh Gupta, Javed Rana said that all other parties have been badly exposed in J&K as no one cared about the welfare of people because except rhetoric there is no development on ground. He said that people should extend support to the National Conference as this is the only 'Tanjeem' (Organisation) which can bail out people from the misery of underdevelopment and discrimination. He also assured to project the aforesaid demands before the concerned quarters for an early redressal.

Javed Ahmed Rana maintained that it is only National Conference which can live upto the expectations of the people of J&K as all other parties have been exposed badly.

Javed Rana said this during an interaction with National Conference leader Rajesh Gupta.

SMVDU students participated in Building Material Expo 25

Top News Report

KATRA, Jan 9: The students of B.Arch., School of Architecture & Landscape Design (SoALD) of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University participated in the 11th Building Material Exposition organized by the Indian Institute of Architects (IIA), Jammu & Kashmir Chapter at Jammu. The students had exhibited their academic curricular work under the supervision of Ar. Abhiney Gupta, Head, SoALD and Ar. Aditya Kumar Singh, Associate Professor, SoALD and both Executive Members, IIA J&K Chapter, which was consisting of Architectural Designs & models of various building typologies such as Residence, Cultural Centre, Hospital, Shopping Complex etc. The

students had received the huge applaud and appreciation from the visitors, especially the Architects & construction fraternity.


The students of architecture, the aspiring Architects have gained the exposure to the Construction Industry especially to the various state of art building materials, fixtures & furnishings that are indispensable for the execution & finishing of the designed buildings.

The faculty members of SoALD who are also associates and fellow members of IIA, namely, Ar. Abhimanyu Sharma & Ar. Navin Gupta respectively had cooperated in curating the initiative with IIA, J&K Chapter.

The Best UG thesis Award was also felicitated by the IIA, J&K Chapter to Mr. Debjyoti

Mukhopadhyay under the supervision of Ar. Abhiney Gupta in order to boost the academic rigor & industry interface. The collaborative efforts of the SoALD with Professional bodies such as IIA have brought the school to achieve 16th NIRF 2022 rank.

The career in the profession of Architecture not only serve the society with sustainable habitable spaces but also enhances the entrepreneurial livelihood. Prof. Pragati Kumar, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of the SMVD University congratulated the school for this initiative of exposure of the students to the professional industry. The student participation was facilitated by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University.



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