

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025

Daily Evening Newspaper

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Makar Sankranti 2025| Karishma Tanna opens up about Sankranti celebrations



PM Modi greets people on Makar Sankranti, Bihu



Sri Lankan President Dissanayake arrives in Beijing on four-day visit to China

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BRIEFLY

Kashmir remains in grip of severe cold

SRINAGAR, Jan 14 (Agencies): Kashmir continues to be in the grip of a cold wave as the minimum temperatures stayed several degrees below freezing point in the valley, the meteorological department said on Tuesday.

The valley is likely to witness mainly dry weather over the next few days, it said.

The minimum temperature in Srinagar settled at minus 4.1 degrees Celsius on Monday night, up from the previous night's minus 5.1 degrees Celsius, according to the meteorological department.

North Kashmir's tourist resort of Gulmarg, known for skiing, recorded a minimum temperature of minus 6.2 degrees Celsius, slightly up from the previous night's minus 6.5 degrees Celsius.

Pahalgam, one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath Yatra in south Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 7.8 degrees Celsius, down from minus 8.4 degrees Celsius the night before.

The minimum temperature was minus 5.6 degrees Celsius in Qazigund, minus 5.5 degrees Celsius in Konibal in Pampore town, minus 4.7 degrees Celsius in Kupwara and minus 3.4 degrees Celsius in Kokernag.

The weather in the valley will be mostly cloudy but dry till January 18 with possibility of light snow at isolated places in the higher reaches on January 15 and 16, the meteorological department said.

Kashmir is currently in the grip of 'Chillai-Kalan' — the harshest period of winter.

During the 40 days of 'Chillai-Kalan', which began on December 21, the chances of snowfall are the highest and the temperature drops considerably.

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

Kashmir pays tribute to Veteran freedom fighter Shamboo Nath Bhan and other freedom fighters

JAMMU, Jan 14 (Agencies): Speaking at the remembrance anniversary function of veteran freedom fighter and spiritual personality of Kashmir Pt Shamboo Nath Bhan noted lawyer

BJP Govt treats Delhi, Kashmir equally: Union Minister Rajnath Singh

JAMMU, Jan 14 (Agencies): Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday lauded Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for his efforts to reduce the distance between hearts of people of J&K and Delhi, and asserted that the BJP government treats Delhi and Kashmir equally.

Singh was addressing the ninth armed forces veterans' day rally at the Tanda Artillery brigade in Akhnoor sector near here.

"Kashmir was treated differently (by previous



governments) in the past as a result our brothers and sisters in the region could not get connected with Delhi as it should have been. I do not want to go into the past as our government's big-

gest achievement is that we have been working to bridge 'dil ki duri' (distance between hearts) between Kashmir and the rest of the country. "I congratulate Chief Minister Omar Abdullah

for taking the right steps to help overcome the little bit of gap (which is still there)," the defence minister said.

The defence minister slammed Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq for his remarks against India, and said that Jammu and Kashmir is incomplete without PoK.

He also extended Makar Sankranti and New Year greetings to the veterans, and said their presence in

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CM Omar Abdullah praises Armed Forces for safeguarding Country



JAMMU, Jan 14 (Agencies): Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday praised the armed forces for safeguarding the country and its people, assuring the veterans of his government's complete support in mitigating their prob-

lems. He said efforts are underway to improve and strengthen the relationship between the government and the forces.

Abdullah was addressing a function organised by the Army at Tanda Artillery Brigade in the

Akhnoor sector near Jammu to celebrate the ninth Armed Forces Veterans' Day celebrations. Defence minister Rajnath Singh, Lt Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan and General Officer Commanding-in-chief M V Suchindra Kumar were prominent among those who attended the event.

"Today I consider myself lucky to be among you on this occasion... You are the people who gave everything for this nation. You are those people who did not worry about your

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Lieutenant Governor pays tribute to ex-servicemen on Armed Forces Veterans Day

SRINAGAR, Jan 14 (Agencies): Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today paid tributes to ex-servicemen on Armed Forces Veterans Day. He said soldiers protecting borders are the

guarantee of security and development of the nation.

Taking to micro-blogging site X (formerly Twitter) LG Manoj Sinha said: "On Veterans Day, paid tribute to

ex-servicemen of the Armed Forces & attended commemorative event presided over by Hon'ble Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh ji, at Akhnoor. I bow my

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6 Army Soliders injured in accidental mine blast along LoC in Rajouri

JAMMU, Jan 14 (Agencies): At least six Army personnel were on Tuesday injured in a landmine explosion in a forward village in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The troops were on



patrol duty when one of the soldiers accidentally stepped over the landmine near Khamba Fort in Nowshera sector around 10.45 am, triggering the explosion, the officials said.

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Natural cave of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine in J&K opened for devotees



KATRA/JAMMU, Jan 14 (Agencies): The natural cave at Mata Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta hills in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district was opened for devotees for Makar Sankranti celebrations on Tuesday, officials said.

The doors of the old cave was opened for devotees after spe-

cial prayers which was among others attended by Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board Anshul Garg, they said.

The natural cave within the sanctum sanctorum of the shrine is usually opened during winter months when the rush of devotees is less. Many devotees wait eagerly

for the day to have 'darshan' at the shrine through the natural cave which remains closed for most part of the year owing to safety issues.

"The natural cave is open for the devotees from today, depending on the rush of the devotees. We will allow pilgrims to have 'darshan' of the old cave only when the number is less than 10,000 so that they do not face any inconvenience," Garg said.

He said the pilgrimage is progressing smoothly from the new cave which can accommodate a large number of pilgrims without any difficulty.

Officials said more than 1.50 lakh pilgrims have visited the cave

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SHA suspends empanelment of Shifa Hospital, Srinagar for six months

SRINAGAR, Jan 14 (Agencies): The State Health Agency (SHA) in Jammu and Kashmir has suspended the empanelment of Shifa hospital, Srinagar for violating the guidelines issued by NHA.

As per an order issued by State Health Agency, a penalty of over Rs 26 lakh has been imposed for the illegal payments collected from aggrieved beneficiaries.

"State Health Agency (SHA), J&K received a number of grievances/complaints against Empaneled Health Care Provider Shifa Medical Centre, Srinagar for violating the guidelines issued by the National Health Authority, New Delhi. Show Cause

Notices were issued to the hospital for all such cases and the hospital did not reply to them within the timeframe as mentioned in the guidelines. On the basis numerous grievances/complaints registered against the hospital, a team of officers/officials conducted a surprise visit to the hospital on 23/11/2024 and during interaction with the beneficiaries/patients it was observed that the hospital is flagrantly violating the guidelines of the scheme including coercing the patients to incur out of pocket expenditure, denial of treatment to the patients," reads the order.

"Again a Show Cause Notice was served

upon the hospital on 18/12/2024 to explain their stand with regard to cases highlighted during the surprise visit to the hospital, however, the hospital again did not reply to the said Show Cause Notice within mandated five working days, as Hospital Empanelment and De-empanelment Guidelines," it reads.

"The case of the hospital along with all the relevant documents was placed before the State Empanelment Committee during its meeting on 26/12/2024 for deliberation/decision," it reads.

"It was decided, in accordance with the Hospital Empanelment Guidelines, that the

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TENTH DAY / KRIYA

With deep grief and sorrow we inform that **Tenth Day** of our beloved **Sh. Raman Chander Antahal** will be performed on 15.01.2025 and **Kriya** on 18/01/2025 at our residence W. No. 3, Chenani.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Nirmal (Wife)
Father & Mother
Purshotam Chand & Krishana Rani
Brother and Sister in law
Dinesh Antahal & Geeta Rani
Sister & Brother in law
Sudha Rani & Pardeep Singh Jamwal
Sister & Brother in Law
Rama Rani & Dr Ram Singh Sambyal
(Daughters)
Shreya & Shivika
(Nephews & Niece)
Samrdev Antahal, Parnav Antahal, Chitrananda Antahal



Sh. Raman Chander Antahal

OBITUARY/10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief this is to inform that My Brother **Sh. Ajit Raina** S/o Late Sh. J.N. Raina original resident of Village Sirmoo, Pulwama and Sarat Nagar, Rawalpura Srinagar, has left for his heavenly abode on 10th of January-2025.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed on Saturday the 18th of January-2025 at Pune.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt. Raj Dulari Raina (Mother)
Smt. & Sh. Nancy & Ashok Raina (Aunt & Uncle)
Anjee Raina (Wife)
Anjali & Anil Raina (Brother & Sister in law)
Lyra & Ajay Raina (Brother & Sister in law)
Kristika Raina-Bhan & Avinash Bhan (Daughter & Son in Law)
Kaishan, Kanisha, Mariyam, Agastya (Children)
Pune Address: 8, LIVSTONIA III PALM GROVES, B.T.KAWDE ROAD, GHORPADI, PUNE 411 036.
CONTACT : ANJILEE : +91 89834 67069, ANIL : +91 98603 15559



SH. AJIT RAINA

10TH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved father **Sh. Thaker Singh Bhou** (Founder of Nand Public Hc. Sec School) R/o Dogra Nagar, Muthi, Jammu on 2nd January, 2025.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed at our residence H.No. 422, Sec-2, Dogra Nagar, Lower Roop Nagar, Jammu on 11th January 2025 (Saturday) at 11:00 AM.

13TH DAY KRIYA shall be performed at our residence on 15th January (Wednesday) 2025 at 12:00 Noon.

GRIEVING LOVED ONES

Smt. Ratna Bhou - Wife
Sons
Paramjeet Singh Bhou
Shubam Singh Bhou
Daughters and Son-in-laws
Reena Bhou and Kuljeet Singh Raju
Ruchi Bhou and Sandeep Singh Chib
Sujata Bhou and Randeesh Singh Koch



Sh. Thaker Singh Bhou

Grandchildren : Nityansh, Ranvik Kya, Prayesh, Devanya

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With deep sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved father **Sh. Kasturi Lal Gupta** S/o Lt. Sh. Bhagat Ram Gupta, R/o, Govind Pura, Kulian Old Satwari, Jammu, who left for his heavenly abode on Monday 06-01-2025.

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed on 15-01-2025, Wednesday at our residence Govindpur Kulian Old Satwari Chatha near SBI Bank at 12:00 Noon.

Grief Stricken:

Sh. Sanjeev Gupta & Smt. Arli Gupta (Son & Daughter-in-Law)
Smt. Seema Gupta & Sh. Surinder Mohan Gupta (Daughter & Son in law)
Smt. Teena Gupta & Sh. Vikas Gupta (Daughter & Son-in-Law)
Smt. Garo Gupta (Sister in law)
Smt. Rani Gupta & Sh. Harbans Lal Gupta (Sister and Brother in law)
Smt. Kamala Gupta & Sh. Subash Gupta (Sister & Brother in law)
Grand Children: Purica, Manan, Sagrika, Karan, Vansh
CONTACT: 9419135206



Sh. Kasturi Lal Gupta

ADH-BARKHI

Six months have passed but our connection never lost. Your loss will always sting us. But now, everything we do is to honor you & celebrate your life. We love you & miss you each day.

ADH BARKHI will be performed at our residence in Jammu, on 15th January, 2025 between 12:00 Noon to 2:00 pm.

ADDRESS - Lane 2, Last House (Right side) Near India Cake House, Udheywala road, Lower Muthi (181205), Jammu.

Deeply Remembered by

Neelam Bhat (Wife)
Anika & Sahil Tandon- Daughter & Son-in-law
Anik Ashok- Son
Avanika- Daughter
Tiaana- Granddaughter



ASHOK KUMAR
01 Jan 1964 - 24 June 2024

TENTH DAY/ KRIYA/RASAM PAGRI

A cherished grandmother, selfless mother and a loving wife to Lt. SUB. Talab Singh Lalotra (2nd BN. The Dogra Regiment), **Smt. Satya Devi** passed away peacefully on 2nd January 2025. The following rituals will be performed at our residence, Ward No. 4, Hiranagar, Kathua:

Tenth Day on Saturday, January 11, 2025 at 12:00 Noon.

Kriya on Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 12:00 Noon.

Rasam Pagri on Wednesday, January 15, 2025 at 01:30 PM.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-

Son and Daughter-in-Law :
SUB. Sarabjeet Singh (Retd.), JKCA & Smt. Dolly Singh
Daughters and Sons-in-Law:
Smt. Neelam Kumari & Sh. Arun Singh Slathia
Smt. Usha Rani & Sh. Rakesh Singh Jasrotia
Grandchildren:
Minan, Dolma, Vaasavi, Harsh, Tapasvani
Ph: 7006242460, 7889347748, 8493879 705



Smt. Satya Devi

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad demise of **Smt Asha Kundan Raina** W/o Late Sh. K.N Raina Originally resident of Nowgam, Shangus Anantnag Kashmir at present Ward No 59 Khajuria Mohalla Near Jesus Care Convent School Paloura Jammu.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed at Akhnoor Ghat on 21-01-2025 and **Assembly** will be performed at our residence 12.00 Noon.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Daughter in law & Son
Smt Princy & Sh. Inder Raina, 9906101428
Daughter & Son in Law
Smt Kiran & Sh. Bharat Ji Bhat, 7889522409
Devrani & Devar
Smt Sarla & Sh. M.L. Raina, 9906077338
Smt Babil & Sh. H.L. Raina, 7006635726
Smt Rozy and Sh. C.L. Raina, 9622191360
Smt Jyoti and Sh. N.K. Raina 7006439065
Sister in Law
Smt Jaya Kishori and Late Sh. S.N Pandita
Late Smt.Santosh and Sh. H.L. Bhat
Smt Sarla & Sh. A.K. Pandita



SMT ASHA KUNDAN RAINA

KIRYA/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Vijay Nagpal (Adv.)** S/o Late Ramkrishan Nagpal on Saturday, 4th. January 2025.

Kirya will be performed on Wednesday, 15th. January 2025 at 12.30 p.m. at our residence H. No. 56-A, Sector E, Bharat Nagar, Talab Tillo, Jammu.



Late Sh. Vijay Nagpal

Uthala will be performed on Wednesday, 15th. January 2025 from 4.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. at Hari Mandir, Rehari, Jammu.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Neelam Gupta - Wife (Retd. Principal)
NAGPAL FAMILY | GUPTA FAMILY | ARORA FAMILY
Mob.: 6305892702 | 7006454553 | 9906292354

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the untimely sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Pawan Ji Mantoo** S/o Sh. Sohan Lal Mantoo originally from Sangrampora Sopore, Kashmir at present R/o H.No. 372, Lane No-3, Lakkar Mandi, Jammu, Jammu.

TENTH DAY shall take place on 17th January 2025 (Friday) at Akhnoor Ghat.

ASSEMBLY will take place at 12 Noon at Muthi Ghat.

GRIEF STRICKEN
Smt. Sheetal Mantoo -Wife
Parents
Smt. Reeta Ji & Sh. Sohan Lal Mantoo
Aunts & Uncles
Smt. Phooli Ji & Bushan Lal Mantoo
Smt. Raj Shree & Sh. Kumar Ji Mantoo
Smt. Sumen Ji W/o Lt. Shubal Lal Mantoo - Aunt
Sister & Brother-in-law
Smt. Meerakshi Suri & Sh. Deepak Suri
Smt. Kanchan & Deepak Mantoo - Bhabi & Brother
Sister-in-law & Brother-in-law
Smt. Manisha & Rocky Shan
Nihar Mantoo, Vivaan Mantoo - Sons
Mobile : 9419124265, 7889553379, 9652596720, 7006201191

Sh. Pawan Ji Mantoo

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform that **Sh. Mohan Lal Bhat** S/o Lt. Sh. Prem Nath Bhat originally from Delina, Baramulla, A/p Q.No. 330 Block-P, Tophsherkhania, Jammu left for heavenly abode on 8th Jan 2025.

10TH DAY KRIYA will be performed on 17th Jan 2025 at Akhnoor Ghat and Assembly at Muthi Ghat, near Directorate of School Education at 11:00 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Bushan Lal Bhat & Bitta Ji Bhat - Brother & Sister-in-law
Roshan Lal Bhat & Dolly Ji- Brother & Sister-in-law
Vijay Mohan Bhat & Ruby Bhat - Son & Daughter-in-law
Anita Pandita & Sunil Pandita - Daughter & Son-in-law
Raj Mohan Bhat -Son
Contact Nos: 9797375166, 9419122337, 9906175273



SH. MOHAN LAL BHAT

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved Mother **Smt. Shama Kakroo** W/o Lt. Kashi Nath Kakroo erstwhile R/o Ganpatyar Srinagar, Kashmir presently residing at Lane 25, Block 159/1, Jagti Colony.

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed at Sainik School Ghat Nagrota on 16th Jan., 2025 (Thursday) thereafter **Assembly** will be held at Community Hall Lane No. 25 at 12.00 Noon.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Raj Kumar Kakroo and Smt. Simmi Kakroo (Son & Daughter-in-law)
Kakroo's, Braroo's, Kuloo's, Bhat's, Zadoo's



Smt. Shama Kakroo

10TH DAY KRIYA

With heavy hearts and profound grief, we bid farewell to our beloved **Sh. Amarnath Miskeen** (Ex-Grindlays Bank, Srinagar), resident of 328/13 Shivpora, Ram Munah Bagh, Srinagar, J&K, who left for his heavenly abode on 6th Jan 2025 in Japur. **CREMATION** was held on 7th Jan 2025. A patch and a beacon of love, kindness, and strength, his warmth and ever-smiling demeanor touched everyone's lives. He also leaves an irreplaceable void in our hearts.

The 10th Day Kriya will be performed on Wednesday, 15th Jan 2025, at Swam Path, Moksha Dam, Shivas Path, Mameovar, Jampur, at 9 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN
Mrs. Paupa & Astar Krishna Miskeen (Bhabi & Brother)
Mrs. Sneha Kaul (Daughter)
Mrs. Veena Kaul (Daughter)
Mrs. Ronu & Anil Bhan (Daughter & Son-in-law)
Mrs. Sanita & Kamal Ganji (Daughter & Son-in-law)
Mrs. Ronu & Sameer Miskeen (Daughter-in-law & Son)
Mrs. Vini & Anil Labroo (Daughter & Son-in-law)
Mrs. Anjali & Umesh Chagga (Daughter & Son-in-law)
Mrs. Anjana & Sanil Tulu (Daughter & Son-in-law)
Grandchildren: Anshika & Anshika, Isha & Shameer, Anshu & Divyika, Raj & Ruben, Utkarsh & Megha, Yashu & Qas, Sheena, Pranaya
OTHER RELATIVES:
GADROOS, AMBARDARS, PANDITS AND KAWS



Sh. Amarnath Miskeen (Ex-Grindlays Bank, Srinagar)

TENTH DAY KRIYA

Words would be too feeble to embody the pain of informing, that **Sh. Ram Krishen Koul (Saraf)** S/o Late Sh. Damodar Koul (Saraf), original resident of Agahamam, Habbokadal, Srinagar, presently at 311-A, Master Lane, Bohri, Talab Tillo, Jammu, left his mortal frame for attainment of eternal peace at VAIKUNTHA.

TENTH DAY KRIYA shall be performed at Akhnoor Ghat on Thursday, January 16, 2025, followed by the **ASSEMBLY** which shall be held at Muthi Ghat at 11:00 AM.

Grief Stricken

Usha Koul (Wife)
Sameksha Koul (Daughter)
Shiveta and Sameer Koul (Daughter-in-law and Son)
Saharshinie Koul (Grand Daughter)
All Koul's, Saraf's, Bhat's, Raina's and Khaptoo's)
9796012233, 9796007422.



Sh. Ram Krishen Koul (Saraf)

TENTH DAY KRIYA

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW WE REGRET TO INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED FATHER SH. PRITHVI NATH BHAT S/O LATE SH. NATHJI BHAT ORIGINALLY RESIDENT OF SIRMOO TEHSIL & DISTRICT PULWAMA, CURRENTLY RESIDING AT H.NO. 76 SEC A2 LAXMIPURAM CHINORE BEHIND SHIV MANDIR JAMMU ON 08TH JANUARY, 2025.

THE MOURNING FROM IN-LAWS SIDE BEING OBSERVED AT SAME PLACE.

SH. BRUJ LAL RAINA-SHABAJI (BROTHER IN LAW)
10TH DAY KRIYA SHALL TAKE PLACE ON 17TH JANUARY, 2025, (FRIDAY) AT AKHNOOR GHAT JAMMU AND THE ASSEMBLY WILL TAKE PLACE AT 11:00 AM AT OUR RESIDENCE.

GRIEF STRICKEN:
DAUGHTERS & SONS IN-LAW
SMT GIRJA MUNSHI & LATE SH ASHOK MUNSHI (8871869311)
SMT SUNITA BHAT & SH VINOD KR. BHAT (7006953930, 9796982230)
SONS & DAUGHTERS IN-LAW
SH SUNIL BHAT & SMT LOVELY (9419228880, 9149583260)
SH SATISH BHAT & SMT KHUSHBOO (9419146830, 7006963224)
SH PYARAJ LAL BHAT & SMT. PRINCY BHAT (9419631490)
SH RAMESH KR. BHAT & SMT. CHAMPA BHAT (7839707874)
GRAND DAUGHTERS & GRAND SONS
NISHA & PRADHAT JI, RUCHIKA & RAWAN JI, PRIYKA VINNET JI, SAHIL & PREETI, RAHUL & REETA, SUMIT, ROHIT, AKASH, KOMAL, NAFIK, TIARA, MISHA AND RIVAN



SH. PRITHVI NATH BHAT

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of **Smt. Shanta Sumbli**, wife of Sh. M.L. Sumbli, establishe resident of Chabala/Chapora, Srinagar presently residing at 94/10 Mohi. Nagar, Dehadun. She passed away peacefully on 11th January 2025 at 5:40 PM.

The 10th Day Kriya will be performed on Monday, 20th January 2025 at Tiplewar Temple, Dehadun.

Smt. Shanta Sumbli was a beacon of love, strength, and wisdom for her family and everyone who knew her. Her kindness and generosity will always be remembered and cherished. May her noble soul attain eternal peace.

In Grief:

Sh. M.L. Sumbli (Husband)
Sh. H.N. Sumbli (Brother in law)
Smt. Sheeb Farida (Sister in law)
Smt. Rita and Ravinder Koul (Daughter and Son in law)
Smt. Sunita and Ravi Sumbli (Daughter in law and Son)
Smt. Ayashi and Anmol Sumbli (Grand Daughter in law and Grandson)
Chruv Sumbli (Grandson)
And, samastya Sumbli, Bhan, Panika and Koul Parivar.
Contact number: 982032141



Smt. Shanta Sumbli

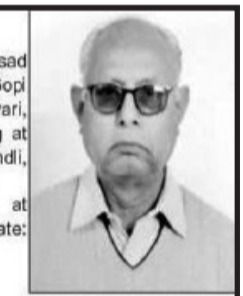
TENTH DAY KRIYA

We are deeply saddened to inform the sad demise of **Sh. P.K. Dhar** son of Late Dr. Gopi Nath Dhar, originally from Motiyar Rainawari, Srinagar (Kashmir), and currently residing at S-1, Flat-602, Kings Bury, TDI City, Kundli, Sonapat (Haryana).

The 10th Day Kriya will be performed at Kheradi Village, Yamuna Ghat, Kundli Date: 16th January 2025 Time: 8:30 AM.

Grief-Stricken

Nalini Dhar (Wife)
Sh. Rattan Lal Dhar (Brother) 9619028006.
Sh. Ashish Dhar (Son) - 9619028006
Sh. Aseem Dhar (Son)
Samasth Dhar Parivar & Samasth Moza Parivar



Sh. P.K. Dhar

KRIYA & UTHALA

We regret to inform you the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Gurdev Karam Chand Ji** who left for heavenly abode on Saturday, 4th January, 2025.

KRIYA shall be performed at our residence, House number 125, Sector 3, Trikutangar Jammu, at 12 Noon on Tuesday, 14th January 2025.

RASAM PAGRI/UTHALA shall be performed at Shiv Mandir Sector-3 Trikuta Nagar Jammu from 4 to 5 pm on Wednesday, 15th January 2025.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Daughter in law and Sons
Smt. Kavita and Sushil Sharma.
Smt. Kanchan and Ramesh Dogra.
Grandchildren- Aditya, Aditi and Adhikansh.
ASL TUTORIALS (STAFF AND FACULTY)
Mob: 94191 94232, 8492841444



SH. GURDEV KARAM CHAND JI

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and deep sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Krishna Kar**, wife of Dr. H.N. Kar, resident of 277 Lane 15 Tawi Vihar Colony Sidhra Jammu, who departed for her heavenly abode on Monday 6th January 2025.

The TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed on Wednesday, 15th January 2025, at Akhnoor Ghat, Jammu, at 8:30 AM.

A prayer meeting will be held at our residence at 12:30 PM on the same day.

Your presence will be a source of solace to the grieving family.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Daughter - Arunima Ganjoo
Son in Law - Sanjeev Ganjoo
Son - Ashish Kar
Daughter in Law - Manju Kar
Son - Anuj Kar
Daughter in Law - Devanshi Kar
Grand children : Aarushika Ganjoo, Akshat Ganjoo, Hurshil Kar, Rishi Kar, Mehr Kar, Myra Kar
PH: 9419143311, 9892373403



KRISHNA KAR

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PARAKH supported capacity building workshop concludes at JKBOSE

Upskilling imperative for growth of teachers: Chairman

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: A five-day workshop and capacity-building programme on Holistic Progress Card and Standardization of Question Paper Template under the PARAKH initiative organized by NCERT concluded successfully at the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) Rehari, here today.

As many as 90 educators participated in this capacity building programme.

Chairman JKBOSE Prof. (Dr.) Parikshat Singh Manhas was the Chief Guest, while Secretary Sudershan Kumar was the Guest of Honour at the Valedictory Function.

In his valedictory address, Prof. Parikshat Singh highlighted the multifaceted role of educators, stating, "Teaching is the noblest of all noble professions. However, teaching is not the sole responsibility of educators; they are also tasked with evaluating students. Balanced



question paper setting is a crucial element of the evaluation process". He also emphasized that upskilling is imperative for the growth of teachers.

Secretary JKBOSE Sudershan Kumar emphasized the significance of such initiatives, remarking, "Workshops like these play a vital role in fostering a vibrant assessment ecosystem, which is integral to holistic education."

Director Academics Dr. Sudhir Singh lauded the Academic Division for its commendable efforts in organizing the workshop. He announced that similar

workshops would be conducted in a cascade manner to further enhance the capacity of question paper setters across the board.

Earlier, Deputy Director, Yasir H. Sirwal presented a detailed report on the five-day workshop, expressing gratitude to the expert resource persons for their invaluable deliberations.

He explained that the workshop was conducted to equip educators with the skills needed to design and develop a Holistic Progress Card for the secondary stage.

Two highly experienced and well-trained

resource persons from PARAKH, NCERT, guided the participants throughout the program. The training focused on creating progress cards that not only assess academic performance but also consider the awareness, sensitivity, and creativity of students, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of their development. Additionally, the educators were trained in the art and science of designing balanced question papers. This involved understanding how to cater to the diverse learning needs and abilities of all types of students, ensuring fair-

ness and inclusivity. The workshop emphasized innovative assessment practices and equipped educators with tools to enhance the learning process while maintaining a student-centric approach.

Dr Romesh Kumar, Incharge Principal and Promila Koul Lecturer while giving their feedback on behalf of participating educators lauded the efforts of JKBOSE in organizing such programmes and requested for follow up to such initiatives to further strengthen the skills of trained educators.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Ashutosh Parashar, Academic Officer. The programme was skillfully anchored by Ms. Sugandh, Academic Officer.

Other attendees included Syed Kashif Hashmi, Chander Kumar (Academic Officers), and officials from the CDR Wing JD JKBOSE, who collectively contributed to the success of the event.

DSHJ flags off FPO Members of Jammu Division on 5-day exposure tour to Panipat, New Delhi



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: Director Sheep Husbandry Department Jammu Dr. Syed Moinul-Haq today flagged off group of 20 FPO Members/Entrepreneurs of Jammu Division on a 5-day exposure tour to Woollen Industries of Panipat and New Delhi to get acquainted with Promotion of Wool and Pelt for effective Processing & Marketing.

The tour has been organized under Holistic Agricultural Development Programme

(HADP)

Director advised the FPO Members/Entrepreneurs to take maximum benefits from this tour and learn best practices of Wool & Pelt from the experts during their stay at Panipat and New Delhi. "The objective of the exposure tour is to make farmers aware of the latest technological intervention in the field of Wool & Pelt to achieve the targets and goals," he added. He said under the Holistic Agricultural Development Programme (HADP) special attention has been given to

the capacity building of farmers and to achieve this target a number of programs have been devised.

The Farmers were advised to replicate the new technology that they will learn during the visit in their respective areas and further share it with other fellow members/farmers.

Principal Sheep and Wool Workers Training Class Kartholi Dr. Pritam Manhas; Incharge Training Class Kartholi Dr. Vijay Kumar Officer and VAS Dr. Anil Kumar, also accompanied the farmers during the exposure visit.

Those who were present on the occasion included Joint Director (Extension), Dr. Tara Chand; Deputy Director (Central) Dr. Surinder Gupta; Deputy Director (Planning) Shivali Sethi; Technical Officer Dr. Nasir Altaf Zargar and Publicity Officer Sheep Husbandry Department Jammu Asheesh Sharma, besides officers/officials of the Department.

DC reviews progress of NABARD RIDF projects in Poonch District

Top News Report

POONCH, Jan 14: Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal assessed the physical and financial progress of the NABARD Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) in Poonch district.

The meeting aimed to evaluate various developmental initiatives targeting infrastructure improvement in underserved areas.

During the discussions, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the need for expediting forest and revenue clearance procedures to streamline the development process for community benefit. He

stressed the importance of inter-departmental coordination to overcome developmental challenges and reviewed the status of road connectivity across the district's three subdivisions.

SDM Mendhar and SDM Surankote participated virtually, providing detailed updates on the ongoing works in their respective divisions.

Following a thorough discussion, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Executive Engineer of PWD to strictly adhere to the approved plans and expedite ongoing projects. He emphasized the need for a proactive approach in resolving

pending road issues.

Additionally, he instructed concerned executive engineers to prioritize the clearance of lapse-able funds, particularly under the district Capex.

The Deputy Commissioner also set a deadline for the completion of the BADP plan by the end of January 2025.

The meeting was attended by key officials including SE PWD (R&B), ACR Poonch, CPO, Xen PWD Division Poonch, Xen PHE, AEE's, and other concerned officers, all of whom are committed to enhancing infrastructure development in the district.

DC Poonch flags off Anti-Drug Marathon organized by Department of School Education

Top News Report

POONCH, Jan 14: In a significant step towards spreading awareness about the menace of drugs and fostering a drug-free society, an Anti-Drug Marathon was organized by the Department of School Education, Poonch, here today.

The event was flagged off from the DC Office by Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal in the presence of District Education Planning Officer (DEPO) Mukhtar Manhas, Deputy CEO Mohd Latif Choudhary, students, teachers and local dignitaries.

Participants, including students and faculty, enthusiastically ran through the main roads of Poonch, spreading the message of staying away from drugs and leading a healthy lifestyle.

The event culminated at the Sports Stadium where students took a solemn pledge to stay away from drugs and to educate their peers and communities about its harmful effects.

Addressing the gathering, the DC lauded the efforts of the Department of School Education for organizing such a meaningful initiative.

He urged the students to become ambassadors of change and to work collectively towards eradicating drug abuse from society.

District Education Planning Officer Mukhtar Manhas, in his address, highlighted the growing challenges posed by drug abuse among the youth and the need for sustained efforts to tackle this issue. "This marathon is not just a run but a movement to unite the community against the drug menace. We must inspire the younger generation to lead by example and adopt a lifestyle

free from drugs," he said.

Deputy CEO Mohammad Latif Choudhary commended the enthusiasm of the participants and the collaborative effort of teachers and students. He stated, "It is heartening to see the overwhelming support from students and educators for this cause. The Department of School Education will continue to focus on such initiatives that promote awareness and a positive lifestyle among the youth."

6-Day Entrepreneurship Development Programme concludes at JKEDI Jammu

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: A six-day Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP), under the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Employment Generation Programme (JKREGP), successfully concluded today at the District Centre of Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) Jammu.

The EDP was organized by JKEDI under the guidance of Director JKEDI Rajinder Kumar Sharma and aimed at nurturing aspiring entrepreneurs from Jammu district under the JKREGP scheme. A

total of 23 participants successfully completed the training program.

Throughout the six-day program, participants were trained in essential business concepts, including business plan formulation, marketing strategies, accounts management, record keeping, customer relationship management, and other relevant topics. The training also focused on business ventures in manufacturing, services, and agri-allied sectors. Participants explored small business opportunities such as retail outlets for cosmetics and ready-made goods, cattle feed units, electrical goods

stores, dairy farming, goat farming, commercial vehicle operations, and hardware stores in various parts of Jammu district.

The program was coordinated by District Nodal Officer, JKEDI Rajesh Kotwal, along with Office Associate Monika Salaria and Administrative Assistant Nauty Pandoh.

Speaking at the valedictory ceremony, Rajesh Kotwal emphasized the significance of entrepreneurship and self-employment in driving economic development in Jammu and Kashmir. He encouraged the participants to leverage the knowl-

edge and skills acquired during the program to establish sustainable business ventures.

Several participants shared their experiences, expressing confidence in embarking on their entrepreneurial journeys. They acknowledged the comprehensive training provided by JKEDI as instrumental in equipping them with the tools and confidence needed to realize their business aspirations.

The program is a testament to JKEDI's commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and empowering individuals to contribute to the region's socio-economic development.

MVD Doda hosts road safety awareness program

Top News Report

DODA, Jan 14: The Motor Vehicle Department (MVD), Doda, under the guidance of Transport Commissioner Vishesh Paul Mahajan and Deputy Commissioner, Harvinder Singh and the supervision of ARTO, Rajesh Gupta, organized a Road Safety Awareness Program at Paryote Pul Doda.

The program was conducted as part of National Road Safety Month-2025 to educate the public about the importance of road safety and promoting responsible driving practices.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from local drivers



and featured interactive sessions and demonstrations to promote

road safety awareness and encourage responsible behavior on the

roads.

Speaking on the occasion, the ARTO emphasized the need for collective efforts to minimize road accidents and ensure safety on the roads. He highlighted the importance of following traffic rules, wearing helmets, and avoiding reckless driving. Inspector MVD Robin also underscored the significance of such awareness programs in fostering a safer driving culture.

The program concluded with participants taking a pledge to adhere to road safety norms and promote responsible driving practices in their communities.

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EDITORIAL

Army Veterans Day:
Honoring Unsung Heroes

Army Veterans Day is a special occasion dedicated to recognizing the invaluable contributions of those who have served in the armed forces. Observed annually on January 14th, this day celebrates the courage, dedication, and sacrifices of veterans who have devoted their lives to protecting the nation. It is a time to honor their service, express gratitude, and acknowledge the enduring impact they have had on society.

The origins of Army Veterans Day date back to 2017, when the day was first observed in India. It commemorates the retirement of Field Marshal K.M. Cariappa, the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, on January 14, 1953. Since then, this day has been dedicated to honoring all army veterans who have served with distinction. The occasion underscores the importance of remembering their sacrifices and recognizing their role in preserving the nation's sovereignty and integrity.

Celebrations for Army Veterans Day are marked by various events organized by the armed forces, veterans' associations, and local communities. Parades and wreath-laying ceremonies are held at war memorials to honor the fallen heroes, with veterans and military officials paying tribute to their sacrifices. Reunions and meetings provide an opportunity for veterans to reconnect, share experiences, and celebrate their shared history. These gatherings foster camaraderie and a sense of belonging among former servicemen and women.

Many veterans are recognized for their exceptional service during these celebrations. Awards and honors are presented to highlight their bravery and dedication. Outreach programs are also organized to address the welfare needs of veterans, including healthcare camps, financial assistance, and pension-related support. Additionally, educational activities such as essay competitions and seminars are conducted to inspire younger generations and instill respect for the armed forces.

While Army Veterans Day is a day of celebration, it also brings attention to the challenges faced by veterans. Many struggle with healthcare issues, including physical injuries and mental health conditions such as PTSD. Access to quality medical care remains a critical concern for these heroes. Additionally, transitioning from military to civilian life can be difficult, with employment opportunities often limited despite the veterans' valuable skills and discipline.

Financial stability is another significant challenge, particularly for older veterans who may face pension-related issues. Adjusting to civilian life and finding a sense of purpose outside the military can also be emotionally taxing. These challenges underscore the need for comprehensive support systems to ensure veterans' well-being.

Society and the government have a vital role in supporting veterans. Government initiatives should focus on enhancing healthcare services, streamlining pension systems, and providing vocational training for post-retirement employment. At the community level, organizing fundraisers, volunteer programs, and mentorship initiatives can foster a sense of appreciation and solidarity.

Corporate involvement is equally important in supporting veterans. Companies can actively recruit former servicemen and women, recognizing their leadership qualities and work ethic. Offering flexible roles and tailored opportunities can ease their transition into the civilian workforce.

Army Veterans Day is more than just a tribute; it is a reminder of the debt of gratitude owed to these heroes. Their sacrifices have secured the freedoms and security enjoyed by citizens today. By addressing their needs, preserving their legacy, and honoring their contributions, we ensure that their service is never forgotten.

As we observe Army Veterans Day, let us take a moment to reflect on the courage and dedication of our veterans. Their selfless service is a source of inspiration, reminding us of the values of patriotism, discipline, and duty. In honoring them, we reaffirm our commitment to supporting those who have given so much for the nation.

Budget blueprint: Making MSMEs a growth engine

By: Gourav Vallabh

The transformation of India's micro, small and medium enterprises or MSMEs represents perhaps the most significant opportunity for achieving inclusive growth in this decade.

With 63.4 million enterprises contributing 30 percent to the national GDP and employing over 100 million people, this Indian sector's economic footprint is larger than the entire economies of, say, Thailand or Sweden. Yet, its potential remains significantly underused, primarily due to structural constraints that the upcoming Budget 2025 must address.

Closing the financing gap: The U K Sinha Committee estimated this gap to be Rs 20-25 lakh crore, about 7.3 percent of the GDP. Access to credit stands at 14 percent, significantly trailing China's 37 percent and the US's 50 percent.

Germany's KfW model offers a relevant framework—it operates as a government-owned development bank, providing credit guarantees and technical assistance, and acting as a second-tier lender through commercial banks. This model reduces lender risks, promotes private-sector involvement, and supports innovation while maintaining low default rates.

India could benefit from expanding the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises to include larger loans and differentiated guarantees like the KfW does. Incorporating financial aid with capacity-building initiatives, using digital infrastructure for secure data sharing, and collaborating with fintech firms to offer innovative lending solutions would help bridge the financing gap and promote sustainable growth.

Digital transformation: The post-pandemic era highlights the urgent need for



digital adoption among Indian MSMEs, with current rates at 20 percent, compared to Taiwan's 91 percent and Singapore's 95 percent. According to one report, of the 64 million MSMEs in India, only about 7.7 million have reached digital maturity.

Digital transformation is essential for improving productivity and competitiveness. Singaporean SMEs' Go Digital programme, launched in 2017, achieved 95 percent adoption through subsidies. Japan's targeted technical centres enabled MSMEs to access advanced manufacturing technologies by sharing infrastructure and reducing capital burdens. India should establish 100 digital transformation centres in key industrial clusters to replicate this and partner with IT firms for subsidised tools and training. Enhancing platforms like the government e-marketplace can encourage MSMEs to adopt digital solutions.

Market access: This is a significant challenge for Indian MSMEs, which contribute 49 percent of the country's exports but are underrepresented in global value chains. We should create an export development fund and a digi-

tal platform for market intelligence using tools like the directorate general of foreign trade (DGFT) portal.

The World Bank in 2019 highlighted the potential of alternative credit-scoring models using non-traditional data—like trade credit and utility payments—to enhance access for underserved businesses. In the US, lenders have used such data to assess the creditworthiness of small exporting businesses, leading to quicker loan approvals. Implementing a similar approach in India by focusing on export-specific metrics could enhance risk assessments, streamline loan processing, and empower export-oriented MSMEs.

Simplifying compliance: The formalisation of MSMEs should be prioritised in Budget 2025. Simplifying tax and compliance processes will encourage more MSMEs to formalise. Currently, MSMEs deal with complex filing requirements, which raise operational costs.

Learning from Brazil's SIMPLES programme, India could create a unified system integrating various taxes into a single filing with simplified rates and pre-filled forms. Existing platforms like GST Sahaj and Udyam can further facilitate

this process. Additionally, addressing the "missing middle" phenomenon—where small firms hesitate to grow due to regulatory complexities—can be achieved through a three-year transition window for those surpassing thresholds, accompanied by tax benefits to ease new compliance burdens.

Real-time monitoring: India's MSME sector needs a cohesive monitoring framework to assess its performance and effectively evaluate policy interventions. Inspired by Taiwan's SME Development Index, India should create a centralised MSME Performance Dashboard using existing platforms like Udyam and Champions portal. The dashboard could track key metrics such as credit flow (via Sidbi's MSME Pulse), technology adoption, market access and export performance (through DGFT), and employment generation and skill development.

To implement this, the government should establish a high-powered MSME transformation council, responsible for coordinating data collection and analysis. This would leverage digital tools for real-time monitoring.

The fiscal implications of these interventions must be viewed through the lens of potential returns. Malaysia's SME Masterplan provides empirical evidence of such returns: similar interventions increased their MSME contribution to GDP from 32 percent to 38 percent in five years.

The success of these interventions hinges on coordinated implementation across central and state governments, financial institutions and industry bodies. By addressing these issues, Budget 2025 can position MSMEs as the cornerstone of India's economic growth.

*(Professor of finance,
XLRI Xavier School of
Management)*

Remembrance of things past at the dawn of 2025

By: Makarand R
Paranjape

The new year began with a certain stillness. The year just gone by, 2024, had been eventful, even turbulent. There was no guarantee that 2025 would be any different, let alone better, for myself or the world. But whatever happened outside, I knew I had to retain my inner poise and calm. And that would only come from purity of intentions and cleansing the inner being. Through tapas, askesis.

A new year's resolution materialised: accept, not expect.

Then, on January 2, I met Sri Nandkishore Tiwari, better known as Guruji, who said almost the same thing to me: "Don't expect anything from anyone."

He had sent his book, Sahaj Smriti Yog, in original Hindi to me, asking me to write a preface or foreword. Unqualified to do so, I offered instead to write a shorter comment that might serve as a blurb or endorsement. I wrote it in Hindi, so let me translate, rather paraphrase, in English. "In this concise and concentrated booklet, Nandkishore Guruji explains and expounds 'Sahaja Smriti Yoga.' In short, it is realising one's true nature through a transformative relationship with the guru. Through this process, a spectator becomes a seer.

The unique feature of Sahaja Smriti Yoga is it eschews artificial, complex and cerebral methods of self-realisation. It emphasises direct experience through prajna or intuitive understanding. We may also call it the reorientation of our mentality towards wisdom.

The foundation of Sahaja Smriti Yoga, like many other paths in Sanatana Dharma, is a simple, ethical life, including waking up early, daily meditation, physical labour, and being true in thought, word and deed.



One's progress is nurtured in loving contact with the guru. Once the guru within us—that is, the divine discernment, vision and self-realisation, is awakened—we can become the natural medium of transformation of others."

Rereading Guruji's book brought to my mind an interesting comparison—given how deeply embedded Hindutva is in our political and cultural discourse today—with V D 'Veer' Savarkar's definition of who or what is a Hindu. In Essentials of Hindutva, after claiming at the outset that "Hindutva is not a word but a history", Savarkar asserts, "Hinduism is only a derivative, a fraction, a part of Hindutva."

Savarkar's entire exposition is dynamic, fluid and exploratory, rather than fixed or rigid as it is made out by critics and admirers alike. Initially, a large portion of the text is devoted just to the semantics and politics of naming, starting with an investigation into the meaning of 'Hindu'.

Savarkar then insists on racial and cultural commonality, invoking a common history, culture and civilisation; rituals, practices and festivals;

heroes, deities and gods. As also common enemies: "Nothing makes self-conscious of itself so much as a conflict with non-self." Those who fought against the repeated waves of invaders are Hindus: "Sanatanists, Satnamis, Sikhs, Aryas, Anaryas, Marathas and Madrasis, Brahmins and Panchamas—all suffered as Hindus and triumphed as Hindus."

It is only afterwards that Savarkar hones in on the nation or rashtira, the ideal that molds the many into one, the enormous diversity "individualised into a single being". Finally, towards the end, we have his famous thesis: "These are the essentials of Hindutva—a common nation (rashtra), a common race (jati) and a common civilisation (sanskriti)."

The entire idea is captured aphoristically in his own inimitable Sanskrit summation: "Aa Sindu Sindhu paryanta, Yasya Bharatbhumi Pitribhuh Punyabhushchaiva sa vai Hinduriti smritah." (From the Indus to the Indian ocean, those who regard Bharat as their fatherland and sacred land are known as Hindus.)

Political, cultural, social, even psychological—yes. But where is the spiritual element in Savarkar's approach to the essentials of Hindutva? Can one worship an idea or is the vital contact with a living guru mandatory? Jump to Nandkishore Guruji for whom the defining, if not only, trait of Sanatana Dharma is the gurusishya parampara or transmission of self-knowledge from a living guru to a living disciple.

According to him, "Since ancient times, only the guru-disciple relationship has been the carrier of transcendental discernment." This relationship, purely voluntary, arises not so much from choice as recognition. The guru, thus, becomes the missing link between shruti (revelation) and smriti (memory), turning the past into the present and the present into eternity.

The alchemy of transformation can neither be fully captured in words nor grasped in its entirety by the intellect. It must be experienced. For one's true nature to manifest itself, one must give up the false identifications that are congealed in the illusory entity we call the ego. And the

ego does not dissolve without encountering a living master.

These were wonderful words to hear and beautiful moments to cherish so early in the year in Bengaluru. Guruji arrived before time. I was taken by surprise that he drove himself. We had lunch and some talk. Again, we met at his modest residence, very far from my own place. Bengaluru being a city not only of distances but of the most congested roads in India took its toll. I arrived late, after being driven for over two hours.

I apologised. But what is time in the ever and omnipresent flow of pure consciousness? "This time is yours; you can spend it as you like." This made me all the more conscious not only of lost moments or minutes but of years, decades, even lives. We continue in our selfsame foolish ways until we give it all up. But that is as difficult as crossing the ocean of samsara.

To get there, we must be the best, the most perfect version of ourselves. How is that possible when we see ourselves, like we do others, as terribly flawed, distressed, even doomed? It is the guru who shows that to us. He makes us believe we can indeed be our best selves. For what else are we but that?

Can we be equal to the task? Yes, because, as Guruji says, it is "Bharat that embodies the unbroken guru-disciple relationship since time immemorial".

*(Makarand
R Paranjape |
Author and com-
mentator)*

Create two new districts Bhadarwah, Thathri before Panchayat, Municipal elections: RAO

Top News Report

DODA, Jan 14: Kuldeep Kumar Rao, President Thathri Development Front, District, Doda in a press statement issued here has appealed to the, Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, concerned MP & MOS in Prime Minister office, Dr Jitendra Singh, MLA, Bhadarwah, Daleep Singh Parihar, MLA, Doda, Mehraj Malik to create two new Districts Bhadarwah & Thathri before Panchayat & Municipal elections for Justice for population wise equality in J&K UT.

In Kashmir Division there are Districts with hardly two or three Tehsils while in Jammu Division there are Districts like District Doda having 17 Tehsils, is not only in genuine but also ridiculous. So it is appealed to both the Centre & State governments to make

number of Tehsils equal or almost equal in every District after reorganization of Tehsils & the creation of New Districts is of paramount importance.

Ignoring strong claim of public of Sub-Division Thathri, for the grant of a separate Thathri Assembly Constituency, having 5 Tehsils of its own, namely, Thathri, Phagsoo, Kahara, Bhella & Chiralla, with two more adjoining Tehsils Drabshalla & Mahalla, at a distance of 4 & 14 Kms respectively, which deserves not only separate Assembly Constituency, separate tourism Authority but a District status also, is a cruel repetition of De-limitation commission of 1978 as also of 1995 because the poor public of these Tehsils of Sub-Division Thathri is wonder struck as to how such a bonafide claim can be over looked



and rejected the President Thathri Development Front, Kuldeep Kumar Rao said.

He has strongly criticized the proposals & creation of new Assembly Constituencies of J&K as Sub-Division Thathri of District Doda stationed along main National Highway-44, has totally been neglected, discriminated and even shattered to the extent that some areas of it have been attached with adjoining newly Assembly segment of Doda west & Doda, throwing to winds the main constitutional parameter of geographical continuity & commu-

nication accessibility and it appears that cruel joke perpetrated by earlier De-limitation Commission of 1978 & 1995, has not only been allowed to continue but also whole Sub-Division Thathri has been divided into so many fragments to destroy its sole identity & strong base of its main population, he said and added that there appears no difference between the then NC & Congress regime & the present dispensation being governed by BJP at the centre and J&K UT.

Rao further said that the people of Sub-Division Thathri have never got what was their genuine due share in the socio-economic and political processes during all these more than 74 years of the state's accession to India. It is Jammu based leadership in general & Chenab Region in Particular that is

responsible for the step-motherly treatment being meted out to the people of District Doda in general & Sub-Division Thathri in particular. There is hardly any section of society in Chenab region which is happy. Had the Jammu leadership, like its counterpart in Kashmir discharged its obligations towards this region and played a pro-active role in the state cabinet, Legislative Assembly & Legislative council, the story of District Doda in general & Sub-Division Thathri in Particular today would have been totally different. The same in-genuine process has been adopted by BJP in delimitation of Assembly seats in District Doda, as also in creating of 14 District Development Councils in each District of J&K UT, ignoring the area & population of the Districts in J&K UT.

Pallavi Chandel releases her new Bhajan "Shri Ram"



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: Emerging folk singer Pallavi Chandel has released her new bhajan, "Shri Ram," on the KC Records YouTube channel. This devotional song has already started gaining attention from music lovers and is expected to be a treat for her fans.

The bhajan features music composed by SR Studio, ensuring a soulful and melodious experience for listeners. The visual aspect of the bhajan has been beautifully captured under the direction of Punit Vicky, adding depth and meaning to the song.

Interestingly, Pallavi Chandel herself has taken on the role of

producer for this project, showcasing her dedication to her craft. The heartfelt lyrics of "Shri Ram" have been penned by Om Prakash Chandel, adding a personal and emotional touch to the song.

In her message to fans, Pallavi Chandel expressed gratitude for their unwavering support and requested them to shower this new release with love and blessings. She hopes "Shri Ram" will resonate with listeners and continue to spread the essence of devotion and positivity.

Fans of Pallavi Chandel and lovers of bhajans can now watch and enjoy this beautiful creation on the KC Records YouTube channel.

Shiv Sena demands to run DMU, connective train between Jammu-Katra-Srinagar

Tourists will get a chance to spend time in Jammu: Sahni



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu-Kashmir unit has welcomed the linking of Kashmir with other parts of the country through rail route and has demanded connectivity rail facility and running of DMU trains between Jammu-Katra-Srinagar.

During a program organized at the party's state intermediate office, Shiv Sena UBT state chief Manish Sahni, while reacting to the decision of the railway department not to send

trains directly from Delhi to Kashmir due to security reasons, said that rail passengers going to Kashmir from Delhi and other states should be provided connectivity from Jammu railway station and DMU services should be started between Jammu-Katra-Srinagar.

So that tourists get a chance to enjoy the religious and tourist places of Jammu along with Kashmir and the economy of entire Jammu and Kashmir is strengthened.

Sahni said that Jammu

has already suffered due to the restoration of rail service to Katra in the year 2014. The hotel and taxi business of Jammu has almost come to a standstill. There is a fear of it being completely ruined due to the start of direct rail service to Kashmir.

Sahni has demanded from Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav to provide connective rail facility from Jammu Railway Station to the passengers going to Kashmir from Delhi and other states and to run DEMU trains every two-three hours between Jammu-Katra-Srinagar.

Sahni has appealed to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and BJP MPs who won from Jammu division to raise their voice on the above demands keeping in mind the interests of Jammu.

Govt committed to welfare of Armed Forces, says CM Omar at Veterans Day event

Top News Report

AKHNOOR, Jan 14: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said that the government is committed to working for the welfare of the armed forces.

Omar Abdullah said this while paying tribute to the sacrifices and contributions of the armed forces during the Armed Forces Veterans Day event held in Akhnoor.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha also attended the event.

Addressing a gathering of veterans and their families, the Chief Minister reassured them of the government's unwavering commitment to their welfare.

"You have given your lives to the nation; you have taken care of this country. It is our duty to work for you and your families whenever there is a problem for you," said Omar Abdullah.

The Chief Minister emphasized the importance of recognizing the contributions of armed forces personnel, noting that their dedication was the foundation of the nation's security and progress.

"It is because of you that we are excelling. I assure you that the government will work for you. Recruitment, financial schemes—our administration will support you in every way possible," he added, outlining key initiatives aimed at addressing veterans' needs.

Highlighting the inclusive nature of his cabinet, Abdullah shared, "In my cabinet, there is a minister who comes from an army family. We will work with that understanding and perspective to address your concerns."

Veterans were also lauded for their continued role in society even after service, with the Chief Minister describing their assistance as invaluable. "Your help is our duty, and we will do everything to fulfill it," he promised.

The event featured moments of remembrance, celebration, and camaraderie as the sacrifices of the armed forces were honored.

Lohri celebrated at Surya Vihar with traditional fervor, gaiety

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: Lohri festival was celebrated with traditional fervor and gaiety at Surya Vihar.

The residents lit bonfire and distributed sweets, fruit and ground nuts among inmates, and also extended the Lohri greetings.

While briefing the gathering about significance of this festival, Anita Ganjoo threw light on historical and traditional value of celebrating this festival together in Northern India.

Also speaking, R.L.Kaith said, Lohri is essentially celebrating the movement of the



sun, which coincides and impacts the harvest.

This may explain why it is celebrated around a large fire. One could assume that fire is representative of the sun, which is capable of stimulating the growth of crops and the well being of man and animals through its' supply of

light and heat. It is also an image of energy and spiritual strength during the cold and dark winter.

Prominent among the residents who were present on the occasion included Lecturer Verander Nath Sharma, Deepak Koul, Sain Nath, Neha Koul, Neha Kalsi and Muskan.

DSS J&K organizes literary meet to highlight Duggar history, heritage



Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Jan 14: Under the guidance of Gulchain Singh Charak, President of Dogra Sadar Sabha (DSS) Jammu and Kashmir, a significant literary meet was organized in Udhampur under the supervision of Krishna Kumar Bhardwaj district President Udhampur to celebrate the rich history and heritage of Duggar.

The event was chaired by eminent writer Dr. Adarsh Prakash and attended by renowned writer and Padma Shri Awardee, Prof. Shiv Nimohi, along with noted writer and columnist,

Ashok Sharma.

On this occasion, Prof. Shiv Nimohi presented a well-researched paper on Raja Udhm Singh, after whom the town of Udhampur is named.

He unveiled numerous lesser-known facts about the Dogra rulers and the historical significance of Udhampur District. Prof. Nimohi's insights shed light on the life and tragic demise of Raja Udhm Singh in Lahore in 1840, contributing to the understanding of the region's illustrious past.

Dr. Adarsh Prakash, in his address, stressed the importance of organizing such events to

discuss and preserve the history, culture and heritage of Duggar, with a special focus on Udhampur.

He lauded Prof. Shiv Nimohi for his meticulous research and praised his contribution to documenting the legacy of Raja Udhm Singh. Adding a literary touch to the event, Dr Prakash recited a poem dedicated to the rich cultural tapestry of Duggar.

The meet concluded with a shared commitment to continue efforts to promote the region's cultural heritage and bring to light the contributions of its historical figures.

Bukhari extends condolences over passing of Raja Jehangir Khan

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 14: Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari has expressed his sorrow over the demise of Raja Jehangir Khan, a widely respected social figure and prominent lawyer, who passed away at his residence in Kathi Darwaza, Srinagar, on Monday night.

In his condolence message, Bukhari said, "I am saddened to hear about the passing of Raja Jehangir Khan, who left for his heavenly abode on Monday night. Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Rajoon. May the Almighty grant him the highest place in Jannah. Raja Sahib was a highly respected personality and a prominent social figure. He also earned a distinguished reputation as a successful lawyer, leaving behind a legacy of integrity and service."

GDC RS Pura celebrates festival of Lohri, Makar Sankranti



Top News Report

R S PURA, Jan 14: Cultural Committee in collaboration with NSS Unit of Govt. Degree College (GDC), RS Pura celebrated Lohri and Makar Sankranti festival

in the college campus.

The festival was celebrated with exuberance and fanfare. The celebrations started by gathering around bonfire, throwing sweets, puffed rice, and popcorn

into the flames by chanting of mantras.

After offering prayers, Peanuts, Rewri, flour and various food items were distributed amongst every one present on the occasion.

The students and the faculty enjoyed the festival to the fullest by grooving to the beat of the drums.

The Principal (Prof) Dr. Preetpal Kour addressed the students by wishing them happy Lohri and exhorted upon the student to work hard in their studies.

The celebration was attended by Principal staff and students of the college.

GDC RS Pura organizes "Surya Namaskar"

Top News Report

RS PURA, Jan 14: Makar Sankranti is an auspicious day in Indian culture dedicated to the Almighty God, Surya bringing along many cultural, spiritual and agricultural messages.

To mark the significance of this holy occasion Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India decided to reach out to humanity with a special and unique message of rejuvenating selves through "Surya Namaskar".

The initiative as each soul is an actor with a unique role to play and acceptance of each



one's sociality and uniqueness makes our relations beautiful and harmonious.

In this connection, Department of Dogri and Sanskrit of GDC RS Pura participated enthusiastically enmass

college enthusiastically participated in the event under the leadership of Dr. Sonali Magotra form Dept. of Mathematics along with Sanju Kattal, Sourav Dutt and Ritik Chauhan, Students of the college.

The event was organized under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Preetpal Kour, Principal of the college. She exhorted that the significance of this set of Yoga Asanas goes much beyond the salutation of the Sun, God. It has very profound impact on physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of humans.

Surya Namaskar not only improve physical health but also helps in maintaining mental balance in the current fast moving and stress generating world.

The event was coordinated by Dr. Sunil Kumar Mangoch (HOD Dogri) and Co-ordinated by Prof. Sanjeev Upadhyay (HOD Sanskrit).

Prominent among the others who grace the occasion were Dr. Raj Jamwal, Dr. Sudesh Kumar, Prof Harpreet Kour, Prof. Neelam Kumari, Dr. Hari Singh, Dr. Ruchi, Dr. Sheetal, Dr. Sapna and Nisha.

Vijayeta Kumar, whose *Kicking Balls* was adjudged Best Documentary Short at the New York International Film Festival, says she is happy to be the change she wants to see

Can young girls break the shackles of child marriage, that too by playing football? Heartening answers to this puzzling query can be found in Vijayeta Kumar's documentary *Kicking Balls*. Literally busting patriarchy, if the tongue-in-cheek title came to her organically, the story was probably providence, waiting to happen.

A visit to her hometown, Ajmer in Rajasthan, and she was piqued by the sight of village girls playing the game, so far considered a male domain. The girls were as intrigued—why would someone be interested in what they were doing. As Vijayeta puts it, "Feminism, as we the women of privilege see and practice, might be a western construct but here is everyday feminism. For these girls, it's an everyday struggle."

Patience pays
Getting them to face the camera came with its own set of challenges for unlike urban bred, who live in the world of Insta reels and reality shows, these girls had never experienced anything like this before. And this is where Vijayeta's all-woman crew, especially her cinematographer Priyanka Singh's presence, made all the difference in creating a comfort level of trust.

Incidentally, Vijayeta's decision to have an all-women team didn't quite start like a mission.



During the making of her earlier film, *Sunny Side Upar*, when she asked friends in the industry for references of cinematographers, she realised not a single female name figured in that list. She recalls, "I thought in my mind, but I know so many women directors of photography." Presto, nari shakti of various hues and skills gelled together. Initially, she had to put up with a snide remark, "oh, kitty party chal rahi hai", here and there. However, soon producers realised it was the calmest set where everyone worked so professionally.

Worthy platform
Yet another woman who came on board for *Kicking Balls* was Oscar-winning producer Guneet Monga, which meant many doors did open. OTT boom may not have done much for Indie makers but Vijayeta

reasons, "Every film does find its audience as well as a platform."

As *Kicking Balls* is currently streaming on Prasar Bharti's OTT app Waves, she reminds us how back in time Doordarshan, along with the National Film Development Corporation, helped the cause of Indie movement of cinema. On Waves, she herself has discovered many shows of yore like Jaspal Bhatti's *Flop Show*. "The incredibly accessible Waves can reach out to more and more viewers, especially in rural hinterland which is where *Kicking Balls* ought to be seen," she says.

Winds of change
Indeed, the struggle for Indie makers doesn't end after the film is made. For even if the story at hand is waiting to be told, the trick lies in how you make people watch and listen. Her documentary, however,

has found resonance among viewers at a clutch of film festivals like Mumbai International Film Festival, International Film Festival of South Asia Toronto, Indian Film Festival of Melbourne, Chicago South Asian Film Festival and more. Besides, many have come up with feelers as to how they help. The money thus collected has been given to the NGO which runs this unusual programme. With satisfaction, Vijayeta notes how the inspirational endeavour has not fallen through but given young girls agency. While one girl has become a FIFA-certified coach, many are studying in bigger cities and also bid adieu to toxic marriages.

Screening of her film at various festivals has also made her realise that child marriage is not a problem of North Indian states or India alone for that matter. During a screening at Stanford, she was shocked to know that in some states of USA the legal age of marriage is as low as 13. Of course, in India laws say one thing and society follows a different track. But Vijayeta feels, "We as a society can only make a minuscule difference. Ultimately, it's government policies and proactive approach that can truly bring about a paradigm shift." Till then, of course, she is happy to be the change she wants to see.

Tabu joins Akshay Kumar in Priyadarshan's 'Bhooth Bangla'



Superstar Tabu has boarded the cast of Priyadarshan's upcoming horror comedy "Bhooth

Bangla", headlined by Akshay Kumar.

Also starring Paresh Rawal, Jisshu Sengupta, and Wamiqa Gabbi, the film is set to be released on April 2, 2026.

"Bhooth Bangla" marks a reunion for Tabu with Kumar, Rawal and Priyadarshan after the 2000 superhit comedy "Hera Pheri".

"Hum yahan bandh hain. @priyadarshan. official @balajimotionpictures @akshaykumar @ektarkapoor @jishu.sengupta @ipritamofficial @wamiqagabbi," she wrote on Saturday alongside a picture of the film's clapperboard on Instagram.

"Bhooth Bangla" is also the first collaboration between Akshay and Priyadarshan in over 14 years. Their film together was 2010's political satire "Khatta Meetha".

Tabu's latest work was American science fiction series "Dune: Prophecy", in which she essayed the role of Sister Francesca.

Oscars push back nominations announcement amid California wildfires

The Oscar nominations are being pushed back almost a week from their original date amid the ongoing California wildfires.

Nominations will now be announced on January 23, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences said.

"We are all devastated by the impact of the fires and the profound losses experienced by so many in our community," Academy CEO Bill Kramer and Academy President Janet Yang said in a joint statement. "The Academy has always been a unifying force within the film industry, and we are committed to standing together in the face of hardship." With fires still active in the Los Angeles area, the film academy also extended the nominations voting period for its members through Friday. Originally, nominations were to be announced that morning.



The organisation that puts on the Oscars has also made the decision to cancel its annual nominees luncheon, an untelevised event best known for the "class photos" it produces annually. The Scientific and Technical Awards, previously set for February 18, will be rescheduled later.

The 97th Oscars will still happen on March 2, at the Dolby Theatre, with a live television broadcast on ABC beginning at 7 pm ET and a live stream on Hulu.

Oscar nominations were postponed in 2021

during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ceremony itself was also delayed, which had happened several times before: The ceremony was pushed back a week because of disastrous flooding in Los Angeles in 1938.

In 1968, it was delayed two days following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. And in 1981, it was put off for 24 hours after President Ronald Reagan was shot in Washington D.C.

The 1981 decision was made four hours before the broadcast was scheduled to begin.

Celebrities donate generously to families and workers impacted by the Los Angeles fires

Eva donates \$50,000
Actress Eva Longoria is extending a helping hand to the victims of the Los Angeles wildfires. Recently, the actress, 49, shared an emotional video message on Instagram amid the ongoing wildfires. In her video, Longoria said she was donating \$50,000 to the organisation 'This Is About Humanity' to support frontline workers and families who have been impacted by the fires.

Beyonce gives \$2.5 million
Grammy-winner Beyoncé is helping those affected by the Los Angeles fires through her BeyGOOD charity foundation. The charity foundation is donating \$2.5 million to help families rebuild after they've suffered losses.

In addition to helping those who lost their homes and possessions, BeyGOOD will also assist churches and community centres.

Meanwhile, the Walt Disney Company pledged \$15 million, while Paramount and Fox Corp donated \$1 million with contributions to the American Red Cross and the Los Angeles Fire Department.

Warner Music and Blavatnik Foundation announced an initial \$1 million commitment to



the Los Angeles area fire relief and rebuilding efforts. In addition to direct financial donations, Live Nation is planning to hold a FireAid benefit concert at Inglewood, CA's Intuit Dome on January 30.

The Grammy Awards, which will be held in Los Angeles on February 2, will likely include major elements focusing on raising money for relief. On

January 12, rapper Snoop Dogg stepped forward to support those affected. Snoop Dogg's Clothing store has announced that it would offer free clothing to help rebuild lives of those affected.

Pay raise for firefighters
Amid the ongoing wildfires in California, reality TV star Kim Kardashian expressed her gratitude to firefighters who

have risked their lives to save people from the deadly disaster. She even demanded a pay raise for them. On Sunday, Kim took to Instagram and penned a note claiming incarcerated firefighters have been paid USD 1 per hour since 1984, telling her millions of fans that pay for them has, "Never been raised with inflation. It's never been raised when fires got worse and many died. A recent agreement to raise it to five dollars an hour was reportedly 'shot down last minute'." Kardashian then asked California Governor Gavin Newsom to raise the pay for incarcerated firefighters so it's a rate that honours a human being risking their life to save our lives and homes'.

Meghan postpones release
Meghan Markle, Duchess of Sussex, has postponed the release of her Netflix show *With Love*, Meghan. The series was set to premiere on Netflix on January 15.

Now it will be released on March 4. In a statement released by the streamer, Markle said, "I am thankful to my partners at Netflix for supporting me in delaying the launch, as we focus on the needs of those impacted by the wildfires in my home state of California."

Makar Sankranti 2025 | Karishma Tanna opens up about Sankranti celebrations

For actor Karishma Tanna, Makar Sankranti is "all about all about connecting with family and friends". The actor, who was last seen in Hansal Mehta's *Scoop*, says that the beauty of the harvest festival, where offerings are made to the Sun God as a symbol of gratitude for a bountiful harvest, lies in its "simplicity and universality."

"It's a time to pause and cherish the small joys of life," Tanna says, adding, "We usually begin the day with prayers, dress in traditional outfits and indulge in festive treats such as tilgul (a sweet made with jaggery, sesame and ghee) and undhiyu (a classic Gujarati mixed-vegetable dish slow-cooked with aromatic spices)."

Married to businessman Varun Bangera, Tanna reminisces about her mother's cooking, saying her undhiyu is "the best in the world". She adds with a smile, "Pairing it with puris and jalebis is a tradition I eagerly look forward to every Sankranti."

Kite flying, a quintessential Sankranti activity, evokes fond childhood memories for the 41-year-old. "I was never great at it, but I



loved the energy it brought to the day," recalls the actor, saying, "I have fond memories of

flying kites on the terrace with my cousins. We'd compete to see whose kite stayed up the longest... I remember once my kite got tangled with someone else's, and it turned into a hilarious tug-of-war!"

While Sankranti holds a special place in her heart, Tanna also appreciates other harvest festivals that showcase India's rich cultural diversity. "The diversity of these festivals is what makes India so incredible. Each one reflects the traditions and essence of a region. I've always loved how Pongal is celebrated in Tamil Nadu with kolams and sweet pongal, and Lohri in Punjab with its bonfires and energy. Experiencing these festivals has been a beautiful way to learn about different cultures," Tanna shares.

When asked how she manages to find time to enjoy festivals amid her busy schedule, Tanna admits "it's challenging". "Balancing festive celebrations with a hectic schedule isn't always easy, but even if it's just a quick celebration or a phone call to loved ones, it is important to me to stay connected to my roots and traditions," she wraps up.

Pongal 2025 | Regena Cassandrara: The magic of this festival lies in its inclusivity



Actor Regena Cassandrara, who grew up in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, holds Pongal close to her heart. Rooted in the traditions of South India, the multi-day harvest festival celebrates abundance, gratitude and togetherness. Reflecting on her upbringing, the 34-year-old actor says, "I was born in a Christian household, but the cultural influence around me - be it from friends, neighbours, or the community - made Pongal."

Known for her performances in films like *Maanagaram* (2017), *Ek Ladki Ko Dekha Toh Aisa Laga* (2019) and *Thalavii* (2021), Cassandrara fondly recalls

her early memories of Pongal. "As a child, I'd borrow traditional skirts from my friends to participate in the Pongal pooja. I'd help with cooking and, of course, eating the delicious pongal!" she shares, adding, "There are two types of pongal dishes - sakkara (sweet) pongal and ven (savory) pongal. My favourite is sakkara pongal."

For Cassandrara, the essence of Pongal lies in its inclusivity. "Even now, my house help creates beautiful kolams (rangoli) outside my home. She does it with such enthusiasm, it's a joy to watch her. We also prepare a special spread of food. I've celebrated Pongal in other cities like Delhi and Mumbai, but there's something magical about how Tamilians celebrate it — it feels so authentic and full of love," she says.

This year, Cassandrara is particularly excited about a unique event in her hometown. "For the first time, Chennai is hosting a balloon festival during Pongal. I'm planning to attend - it's going to be such a fun way to celebrate!" she shares.

Need to develop earthquake warning systems: PM Modi

Celebrations are attended by Celeste Saulo, Secretary General of the World Meteorological Department, Earth Sciences Minister Jitendra Singh, Earth Sciences Secretary M Ravichandran and IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra

NEW DELHI, Jan 14 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday urged scientists to work towards developing warning systems for earthquakes while noting that advances in weather sciences have helped the country minimise losses caused by natural disasters.

Addressing a function to celebrate 150 years of the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Modi also launched 'Mission Mausam' for developing cutting-edge weather surveillance technologies and systems, implementing high-resolution atmospheric observations, next-generation radars and satellites, and high-performance computers. "We have launched 'Mission Mausam' to make India weather ready and climate smart," Modi said.

Mission Mausam will also focus on improving the understanding of weather and climate



processes, provide air quality data that will help strategise weather management and intervention in the long run.

"Meteorology offers the most important support for the disaster management capability of any country. To minimise the impact of natural disasters, we need to maximise the efficiency of meteorology," the prime minister said.

He said advancements in science and the ability to harness

its full potential serve as the cornerstone for shaping a country's global reputation.

"There is need to develop warning systems for earthquakes and scientists and researchers should work in this direction," Modi said.

The prime minister said India's disaster management capabilities have significantly improved due to advancements in meteorological technology which has proved to be beneficial not only

for the country but also for the global community.

"Today, our Flash Flood Guidance system provides critical information to neighbouring countries, including Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka," Modi said.

The prime minister said India has emerged as the first nation to offer help to countries in its neighbourhood hit by any disaster.

Modi also released the IMD's Vision-2047 document for weather resilience and climate change adaptation and a commemorative coin to mark 150 years of the IMD.

The celebrations were attended by Celeste Saulo, the Secretary General of the World Meteorological Department, Earth Sciences Minister Jitendra Singh, Earth Sciences Secretary M Ravichandran, IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra and a host of dignitaries.

PM Modi greets people on Makar Sankranti, Bihu



NEW DELHI, Jan 14 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted people on the

occasion of Makar Sankranti on Tuesday. The festival marks the beginning of the

Sun's 'uttarayana' (northward) journey, considered auspicious in Hindu tradition.

Modi wished new energy and enthusiasm to everyone, and also greeted people on Magh Bihu, a harvest festival celebrated in Assam.

He said on X, "We celebrate the abundance of nature, the joy of harvest and the spirit of togetherness. May this festival further the spirit of happiness and togetherness."

Yogi offers khichdi to Baba Gorakhnath, prays for people welfare

GORAKHPUR, Jan 14 (Agencies): Goraksha Peethadheeshwar and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, adhering to the sacred traditions of the Nath Panth, offered the holy khichdi of faith to Shivavtar, Mahayogi Gorakhnath, at the Gorakhnath Temple during the Brahma Muhurta on the occasion of Makar Sankranti on Tuesday.

On this auspicious occasion, Yogi prayed to Baba Gorakhnath for the welfare of the people, a harmonious and prosperous life for all citizens, and the nation's well-being.

After the ritual offering, he extended heartfelt greetings and best wishes for Makar Sankranti to all citizens, saints, and devotees.

Addressing the media, he described Makar Sankranti as a festival dedicated to express-

ing gratitude to the Sun God, the creator and sustainer of life. "This festival, deeply rooted in India's Sanatan Dharma, is celebrated with immense devotion under various names nationwide," he said.

The CM highlighted the cultural diversity in the celebration of Makar Sankranti and said that people in the North, South, East, or West mark this day with unique traditions and rituals.

He said, "It is celebrated as Bihu in Assam, Lohri in Punjab, Pongal in far South, Tilwa Sankranti in Bengal and Maharashtra, and Khichdi Sankranti in North India."

He emphasised that Makar Sankranti is a profound expression of joy, unity, and solidarity, embodying the spirit of togetherness and hap-

piness within Indian society.

Yogi said that in Uttar Pradesh, the day is marked by holy dips in sacred rivers and lakes, acts of charity, and other virtuous deeds.

Reflecting on his role, he said, "It is my great fortune to have the opportunity to offer khichdi at the feet of Baba Gorakhnath at this revered place of worship."

The CM took the opportunity to congratulate saints and devotees on the first Amrit Snan of the Prayagraj Maha Kumbh. He said that while faith-filled khichdi is being offered at the sacred site of Lord Gorakhnath's penance, the grand Maha Kumbh of the century has commenced at the confluence of the holy rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati in Prayagraj.



He said that approximately two crore devotees took a holy dip at Prayagraj on Monday. In contrast, lakhs of devotees led by revered saints began their sacred bath during the Brahma Muhurta on Tuesday.

He highlighted the participation of followers of Sanatan Dharma from across India and the globe. "Many foreigners also are drawn to the spiritual essence of the Maha Kumbh," he said. Yogi emphasised that

festivals like Makar Sankranti convey the message of unity and inspire people to uphold social harmony and preserve our traditions.

He urged everyone to keep pilgrimage sites clean and beautiful by avoiding single-use plastics and refraining from littering. He acknowledged the efforts of the government, administration, and numerous voluntary organisations to ensure smooth arrangements for saints and devotees.

44 Arrested after dalit teen alleges rape for over 5 years in Kerala

PATHANAMTHITTA, Jan 14 (Agencies): The special investigation team (SIT) of Kerala police probing the sensational case of alleged sexual abuse of a Dalit girl in the district has arrested 44 people so far in connection with the matter, a senior police officer of the district said on Tuesday.

DIG S Ajeetha Begum, who is overseeing the investigation, said that 30 FIRs have been registered in connection with the alleged sexual assault of the girl and out of the 59 accused mentioned in the cases, 44 have been arrested.

"Two of the accused are on the run. They are abroad at present. We are considering issuing Look out Circulars for them. We are also planning to issue a Red Corner notice for them through Interpol," the officer told TV channels. Besides them, 13 more have to be arrested, she said.

"We are searching for their locations. They will be arrested soon. A foolproof and scientific investigation will be carried out by the SIT. We will not spare any of the accused. There will be no compromise. We will bring all of them before

the law," the officer said.

The investigation so far has revealed that several of the accused met the girl at a private bus stand in Pathanamthitta. She was then taken to various locations in vehicles and subjected to abuse, police said.

The probe also found that the girl, while she was studying class XII last year, was taken by a youth who was acquainted with her through Instagram to a rubber plantation in Ranni, where he raped her along with three others.

Police said the investigation revealed she was gang-raped on at least

five occasions, including incidents inside a car and at the Pathanamthitta General Hospital in January 2024.

The girl, who is now 18 years old, has alleged in her complaint that she was sexually abused by 62 individuals since the age of 13.

The matter came to light during counselling conducted by the Child Welfare Committee, after the victim's teachers at an educational institution informed the panel about noticeable changes in her behaviour.

The Committee, subsequently, notified the

police and an investigation is on.

The SIT had been formed to conduct a comprehensive probe into the incident, with Pathanamthitta Deputy SP P S Nandakumar leading the team under the supervision of District Police Chief V G Vinod Kumar.

The team comprises over 30 police officers, including women, from various ranks and stations.

DIG Ajitha Beegam said that once the Sabarimala pilgrimage season gets over, more officers will be included in the SIT.

KGMU resident doctor jumps off hostel roof in Lucknow; critical

LUCKNOW, Jan 14 (Agencies): A first-year MD medicine resident at King George's Medical University (KGMU) attempted suicide on Tuesday by jumping off the roof of her hostel building, police said.

The critically injured student was undergo-

ing treatment at the university's trauma centre, they added.

"The resident doctor attempted suicide by jumping off the roof of Room No. 206 in the girls' hostel.

She is being treated at the critical care facility of our trauma centre,"

KGMU media spokesperson Dr Sudhir Singh said.

"The incident occurred on Tuesday morning. The student was rushed to the trauma centre, where diagnostic procedures, including a CT scan and blood tests, were conducted. Her

condition is serious," he added.

The student, who is native of Kanpur, is pursuing her first year MD in medicine. Her parents had been informed, Singh said.

"Preliminary findings suggest that she was dissatisfied with her

job, which may have prompted her to attempt suicide," a police official said.

The police and the college administration were questioning the other hostel residents to gather more details, the officer added.

Six-year-old girl raped, killed in Bengaluru

BENGALURU, Jan 14 (Agencies): A six-year-old girl was allegedly raped and murdered in Bengaluru, police said on Tuesday.

The incident occurred around 7.30 p.m. on Monday when the victim's parents were out for construction work and she was alone at home in the Rammurthy nagar police station area.

The accused, identified as 25-year-old man Abhishek Kumar from Bihar, has been arrested.

When the accused, who also worked as a mason, found the victim alone, he lured her outside. He took her to an isolated place and raped her.

However, the sources said that the girl died during the sexual assault.

More details are awaited and police are yet to issue an official statement.

The police have booked the accused under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

On July 10, 2024, a gang of five men

abducted two minor girls and sexually assaulted one of them on the Karnataka-Kerala border in Kodagu district. The other girl had escaped and after getting information in this regard, the Karnataka Police had arrested all the five accused.

On July 19, 2024, police have arrested two persons in connection with the raping a minor girl in Yadgir district of Karnataka. The girl was raped by two accused when the victim had gone to attend nature's call.

A 17-year-old girl was raped and impregnated by a 19-year-old man in Karnataka's Hubballi and the accused was arrested on May 4, 2024. The accused had targeted the victim girl by getting close to her through her classmate. Later, the accused abused and threatened her.

The accused sexually exploited the victim for three months before being arrested by the police.

Trinamool Congress leader shot dead in West Bengal's Malda

KOLKATA, Jan 14 (Agencies): A Trinamool Congress leader was shot dead and two others were critically injured in a shootout at Kaliachak in West Bengal's Malda district on Tuesday.

The deceased was identified as Hasan Sheikh, a local Trinamool Congress leader. Two others, namely the ruling party's local area president Bakul Seikh and his associate Esaruddin Sheikh, were also hit in the firing. Both were admitted to Malda Medical College and Hospital, and were said to be in extremely critical condition.

A couple of others also received minor injuries in the shootout.

The firing took place on the road and in broad daylight, and comes exactly 12 days after Trinamool Congress councillor from English Bazar Municipality also in Malda district Dulal Sarkar aka Babla was killed in a similar shootout in the morning of January 2.

It is learnt that the deceased and critically injured persons assembled at Nayabasti area at Kaliachak area on Tuesday morning. Suddenly, as told by eyewitnesses to the police, a group of miscreants reached there and started firing at the victims. Being hit by bullets

fired from close range, Hasan Sheikh, Bakul Sheikh and Esaruddin Sheikh fell on the ground profusely bleeding. They were immediately rushed to the hospital, where Hasan Sheikh was declared dead.

A huge police contingent from the local police station has reached the spot. A thorough investigation into the matter was started.

The CCTV footage was being checked. Although it is yet to be clear what prompted the shootout and the murder, some local people said that infighting between two rival factions in the ruling party at Kaliachak could be the reason behind the tragedy.

In fact, by now it is clear that infighting in Trinamool Congress in Malda district was the reason behind the murder of Dulal Sarkar on January 2. Trinamool Congress' Malda town president and the party's chief for the Hindi cell in the entire district Narendra Nath Tiwari was identified and arrested by the police as the principal mastermind behind Sarkar's murder. Till the time the report was filed, there was neither any reaction from the Trinamool Congress nor from the BJP on Kaliachak's shootout.

Maintain decorum of Home Minister's post: Pawar on Shah's remarks

MUMBAI, Jan 14 (Agencies): Former Union Minister Sharad Pawar on Tuesday rubbished Union Home Minister Amit Shah's remarks that the BJP's victory in the November 20 Maharashtra assembly polls ended the politics of betrayal and treachery started by him in 1978.

"I was the chief minister in 1978. I am not aware about his whereabouts then," Pawar told reporters in Mumbai. "When I was the Chief Minister, there were people like Uttamrao Patil from Jan Sangh in my ministry," Pawar added.

The decorum of the post of home minister should be maintained, the NCP (SP) chief said, bemoaning the lack of communication between present political leaders.

"There used to be 'susanvad' (good communication) between political leaders earlier but that is missing now," he said.

"The victory of BJP in Maharashtra ended the politics of instability and backstabbing started by Sharad Pawar in 1978. You (people) have buried such politics 20-foot in the ground," Shah had said, addressing a state-level con-



vention of BJP in Shirdi on Sunday.

Pawar recalled that then PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee had made him the vice-chairman of the Disaster Management Authority after the Bhuj earthquake despite being in the opposition. "This country has seen many excellent home ministers, but none of them was externed from his state," Pawar said, in an apparent reference to Shah being externed in 2010 from Gujarat for two years in connection with the Sohrabuddin Sheikh fake encounter case. He was acquitted of all charges in 2014.

"When he (Shah) could not stay in Gujarat (after being externed), he went to Balasaheb Thackeray for help," Pawar said.

Israeli strikes on Gaza kill 18 as hopes rise for ceasefire and hostage release

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels meanwhile fired a missile at central Israel, setting off sirens and sending people fleeing to shelters without causing any casualties.

DEIR AL-BALAH, Jan 14 (Agencies): Israeli strikes in the Gaza Strip killed at least 18 people overnight, including six women and four children, health officials said Tuesday, as Israel and Hamas appeared to be narrowing in on a ceasefire deal to end the 15-month war and release dozens of hostages.

Officials have expressed mounting optimism that they can conclude an agreement in the coming days after more than a year of talks that have repeatedly stalled.

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels meanwhile fired a missile at central Israel, setting off sirens and sending people fleeing to shelters without causing any casualties. Police said several homes were damaged outside Jerusalem and released a photo of a missile casing that had crashed into a roof.

Two strikes in the central Gaza city of Deir al-Balah killed two women and their four children, who ranged in age from 1 month to 9 years old. One of the women was pregnant and the baby did not survive, according to Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, which received the bodies.

Another 12 people were killed in two strikes on the southern city of Khan Younis, according to the European Hospital.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli mili-



tary. Israel says it only targets militants and accuses them of hiding among civilians in shelters and tent camps for the displaced.

Israel and Hamas have come under renewed pressure to halt the conflict in the lead-up to the Jan. 20 inauguration of President-elect Donald Trump, whose Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff, recently joined U.S., Egyptian and Qatari mediators in the Gulf country's capital, Doha.

The phased deal would be based on a framework laid out by President Joe Biden in May and endorsed by the U.N. Security Council.

In the first phase, Hamas would release dozens of the most vulnerable hostages seized in the Oct. 7, 2023 attack that triggered the war in exchange for dozens of Palestinian prisoners as Israeli forces pull back from population centers. At least

some Palestinians would be allowed to return to their homes and there would be a surge of humanitarian aid.

In the second phase, Hamas says it would release the remaining hostages in exchange for a large number of prisoners, a full Israeli withdrawal and a lasting ceasefire. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to keep fighting until Hamas' military and governing capabilities have been destroyed and it no longer poses a threat. The gap between the two sides would be negotiated during the first phase.

Hamas-led militants killed around 1,200 people in the Oct. 7 attack and abducted another 250. Some 100 hostages are still being held inside Gaza. The Israeli military believes that at least a third and up to half of them are dead.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 46,000 Pales-

tinians, more than half of them women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not say how many of the dead were combatants. The Israeli military says it has killed over 17,000 fighters, without providing evidence.

The offensive has reduced large areas of the territory to rubble and displaced around 90% of Gaza's population of 2.3 million, with hundreds of thousands packed into tent camps along the coast where hunger is widespread.

The war has rippled across the region, igniting over a year of fighting between Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah militants that ended with a tense ceasefire in November. Israel has also traded direct fire with Iran, which backs Hamas, Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthis.

The Israeli military said it made several attempts to intercept the missile launched from Yemen early Tuesday and that "the missile was likely intercepted." It said an earlier missile fired from Yemen was also intercepted.

The Houthis, who captured Yemen's capital, Sanaa, and much of the country's north in 2014, have launched a series of missile and drone attacks on Israel and have attacked international shipping in the Red Sea. The Houthis say they are fighting in solidarity with the Palestinians, but the vast majority of the targeted ships have no connection to the conflict.

Ukraine strikes Russia in major drone and missile attack: Report

The Shot Telegram channel said that Russia had downed more than 200 Ukrainian drones and five U.S.-made ATACMS ballistic missiles.



MOSCOW, Jan 14 (Agencies): Ukraine struck Russian regions with a major drone and missile attack overnight, damaging at least two factories and forcing schools to close in a major southern Russian city, according to Russian officials and media.

The Shot Telegram channel said that Russia had downed more than 200 Ukrainian drones and five U.S.-made ATACMS ballistic missiles.

"The enemy has organized a massive combined strike on the territory of the Russian regions," the Two Majors war blogger said.

Alexander Bogomaz, the governor of the Bryansk region in western Russia, said Ukraine had launched a major missile attack but did not say which missiles

had been used.

The Russian defence ministry, which reports on such attacks, made no immediate comment. Reuters was unable to immediately confirm the reports.

In the Russian city of Engels, home to an air base where Russia's nuclear bombers are based, Saratov Governor Roman Busargin said an industrial enterprise had been damaged by a drone but gave no more details.

Busargin said that classes in schools in Saratov and Engels would be held remotely. Flight restrictions were imposed in Kazan, Saratov, Penza, Ulyanovsk and Nizhnekamsk, Russia's aviation watchdog said.

Nizhnekamsk, in Russia's republic of Tatarstan, is home to the major Taneco refinery.

Shot said attack sirens were sounded at the refinery. Reuters was unable to immediately verify the report.

Russia fired a new intermediate-range hypersonic ballistic missile known as "Oreshnik", or Hazel Tree, at Ukraine on Nov. 21 in what President Vladimir Putin said was a direct response to strikes on Russia by Ukrainian forces with U.S. and British missiles.

Putin, after those attacks, said that the Ukraine war was escalating towards a global conflict after the United States and Britain allowed Ukraine to hit Russia with their weapons, and warned the West that Moscow could strike back.

President-elect Donald Trump has pushed for a ceasefire and negotiations to end the war quickly, leaving Washington's long-term support for Ukraine in question.

Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine has left tens of thousands of dead, displaced millions and triggered the biggest crisis in relations between Moscow and the West since the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.

Dozens rescued, bodies pulled from S. Africa mining pit

STILFONTEIN, Jan 14 (Agencies): More than two dozen illegal miners have been rescued and at least nine bodies recovered from an abandoned gold mine in South Africa, as rescue operations resumed Tuesday to reach potentially dozens more people underground.

A professional mine rescue company on Monday sent a large cage to retrieve men at the site near Stilfontein, about 140 kilometres (90 miles) southwest of Johannesburg.

Thousands of illegal miners, many of them hailing from other countries, are said to operate in abandoned mine shafts across mineral-rich South Africa. Community leader Johannes Qankase told agency on Tuesday that 26 people had been rescued and nine bodies recovered the previous day at the Stilfontein site.

"They are very sick. They are very dehydrated. You can see they are nearly dying," he said of the people rescued.

Most had been taken to hospital while two were believed to be in police custody, Qankase said.

Government officials were expected to be at the site Tuesday as the recovery continued.

The operation follows a weeks-long saga at the abandoned shaft, where authorities have been accused of trying to force the miners to surface by throttling food and water supplies lowered to them by the surrounding community. It is not clear how many people are



in the shaft.

The government on Monday stated that more than 1,000 people involved in illegal mining activity in the area had "surfaced and been apprehended" to date.

There were claims in mid-November that up to 4,000 people were underground but police have said the figure was probably in the hundreds.

Six bodies were brought up from the mine in early December and one in November. There have been claims recently that there were more than 100 corpses underground.

Over the past weeks the miners who have exited the shaft reported dire conditions underground, including acute hunger and dehydration. Some were arrested for being in South Africa without proper documentation.

Locally known as "zama zamas" -- "those who try" in the Zulu language -- illegal miners frustrate mining companies and are accused of criminality by residents.

Sri Lankan President Dissanayake arrives in Beijing on four-day visit to China

BEIJING/COLOMBO, Jan 14 (Agencies): Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake arrived here on Tuesday on a four-day visit during which he is scheduled to hold talks with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping and other Chinese leaders on deepening bilateral ties.

Upon his arrival, the President was accorded a ceremonial welcome by the Chinese military, and he was formally received by China's Deputy Foreign Minister Chen Xiaodong, according to a press release issued by Dissanayake's office in Colombo.

This is Dissanayake's second overseas visit - the first being to India - since assuming office in September last year.

During his China visit, Dissanayake will hold bilateral talks with President Xi on areas of mutual interest and will also meet Chinese Premier Li Qiang, and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Con-



gress of China Zhao Leji.

Several Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) aimed at strengthening bilateral cooperation between Sri Lanka and China are expected to be signed during the visit, the Presidential office press release said on Tuesday.

During this state visit, Dissanayake is scheduled to participate in several key engagements and undertake field visits focused on technological and agricultural development, as well as initiatives aimed at poverty alleviation.

The visit also includes high-level business meetings and discussions, it said.

"The visit to the People's Republic of China will further strengthen the longstanding ties between the two countries," the Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry said earlier.

A host of issues, including permitting Chinese research vessels, regarded as spy ships by India; Sri Lanka's debt commitments to China, stated to be Colombo's largest creditor and expansion of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) invest-

ments are expected to figure in Dissanayake's talks with Xi.

Sri Lanka expects the visit to result in the digitisation of Sri Lanka's two state TV channels - Rupavahini and ITN.

Sri Lanka would also seek Chinese assistance to complete the central expressway, which has been stalled for over a decade, the media division of the Sri Lanka President's Office here said in a press release earlier.

The talks would also cover the Chinese industrial zone around the southern port of Hambantota.

Qin Boyong, a top Chinese official who visited Dissanayake immediately upon his return from Delhi in December, said the Chinese companies were eagerly waiting to set themselves up for business at Hambantota.

Dissanayake, once a bitter critic of India, chose Delhi for his first visit abroad.

During his visit to India

in December, where he met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Dissanayake assured New Delhi that Colombo would not permit its territory to be used in a manner that is detrimental to the interest of India, in an apparent reference to China.

China, which expanded its strategic ties with Sri Lanka during the pro-Berlin leader Mahinda Rajapaksa, his brother Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Ranil Wickramasinghe with the acquisition of Hambantota port for 99 years' lease as a debt swap followed by the development of Colombo Port City project, Dissanayake is a new generation leader representing new realities of his island nation.

A high-level delegation, including Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism Vijitha Herath, and the Minister of Transport, Highways, Ports, and Civil Aviation Bimal Rathnayake, has accompanied him to China.

North Korea launches missiles toward eastern waters in 2nd launch of year, South says

SEOUL, Jan 14 (Agencies): North Korea on Tuesday test-fired multiple missiles toward its eastern waters, South Korea's military said, as it continued its weapons demonstrations ahead of Donald Trump's return to the White House.

South Korea's joint chiefs of staff said the weapons were fired from a northern inland area and were suspected to be short-range ballistic missiles. It wasn't immediately clear how far the weapon flew.

The joint chiefs said the South Korean military has strengthened surveillance while sharing the launch information with the

US and Japanese militaries.

It was North Korea's second launch event of 2025, following a ballistic launch last week.

North Korea said the January 6 test was a new hypersonic intermediate-range missile designed to strike remote targets in the Pacific as leader Kim Jong Un vowed to further expand his collection of nuclear-capable weapons to counter rival nations.

North Korea is coming off a torrid year in weapons testing. The systems it demonstrated in 2024 included solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missiles designed to strike the US main-

land and various shorter-range missiles designed to overwhelm missile defences in South Korea. There concerns that its military capabilities could advance further through technology transfers from Russia, as the two countries align over the war in Ukraine.

At a year-end political conference, Kim vowed to implement the "toughest" anti-US policy and criticised the Biden administration's efforts to strengthen security cooperation with Seoul and Tokyo, which he described as a "nuclear military bloc for aggression".

North Korean state media did

not specify Kim's policy plans or mention any specific comments about Trump.

During his first term as president, Trump met Kim three times for talks on the North's nuclear programme.

Even if Trump returns to the White House, a quick resumption of diplomacy with North Korea could be unlikely. Kim's strengthened position — built on his expanded nuclear arsenal, deepening alliance with Russia and the weakening enforcement of US international sanctions — presents new challenges to resolving the nuclear standoff, experts say.

Sydney closes 9 beaches due to mysterious ball-shaped debris

SYDNEY, Jan 14 (Agencies): Nine beaches in Sydney, including well-known Manly beach, were closed to bathers on Tuesday after small white and grey balls of debris washed up on the shores at the height of the summer holiday season.

Northern Beaches Council said it was working on safely removing the matter. Most of the samples of the ball-shaped debris were the size of marbles, with some larger, it said in a statement.

Sydney's ocean beaches, famed for golden sand and clean water, draw tourists from around the globe.

Beachgoers were advised to avoid Manly, Dee Why, Long Reef, Queenscliff, Freshwater, North and South Curl

Curl, North Steyne and North Narrabeen beaches until further notice and keep away from the material while the clean-up and investigations continued.

Authorities said they were working closely with the state's environmental agency to collect samples of the debris for testing.

Last October, several beaches including the iconic Bondi east of downtown Sydney were shut after thousands of black balls appeared on the shores.

An inquiry later found that those balls were formed from fatty acids, chemicals similar to those in cosmetics and cleaning products, as well as hair, food waste and other materials associated with wastewater.

APS Rakhmuthi students display dance performance 9th Armed Forces Veterans' Day celebration

Top News Report

AKHNOOR, Jan 14: 9th Armed Forces Veterans' Day was commemorated today with great enthusiasm and reverence at Artillery Brigade Tanda, Akhnoor, under the aegis of Northern Command.

This significant day, celebrated annually on 14th January, marks the retirement of the First Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces, Field Marshal KM Cariappa, in 1953. It was first observed in 2016 and continues to be an important occasion to honour the contributions of Ex-Servicemen.

The event was graced by the presence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, J-K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Anil Chau-



han, along with other senior military and civil officials. This gathering not only recognized the invaluable service of our veterans but also celebrated their enduring legacy.

A notable highlight was the dance performance by the students of Army Public School Rakhmuthi. The performance beautifully integrated some of the initiatives of Prime Minis-

ter Narendra Modi namely Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Digital India, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, and Atmanirbhar Bharat. The Defence Minister was so mesmerised with the performance that he called the students on the stage once again to capture a memorable photograph. It was a proud moment for the Principal, teachers and students.

The event concluded with the solemn playing of the National Anthem, encapsulating the spirit of unity, patriotism, and the nation's gratitude towards its Armed Forces.

Armed Forces Veterans' Day serves as a reminder of the sacrifices and dedication of those who have served in the military, and this year's celebration further cemented the importance of remembering and honouring their contributions.

NC govt should focus on governance now after once again assurance by PM: Arun Gupta

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: After the assurance by Prime Minister, now the NC government should shift its focus on the governance in Jammu & Kashmir utilizing the development advancements made hereby the Union government, instead of raking up emotional issues like statehood for political mileage, stated Arun Gupta.

Arun Gupta, Spokesperson, J&K BJP accompanied by YV Sharma, Spokesperson, and Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, Media Incharge, J&K BJP was addressing a Press Conference at party headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has once again assured that all the promises made to J&K will be fulfilled, said Arun Gupta and added that some of the promises are already done and the rest will be done at the right time.

NC leadership should start focusing on effective and result-oriented governance by the J&K government and stop talking only about promises made including statehood by the Union government, said Arun Gupta.

"For the last three months, nothing has been accomplished by the present NC government which has more than 35 departments under their jurisdiction", said Arun Gupta.

Arun Gupta said that it is high time that the NC government should understand that singly repeating one subject alone cannot do justice to the aspirations and expectations of the citizens of Jammu & Kashmir. Citizens also expect the NC government to fulfill the promises made to people during elections and cannot escape by only repeating at the cost of repetition.

"NC government has no policy, no road map for future and cannot take people for granted", said Arun Gupta.

Arun Gupta said that the Government of India has provided liberal funding for numerous infrastructure projects in Jammu & Kashmir. Those projects shall not serve their purpose if local governance does not match with all the infrastructure being developed by the Union government at a huge cost.

"What is the point of developing 4 vital corridors in Jammu and Kashmir if they remain

underutilized getting developed at the whopping cost of 50,000 crore" said Arun Gupta while sharing that the Jammu-Srinagar is getting developed at the cost of 16000 crore rupees, Jammu-Chenani-Anantnag at the cost of 14,000 crore, Surankote-Shopin-Baramulla at the cost of 10,000 crore, Jammu-Akhnoor-Surankote-Poonch at the cost of 5,000 crore and Kathua-Basohli-Bhaderwah-Doda at the cost of 3,400 crore rupees.

He added that the Delhi-Katra is already being developed at a cost of 41,000 crore rupees, and a new project Paddar-Zanskar road is being conceived.

YV Sharma said that this is the golden period of development in Jammu & Kashmir.

Right from the rail link to Kashmir and this Z-Morh tunnel, the PM is eager to develop J&K and the people were waiting from early morning to listen to the PM in the sub-zero temperature. He also appealed to the NC government to focus on the development and to address all the issues related to the public needs utilizing the resources provided by the Union government with the liberal funding to Jammu & Kashmir.

Amar Mahal prepares for Museum Golden Jubilee & annual Tawi festival

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: The iconic heritage and tourism landmark of Jammu, Amar Mahal is gearing up to host its annual Tawi festival of Arts and Culture scheduled for 7th to 9th March, 2025. This year will see the third edition of the Tawi Festival and Mela which is hosted by the Hari Tara Charitable Trust (HTCT) and the erstwhile Dogra Royal Family of Jammu & Kashmir at the Amar Mahal Palace in Jammu city.

Martand Singh, Trustee of HTCT and grandson of Maharaja Dr. Karan Singh said that this year the Tawi Festival will be special as the Museum & Library at Amar Mahal will also be celebrating its Golden Jubilee Year that is fifty years since its opening.

He added that his esteemed grandfather, Maharaja Dr. Karan Singh opened the doors of the Museum & Library to visitors and tourists in 1975 and it was inaugurated by then Prime Min-

ister, Indra Gandhi.

Martand Singh further said that it is a matter of great pride that over the past five decades, Amar Mahal has emerged and grown to become the centre and symbol of tourism, art, culture, heritage, history and the dogra legacy of Jammu & Kashmir. He also said that the Hari Tara Charitable Trust has been supporting and promoting many socio-cultural, arts and crafts related initiatives in Jammu & Kashmir the latest being the Guru-Shishya Parampara which supports young and upcoming artists in Basohli form of miniature painting, unique to Jammu region.

Dr. Jyotsna Singh, Director of the Amar Mahal Museum said that the Tawi Festival comprises of Seminars, workshops and talks; performances of folk music and street theatre, classical and folk dance and music; and a Mela, with an emphasis on showcasing entrepreneurship, innova-

tion, and local cuisines, and organic products sourced from NGOs across the Himalayan region.

She further said that the region's rich diversity of language, culture, architecture and music is yet to be fully appreciated and the festival will play a role in creating an interest locally as well as outside of the region.

Dr. Jyotsna Singh also said that art camps, immersive workshops and exhibitions are an integral part of the festival and artists from the Basohli School supported by the Amar Mahal Museum are encouraged to demonstrate and explain their techniques and approach.

The annual event witness participation from artists, scholars, intellectuals and students from Jammu & Kashmir and many parts of the country. The Mela feature held in the lawns of Amar Mahal particularly attracts many youth and families from Jammu city.

Think India Srinagar organizes Round Table Conference on National Youth Day

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 14: On the eve of National Youth Day, Think India Srinagar hosted a motivating Round Table Conference at Government College for Women, MA Road, Srinagar. The event was designed to engage and inspire the youth, focusing on leadership, service, and the spirit of progress.

The conference was honored by the presence of M. Rashid Kohli, Joint Director of Youth Services and Sports, Kashmir, who addressed the gathering as the Chief Guest. His speech highlighted the vital role of youth in shaping the future of the region and the country.

Kifayatullah Malik, a Presidential Awardee, also graced the occasion as the Guest of Honor. His words on the importance of national service and youth empowerment were well received by the attendees.

Adding to the energy of the event, Akeel Ahmad Tantray, a passionate student activist, made

a special appearance. During his address, he emphasized Think India Srinagar's commitment to organizing similar programs in the future. He also expressed the vision of making the youth the brand ambassadors of Viksit Jammu Kashmir and Viksit Bharat, encouraging them to take an active role in driving the development of the nation.

This event not only sparked a renewed sense of purpose among the youth of Kashmir but also marked the beginning of a broader movement aimed at empowering the younger generation. Think India Srinagar remains dedicated to creating opportunities for youth engagement, helping them become leaders who contribute to the progress of both Jammu and Kashmir and India.

The event concluded with a unified vision for a brighter and more prosperous future, with the youth of today playing a key role in shaping that future.

Samsung opens pre-reserve for the next Galaxy S Series

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: Samsung, India's largest consumer electronics brand, today announced that consumers in India can pre-reserve their next Galaxy S series smartphone starting on Tuesday.

The new Galaxy S series will unveil a new chapter in mobile AI, unveiling premium Galaxy innovations, that bring seamless

convenience into every moment of your life.

Customers can pre-reserve the flagship Galaxy S series by paying a token amount of Rs 2000 on Samsung.com, Samsung Exclusive Stores, and leading online and offline retail stores across India.

Pre-reserved customers will be eligible for early access and receive benefits of up to Rs 5000 on purchasing

the new Galaxy S series devices. Samsung will bring the next evolution of Galaxy AI, which will change the way consumers will interact with the world every day.

The new Galaxy S series will set the bar once again for mobile AI experiences. Samsung will unveil its next generation of Galaxy S series at Galaxy Unpacked on January 22 in San Jose, California.

FromPage No:1

BJP Govt treats Delhi, Kashmir equally: Union Minister Rajnath Singh

Akhnoor demonstrates that "we are treating Akhnoor or for that matter Kashmir the same way as Delhi in our hearts."

CM Omar Abdullah praises Armed Forces for safeguarding Country

tomorrow or care for your lives. "You are the ones who are ready to sacrifice your lives to safeguard the unity and integrity of the country and you are performing your duties diligently. Now it is our duty to take care of you. While taking care of our country, you took care of everyone," the chief minister said.

He said it is now the duty of the government that they should not face any difficulty or trouble.

"When we do this, we should not think that we are doing any favour to you, because it is our duty. We are grateful for what you did for the nation and in fact, you have done a great favour to us. Now it is our duty to fulfil our duty by helping you, solving your problems, and reducing your difficulties," the chief minister said.

Assuring complete support of his government to mitigate any problems being faced by the veterans, Abdullah said they should bring to his notice any shortcoming or flaw,

so that it can be resolved on time.

He said his government will try to implement reservation in recruitment for the veterans and also facilitate financial support in accordance with the government schemes.

"Efforts are being made to further improve and strengthen the relations between the government and the forces," he said, asserting that he along with his cabinet colleague and the son of a retired soldier, Satish Sharma, will try to bring relief to them by addressing their problems.

"It is our duty to serve and help you. And we will carry out our duty to the fullest," he said.

Lieutenant Governor pays tribute to ex-servicemen on Armed Forces Veterans Day

head in gratitude to all valiant Jawans, Veeer Naris & families of our Armed Forces' brave hearts".

"Soldiers protecting the borders are the guarantee of security and development of the nation. It is collective responsibility of the society to take concrete measures for welfare of soldiers & veterans," LG Sinha said on X.

"A martyr's house is a sacred temple. This feeling & respect must be there in minds of common man. Admin & society can express their gratitude to those who sacrificed everything for country by fulfilling their responsibilities & ensuring that they live a life of comfort &

dignity," he added on X.

6 Army Soldiers injured in accidental mine blast along LoC in Rajouri

They said the injured were immediately shifted to hospital and their condition was stated to be stable.

As part of an anti-infiltration obstacle system, the forward areas near the Line of Control are dotted with landmines which sometimes get washed away by rains resulting in such types of accidents, the officials said.

Natural cave of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine in J&K opened for devotees

shrine since the beginning of the New Year.

"We have almost 10,000 to 15,000 pilgrim footfalls at the cave shrine on a daily basis. The number of pilgrims go up usually on the weekend days," the CEO of the shrine board said, hoping that the number of pilgrims will go up after the opening of the natural cave.

Last year, 94.83 lakh pilgrims offered prayers at the revered shrine, the second highest number of visitors in a decade.

SHA suspends

empanelment of Shifa Hospital, Srinagar for six months

hospital be immediately suspended for a period of 6 months and a penalty of Rs 2615000/- would be imposed for the illegal payments collected from the aggrieved beneficiaries," reads the order.

"However, in the interest of dialysis patients, the hospital may continue providing dialysis treatment to the existing patients under AB PM-JAY/AB PM-JAY SEHAT," it reads further.

"Now, therefore, Shifa Medical Centre, Magarmal Bagh Srinagar is hereby suspended for a period 6 months from the date of issuance of this order. However, in the interest of dialysis patients, the hospital shall continue to provide treatment to the existing dialysis patients under AB PM-JAY/AB PM-JAY SEHAT. Also, penalty to the tune of Rs 2615000/- (Twenty-Six Lac Fifteen Thousand only) is imposed on the hospital for the illegal payments collected from the aggrieved beneficiaries. The said penalty amount shall be deposited by the hospital within 5 working days. In case the hospital fails to deposit the penalty/fine amount within the stipulated time same shall be adjusted with the pending payment to the EHCP without any further notice," the order reads further.

Kashmir pays tribute to Veteran freedom fighter Shamboo Nath Bhan and other freedom fighters

dom fighter Shamboo Nath Bhan and other freedom fighters

and a prominent Kashmiri leader Ashok Bhan said, "Kashmir today pays tribute not only to freedom fighter and socio-spiritual leader Pt Shamboo Nath Bhan but all those freedom fighters who fought for Freedom of our Country. We the people post freedom generation Salute them.

"Kashmir is the keystone of our heritage and finds mention in the oldest scriptures. Kashmir is an integral part of Indian civilization. It is not a statement but an impassioned avowal. Kashmir is the cradle of rich civilisation was considered the abode of Saraswati, the highest seat of learning in India, and was also referred to as Sharada Peeth." Ashok bhan said.

So much so that students on graduating from Kashi would take four symbolic steps towards Kashmir, denoting their aspiration for higher learning. Almost the entire body of Sanskrit literature has its origins in Kashmir.

Swami Vivakananda visited twice Kashmir Valley and spent his time in Khirbawani temple and performed Shri Amar Nath Yatra. It is the spiritual personalities like Pt. SN Bhan who founded Kashmir's Ramakrishna Mission and was an ardent devotee of Mata Kheerbawani in his life time who inspired the Kashmiri generations and kept alive the richest spiritual & cultural heritage by his pravachans, articulations, debates & discussions.

Bhan said, "We need to carry such good work forward in this

critical time when Kashmir need it most craving for peace and Justice. Kashmiris have consciously acceded to India in 1947 by rejecting Jinnah's two nation doctrine and after showing him black flags in protest by sloganeering as- "Jinnah go back." History does not tread the path trodden by kings & Sultans alone. It treats many little paths, through lanes and by lanes peeping into the close doors of the matter & mind.

People of Kashmir sick of terror violence that has brought death & destruction. Kashmir have rejected it and opted massively for democracy and for peace and peaceful life for its present and future generations."

Exiled natives are longing to return home after 35 years of living as refugees in their own Country. Now on the verge of disintegration are longings to return home and say "Akir Vistapith Kab Tak"

Ashok Bhan empathised, "The country's constitutional & strategic interests are intertwined with the people of Kashmir and not with the land alone."

The people include the Kashmiri Pandits as important stakeholders.

"Therefore it is the Constitutional and political duty of the current union Govt. to correct the affairs of Kashmir, restore trust & confidence by engaging with the common people. Modi -3:0 and Omar Abdullah's Government in unison are required to create livings conditions for the people to live peacefully and plan a time bound return, restitution & rehabilitation of Exiled Kashmiri Pandits back to homeland. The societal welcome in Kashmir keenly awaits them back home with open arms to promote the inclusive Kashmiri ethos." said bhan.

Army celebrates Veterans Day in Ramban

Top News Report

RAMBAN, Jan 14: The Indian Army organized an Ex-Servicemen Meet at Maitra, in District Ramban, to commemorate Veterans Day and honor the service of retired personnel, their families, and Veer Naris (war widows).

The event provided a platform for veterans to reconnect, share their experiences, and reminisce about their service. Interactive sessions highlighted the camaraderie and ethos of the armed forces, with veterans sharing insights to inspire current personnel.

Stalls were set up to address the specific



needs of veterans and their families, including assistance with SPARSH portal transitions, ECHS card preparation, DSP account benefits, and medical consultations by Army doctors.

Additionally, the Revenue, Horticulture, Handicrafts and Handloom Department and State Bank of India showcased their services, products and promoted skill development and employment opportuni-

ties.

In a special gesture, the sacrifices of Veer Naris were acknowledged, reflecting their resilience and contributions to the nation.

The event also educated veterans about

welfare schemes, healthcare services, and post-retirement benefits, ensuring their continued support and well-being.

This celebration was a tribute to the Army's legacy of sacrifice and commitment, fostering stronger bonds within the military community. By addressing grievances and creating engagement opportunities, the Army reaffirmed its gratitude and dedication to its veterans.

The Ex-Servicemen Meet underscored the values of honor, duty, and cares, ensuring the sacrifices of veterans remain a source of pride and inspiration for the nation.

9th Tri Services Armed Forces Veterans Day celebrated at Leh

Top News Report

LEH, Jan 14: 9th 'Tri Services Armed Forces Veterans Day' was celebrated by Indian Army at Leh on Tuesday in a grand function befitting valour and sacrifices of the Veterans.

Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd), Lieutenant General Hitesh Bhalla, SC, SM, VSM, General Officer Commanding, Fire and Fury Corps and senior veterans paid homage to the fallen heroes of Ladakh by laying wreath at the Hall of Fame, Leh.

Veterans Day is celebrated all across the country on 14 January every year since 2017 to pay respect to our veterans and show the nation's genuine gratitude for their service. On this day the first

Indian Chief of the Army Staff, Field Marshal KM Cariappa, Order of British Empire (OBE) superannuated in 1953.

Around 650 retired armed forces personnel from Ladakh attended the main event at Rinchen Auditorium in Leh. During the event, Lieutenant Governor addressed the veterans and thanked them for their invaluable contribution and sacrifice for the nation.

Lieutenant Governor also assured them of wholehearted support from civil administration to resolve their problems and complemented all ranks of Fire and Fury Corps for their dedicated efforts in ensuring all round welfare and development of veterans and their dependents in Ladakh. Six veterans and One

Veer Nari were awarded LGs certificate of appreciation for their distinguished service to the Society. Veer Naris of Ladakh were also felicitated by the First Lady of Ladakh.

Numerous 'Help Desks' were also established for the benefit of attendees wherein problems related to different issues being faced by veterans and their dependents were resolved. Complex cases were noted for further action and follow up.

Similar events were held at 10 remote locations in entire Ladakh. The grand celebration of Veterans Day on 14 January every year stands testimony to the commitment of Indian Army towards the deep bond that is shared with the veterans.

137 Bn CRPF organizes Anti-Drug Campaign at GMHSS Udhampur

Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Jan 14: The 137 Battalion CRPF organized a grand event today as part of the Anti-Drug Campaign 2024-2025 at Government Model Higher Secondary School (SIKS), Udhampur.

The event witnessed the gracious presence of esteemed dignitaries, including Honorable MLA of Udhampur West, Pawan Kumar Gupta, Padma Shri Shiv

Nirmohi, SSP Udhampur Amod Nagpure, Addl. SSP Sandeep Bhut, Sumer Khajuria, CEO Education Narinder Suri, Principal Manoj Kumar, Rohit Sethi, Varinder Badyal, and Second-in-Commandant of 137 Battalion CRPF, Manoj Kumar.

The campaign was aimed at creating awareness about the harmful effects of drug addiction and promoting a healthy, drug-free lifestyle. Shri Pawan

Kumar Gupta, in his keynote address, spoke about the pressing need for collective action to eradicate substance abuse and urged the youth to stay away from drugs.

Padma Shri Shiv Nirmohi Ji motivated the audience with his powerful message, emphasizing the importance of moral and cultural values in building a drug-free society. SSP Amod Nagpure and Addl. SSP Sandeep Bhut shared

their perspectives on law enforcement's role in combating drug abuse and encouraged community collaboration. CEO Education Narinder Suri stressed the role of education in preventing youth from falling into the trap of addiction.

Second-in-Commandant Manoj Kumar represented the 137 Battalion CRPF and reaffirmed the battalion's commitment to conducting such

awareness campaigns. He highlighted the importance of community involvement and inspired attendees with his encouraging words.

The event included cultural performances, poster exhibitions, and informative speeches, which were well-received by the students, teachers, and local citizens. The program successfully concluded with a call for united efforts in building a drug-free society.

Army organizes veterans' rally at Chak-Kigam



Top News Report

HANDWARA, Jan 14: The Indian Army conducted a Veterans' Rally on Tuesday at Chak-Kigam Camp, under the aegis of Charkut Garrison, to strengthen its bond with ex-servicemen in the Keegam and Lolab Valley regions.

The event aimed to inform veterans about the latest welfare schemes, inspire them to utilize educational opportunities for their children through institutions like Sainik Schools, RIMC, and Military Schools, and reinforce their role as integral contributors to society.

The rally emphasized the enduring respon-

sibilities of ex-servicemen, encouraging them to play an active role in fostering harmony and normalcy in the region.

Veterans were urged to guide local youth towards positive and productive engagement, ensuring their integration into the mainstream of the nation's development.

A total of 132 veterans, accompanied by 30 of their wards, attended the event. Additionally, representatives from 18 departments set up stalls to provide assistance and address grievances.

Key services included medical and dental consultations, CSD card renewal, mobile number and address updates,

and financial services from HDFC Bank and SBI Bank. The JAK LI Records Office also facilitated the veterans with necessary support.

A cultural program featuring performances by children from Harshan Army Goodwill School (AGS) Krusan added a festive touch to the event. During the rally, the database of veterans was updated to enhance future communication and outreach. The ex-servicemen expressed their gratitude to the Indian Army for its continued support and efforts to address their concerns. The initiative underscored the Army's commitment to the welfare of its veterans and their families.

Union with Almighty is true basis of devotion: Mata Sudiksha

Top News Report

SAMALKHA, Jan 14: "Devotion is a state that fills life with divinity and bliss. It is neither a barter of desires nor a medium of self-interest. True devotion means a deep connection with the Almighty and selfless love."

These inspiring words were expressed by Nirankari Satguru Mata Sudiksha Ji Maharaj while addressing a vast gathering at the "Bhakti Parv Samagam" organized at the Sant Nirankari Adhiyatmik Sthal in Samalkha, Haryana.

On this auspicious occasion, under the divine guidance of Satguru Mata Sudiksha Maharaj and the esteemed Nirankari

Rajpita Ramit, an atmosphere of devotion and reverence prevailed.

Thousands of devotees from Delhi, NCR, and across the globe participated in this divine congregation, experiencing profound spiritual bliss through the medium of Satsang.

On this sacred occasion, the invaluable contributions of revered saints like Param Sant Santokh Singh and others in promoting Brahm Gyan, dedication, and spiritual wisdom were remembered and drew inspiration for the devotees.

During the event, numerous speakers, poets, and lyricists beautifully expressed the glory of the Satguru and the essence

of devotion through various art forms. The inspirational teachings of the saints enriched the spiritual perspective of the attendees' lives.

While highlighting the significance of devotion, Satguru Mata emphasized that just as Brahm Gyan (God-knowledge) is the foundation of true devotion. It transforms life into a celebration. True devotion transcends superficiality and must be free from selfishness and greed.

Using an analogy, Satguru Mata explained that just as milk curdles when mixed with lemon, devotion loses its purity if tainted with greed and self-interest.

Satguru Mata cited examples of Lord Hanuman, Meera Bai, and



Lord Buddha, noting that while their expressions of devotion differed, their essence was the same—a profound and unbreakable connection with the Almighty. Devotion can manifest in various forms, such as service, remembrance, Satsang, or singing hymns, but it must be characterized by selfless love and surrender. She also emphasized that devotion is possible even in a household life, provided one experiences

the presence of the Almighty in every action.

Satguru Mata highlighted the lives of Mata Savinder and Rajmata as epitomes of devotion and dedication, stating that their lives serve as the finest examples of devotion and selfless service.

The core principle of the Nirankari Mission is that devotion becomes meaningful only when it is based on the realization of the divine essence.

Undoubtedly, Satguru Mata's invaluable discourses inspired devotees to understand and embrace the true essence of devotion through Brahm Gyan, enriching their spiritual lives.

NSS Unit of GDC Samba celebrates National Youth Day



Top News Report

SAMBA, Jan 14: The NSS Unit of SPPND Govt. Degree College (GDC), Samba organised innovative stone painting activity to mark National Youth Day.

The activity was held under the patronage of Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Twinkle Suri to honour the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.

The event aimed to promote creativity and inspire students to embody the values of Swami Vivekananda, including self-reliance, unity, and service to society.

Enthusiastic students painted stones with motivational quotes, cultural sym-

bols, and vibrant designs reflecting the ideals of youth empowerment.

Principal Prof. (Dr.) Twinkle Suri, appreciated the initiative, emphasizing the importance of engaging the youth in creative and meaningful endeavors.

She further encouraged students to follow Swami Vivekananda's teachings and channel their energy toward building a better society.

The celebration concluded with a display of the painted stones, symbolizing the strength and resilience of the youth, aligning with the ideals of Swami Vivekananda. A total of 30 Volunteers participated in the event. The event was organized by NSS PO Prof. Kamlesh Bala.

NGO Helping Hands Jammu receives National Excellence Award 2025

Top News Report

JAMMU / KANGRA, Jan 14: In a prestigious event held in Kangra, Himachal Pradesh, Helping Hands Jammu was honored with the National Excellence Award 2025, recognizing its outstanding contribution to society. The event saw nominations from across the country with Helping Hands Jammu proudly representing Jammu & Kashmir. The award ceremony was hosted by the Himachal Pradesh Government in collaboration with the Betiya Foundation, a National NGO. Adding to the grandeur of the event, several Bollywood stars were also present, celebrating and acknowledging the remarkable efforts of the award recipients. This accolade highlights the impactful work carried out by Helping Hands Jammu in sectors such as education, healthcare, cleanliness drives, and animal welfare.

Speaking on this proud occasion, Founder Sourav Sharma said, "We are deeply thankful to everyone who has stood by us, encouraged our efforts, and believed in our mission. Representing Jammu & Kashmir at the national level is a moment of immense pride for us. Through our work, we aim to continue helping people and bringing honor to our state." The dedicated efforts of team members Rakshit Bhal, Paras Sawhney, Priya Sharma, Jui Kalsotra, Jai Karan Bali, Karan Thakur, and Ravi were also acknowledged during the event. Their commitment and teamwork have been instrumental in achieving this milestone. This award serves as a testament to the unwavering determination of Helping Hands Jammu to uplift communities and address critical social issues.

Khelo India Center Handwara wins 1st Snow Volleyball Championship



Top News Report

KUPWARA, Jan 14: In a momentous achievement, the Khelo India Center of Volleyball, Handwara, has etched its name in history by winning the 1st Snow Volleyball Championship held during the Winter Carnival 2025 in Kupwara.

This victory highlights the growing prominence of volleyball in the

region and the unwavering dedication of the athletes and their mentors.

The Kupwara Volleyball Association extended congratulations to the Sports Council of J&K, especially to Nuzhat Gul, Secretary of the Sports Council, for her exceptional support and leadership in promoting sports across the Union Territory.

Special apprecia-

tion was also given to the Khelo India Center Handwara and its volleyball coach, Sheikh Mudasir Ahmad, for their outstanding performance and dedication in achieving this remarkable feat.

This victory not only brings glory to Handwara but also inspires the youth of Jammu & Kashmir to explore new opportunities in sports, even in challenging winter conditions.

The Kupwara Volleyball Association commended the relentless efforts of all stakeholders and looks forward to witnessing more achievements from the Khelo India Center Handwara in the future.

Future stars shine at Petronas Twin Towers ahead of 2025 ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup

The rising stars of women's cricket gathered at the iconic Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur for the Captains' Day photoshoot ahead of the 2025 ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup.

KUALA LUMPUR (MALAYSIA), Jan 14 (Agencies): The rising stars of women's cricket gathered at the iconic Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur for the Captains' Day photoshoot ahead of the 2025 ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup.

On a vibrant Tuesday morning in the Malaysian capital, the captains of all 16 participating teams posed with the tournament trophy, each envisioning the moment they might lift it on February 2.

Defending champions India and hosts Malaysia were positioned closest to the trophy, while the remaining 14 teams stood flanking them.

India's captain, Niki Prasad, expressed her determination to bring home another title, inspired by the success of her predecessors two years ago.



"Coming to the Captains' Day and meeting the other 15 captains was a great experience, and to do it in front of the towers in Kuala Lumpur makes it extra special," Prasad said, as quoted by the ICC.

"Looking at the trophy on display, I'm excited to go out with my teammates and try and

defend the trophy won by Team India in 2023," she added.

For Samoa, one of the tournament's debutants, captain Avetia Fetu Mapu shared that the experience of joining the other captains had made their surprising qualification feel all the more real.

This event marked the only

time all 16 captains will be together in one location, as the teams will soon head to various parts of Malaysia for the group stage, starting on January 18.

Group C matches will take place in Sarawak, located on the island of Borneo, while Group B teams will compete in Johor, near the Singapore border. Teams in Groups A and D will remain closer to Kuala Lumpur, playing at Bayuemas Oval and UKM Oval.

The tournament will feature 41 matches, with the top three teams from each group advancing to the Super Six stage. Points earned during the group stage against other advancing teams will carry over. The top two teams from each Super Six group will then progress to the semi-finals, keeping the race for the trophy wide open.

Taylor Fritz powers into Australian Open second round for seventh straight year



MELBOURNE, Jan 14 (Agencies): Fourth seed Taylor Fritz cruised into the second round of the Australian Open for the seventh consecutive year, dispatching fellow American Jenson Brooksby with a dominant performance on Day 3 in Melbourne.

Fritz secured a commanding 6-2, 6-0, 6-3 victory against Brooksby, who was making his return to competitive tennis after a year-long absence.

"I'm super happy how the match went," Fritz said, as per the official website of ATP.

"It's never easy playing the first match

of Slams with a bit of nerves. I did a good job shaking that off early and getting it done in straights," he added.

Brooksby had last competed at the 2023 Australian Open before undergoing wrist surgery and serving a suspension for missing three anti-doping tests.

Fritz, who reached the 2024 US Open final and the ATP Finals title match last year, now awaits the winner of the clash between Cristian Garin and Borna Coric in the next round.

Earlier, Matteo Berrettini of Italy overcame Britain's Cameron Norrie in a closely contested match, firing 32 aces en route to a 6-7(4), 6-4, 6-1, 6-3 victory. Berrettini, a former Australian Open semi-finalist in 2022, has struggled to make deep runs in majors recently, reaching the second week only once in the past two years (Wimbledon 2023).

Berrettini's next challenge will be Danish star Holger Rune, who edged past Zhang Zhizhen of China in a five-set thriller. Rune, ranked in the Top 10, prevailed 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 3-6, 6-4 after three hours and 10 minutes. He holds a 3-1 advantage in his head-to-head record against Berrettini, having won their last three encounters.

Rohan Bopanna's Australian Open campaign ends in first round

MELBOURNE, Jan 14 (Agencies): India's doubles ace Rohan Bopanna faced an early exit from the Australian Open as his men's doubles campaign ended in the first round on Tuesday. Teaming up with Colombian partner Nicolas Barrientos, the 14th-seeded duo fell to Spain's Pedro Martinez and Jaume Munar 5-7, 6-7 (5) in a tightly contested match on Court 15 in Melbourne.

Bopanna, who won the Australian Open doubles title last year with former partner Matthew Ebden, couldn't replicate his success this time with Barrientos. Despite their seeding, the Indo-Colombian pair struggled to find their rhythm against the unseeded Spanish team, eventually losing in an hour and 54 minutes. It was disappointing for the 44-year-old Bopanna, who had reached the World No. 1 doubles ranking in 2023. It also added to India's setbacks at the tournament, following



Sumit Nagal's first-round exit in the men's singles on Sunday.

Nagal, the only Indian in the men's singles draw, went down to 26th seed Tomas Machac of Czechia in straight sets, losing 6-3, 6-1, 7-5. The 27-year-old fought hard but was overpowered in two hours and five minutes.

Last year, Sumit Nagal made the main draw via the qualifying rounds and stunned Kazakhstan's world No. 27 Alexander Bublik in the opening round. He became the first Indian men's tennis player to defeat a seeded player in a Grand Slam since Ramesh Krishnan in

1989. Nagal bowed out in the next round after losing to People's Republic of China's Juncheng Shang.

Three other Indian players remain in contention in men's doubles. Yuki Bhambhani has partnered with France's Albano Olivetti, N Sriram Balaji is teaming up with Mexico's Miguel Angel Reyes-Varela, and Rithvik Bollipalli is playing alongside American Ryan Seggerman.

Meanwhile, no Indian woman qualified for the Australian Open this year, leaving the nation's hopes resting on the remaining doubles players.

After Kenya, India 2nd in list of banned athletes with 108 doping cases

MUMBAI, Jan 14 (Agencies): India is currently placed second in the list of countries with the most athletes currently ineligible to participate in international events.

But the outgoing president of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) Adile Sumariwala and World Championship bronze medallist Anju Bobby George feel this is actually a good thing that more people are getting caught, which indicates that more testing is being done to catch all the "crooks and culprits".

According to data made available by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) for the year ending December 2024, Kenya tops the list with 119 cases while India is second at 108.

Russia is third in the countries with the most ineligible athletes at 73, Telecom Asia Sport (www.telecomasia.net) reported.

China, in contrast, has

only 26 such cases, while the United States has only 16 such athletes.

In the last month or so, India has seen four athletes added to the list of those ineligible to participate in any event.

The AIU, an independent body set up to run the anti-doping programme for World Athletics, last week suspended Indian middle-distance runner Archana Jadhav for using a banned substance.

In December 2024, the AIU had sanctioned three Indians -- sprinter Ankit Kumar (100m, 200m), Vinit Rathi, who participates in 3000m steeplechase and 5000m, and Jeyavindhya Jegadish, an Asian junior medallist in women's 400m and 400m hurdles -- for failing dope tests. Kumar has been suspended for four years, while the other two will be out for three years.

It is this rise in the number of doping

cases that has recently prompted two-time Olympic medallist in javelin throw, Neeraj Chopra to flag doping as a major concern for Indian athletes.

"Nowadays doping is a big problem in India among our athletes. I want to tell them that once doping is in their mind, it gets hard in the future. They are unable to play at that level. They think that only doping can improve their performance, but that is not the truth. It is their hard work and self-belief, that proper guidance from the coach will take you forward," said Chopra recently.

Chopra, who won India's first gold medal in athletics in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and a silver medal at Paris 2024, has rightly flagged this issue as the number of positive doping cases has drastically risen in India.

There has been a steep rise in the number of ineligible athletes in

the last two years in the top two offender countries -- Kenya and India.

While Kenya and India had 54 and 65 ineligible athletes, respectively, on 31 December 2022, the number has surged to 119 and 108, respectively, in the same period in 2024.

All in all, it paints a worrying picture for sports in India and if the trend continues, this problem is going to tarnish the country's image further. It should be a matter of concern for authorities, especially when India has shown interest in hosting the Summer Olympics of 2036.

"If more people are getting caught, it's good, which means that we are testing more, we are catching more, we are catching all the crooks and culprits. So I think it's a good sign that people know that over some time, you will get caught if you dope, and then that's the only way you will see a reduction in the long term,"

Sumariwala told Telecom Asia Sport.

Anju, India's first athlete ever to win a medal at the 2003 World Athletics Championships, while lauding AFI for its efforts to educate the athletes, had some advice for the youngsters.

"Don't suffer for life for short-term gain. Be wise," she said while advising them to avoid falling into the doping trap.

"We, at the Athletics Federation of India, have zero tolerance for doping. Doping is mostly done at the district level, where district coaches are responsible for even supplying banned substances to juniors, which is again an offence under the Juvenile Act," said Sumariwala.

He said making doping a criminal offence could be an effective way to tackle it, and the AFI is coordinating with the government to enhance the doping bill.

Banton, Pooran steer MI Emirates to emphatic 26-run triumph over Dubai Capitals

ABU DHABI, Jan 14 (Agencies): The MI Emirates cruised to their first win of the International League T20 (ILT20) season as they rode on half-centuries from Tom Banton and Nicholas Pooran to clinch a 26-run win against the Dubai Capitals in the Zayed Cricket Stadium.

Shai Hope was the star of the match as he scored a magnificent century of 101 runs in 59 balls, but it went in vain as the Dubai Capitals lost to the MI Emirates for the first time in group stages in the tournament's history. Fazalhaq Farooqi's over, where he picked up two wickets and conceded just three runs, turned the course of the game in favour of the MI Emirates.

With the Capitals chasing a daunting target of 188, MI Emirates opened their bowling with spin as Akeal Hosein was handed the new ball and the move nearly paid off in the third over. Ben Dunk skied a quicker one, but the chance went begging as Waqar Salamkheil dropped a sitter. Shai Hope, at the other end, did the bulk of the scoring and anchored the Capitals' innings.

Alzari Joseph gave MI Emirates the breakthrough as he bowled Dunk in the sixth over, but Hope motored on at the

other end and brought up his 50 in 32 deliveries.

Hope and McMullen put up 61 for the second wicket before the latter was stumped by Nicholas Pooran. It was a redemption tale for Salamkheil as he finally got his man.

Hope remained unscathed and hit AM Ghazanfar for a four and a six as he brought up his T20 career's second century. This was the first century scored by a Dubai Capitals player and also the third 100 in the history of the ILT20. Hope could not go further as he fell the very next ball.

The momentum swiftly swung in the MI Emirates' way thereafter as Fazalhaq Farooqi dismissed Sikandar Raza with a toe-crushing yorker. Farooqi made it two in two as he crafted yet another brilliant yorker to get rid of Dasun Shanaka's off stump.

The Dubai Capitals were left to rue their chances as Zahoor Khan bowled a fantastic 19th over, giving away just one run. The Dubai Capitals needed 36 in the final over, but it proved to be too steep a hill to climb as the MI Emirates sealed an emphatic victory.

Earlier in the evening, MI Emirates stuttered early on as Dushmantha Chameera was on the money in his very first deliv-

ery. He outfoxed Kusala Perera and dislodged his leg stump to give the Dubai Capitals an early footing in the game. Tom Banton joined Muhammed Waseem in the middle and the duo offered the MI Emirates some much-needed stability with a key partnership of 38 runs that was littered with boundaries.

However, Raza made amends for a missed catch earlier as he found the stumps with a stunning throw from mid-off and Waseem returned to the pavilion for 18. The powerplay ended with MI Emirates putting up 50/2, with both teams having plenty of positive takeaways.

Banton continued to thrive on one end, bringing up his half-century in style as he swept Zahir Khan for a huge six on the leg side to wrap up the 11th over.

Coming in at number four, Pooran joined the party as he clobbered two fours and six sixes in a 29-ball endeavour that yielded 59 runs. Pooran took down Olly Stone for three successive sixes in the 15th over. The skipper began his onslaught with a perfectly timed scoop, the next was a fortunate edge that sailed over the ropes and the third was a repeat of the first. In pursuit of a fourth consecutive maximum, he held

out to Dasun Shanaka at deep midwicket.

Stone struck again in the 18th over as he got rid of Banton, the architect of MI Emirates' innings, for a top score of 74 runs in 52 balls. Romario Shepherd, Kieron Pollard and Joseph made up Gulbadin Naib's second consecutive three-wicket haul in the final over as the Capitals restricted the MI Emirates to 187-7.

Expressing his regret on not bringing the Capitals home, centurion Shai Hope said, "A 100 always feels a lot sweeter when you end up on the winning side. Just unfortunate I could not get the team there, but we just fell short with the bat. It was a pretty good pitch, and I thought we did well to restrict them to under 200," as quoted from a release by ILT20.

Meanwhile, Player of the Match, Tom Banton remarked, "It was tricky to begin with. We spoke pre-game that someone's got to bat through the innings. I looked to put pressure back on the bowlers when the ball was in my area. I've played a lot of cricket here and the wickets are always good. It's my first year here, I was with MI Cape Town last year. Someone has to put his hand up every game, and today it was me."

"It's an honour to play against the best": Brazilian Kho Kho player Nicholas Tadeu Santos Da Silva on playing against India



NEW DELHI, Jan 14 (Agencies): Brazilian Kho Kho team player, Nicholas Tadeu Santos Da Silva, spoke passionately about the honour and excitement of participating in the first-ever Kho Kho World Cup in India. With the tournament marking a milestone in the sport's history, Da Silva shared his thoughts on the journey, the competition, and the warm hospitality they've received in India.

Reflecting on their first match against India, Da Silva emphasized the significance of playing against India.

"It's an honour to play against the best. We are learning a lot on a daily basis, and I believe

we are going to give a competitive match. We are training for that. We want to give a beautiful game and play a beautiful game. It's a big honour to play against India," Da Silva told agency.

When asked about the experience of being in India for this historic event, Da Silva couldn't contain his excitement.

"It's a level of excitement that I can't describe. It's a dream coming true. It's surreal for us. In Brazil, we came all the way here to play, and we could not imagine the size of this World Cup," he shared, clearly in awe of the opportunity.

The athlete also spoke about the joyous atmo-

sphere and cultural richness of the host country. "It was amazing; it was a feeling I was in the clouds, you know. There were beautiful dances," he recalled, highlighting the vibrant energy surrounding the event.

The Brazilian team has also been deeply moved by the warm reception they've received in India. "Hospitality, it's amazing, and it's been amazing. Everybody is taking care of us. We really don't want to go. We want this to last forever," Da Silva concluded, expressing his gratitude for the kindness shown by the host nation.

The first-ever Kho Kho World Cup finally kicked-started in New Delhi on Monday with a grand opening ceremony and will be held till January 19. The first match of the tournament saw India play Nepal in men's action. The women's action will kickstart on Tuesday with England taking on Australia. Brazil's men's team will play India on Tuesday.

JSS Jammu wins India's Five Star Ranking Award

Principal-cum-Vice-Chairperson recognized as one of the Top 10 Educational Leaders

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: Jammu Sanskriti School (JSS), Jammu, has achieved a remarkable milestone by winning the prestigious India's Five Star Ranking Award, Grade : A++ and in the Special Category : Inclusive School at the recently held School Leaders Conference in New Delhi. This recognition underscores the school's outstanding contributions to education and its commitment to nurturing academic excellence and leadership in students.

The award was presented to the school in recognition of its consistent efforts to provide quality education, innovative teaching practices, and a well-rounded learning environment. Rohini Aima, the Principal Cum Vice-Chairperson of Jammu Sanskriti School, received the award on behalf of the school, further elevating the institution's reputation on a national level.

In addition to the school's achievement, Rohini Aima, the Principal Cum Vice-Chairperson was personally honoured at the event for being named among the Top 10 Educational Leaders in India.

Her visionary leadership, dedication to holistic education, and relentless efforts in improving



the educational landscape were key factors in this recognition. With more than three decades of experience in the field of education, she has been instrumental in driving the school's growth and fostering a culture of excellence.

The School Leaders Conference, organized by the Centre for Educational Development (CED), brought together promi-

nent educators, school leaders, and policymakers from across the country to discuss strategies for the future of education in India. The India Star Ranking award highlights schools that demonstrate exceptional educational practices and a commitment to student success.

"I am deeply honored to receive this recognition. This award is not just a reflection of

my efforts, but a testament to the collective dedication and hard work of our exceptional team of Management, teachers, students, and their families," said Rohini Aima upon receiving the award.

"At Jammu Sanskriti School, we strive to create an environment where students not only excel academically but also develop critical life skills, leadership qualities, and values that will guide them through life's challenges," she added.

Jammu Sanskriti School has developed a comprehensive and balanced curriculum that emphasizes academics, extracurricular activities, and character building.

The school's infrastructure, state-of-the-art facilities, and modern teaching methodologies make it one of the most sought-after institutions in Jammu.

The India Star Ranking Award is one of the most prestigious accolades in the education sector, recognizing the top-performing schools and their leaders across the nation.

The Centre for Educational Development (CED) continues to promote excellence in education by recognizing the efforts of institutions and leaders who are making a significant impact in shaping the future of India's education system.

Fullfill promise, restore statehood to J&K: Rampaul urges PM Modi



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: Former Minister and Zonal President, JKNC Central Zone, Babu Rampaul has reiterated his demand for restoration of full-fledged statehood to Jammu & Kashmir and urged the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah to fulfill their promise given to people of J&K, who are deeply frustrated due to constant discrimination being meted out to J&K people by the Centre due to procrastination in restoring Statehood.

Rampaul was addressing the party workers during a meeting in which Rajinder Kumar was nominated as Joint Secretary of the Central Zone. The meeting was organised by Dr. Vikas Sharma, Coordinator Jammu District and Secretary of the Central Zone of JKNC and graced by Babu Rampaul, President of JKNC Central Zone, as the Chief Guest, while Ankush Abrol, Provincial Joint Secretary was the Guest of Honour.

Former Minister expressed concern over delay in restoration of the Statehood despite promises made in Parliament and commitments expressed before the Supreme Court of India, adding that the Centre's reluctance and rigidity have prevented any concrete progress toward restoring statehood.

He emphasized that

restoring statehood is critical to honoring the democratic aspirations of the people, as reflected in the mandate, they expressed in the 2024 Assembly Elections. "The restoration of Statehood will ensure the transfer of power to the people, which are the cornerstone of democracy," he asserted.

Rampaul emphasized the people's high expectations from the central government, asserting that granting full-fledged Statehood would cater to the larger interests of both J&K people and the country.

Expressing concern over the delay in restoring statehood to J&K, Rampaul warned that prolonged inaction could foster discontent among the region's people. He reaffirmed the National Conference's commitment, under the leadership of Hon'ble Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Jenab Omar Abdullah for promoting democratic governance and socio-economic welfare across Jammu and Kashmir.

Rampaul referred to the major initiatives taken by the previous Omar Abdullah-led government during the past few months, emphasizing that National Conference remains committed to the welfare and development of the both the regions and their sub regions. He assured the people that the new government will address their grievances and take Jammu and Kashmir for-

ward in terms of peace, progress and prosperity.

Ankush Abrol, in his address, underscored the importance of youth participation in political discourse and called for a united effort to address pressing regional issues. He urged the gathering to work collectively for the welfare of the people and uphold the principles of justice and development championed by JKNC.

Abrol particularly pointed out the snail pace of the much-publicized Smart City Project, calling it a "nightmare" that left citizens disillusioned. People are left wondering what the Smart City Project was all about. It brought no tangible benefits except leaving roads and streets ruined depriving the Jammu ities of basic amenities, he remarked.

Dr Vikas Sharma also addressed the meeting stating that the existence of National Conference is due to its secular credentials and the cherished slogan of Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah "Hindu Muslim, Sikh, Christian Unity" will always remain guiding force for the party.

He also exhorted the cadre to strengthen the hands of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to steer Jammu and Kashmir toward progress, new era of peace, progress and stability.

Prominent among those present on the occasion included Adv. Rajinder Chamyal Zonal Vice-President, Rahul Mahajan Zonal Vice-President, Sham Lal Mehra Zonal Vice-President, BD Dalotra Zonal Secretary, Bharat Bushan Zonal Secretary, Dr. Gourav Bharat Zonal Secretary, S. Surjeet Singh Sasan, Sahil Keri Secretary Jammu District YNC, Rahul Gupta, Sourab Bhagat, and others.

Rajinder Bazar Residents Welfare Society celebrates 3-day Lohri & Makar Sakranti fest

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: From January 12 to 14, 2025, the Rajinder Bazar Residents Welfare Society (RBRWS) celebrated a grand three-day festival of Lohri and Makar Sakranti with great unity and fervour. The event was marked by various cultural activities, traditional music, dance performances, and a variety of local delicacies that brought the community together in a spirit of joy and enthusiasm.

On the first day, the celebration began with a vibrant Nimantran Yatra, followed by soulful Bhajans and Satsang, setting a serene and joyous tone for the festivities.

The second day featured the main Lohri function, which included a traditional rally with dhol, bhanga, and chajjas from Ghas Mandi Chowk to Shahidi Chowk, Residency Road, Panjbhaktar Temple, and back to Ghas Mandi Chowk. Besides, the residents, the rally was also participated by traders and residents of the nearby localities irrespective of their religion, caste and creed.



The highlight of the evening was the traditional pyre Lohri burning, where participants offered parsad to the holy fire and distributed parsad among the attendees.

The third day was dedicated to Makar Sakranti, with the community coming together to distribute Khichdi among locals and passersby. Special prayers and thanks offerings to God were held at the Panjbhaktar Temple, concluding the festivities on a spiritual note.

Deepak Sharma, RBRWS president, expressed his delight, "Lohri and Makar Sakranti are festivals that symbolize joy and togetherness. Our community has come together to celebrate with great fervour and unity, and I am proud to be part of

such a vibrant community."

Sameer Bhasin, Vice President of the RBRWS, shared his thoughts, "The energy and enthusiasm displayed by everyone have truly made this celebration special. It's heartwarming to see everyone come together and revel in our cultural heritage."

Sanjeev Kumar Gupta, general secretary of the society, added, "The success of this three-day extravaganza is a testament to the dedication and spirit of our community. We have created lasting memories and celebrated our traditions with great zeal."

The Rajinder Bazar Residents Welfare Society extended its heartfelt gratitude to all the residents and visitors who participated and made

the event a grand success.

Among other residents of the locality and their families also present on the occasion were RBRWS advisors and executive members including Sanjeev Grover, Madan Gopal Tony, Ashwani Rohmetra and Amit Khajuria

Besides, Society Spokesperson Raj Kumar Gupta, Media Secretary Karan Ambaradar, Advisors Sanjeev Grover, Madan Gopal Tony, Ashwani Rohmetra, Finance Secretary Divya Mahajan, Arun Dogra and other residents of the locality along with their families.

5th District Doda Taekwondo Championship to begin on Jan 17

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 14: The Taekwondo Association of District Doda (TADD) announced the 5th District Doda Taekwondo Championships 2024-25, scheduled to be held on 17th and 18th January 2025 at the Indoor Sports Hall, Doda.

This significant event is part of the "My Youth My Pride" initiative and is being organized under the aegis of the J&K Taekwondo Association (Regd.) and the J&K Sports Council.

The championship is open to players across four categories: Sub-Junior, Cadet, Junior, and Senior, from District Doda. It serves as a gateway for athletes to showcase their talent and secure a spot in the 27th J&K UT Tae-

kwondo Championships 2024-25.

Only medalists from this district-level event will qualify for the UT-level competition, ensuring a high standard of participants representing the district.

To ensure fair and organized participation, all athletes are required to have valid JKTA Athlete Licenses. Entries without these licenses will not be entertained. Additionally, Senior and Junior athletes must possess Black Belt Certificates to qualify for the upcoming UT-level championships, adhering to the guidelines of the Taekwondo Federation of India (TFI).

The decision to host the championship was finalized in a meeting chaired by Junaid Ali Khan, President of the

Taekwondo Association of District Doda, along with other key office bearers. The association aims to promote sportsmanship and foster talent through this well-structured event.

The weigh-in for participants will take place on 17th January 2025, at 3:00 PM, at the Indoor Sports Hall, Doda.

Participants must submit completed registration forms, duly signed by parents, Aadhaar Card and JKTA License, and Date of Birth Certificate (issued by the Municipality of Doda or the concerned Sarpanch).

For any queries or additional information, participants can contact Nideem Niaz (Organizing Secretary, TADD) at 9596965982.

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