

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2025

Daily Evening Newspaper



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BRIEFLY

Soldier dies by suicide in Kupwara

SRINAGAR, Jan 20 (Agencies): An Army soldier died by suicide at the Ragni post in north Kashmir's Kupwara district on Sunday night.

Official sources told news agency JKNS that the soldier died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound using his service weapon.

He was immediately evacuated to the hospital for treatment, but doctors declared him brought dead.

Meanwhile, the police have registered a case, and an investigation is underway.

Former J&K minister Ghulam Hassan Geelani passes away

SRINAGAR, Jan 20 (Agencies): Former minister, Ghulam Hassan Geelani, passed away this morning.

A five-time MLA from Budgam, his contributions to the political landscape were invaluable.

Chairman Peoples Democratic Front (PDF) and former Minister Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen has expressed profound grief and sorrow over the demise of Ghulam Hassan Geelani.

In a condolence message, Hakeem Yaseen said that he was a prominent political figure in Jammu and Kashmir, recognized for his selfless service to the people of his region.

His long political career saw him play key roles in various capacities, and he was a staunch advocate for his constituents. "Throughout his life, he remained committed to addressing the issues faced by the people of Budgam and the larger region," Hakeem Yaseen said adding that his death marks the end of an era in local politics, leaving a void in the political landscape of Jammu and Kashmir.

He said Geelani's contributions to the region's socio-political emancipation in will be remembered for long.

PDF Chairman has conveyed heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul.

Cold wave returns to Kashmir, weather improves in Jammu

SRINAGAR, Jan 20 (Agencies): After two days of less harsh night temperatures, a cold wave returned to Kashmir Valley and Srinagar

Mysterious illness: Screening of 9000-10000 houses done in Rajouri, say officials



RAJOURI, Jan 20 (Agencies): The health department in Jammu & Kashmir's Rajouri district is working on a war footing with health officials launching extensive screening of residents.

The disease that remains unidentified has claim 17 lives and affecting 38 people since early

December 2024. However health department teams say there is no need to declare a public health emergency.

Dr M L Raina, CMO Rajouri, said, "We have repeatedly screened the 1600-1700 houses. We have screened out 9000-10000 houses from door to door. I have on-record

data, day-wise data and date-wise data. We have day-wise data and date-wise data. On the very next day of the 'unidentified' disease outbreak, we deployed our teams. In which we doing active surveillance and passive surveillance. There are our medical mobile units. There is a team of doctors from the National Health Organization. Along with that, we have a lab system too."

Dr M L Raina provided updates on the ongoing surveillance and public health efforts in the district. He stated that teams have been set up for all clusters and that surveillance has been

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Trial of Yasin Malik | SC asks J&K HC registrar to ensure proper VC facilities at Jammu Court

NEW DELHI, Jan 20 (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Monday directed the registrar general of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court to ensure proper video conferencing facilities at a special court in Jammu hearing the 1989 Rubaiya Sayeed kidnapping and the 1990 Srinagar shootout cases involving jailed JKLF chief

The top court also directed the registrar

general of the Delhi High Court to ensure proper video conferencing facilities at Tihar jail also where Malik is lodged in connection with another terror financing case.

The bench has asked both the high court registrars to file their status reports on February 18 and fixed the plea of CBI for hearing on February 21.

A bench comprising Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan was

hearing a plea of the CBI seeking the transfer of the trials in the 1989 Rubaiya Sayeed kidnapping and the 1990 Srinagar shootout cases from Jammu to New Delhi so that Malik is not needed to be taken to the special court there.

The top court on December 18, last year had given six accused two weeks to respond to the CBI's plea to transfer the trial the cases.

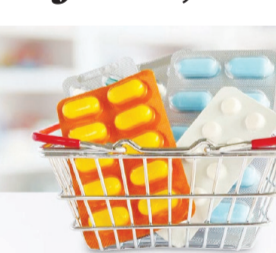
One case relates to

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Govt-supplied medicines found dumped in Rajouri, Probe ordered

RAJOURI/JAMMU, Jan 20 (Agencies): A large cache of government-supplied medicines was found dumped in a gorge in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, prompting the authorities to order a probe. Jammu travel guide

The dumped medicines included tablets



and syrups, some still having validity for a few more months. These were found abandoned

near Budhkanari in Darhal tehsil, officials said on Sunday.

Clips of the dumped medicines have become widely circulated on social media.

Local villagers claimed that a vehicle loaded with the medicines was emptied at the spot, and demanded appropriate

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Bhaderwah covered in thick blanket of snow; tourists flock to Guldanda meadow

JAMMU, Jan 20 (Agencies): A huge influx of tourists thronged to the famous Guldanda meadow of Jammu and Kashmir's Bhaderwah on Monday.

This comes after the authorities allowed traffic movement on the Bhaderwah-Pathankot National Highway after the clearance of snow upto Guldanda.

The Guldanda meadow is covered in a large amount of snow where tourists were seen enjoying.

This site of Bhaderwah has emerged as a favourite destination of



the Jammu region as tourists are thronging from different parts of the country to enjoy the mundane beauty.

The snow-filled Guldanda meadow of Bhaderwah located at a height of more than

10,000 feet above sea level is attracting the heavy influx of tourists to enjoy the snow in the famous tourist destination of Jammu region in the territory.

Tourists are also

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Army soldier critically injured in Sopore gunfight succumbs

SOPORE, Jan 20 (Agencies): The soldier, who was injured in the encounter between terrorists and security forces in Gujjarpati area of Zaloor in Sopore, succumbed to his injuries, officials said.

The encounter broke out in the area late last evening.

An official told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the operation was halted last night due to darkness. "With the first light of the day, fresh firing resumed. In the ensuing encounter a soldier was injured and was evacuated to a hospital."

He said that the injured army soldier succumbed to his injuries at the hospital.

On Sunday joint teams of Army, CRPF

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Indian Army's Daredevils set new World Record for highest human pyramid



NEW DELHI, Jan 20 (Agencies): The Motorcycle Rider Display Team "Daredevils" of the Indian Army, achieved an extraordinary feat on 20 January 2025 at Kartavya Path, New Delhi, by creating a World Record for the highest Human Pyramid on moving motorcycles.

The formation, measuring an impressive 20.4 feet and compris-

ing 40 men on 7 motorcycles, covered a distance of 2 kilometres on Kartavya Path from Vijay Chowk to India gate.

The Motorcycle Rider Display Team, known as the "Daredevils" is from the Corps of Signals, which has a long history of accolades, and earned international acclaim for its outstanding performances.

With this latest

achievement, the team now boasts an incredible 33 World Records, including entries in the Guinness Book of World Records, Asia Book of Records, and Limca Book of Records.

The Daredevils were flagged in at India Chowk by the Signals Fraternity, including the Head of the Arm of the Corps of Signals, Lieutenant General KV Kumar, amidst cheers and motivation to boost morale for the contingent and to celebrate their tremendous feat.

Since its inception in 1935, the Daredevils have conducted over 1,600 motorcycle displays across India, captivating audiences during prestigious events such as Republic Day Parades, Army Day Parades, and various Military Tattoos. Their dedication and

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Uttam Bharat Puraskar conferred to Dy CM Surinder Choudhary by GHRT India



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: GHRT India announced that the Uttam Puraskar has been conferred upon Deputy Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Surinder Choudhary.

This prestigious award recognizes Shri Choudhary's outstanding

contributions to public service and his tireless efforts to promote the welfare of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Choudhary, a seasoned politician with a long history of public service, has been a driving force behind various initiatives aimed at promoting social and economic development in

the region.

His commitment to the people of Jammu and Kashmir is truly commendable, and this award is a testament to his dedication and hard work.

GHRT India is honored to recognize Choudhary's achievements and contributions to society. We believe that his selfless service and commitment to the public good are an inspiration to us all, and we are proud to celebrate his achievements through this award.

The award presented by Chairman Global Human Rights Trust Dr. H. R. Rehman and Working President Dr. Narinder Kumar.

Civil Defence Jammu starts five days CD training programme

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: On the directions of Directorate of HG, CD and SDRF J&K, 05 days Civil Defence basic training programme is started at Galaxy Para Medical College Sainak Colony, Jammu under the supervision DySP Anita Pawar, Deputy Controller Civil Defence, Jammu. In the training camp 135 Students of College are attending the said training.

This training is on the knowledge of First Aid, prevention, management and control of Fire Fighting, Snake bite, Choking and other basic life saving technique and preventive measures during the natural/ manmade disaster.

On the inaugural programme of the training, lectures were delivered by the Civil Defence experts and highlighted the role of Civil Defence and importance of this training. Sanjev Kumar Manmotra, Chairman of the College appreciated the programme.

Anu Radha, Principal of College, Paramjit Kumar, Chief Warden Civil Defence, Jammu, R. Vijay Kumar Dy. Chief Warden Civil Defence Jammu, Sub-Inspector Ram Dayal Saini, Incharge CD Trainings and other staff of the College also present on the occasion.

District Administration Kishtwar finalizes arrangements for R-Day Celebration

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Jan 20: The Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Kishtwar, Pawan Kotwal, chaired a meeting today with line departments and other stakeholders in the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex to finalize arrangements for the upcoming Republic Day 2025 celebrations.

During the meeting, it was confirmed that the main event would take place at Chowgan Kishtwar/Mini Secretariat DC Office Complex, depending on weather conditions, while local celebrations would be organized at the Sub-Division, Block, and Tehsil levels.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner instructed district department heads to ensure their attendance, along with their staff, at Republic Day functions at both the district headquarters and at the SDM, Tehsil, and Block levels.

Discussions covered various aspects of the celebration, including flag hoisting, the march-past, cultural programs, seating arrangements, stage setup, venue preparation, and catering for refreshments.

It was also informed that the day would begin with the playing of Shehnai Vadan, and special directions were given to concerned officers for Shehnai Vadan.

The Police Authorities were instructed to implement stringent security measures to ensure safety and smooth conduct of the event.

Further, the concerned departments were directed to make provisions for drinking water, power supply, medical facilities, sanitation, transport, traffic management, illumination of government buildings, deployment of fire tenders, seating arrangements, and the distribution of invitations.

The ADC also

reviewed the progress of the various committees formed to oversee the arrangements.

Senior officers from civil and police administrations, along with other stakeholders, contributed valuable suggestions to ensure the successful execution of Republic Day celebrations in the district.

The meeting was attended by SSP Kishtwar Javed Iqbal-JKPS, PO ICDS Rishi Kumar Sharma, CPO Kishtwar Shahnawaz Bali, ACD Kishtwar Phulail Singh, DIO Kishtwar Dr. Kuldeep Kumar, Tehsildar Kishtwar Nirbhay Sharma, AD FCS&CA Kishtwar Shafiq Ali Keen, ALC Kishtwar, EO MC Kishtwar, CAO Kishtwar, CEO Kishtwar, ExEn Jal Shakti, ExEn PWD R&B, ExEn JPDCL Kishtwar, and other district officers, as well as officers from CRPF/CISF, representatives from various departments, educational institutions, and representatives from Power Projects.

Magray expresses gratitude to J&K Govt for fulfilling long-standing demands

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: Senior District Vice-President, Kishtwar, Ghulam Rasool Magray expressed gratitude to the government of Jammu and Kashmir, especially to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, and MLA P.L. Sharma, for fulfilling our long-standing demands.

"We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for the assistance provided to the fire victims of Mulwarwan through the Chief Minister's package, as well as the special package for the construction of houses for the affected families," Ghulam Rasool Magray said in a press conference here on Monday.

"We are also deeply



appreciative of the government for the sectioning of multiple link roads for the Marwah and Warwan blocks, which will significantly improve connectivity. Additionally, we thank the government for establishing Fire and Emergency Stations in both blocks, which will greatly enhance public safety," Magray said. He also acknowledged the efforts of the National Conference, led by the

then MLA Sajjad Ahmad Kichloo, for the countless contributions made to the development of these two blocks.

"Some notable achievements under his leadership include the establishment of a sub-division, sub-district hospital, degree college, multiple schools, anganwadi centers, and many other essential facilities," he said.

Sheep Husbandry Complex condoles demise of mother of Accounts Officer

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: A condolence meeting was held in the Sheep Husbandry Complex, Jammu to condole the sad demise of the mother of Accounts Officer, Sheep Husbandry Department, Jammu Anita Jamwal and the father of Madhu Devi (MDS).

The condolence meeting was attended by Director Sheep Husbandry Department, Jammu Dr. Syed Moin ul Haq and all the officers/officials of the department, who expressed their deep sorrow and grief over the demise and prayed for the bereaved families to bear the loss. Two minutes silence was also observed.

Accused who thrashed, looted Kashmiri Shawl seller in Punjab arrested, FIR Lodged; Punjab CS tells JKSA

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: Hours after a Kashmiri shawl seller, Shafi Khoja from Kupwara district was brutally attacked by three miscreants, leaving him with multiple bruises all over his body after being punched, slapped, dragged, and then looted in Kapurthala, Punjab, the Punjab Chief Secretary, K.A.P. Sinha, informed the Jammu and Kashmir Students Association that swift action had been taken. The Punjab Police have registered an FIR against the accused, and efforts are underway to bring them to justice.

Chief Secretary Sinha, through a phone call to Jammu and Kashmir National Convenor Nasir Khuehami, informed him that an FIR (No. 12 dated 19-01-2025) had been formally registered at Sultanpur Lodhi Police Station in Kapurthala district under various sections, including 307, 309, 127(2), 351(2), 382, 390, 341, and 506 of the IPC.

He stated that one of the accused, identified as Rajkaran, a resident of the Dandapur area in Kapurthala, was arrested within 24 hours.

The other two accomplices have been identified, and police teams are actively pursuing their arrest. The Chief Secretary also mentioned that the bike used in the attack had been

seized as part of the investigation.

Khuehami expressed gratitude for the prompt response of the Punjab Chief Secretary in apprehending the miscreants and ensuring that a strong message is sent against such intolerable acts.

"This swift action reinforces the commitment of the Punjab Government to ensure the safety and security of Kashmiri people in the

state," he said.

Chief Secretary Sinha, in his assurance to the JKSA, said, "We are committed to ensuring the safety of students from Jammu and Kashmir studying in the state and Kashmiri laborers working here. They will not be harmed or harassed at any cost."

The National Spokesperson of the Association, Malik Adnan, expressed gratitude to the proactive stance and

intervention of Punjab Chief Secretary KAP Sinha and DGP Gaurav Yadav. He said that, "We are grateful to the Punjab Chief Secretary for his prompt intervention in apprehending the miscreants. We also thank Punjab DGP Gaurav Yadav for his assistance in identifying the perpetrators and ensuring that a strong message is sent against such intolerable acts," Adnan said. He further

reaffirmed the association's commitment to the safety of Kashmiri students and laborers in Punjab.

The association emphasized that Kashmiri shawl sellers have long contributed to the local economy and have become an integral part of Punjab's social fabric. "These hardworking individuals deserve respect and a safe environment to earn their livelihood," the association said.

JKEEGA expresses gratitude for clearance of regularization proposal for 200 JKPDD Engineers

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: Jammu & Kashmir Electrical Engineering Graduates Association (JKEEGA) has welcomed the clearance of the regularization proposal for over 200 engineers of the Jammu & Kashmir Power Development Department (JKPDD), in line with the Establishment Cum Selection Committee's decision based on the SAC decision of 2019.

In a joint statement, Er Pirzada Hidayatullah, President of JKEEGA, and Er Sachin Tickoo, General Secretary of JKEEGA, expressed their gratitude to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, and H. Rajesh Prasad, Principal Secretary of PDD, for their proactive role in clearing the proposal.

They also acknowledged the efforts of the HRM section of PDD in this regard and expressed hope for further progress on the remaining cases.

The approval of this regularization proposal is seen as a major step towards achieving zero percent adhocism in JKPDD, a key goal outlined in the SAC decision of 2019. This decision also ordered a one-time exemption to bypass the JKPS for the regularization of JKPDD engineers.

It is significant that, for the first time in a long while, senior engineers in JKPDD, including those who have already superannuated or even current Chief Engineers, will soon begin drawing the salaries corresponding to the posts they occupy once formal orders

of regularization are issued.

The statement emphasized that the regularization decision is historic and the result of a constant struggle. Engineers, despite being on the frontline, have often performed their duties under difficult circumstances, but the in-charge culture had demoralized the cadre. The clearance of this proposal is expected to bring much-needed relief and motivate the engineers to perform even better.

The JKEEGA leadership also expressed their heartfelt thanks to all engineers and employees of JKPDD, AIPEF, and the office bearers of JKEEGA, both in Jammu and Srinagar, for their unwavering support throughout the struggle.

Er Sachin Tickoo and Er Pirzada Hidayatullah also highlighted that the engineers, who had been under immense pressure in recent years, displayed great character by consistently raising their demand for regularization. It was their strong stance that paved the way for the clearance of the proposal.

JKEEGA expressed its hope that the remaining engineers will have their regularization proposals processed quickly, ensuring the full implementation of the SAC decision of 2019.

They appealed to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who also holds the charge of the Power Ministry, and Principal Secretary PDD to maintain the momentum and fast-track the next proposals for the remaining engineers, so that justice is done.

Horticulture Deptt holds one-day training-cum-awareness camp

Top News Report

KHOUR, Jan 20: The Department of Horticulture, Khour, under the chairmanship of Chief Horticulture Officer Jammu, Rakesh Kotwal, organized a one-day training-cum-awareness camp at Pargwal.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of farmers, particularly women, reflecting the department's commitment to empowering the farming community.

Speaking on the occasion, Kotwal enlightened the participants about various government schemes, including the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH).

He urged farmers to take full advan-

tage of these schemes to enhance their agricultural practices and improve their livelihoods.

Special emphasis was laid on empowering female participants by encouraging them to establish small-scale processing units for value-added products such as jams, pickles, squashes, juices, candies, and preserves.

Kotwal highlighted how these initiatives could help women farmers achieve financial independence, contribute to household incomes, and create employment opportunities for the region's youth.

DLSMS Sandeep Gupta also addressed the gathering, urging farmers to take full advantage of the department's horticultural schemes. He emphasized the need for collective

efforts to uplift the horticulture sector and improve the socio-economic conditions of the region.

To provide hands-on experience, live demonstrations of preparing various value-added products were conducted, ensuring that farmers could grasp practical skills alongside theoretical knowledge.

Present on the occasion were Chief Canning Instructor Jammu, Gul Sayeed, Manager-Cum-Chemist, Uttam Lal, Manager NRLM Namneet Kour and Horticulture Development Officer Khour, Amit Saraf.

The programme concluded on a high note, with participants expressing gratitude to the Department of Horticulture for its efforts to uplift the farming community through knowledge dissemination and practical guidance.

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EDITORIAL

Challenging
Social Media

In the digital age, social media has become an integral part of our daily lives, connecting people across the globe, providing a platform for self-expression, and offering instant access to news and entertainment.

However, while social media has many benefits, it also presents significant challenges, particularly in the realm of mental health.

As the usage of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok has skyrocketed, so too has the concern about their impact on mental well-being, especially among young people. The battle between the positive aspects of social media and its detrimental effects on mental health is one that needs urgent attention.

One of the most glaring issues surrounding social media is its contribution to feelings of inadequacy and anxiety. Platforms like Instagram, where users often share idealized versions of their lives, can foster a sense of comparison, particularly among teenagers and young adults. The constant exposure to carefully curated images of beauty, success, and happiness can create unrealistic expectations, leading individuals to feel as though they are falling short of societal standards. Research has shown that the more time people spend on these platforms, the more likely they are to experience feelings of low self-esteem, depression, and anxiety. The pressure to present a "perfect" life online can lead to emotional exhaustion and a sense of disconnection from one's true self.

Cyberbullying is another significant concern linked to social media. The anonymity provided by the internet has made it easier for individuals to engage in harmful behaviors without facing immediate consequences. Social media platforms often become breeding grounds for cyberbullying, with people using these platforms to harass, threaten, or shame others. Victims of cyberbullying are more likely to experience depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts. The viral nature of online content means that once a harmful post or message is shared, it can spread quickly, exacerbating the psychological toll on the individual targeted.

Additionally, the constant barrage of notifications, updates, and information on social media can contribute to what is often referred to as "information overload." The 24/7 nature of social media means that users are always connected, leading to a feeling of being constantly on edge. This perpetual state of alertness can heighten stress levels and interfere with sleep, further contributing to mental health issues like insomnia and fatigue.

Another issue that exacerbates mental health struggles is the spread of misinformation on social media. During times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, social media platforms have been rife with false information and conspiracy theories. The anxiety and fear caused by this misinformation can significantly affect individuals' mental well-being, especially when it relates to health, safety, or personal beliefs. Misinformation often preys on individuals' vulnerabilities, amplifying their fears and uncertainties.

The rise of social media has also contributed to the "always-on" culture, where individuals feel the need to be constantly available and responsive. The expectation to engage in online conversations, share updates, and maintain an active presence can be overwhelming. For many, the line between personal life and online life becomes blurred, leading to feelings of burnout and stress. The constant pressure to perform online, whether through gaining followers, receiving likes, or creating engaging content, can take a toll on one's mental health.

The key to mitigating the negative effects of social media on mental health lies in mindful usage. Setting boundaries around social media use, such as limiting screen time, muting harmful accounts, and avoiding social media before bed, can help reduce its impact on mental well-being. It's also essential to curate one's online space, following accounts that promote positivity, self-care, and mental health awareness, while unfollowing those that foster negativity or unrealistic expectations.

19th January-Kashmiri Pandit Holocaust Day

By: Omkar Dattatray

It was the sad, very unfortunate as well tragic day rather the night of 19th January 1990 that loudspeakers fitted with the mosques in Kashmir particularly in summer capital of the then state of Jammu and Kashmir-Srinagar roared with the threatening calls which terrorized Kashmiri Pandits and forced them to leave the valley or face the serious consequences. That was a very sad and killing experience for the miniscule Kashmiri Pandits which forced them to leave Kashmir and became refugees in their own country for the only reason of being staunch Indian's. The state administrative apparatus was non-existent rather it which was mostly comprised by the majority Muslim community almost compromised and this led to the mass migration of the Kashmiri Pandits from their native land. It was exactly 35 year on the fateful night of January 19, 1990 that these people were threatened, warned and asked to leave valley and so the unfortunate exodus occurred in the democratic and so called Bharat. So 19th January is annually observed as the Kashmiri Pandit holocaust day in Jammu, India and by the Kashmiri Pandits scattered all over the globe and even some democratic countries and human right organizations observe 19th January as KP's holocaust day. Kashmiri pandits were horrified and terrified by the calls of Alha Ho Akbar, Nizame Mustfa, and warnings to Kashmiri Pandits to leave the valley. As if it was not enough, there further were calls of Cheliv, Raliv & Galiv that meant leave, be converted or face death, and Asi Banaovow Pakistan Batave Rus Ti Batnav San-which translates as we will make Pakistan without Kashmiri Pandits and with Kashmiri Pandit women and other very objectionable slogans. Many Kashmiri Pandit leaders and extra-ordinary men and government officers were killed with sadistic pleasure before 1990 that is in year 1989 which included KP and BJP leader Shri Tika Lal Taploo, Prem Nath Bhat, Juge Nilkanth Gangoo to name a few and the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits reached its zenith in January 1990

and afterwards due to the threats and warnings from the loudspeakers fitted with the mosques and all this negative propaganda forced the Kashmiri Pandits to fled Kashmir for the safety and security to their lives and for securing the honor of their girls and other women flock. Had they remain in Kashmir in those radicalized and communalized and surcharged atmosphere, hundreds of the Kashmiri Pandits would have been brutally killed by the Pak sponsored armed marauders. In 1990 and specifically after in January of that year, the Kashmiri Pandits were living in most difficult and trying circumstances and they took the right decision of leaving their homes and heaths under total threat to their life, dignity and honor of their women flock and thus the major killings which would had been enemas killings were averted by the conscious but most involuntary decision of leaving Kashmir. Even the Muslim neighbors also showed their inability to protect and stand by their Kashmiri Pandit neighbors in the time of their difficulty and insecurity as well as threat to their lives. So how could have they stayed put in Kashmir. The only silver lining was that Governor Jagmohan and he too could not have safeguarded the horrified Kashmiri Hindus as the whole of then state administration was passively watching the threat calls, warnings, pasting of the threat letters outside the houses of the Kashmiri Pandits. But it was a bit relief that Kashmiri Pandits at the peak of militancy after January 1990 were not forced to stay put in Kashmir. In the rural areas of the whole Kashmir where KP's were living in scattered locations, there were big rallies of the people from majority Muslim community raising the religious as well as extremist slogans and this was enough to have terrorize and horrified the minority Kashmiri Pandits and which forced them to take the most involuntary and painful decision of leaving Kashmir and taking refuge in most unfavorable climatic environment. Now 34 years of the displacement of the Kashmiri Pandits have taken place and the inner desire and yearning of returning to their homeland Kashmir is growing intense and ever stronger with each passing day.

It is the highest of injustice and worst kind of human right violations of the Kashmiri Pandits that they left all movable as well as immovable properties accumulated by their forefathers and handed it down to them has been left in the valley which either has been usurped as distress sales and some properties stand occupied by the people of the majority community and the administration being a mute spectator to all this illegal possession of the displaced Landed and other properties. It is very unfortunate that successive centre and state governments and later the UT government has failed to ensure the safe and dignified return and resettlement of the aborigines of Kashmir in the land of their birth. Modi government also promised the return and rehabilitation of the displaced Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir but without any policy in this direction. With the result the Kashmiri Pandits are continuing to live refugees in their own country. They are living in an alien environment and climatic conditions with which they are not acclimatized. The displaced Kashmiri Pandits are rotting in their colonies such as Jagti, Purkhu and in their houses at other places in Jammu and all over the country and there seem to be no chances of their going back to their roots in Kashmir. The KP's have heard much rhetoric of different political parties that Kashmir is incomplete without Kashmiri Pandits and the KP's are the part and parcel of the Kashmiri society only for political consumption and in reality no efforts are ever made to translate the promises of their return and rehabilitation to Kashmir. It seemed that KP's are destined to live as refugees for many more years. The KP's yearn to return to Kashmir but neither the centre government nor the UT government of J&K nor the majority community that is KMS are providing any helping hand to the displaced KP's in distress and so they are living involuntary outside their homes and heaths and are cut off from their roots and culture and language. There is imminent threat to their extinction and identity. How long will the KP's continue to live the life of refugees in their own country? The centre government, UT government of J&K, KM's, KP's themselves should take the initiative

of returning to Kashmir and great responsibility for the return and rehabilitation rests on the shoulders of the KM's who should play their pivotal role in this direction and make the reverse migration to Kashmir of the KP's a reality in near future. Various KP organizations have observed the black day which is genuinely a holocaust day at various displaced settlements. Paunn Kashmir, ASKPC, KPS Amphalla, Nou Soun Front AIKS, BJP Displaced District and other KP organizations have observed the holocaust day on 19th January 2025 and reiterated their demand for homeland /Kashap Land / resettlement and rehabilitation at few concentrated locations in Kashmir where they can live with dignity, security and where there will be full constitutional guaranteed for the Kashmiri Pandits so settled. Till their return and dignified rehabilitation in Kashmir, the displaced KP's that is the small chunk of them should be paid enhanced relief and they should not be harassed unnecessarily under one pretext or the other. The longing to return to their land of birth is becoming intense with the each passing day and it is hoped that in near future displaced, uprooted and dispossessed KP's will return to valley with security and honor. Once of their return to Kashmir besides the government also rests on the shoulders of the KM's as it is they who can guarantee their safety, security and dignity now in the changed circumstances, as the militancy has been contained to some extent. Rest 19 January 1990 was a black spot on the history of Kashmir and Kashmiri Pandits and on this date every year a KP irrespective of where he temporarily resides is revisited of the black and dark day of the holocaust and resolve to return and rehabilitate to their native place. Jai Hind, Jai Panun Kashmir & Jai Dugger as it is later who embraced KP's in their soil.

*(The author is a
columnist, social, KP
activist & Freelance
Writer)*

Forest fire becoming a Disaster

By: Vijay Garg

America is burning with the worst fire ever. Forests have blazed in large areas of its state, California. More than two dozen people have died. Thousands of houses have been reduced to ashes. A large number of people have been displaced and thousands of acres of area has been destroyed. This fire was also called extraordinary for this reason. Because generally there is no forest fire season there in January. It was claimed that climate change, high temperatures, dry weather and drought suddenly created such conditions that the outbreak sparks took a terrifying form along with the strong winds and destroyed a large area as if a big bomb had been dropped there. For the first time, it seemed that the most powerful country in the world had become helpless in front of the fire that spread rapidly in the Los Angeles area of California. A period of political allegations and counter-allegations started there regarding the policies to deal with this fire. As far as environmental and scientific reasons are concerned, America's 'National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration' (NOAA) says that in the last two decades the conditions created by ignoring the factors of climate change in Western America are mainly responsible for this fire. Generally, there are some incidents of forest fire every year between May, June and October, but here it seems that the time period of this fire has increased. This time, for the first time, the forest fire broke out in the Palisades area of California, due to lightning or human action. The forest fire started on a small scale, due to the strong winds blowing

there, it became so uncontrollable that a large area within no time, the place where many Hollywood celebrities had luxurious houses was reduced to ashes. The fire, which started in Eaton, north of Los Angeles, spread to cities like Altadena. To say it is just a forest fire, but due to the reasons America is badly burnt, it is spreading concern all over the world that something like this can happen anywhere and at any time. Due to climate change, hot and dry weather and drought, this fire broke out in this area of America when there was no possibility of it happening. That is, in the season in which the forests of these areas are approximately this year or the next year was blazing, that season had not yet arrived there. Therefore, the untimely forest fire created such a havoc that even the superpower America was left breathless. The most important causes of fire in forest areas are dry weather and lightning along with strong winds, but human hand may be behind the fire spreading in Los Angeles, a claim made by California Fire Service Chief David. Acuna did. He said that 95 percent of the fires in this area have been started by humans and it is possible that this time too it may be so. It may have happened. Climate experts have identified climate change as a major cause of wildfire danger in the western US. The climate crisis has increased temperatures, prolonged drought and dry weather conditions, which now make fires more likely to occur and spread throughout the year. In this, 'Santa Ana' winds, which blow at a speed of a hundred miles or more intermittently from the end of September to May, have added fuel to the fire. These winds blowing from the

mountains of California towards the sea when they blow with forest fires. If so, then the tragedy will increase in the same way as it has increased this time. Generally, in areas where it rains, favorable environment leads to abundance of trees, plants and bushes in the forested areas. In summer, bushes and grass dry up and create an environment for fire. The trees and plants there know how to deal with natural forest fires. At some places, the thick bark of trees acts as protection, while at other places, even after a fire, the forest flourishes again. Africa's Savanna-like grasslands fires keep happening again and again, but due to the rapid burning of grass and weeds, the effect of the fire does not reach the roots inside the ground. This is the reason why the fields become green again as soon as the fire ends. If the weeds do not catch fire, then huge piles of them later serve as gunpowder. There are similar reasons behind the forest fires in Uttarakhand, Himachal and Jammu and Kashmir of our country. There is abundance of pine in the forests here. When pine leaves pile up too much, a small spark in the forest becomes huge. Forests of Uttarakhand The reason behind this is said to be the fact that every year crores of tonnes of dry pine leaves are deposited there. During the dry season, when piles of pine leaves catch fire for some reason, it often goes out of control. Experts suggest three ways to extinguish forest fires. First, there should be regular cleaning of forests by machines. Dry leaves and bushes should be removed in time, but this is a very expensive option. Another option suggested is to set fires in a controlled manner in forests close to human settlements, so that in hot weather

there do not start any fire yourself. The same is being done in many countries including America and South Africa, but this also requires a lot of resources. The third is to stop migration in the hilly areas and promote a system dependent on forests. This will clean the forests and also reduce the risk of fire. In the area of America where the fire has spread this time, the rich have built their luxurious houses after being attracted by the natural beauty of that place. But there is no information whether these people would have played any role in cleaning the forests. As far as our country is concerned, here policy makers and planners have not properly understood the seriousness of forest fires. Therefore, it is difficult to say that any method related to preventing forest fires from breaking out will be acceptable to them. In such a situation, the only way out is that as soon as the information is received, helicopters equipped with huge buckets of water should be sent towards the burning forests. Villages, administration and security forces should be alert on such critical occasions, but these methods are effective only to a certain extent. The unstoppable fire in America has proved this.

*(Vijay Garg Retired
Principal Educational
Columnist Street Kaur
Chand MHR Malout
Punjab)*

Formal NCC Training begins at SMVD University: Cadets eTake to skies

Top News Report

KATRA, Jan 20: Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) witnessed a significant milestone as formal NCC training for cadets commenced on campus. This marked the beginning of a structured and immersive experience aimed at inculcating discipline, leadership,

and a spirit of patriotism among the students. As part of the training, cadets had the unique opportunity to experience flying a microlight aircraft. The first cadet to achieve this remarkable feat was. Bhumiika Sharma, who flew alongside Wing Commander Nitin Yadav, Commanding Officer

of the NCC Squadron. The flight provided the cadets with a first-hand experience of aviation, inspiring many to consider a career in the armed forces. JDr. Varun Dutta, NCC Coordinator at SMVDU, played a pivotal role in coordinating the event and ensuring that the training commenced seamlessly and on

schedule.

He expressed his gratitude to Vice Chancellor, Prof. (Dr.)Pragati Kumar and Registrar Ajay Kumar Sharma, JKAS, for their unwavering support in facilitating NCC activities at the university.

The launch of formal NCC training has been met with enthusiasm, with cadets eagerly

looking forward to participating in the comprehensive sessions that aim to mold them into future leaders and contributors to society. The NCC training program at SMVDU includes a range of activities, from physical training to leadership development, aimed at nurturing well-rounded individuals.

Mulberry plantation drive launched at Poonch Army organises workshop on sericulture



Top News Report

POONCH, Jan 20: With a motive to involve community in adopting sericulture as one of the profit giving source of income generation, Indian army under the aegis of BG Brigade in collaboration with Dr. Rubia Bukhari's Cocoon Artistry Initiative and Poonch Campus, University of Jammu, organized a one-day workshop on Cocoon Artistry at Dharati Higher Secondary School, Mendhar on Saturday.

According a press release, the event aimed to provide skill-based training to students and residents of the adjoining areas highlighting the significance of Cocoon Artistry in promoting self-reliance and

economic growth.

Dr. Rubia, the founder of Dr. Rubia Bukhari's Cocoon Artistry Initiative was present on the occasion. The event witnessed the presence of senior Army officials, members of civil society, students and faculty of the School.

A workshop related to the subject of Cocoon cultivation under sericulture initiative was also held. Army officials during the workshop lauded Dr. Rubia Bukhari for her relentless efforts and dedication to fostering creativity and innovation among youth and women through Sericulture and Cocoon Artistry.

"Her initiatives have successfully inspired many to explore the potential of sericulture

and cocoon artistry, providing them with sustainable livelihood opportunities," an official remarked.

A detailed Power-Point presentation was given by Dr Bhukhari emphasizing the transformative potential of the sericulture industry. "Skill development in this field can empower individuals particularly in border regions like Poonch to become self-reliant and contribute to the communities," she explained.

"As part of the program, a Mulberry Tree Plantation Drive was organized. Over 1,500 mulberry saplings were planted in the border villages of Sohala and Panjani located just one kilometer from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and ahead of the Anti-Infiltration Obstacle System (AIOS)," army officials stated adding further, "Despite the challenges posed by this sensitive geographical location, the initiative symbolizes growth, environmental conservation and the promotion of sustainable practices in the region".

Free Medical TB Screening Camps organized in rural area



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: The Directorate of Health Jammu, in collaboration with Astra DM Foundation, Ashok Leyland's SEWA Organisation (Maharashtra), and NIT, facilitated a series of free medical tuberculosis (TB) screening camps in rural areas of RS Pura and other identified districts of Jammu & Kashmir.

The initiative was supported and facilitated by Dr. Navneet Kaur, Founder and Chairperson of NGO SUPPORT, and conducted under the supervision of Dr. Rakesh Magotra, Director of Health Services, along with Dr. Jyoti Jolly, State Tuberculosis Officer, and Dr. Monika Suri, BMO RS Pura. The campaign was officially inaugurated at Sub District Hospital,

RS Pura, by Dr. Jyoti Jolly, Dr. Monika Suri, and Dr. Navneet Kaur.

The initiative aims to provide accessible healthcare to underserved rural communities, focusing on early detection and management of tuberculosis. The camps also emphasize raising awareness about TB prevention and treatment, ensuring that healthcare reaches those who need it most.

Chairman/CEC Adv. Tashi Gyalson accords farewell to Brig Vinay Bhel

Top News Report

LEH, Jan 20: Chairman/CEC Adv. Tashi Gyalson, in the presence of Dy. Chairman Tsering Angchuk, bid farewell to Brigadier Vinay Bhel, the outgoing Chief Engineer of Project Vijayak.

During the meeting, Brigadier Bhel updated the Chairman on the status of ongoing projects and sought continued support for their completion.

CEC assured his support for the execution of these projects. As a gesture of appreciation for his collaboration and support, Brigadier Bhel presented a small memento to the Chairman. CEC Gyalson expressed his gratitude to Brigadier Bhel for his efforts and role in supporting the development of Ladakh's infrastructure during his tenure.

The Chairman wished Brigadier Bhel all the best for his future endeavors and assignments.

7 Days' Special Winter Camp by NSS Unit inaugurated at GDC Ramnagar

Top News Report

RAMNAGAR, Jan 20: NSS unit of GDC Ramnagar organizes 7-Days Special Winter camp from January 20 to 26, in the college.

The theme of the camp was 'Youth For Rural Reconstruction'. The camp was organized under the patronship of Prof. (Dr.) Bhavnaish Chand Anthal, the Principal of the college.

Inauguration of winter camp was organized on Monday in which formal inauguration of winter camp was done by Prof. Ashni Devi, the Incharge Principal of the College.

The event started with lamp lighting and formal welcome address. Then after an orientation program was held in which volunteers were made aware of the seven days' activities and their responsibilities by Prof Ritika Mahajan, NSS Program Officer of the College.

After that NIC 2024 and 2025 participants Shivali Sharma and Diksha Sharma delivered their experiences in their camps and motivated other volunteers to work hard to achieve the same.

Session 1 was comprised of lectures by Dr. Pankaj Sharma, HOD English and Prof. Manmohan Singh, HOD History who made the students aware of the duties and responsibilities of a volunteer towards the society.

They also encouraged the students to participate and to bring a change in the society by eradicating the social barriers.

A mega cleanliness drive in and outside of the college premises. NSS volunteers and students participated in the cleanliness drive enthusiastically inside the college premises. NSS volunteers also visited the adopted village Thapial and spread the awareness among the village people over there regarding the importance of cleanliness in our day-to-day life.

The volunteers collected the plastic waste and clean the parks inside and outside the college.

Prof Ashni Devi, I/C Principal of the college, congratulated and applauded the efforts made by NSS Unit and urged students to keep a progressive mindset to keep our society and nation healthy.

GDC Nagrota organizes awareness lecture on 'Sexual Harassment against women at workplace'



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: Under the aegis of IQAC the Internal Complaints Committee against Sexual Harassment of Govt. Degree College Nagrota under the guidance of Principal of the college Prof. Anjali Mahajan, organized an awareness lecture on the theme 'Sexual Harassment against

women at Work place'. The lecture was delivered by Prof. Arvind Sharma Assistant professor of Sociology. In his lecture he awarded Sexual harassment at work place is a form of discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual behavior in the workplace.

It can take many forms, including verbal or physical conduct,

requests for sexual favors, or creating a hostile work environment. Further he said about The Prohibition and Redressed Act, 2013: which Provides redressed to victims of sexual harassment.

Committee members and convener Prof Vandna Ghai, Prof. Dinesh Singh Chib, Prof. Shalini Raina, Dr. Radha Rani and Komal Jammwal along with students attended this program.

Opening of Rural Business Services Hub under HADP marks milestone in Agricultural Development

Top News Report

RAMBAN, Jan 20: The District Administration Ramban, under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Baseer-UI-Haq Chaudhary, continues its dedicated efforts to promote agriculture and allied activities under the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP). This initiative aims to facilitate the farming community while providing job opportunities to farmers, especially the youth.

In a significant development, a Rural Business Services Hub was inaugurated today at Maitra, Ramban. The inaugural function was graced by Chairperson, District Develop



ment Council (DDC) Ramban, Dr. Shamshad Shan; MLA Ramban, Arjun Singh Raju; Deputy Commissioner, Baseer-UI-Haq Chaudhary; DDC Members, Senior Superintendent of Police, Kulbir Singh; and Assistant Commissioner Revenue, S. Harpal Singh, Chief Agriculture Officer, Ram Gopal Sharma, AGMO Horticulture P&M Raju Zutshi.

The private agro-related facility "Zaheeda Agro Trading Co", established at Maitra near SSP Office under HADP and sponsored by the Department of Planning and Marketing (P&M), Jammu and Kashmir Government, is designed to promote rural entrepreneurship. It aims to provide comprehensive agro-based business and services to the farming commu

nity at a single point to developing sustainable agricultural practices.

Speaking at the event, the Chairperson and other dignitaries highlighted the importance of such initiatives in empowering rural communities, enhancing farmers' incomes, and advancing holistic agricultural development across the district. She lauded the collaborative efforts of the govern-

ment and private stakeholders in establishing the hub and encouraged farmers to utilize the services offered effectively.

They also reiterate the commitment of the Government in strengthening the agricultural sector and creating employment opportunities for the youth.

The facility is expected to bolster agricultural operations and contribute to the socio-economic development of Ramban's rural areas, marking a crucial step toward a self-reliant farming community.

Prominent citizens, officials from the HADP implementing Departments, Farmers and local entrepreneurs also attended the event, showcasing their support for this transformative initiative.

Women of Panchayat Reshwari Natnusa voice concerns at Meeting with Sheikh Tahira

Top News Report

KUPWARA, Jan 20: A meeting was held at Panchayat Reshwari Natnusa to address issues ahead of the upcoming Panchayat elections.

Local women gathered to share their stories and highlight the pressing challenges faced by their community. The meeting was led by Sheikh Tahira, District President of Mahila Congress Kupwara, who listened to the residents' concerns with empathy and determination.

During the discussion, it became evident that many residents feel neglected by political parties and government authorities.

"No party has worked here till date," Sheikh Tahira stated, echoing the frustration voiced by the women. The community is grappling with several critical issues, including deteriorating infrastructure, lack

of clean water, and unreliable electricity.

One of the primary concerns raised was the lack of proper roads. Residents highlighted how the absence of functional roads severely hampers daily life and access to essential services. Additionally, the community faces a dire water crisis.

"There's no water in the taps, and no alternative sources of water," Sheikh Tahira emphasized, pointing to the severe challenges families face in meeting their basic needs.

Electricity shortages compound these hardships. Residents reported that, despite the lack of reliable electricity, they continue to receive high electricity bills.

"There is no electricity, yet people are being charged fifteen hundred rupees this month," Sheikh Tahira noted, illustrating the stark disconnect between

services provided and the fees imposed on struggling families.

The meeting shed light on the poverty that pervades the area, with many families living in extremely difficult conditions.

Sheikh Tahira acknowledged these struggles, stating, "Today, there are a lot of poor people," and called for urgent action to address these challenges.

The voices of the women of Panchayat Reshwari Natnusa highlight the pressing need for meaningful change. Their courage in speaking out serves as a reminder that collective action and dedicated leadership are essential to improving the quality of life for this community.

The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment to advocating for the rights and needs of these residents.

'No godfather, but I've God on my side' - Adah Sharma

Adah Sharma, who was last seen in the web show Reeta Sanyal, proved her mettle as a versatile actress. The show's success catapulted her to new heights, earning her critical acclaim and a devoted fan base.

The year gone by was a roller-coaster ride for Adah, but she enjoyed every bit of it, "I have had four releases in 2024 and all so diverse. The Kerala Story on OTT, where I was a vulnerable student; Sunflower 2, where I was an evil bar dancer; Bastar, where I played a soldier fighting for her country; and Reeta Sanyal, where I got to play 10 characters. It has indeed been quite fulfilling as an actor."

Adah feels fortunate for the loyal fan base she is slowly garnering.

"Right after The Kerala Story, fans accepted me in Sunflower 2 and then Reeta Sanyal. Due to this, I am able to take more risks as far as my characters are concerned. For an artiste, it is always a blessing if she can choose to essay diverse characters and put the whole range of her acting skills on display. I hope to live up to expectations each time."

In investigative thriller Reeta Sanyal, Adah does justice to each of the 10 characters she essays. "It was a challenge, but I essayed each character with



utmost sincerity. I believe that is the most important thing. I play an advocate in the series, who assumes different disguises to solve cases. For one character, I had to look really fat, while for another I had to mimic the voice of a Bollywood heroine," says the 32-year-old actress.

Guided by faith
As is widely accepted, without a godfather it is difficult to carve a niche in the entertainment industry, but Adah says, "I

might not have a godfather, but I have God on my side. That is a true blessing and my faith grows each day." There have been many challenges and Adah has aced each one of them. "The biggest challenge was to not go crazy while waiting to get the right roles. To remain patient, while a lot of others got to do characters that I would have loved to essay, was tough on me. However, to be able to say no to work even when I didn't

have any work, because I did not like the roles being offered, was also commendable. Patience is a virtue, I have realised."

Balancing act
In the entertainment world of today, balancing films and OTT platforms is sure an art. Does she approach the two mediums differently? "I approach everything in exactly the same way - with honesty! I don't know any other way. I have the same sincerity if I'm doing a big movie releasing in theatres or a brand collaboration on Instagram. So, my method of working remains the same and I adapt according to situations."

Up next
Adah achieved many a milestone on the individual front in 2024. "I learnt some very complicated pieces on the piano and for that I'm very proud of myself." As for 2025, she jokes, "I plan to clean my cupboard for sure before the year gets over or my mother will be really upset." On a serious note, "Professionally, I don't make plans. I feel plans sort of limit me. I just aspire to be a better person each day. I am so fortunate that I get to meet so many diverse people." Adah remains tight-lipped about her upcoming projects, "There is more action, romance and comedy—that's what I can promise." Bring it on!

Mishkat Verma shines in the show Ram Bhavan



Colors' show Ram Bhavan, set against the backdrop of Prayagraj,

introduces the charismatic Mishkat Verma as Om Ramdas Vajpayee,

navigating life with his swagger. In stark contrast, Isha, played by Khushbu Rajendra, is a portrait of humility, rooted in simplicity. The story takes an intriguing turn when they both face a shared adversary—Gayatri, Om's domineering sister-in-law and Isha's authoritative boss, brought to life by Samiksha Jaiswal.

Mishkat Verma, who breathes life into the spirited Om, shares, "Om is unlike any character I've played before. His pride and mischief make him endearing, yet complex and layered. What drew me to the story was how, beneath his nonchalant exterior, Om cares deeply for his family and their well-being. He is the only one who stands up against Gayatri's dominance. His swag, layered with vulnerability, is something I'm certain viewers will instantly fall in love with."

Siddharth Shivpuri joins Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai

The makers of Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai, one of the most-loved TV shows produced by Rajan Shahi, are bringing in an exciting twist! Actor Siddharth Shivpuri is joining the cast as a new character named Roop Kumar.

He enters Abhira's life during a tough time. He will act as a guide and supporter, helping her regain confidence. But there's more! Roop's connection with Abhira could bring in new drama and emotions, leaving fans curious about what's next! Siddharth Shivpuri is a talented actor known for his performances in previous shows like Yeh Hai Chahatein and Naagin. His character is expected to create



a fresh vibe and keep the audience hooked. With Roop's entry, the show is all set for new twists and turns. Will he help Abhira and Armaan

strengthen their bond, or will his presence create new challenges? The upcoming episodes are sure to be filled with surprises!

Alankrita Sahai is 'immensely grateful' for Band Of Maharajas making in to the Oscars

Alankrita Sahai, the lead actress of Band Of Maharajas recently spilled her excitement about her movie making it to the reminder list of Oscars 2025.

The movie Band Of Maharajas has made the cut for the Best Picture Reminder List for the 97th Academy Awards.

Talking about the latest milestone, Alankrita said, "Immensely grateful to the Academy, the audience and everyone for their love and support towards our film. This is once again a testimony of the fact that good quality work always shines sooner or later. When we heard the news last year that our film is in the race for Oscars from India, we



were immensely happy. And now, the 'reminder list' is one step ahead for the big occasion. My gratitude to everyone for showing love to my work and our film and here's hoping and praying that we can continue to make the country proud."

The diva further wrote in a social media post, "A heartfelt thank you to all my producers for believing in my storytelling, vision, especially to Puneet, with whom I embarked on this journey as the producer-director duo. Our first collaboration, Jal, has not only been a stepping stone to this Oscar journey but has also garnered acclaim at Busan, Indian Panorama, and received a National Award. Following this,

Torbaaz on Netflix has been recognized worldwide. The Academy's acknowledgment of Band of Maharaja is a testament to the dedication of everyone involved in this project - from the remarkable cast to the diligent crew."

She also penned, "I hope it inspires a greater appreciation for diverse narratives yet to be shared. This film is particularly special as it encapsulates the struggles I have encountered while nurturing good cinema throughout the ups and downs of my life. I am deeply thankful to everyone who has supported me along this journey. Let us continue to dream and create together more meaningful cinema!"

'Jai Shri Ram', Jasprit Bumrah: Coldplay's Mumbai concert was celebration of music, culture

From asking what 'Jai Shri Ram' means to giving a tongue-in-cheek shout-out to cricketer Jasprit Bumrah, Coldplay's first concert in India in nine years was nothing short of a cultural celebration where the band's frontman Chris Martin captivated the audience with his humour and curiosity.

There were plenty of unforgettable moments that resonated deeply with fans at Navi Mumbai's DY Patil Sports Stadium where Coldplay kick-started their 'Music of the Spheres World Tour' in India. For two hours at the packed stadium, Martin belted out chartbuster tracks, like "Paradise", "Viva La Vida", "Adventure of a Lifetime", "Yellow", "Fix You", and "A Sky Full of Stars". One of the evening's most stand moments came when Martin noticed a fan holding a placard that read "Jai Shri Ram". Curious, he uttered the phrase, igniting thunderous cheers from the crowd.

He then said, "What does Jai Shri Ram mean? Must be something good."

Martin's innocent inquiry about the meaning of the phrase only heightened the audience's excitement. Throughout the evening, Martin made a concerted effort to connect with the audience in their native tongues. His attempts to speak Hindi and Marathi were met with overwhelming warmth. At the beginning of the concert, he interacted with the crowd in Marathi, Hindi, and English.

He began by saying in Marathi, "Tumhee saghre aaj chaan distat" (You all look beautiful today)." He then said in Hindi, "Aap sab ka bahut swagat hai humare show pe. Mumbai mein aakar hume bahut khushi ho rahi hai. (You're all very welcome to our show. We feel happy after coming to Mumbai.)"

"Sorry, my Hindi and Marathi are bad but I tried my best," he said, before switching to English.

The British musician thanked Indian fans for giving him the chance to play in one of "our favourite places in the whole world".

"This is our fourth visit to India, the second

time playing, and the first time we played our show, and we couldn't have asked for a better audience. It's amazing the way you welcome us," Martin said.

The singer-songwriter frequently checked on the crowd and made a point to ensure that they were well taken care of, asking about their well-being and hydration.

Looking at the various placards held by fans, he said, now is the good time to read some of the signs.

While reading placards by fans, such as 'Happy Birthday to you', 'Love to mom she is fighting cancer', 'I love Coldplay', 'Welcome from Calcutta', and 'I remember you from the Temple'. Martin responded, "Yes, I think so. I remember you. I went to some amazing places."

He later invited a 15-year-old boy whose message read, "Aum, I manifested this moment. I am ready for it. Can I sing 'Everglow' with you?"

Martin fulfilled the boy's wish as the two sang the track together. A few minutes later, while performing the song "Alien", Martin even invited a male security guard on stage, who danced his heart out.

The DY Patil sports stadium, which is primarily a cricket stadium, though it is sometimes used for football and music concerts, was glowing amidst the colourful lights courtesy of the recyclable light wristbands that all the attendees were wearing and the great firework displayed at the end of the concert. At one point, the fireworks didn't light up at the opportune time, and Martin said, "It's taking a bit of time for it to get lit up. Can we all make firework sounds?". The crowd followed him in unison lit the skies were lit. Towards the end of the concert, Martin stopped crooning and teased fans saying he needed to wrap it soon since it was time for Indian bowler Jasprit Bumrah to play cricket at the stadium. "We got to finish the show because Jasprit Bumrah wants to come and play cricket backstage. Thank you very much, everybody, good night. Jasprit says he needs to ball at

me," he said leaving the crowd craving for some more songs.

"We love you Jasprit. So, we are going to ask him to wait for 15 minutes. So, we would like to play the song one more time, this time with four of us and the 60,000 of you all in the same breath," Martin added.

As part of their 'Music of the Spheres World Tour', the British band has two more shows at the DY Patil Sports Stadium on Sunday and Monday. A fourth show will be held at Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium on January 25.

As the big day approached, fans started flocking from noon to attend the Coldplay concert, for which the gates opened at 3:30 pm and the band began at 8:00 pm.

One of the lady security guards said, "We have been here since 10:00 am. We've been told to make sure everything goes smoothly since it's the biggest concert of the century."

Indore-based Shivani Agarwal, who was seen wearing a sash with 'Bride To Be' printed on it, was thrilled to bits attending the concert.

"I've my bridesmaids here, I wanted it to be a concert theme. This concert seemed like the perfect treat for me and my friends," Agarwal said.

Coldplay had earlier performed in the country in 2016 at the Global Citizen Festival in Mumbai.

The British rock band also includes guitarist Jonny Buckland, bassist Guy Berryman, drummer and percussionist Will Champion, and manager Phil Harvey.

A Bangalore-based man, who attended the concert, said even though he barely knows a few songs of the band, he chose to fly to Mumbai as he didn't want to miss out on being part of the 'concert of a lifetime'.

A couple in the early 50s from Amritsar, who came with their two grown-up daughters, described the concert as a "glittering spectacle".

Before Coldplay took on stage, there were performances by Shone, Elyanna and Jasleen Royal.

I want to be challenged, says Vijay Varma



Vijay Varma has cemented his position as one of the most sought-after stars in Bollywood with his recent releases. During an interaction, the Darlings actor revealed that his success stems from people recognising his potential and using it well.

Expressing his desire to continuously challenge himself with diverse roles, the actor was quoted saying, "I constantly feel like whatever I have achieved in my roles is because somebody saw something in me. It's not me creating this character, but somebody saying 'you can play this person also, you can play that person'. So, I want to be challenged that way. I desperately want to do a comedy, and I want to do a zombie movie, one of my favourite genres."

Vijay further revealed that last year turned out to be a hat-trick for him

with successful OTT releases. The actor stated, "I think my last theatrical release was before the pandemic, and I've had around 15 releases since 2020. And they've all been streaming, mostly on Netflix and Amazon. There have been series. And, fortunately, I've been part of some of the good films that came out, a good series that came out, including directors who made very big films."

He also mentioned the ongoing new wave of Bollywood with the OTT blockbuster IC814, "Me and Arvind sir were part of it. It's one of the biggest shows that Netflix has made. And, it is talking about a story, which is a historical event. I think what it is giving me is basically a new version of Bollywood, which doesn't subscribe to the idea of four songs and seven fight scenes and a start, middle, end, kind of those things. So, this is a new parallel that's what I figured."

Up next, he has UI Jalool Ishq and Matka King lined up for release.

First draft of Indian history written by colonisers with distorted perspective: Dhankhar

NEW DELHI, Jan 20 (Agencies): Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Monday said it was a travesty that the ignorant were trying to make us aware about inclusivity by their narrow-minded approach.

He also said that the first draft of the country's history came through colonisers' distorted perspective.

While thousands contributed to the freedom struggle, only a few were promoted. Even post-Independence, this was allowed to take roots. This disrupted organic evolution of our knowledge system, the vice president said.

"We have to unshackle ourselves from colonial legacy



and mindset," he said. He asserted that the philosophical schools of Vedanta, Jainism, Buddhism and others

have always encouraged dialogue and co-existence — the principles that hold immense value in today's polarised world.

It was time now to ensure India's heritage blossoms and thrives and there could not be a more opportune time, he noted while urging the youth to take pride in India's mathematical contributions.

Much of the problems we are facing today will be resolved on a fast track basis if we keep indology in mind, he said after laying the foundation stone for the Nandal Nuwal Centre of Indology at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan here.

Constitution under assault; RSS chief must apologise for 'anti-national' statement: Cong



NEW DELHI, Jan 20 (Agencies): Ahead of its 'Jai Babu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhan' rally in Karnataka's Belagavi, the Congress on Monday alleged the Constitution is under assault and reiterated its demand that RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat must apologise for the "anti-national statement he delivered on the freedom movement".

The opposition party also claimed that Mahatma Gandhi is being insulted and BR Ambedkar is being attacked.

"Tomorrow, the INC's Jai Babu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhan rally will be held in Belagavi. This was to take place on Dec 27th, 2024 but was postponed due to the passing away of Dr. Manmohan Singh," Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X.

It was at Belagavi that Mahatma Gandhi had taken over as Congress president on December 26, 1924, he recalled.

"Mahatma Gandhi is being insulted. Dr. Ambedkar is being attacked. The Constitution of India and

its values are under assault," Ramesh alleged.

The Belagavi rally is a reaffirmation of the Congress' steadfast resolve to preserve, protect, and promote the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi and Ambedkar, he said.

This will be followed by a similar rally at Mhow — Dr. Ambedkar's janmabhoomi — on January 27, Ramesh said.

"Shri Mohan Bhagwat must apologise for the atrocious, anti-national statement he delivered on the freedom movement on January 14th 2025," he said.

"The Union Home Minister must resign and tender an apology for his atrocious remarks on Dr. Ambedkar in Parliament on December 17th, 2024," Ramesh said.

Last week, Ramesh had described Bhagwat's remarks that India's "true independence" was established on the day of the Ram temple's consecration as "anti-national" and demanded an apology over the statement.

Bhagwat said the date of the Ram temple's consecration in Ayodhya should be cel-

ebrated as "Pratishtha Dwadashi" as the "true independence" of Bharat, which had faced "para chakra" (enemy attack) for several centuries, was established on this day.

The Congress has repeatedly also alleged that Home Minister Amit Shah's remarks in the Rajya Sabha during a debate on the Constitution during the winter session show that the BJP and the RSS leaders have a "lot of hatred" for Ambedkar and demanded an apology from him.

The rally in Mhow will commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Constitution and the founding of India's republic as well as the purported attack on the legacy of Babasaheb Ambedkar by the ruling regime, a party circular had said.

Following Singh's demise on December 26, the Congress had announced that all party official programmes, including its foundation day celebrations, will be cancelled for seven days as a mark of respect.

Singh, the architect of India's economic reforms, died at the age of 92.

Singh passed away just hours after the Congress party concluded its Congress Working Committee meeting at Belagavi, marking the 100th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi assuming the presidency of the party at the Belgaum session in 1924.

Kerala court sentences woman to death for boyfriend's murder

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, Jan 20 (Agencies): A court in Kerala on Monday sentenced a woman to death for the sensational murder of her boyfriend in 2022.

The Neyyattinkara Additional District Sessions Court also sentenced her uncle, Nirmalakumaran Nair, the third accused in the case, to three years of imprisonment.

The 24-year-old convict, Greeshma, had sought leniency in sentencing by citing her academic achievements, lack of prior criminal history, and the fact that she is an only daughter.

In its 586-page verdict, the court observed that there was no need to consider the convict's age and other circumstances over the gravity of the crime committed, according to the prosecutor.

The victim, Sharon Raj, was a native of Parassala in Thiruvananthapuram district.

The court also observed that the convict conspired to operate the crime in phases, she had a criminal background as she attempted to murder the youth earlier and

tried to end her life after the arrest to divert the investigation, the prosecutor said.

Expressing satisfaction with the judgment, mother of the victim, Priya, told reporters that she was grateful to the court for issuing such an exemplary order.

Special Public Prosecutor VS Vineeth Kumar told reporters that the verdict was fully justified and the court observed that the case fell under the rarest of rare category.

"The court noted that the convict was a brilliant criminal who meticulously planned the brutal murder," he said.

He added that despite Greeshma's belief that she couldn't be detected, the scientific investigation conducted by the probe team ultimately led to her arrest.

The court also rejected Greeshma's claim that she had no criminal background stating that she had attempted to poison Sharon by mixing paracetamol tablets into fruit juice.

However, that attempt failed when he refused to drink it, citing

its bitter taste, on August 22, 2022, he said.

The court also observed that the woman's actions sent a harmful message to society and violated the sanctity of love, he added.

Welcoming the verdict, D Shilpa, the then Superintendent of Police, who oversaw the probe, said it was a victory for the joint efforts of the police investigation team.

"We faced several challenges in various phases of the probe but the joint efforts by the officers helped in solving the case," she told reporters.

KY Johnson, DSP, the then investigation officer, also said there were several challenges during the inquiry. "We collected scientific evidence and the court considered all the evidence produced by the investigation team," he added.

"The accused searched on Google about slow poisoning and came to know about paraquat, a lethal herbicide.

The presence of this poison on one's body could not be identified in an examination carried out

after 24 hours, however, our probe revealed it," he said.

On Friday, the court convicted Greeshma and her uncle—Nirmalakumaran Nair—while acquitting her mother due to lack of evidence. Greeshma was found guilty under various sections of the IPC, including murder (Section 302), while her uncle was convicted under Section 201 of the IPC for destroying evidence.

According to the prosecution, Raj was lured by Greeshma to her house in Ramavaramchirai, located in Tamil Nadu's Kanyakumari district, on October 14, 2022, and poisoned with an ayurvedic tonic laced with paraquat, a herbicide.

Raj, 23, succumbed to multiple organ failure at a hospital 11 days later, on October 25, 2022, after consuming the lethal concoction.

The prosecution told the court that Greeshma, then 22, plotted the murder after Sharon refused to end their relationship, even though her marriage had been arranged with an army man from Nagercoil.

Sanjay Roy sentenced to life imprisonment till death in rape, murder of RG Kar hospital doctor

KOLKATA, Jan 20 (Agencies): A Kolkata court sentenced Sanjay Roy to life imprisonment till death on Monday after he was convicted of rape and murder of an on-duty doctor at the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital.

The court of Additional District and Sessions Judge Anirban Das in SealDAH had on Saturday held Roy guilty of the crime committed against the postgraduate trainee doctor at the hospital on August 9 last year, which sparked off unprecedented and prolonged nationwide protests.

Judge Das said the crime did not fall under



the "rarest of the rare" category as justification for not giving death penalty to the convict.

The court also directed the state to pay a compensation of Rs 17 lakh to the family of the deceased doctor.

The sentence was passed after the judge heard the final statements of the convict

and his counsels placed in self-defence as well as those of the victim's family, and the CBI.

Roy, a former civic volunteer with the Kolkata Police, was held guilty under Sections 64 (rape), 66 (punishment for causing death), and 103(1) (murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

Fire breaks out near Kinnar Akhara camp at Maha Kumbh, doused

M A H A K U M B H NAGAR, Jan 20 (Agencies): A fire broke out near the Kinnar Akhara camp in Sector 16 at the Maha Kumbh Mela here on Monday, officials said. There were no casualties in the incident.

This comes a day after a big fire triggered by a cylinder blast engulfed 18 tents in Sector 19 at the world's largest reli-

gious gathering.

"Around 9.30 am, personnel stationed at the tower under the Ann Kshetra fire station noticed smoke rising near the Kinnar Akhara camp and immediately informed the control room," a fire department official said.

Fire department vehicles and personnel patrolling the area were dispatched to the spot



without delay. However, by the time they reached the spot, people had already doused the flames using water and sand, the official said.

"Inspection revealed that a small tent at the Shri Hari Divya Sadhna Peeth camp caught fire. Thankfully, there were no casualties," the official added.

On Sunday, a massive fire broke out in Sector 19 at a camp for Kalpawasi set up by Geeta Press and Akhil Bharatiya Dharma Sangh. It spread rapidly and engulfed 18 tents. Multiple LPG cylinders exploded during the fire. No casualty was reported in the incident.

Student jumps from 6th floor of college hostel building in Jaipur



JAIPUR, Jan 20 (Agencies): A first-year student of Malaviya National Institute of Technology (MNIT) here allegedly committed suicide by jumping from the sixth floor of the college hostel, police said on Monday.

A suicide note was found at the spot but police did not divulge the details.

Aditya Poonia, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Malviya Nagar, said Divya Raj (21), a first-year student of Bachelor of Architecture at MNIT and a resident of Pali district, jumped from the sixth floor of the college hostel on Sunday night.

"The body has been shifted to the mortuary of Jaipur hospital for post-mortem examination," he said.

People of Delhi suffering in battle of supremacy between AAP govt, Centre: Sachin Pilot

UDAIPUR, Jan 20 (Agencies): Ahead of the Delhi polls, Congress leader Sachin Pilot on Monday said the people of the capital are suffering in the battle for supremacy between the AAP-led city government and the BJP-led central government, and that his party has emerged as the "better option".

Speaking to reporters here, he exuded confidence that the people of Delhi will vote for the Congress this time.

"There is a battle of supremacy between the Delhi government and the central government and the people (of the city) are suffering in this," Pilot said.

The Congress party has emerged as the "better option" and people will give the mandate to it in the Delhi assembly elections, he said.

"We have given some guarantees to the people of Delhi. They also remember the



development that took place under the Sheila Dikshit-led Congress government. We will fight strongly and the Congress will do well in the Delhi polls," the former deputy chief minister of Rajasthan said.

The Congress' five guarantees for the Delhi polls include providing LPG cylinders at Rs

500, free ration kits and electricity up to 300 units, a monthly grant of Rs 2,500 for women under 'Pyaari Didi Yojana', free health insurance cover of up to Rs 25 lakh under 'Jeevan Raksha Yojana' and financial assistance of Rs 8,500 a month to educated unemployed youths for one year.

On the opposition INDIA bloc, Pilot said Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and senior party leader Rahul Gandhi brought all the parties together to fight against the NDA in the Lok Sabha elections and the result was good.

The 70-member Delhi Assembly goes to polls on February 5 and the results will be announced on February 8.

In the 2015 and 2020 Delhi Assembly polls, the AAP won 67 and 62 seats respectively. The BJP won three seats in 2015 and eight in 2020 while the Congress drew a blank.

Huge cache of arms, ammunition recovered in Manipur's Kangpokpi



IMPHAL, Jan 20 (Agencies): Arms and ammunition were recov-

ered in restive Manipur's Kangpokpi district, police said on Monday.

The recovery was made from the Lunkhiong Ridges in the New Keithelmanbi police station area, they said. Among the arms seized were a 7.62 mm sniper rifle, five 9 mm pistols with magazines, two SBBL guns, two 36 hand grenades, several rounds of ammunition, two stun shells and a tear smoke shell, they added.

Israel releases 90 Palestinian prisoners as part of ceasefire deal

Large white buses carrying the detainees exit the gates of Israel's Ofer prison, just outside the West Bank city of Ramallah, as celebratory fireworks erupt overhead

RAMALLAH (WEST BANK), Jan 20 (Agencies): Israel freed 90 Palestinian prisoners and detainees early on Monday, hours after three Israeli hostages released from Hamas captivity in Gaza returned to Israel.

Large white buses carrying the detainees exited the gates of Israel's Ofer prison, just outside the West Bank city of Ramallah, as celebratory fireworks erupted overhead.

Crowds of Palestinians thronged the buses, chanting and cheering.

According to a list provided by the Palestinian Authority's Commission for Prisoners' Affairs, all of those released were women or minors.

Israel detained all of the people on the list for what it said were offences related to the country's security, from throwing stones to more serious accusations such



as attempt to murder.

The Israeli military, which occupies the West Bank, repeatedly warned Palestinians against any form of public celebration.

The release took place in the middle of the night, in what Palestinians criticised as an attempt to dampen the mood and deter crowds from welcoming the prisoners home.

The most prominent of the detainees being freed is Khalida Jarrar, 62, a leading member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, or PFLP, a secular Leftist faction that was involved in hijackings and other attacks against Israel in the 1970s but has scaled back its militant activities in recent years. Since her arrest in December

2023, Jarrar was held under indefinitely renewable six-month administrative detention orders, a practice denounced by human rights groups as a violation of international law.

Dalal Khaseeb, 53, sister of late senior Hamas official Saleh Arouri -- who was killed in an Israeli airstrike in southern Beirut in January 2024 -- is also being released, along with Abla Abdelrasoul, wife of jailed PFLP leader Ahmad Saadat.

The agreement for the swap, laid out as part of the first phase of the Gaza ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas, involves Hamas gradually releasing 33 Israeli hostages held in the Palestinian enclave over the next six weeks in exchange for Israel releasing nearly 2,000 prisoners and detainees from the West Bank and Gaza.

Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs confident about Trump's backing to AUKUS



WASHINGTON DC, Jan 20 (Agencies): Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Penny Wong expressed her faith in Australian Ambassador to the US, Kevin Rudd for forming an effective relationship with the Trump administration.

When she was asked if she was confident that Trump will not make any changes to the AUKUS arrangement, she said that she was pleased to hear positive comments made by nominee for Secretary of State Senator Rubio.

"I was very pleased to see the very positive comments that the nominee for Secretary of State Senator Rubio made about AUKUS. I was very pleased to see them. And I have been very pleased to see over many months now the bipartisan support in the Congress for AUKUS as this is one of the ways in which partnerships and alliances can be utilised to enhance collective deterrence and collective strength. And that is so important for peace and security," she said.

When asked by the media what her

views were on Trump's proposal of spiking the defence budget of the NATO to 5 per cent, Wong said that they are on a pathway to increasing the defence budget, and it comes under AUKUS.

Wong said that Rudd's effective working caused the AUKUS legislation to come to effect.

"I think that is demonstrated, isn't it? I mean, we've seen the AUKUS legislation shepherded through. We've seen this visit organised. We've seen the invitation to the inauguration for both me and also Ambassador Rudd, and I think that speaks for itself," she said.

AUKUS is the military technology partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Talking about Trump's proposal about NATO lifting defence spending to five per cent, she said that they were on a pathway of increasing the defence budget.

"Look, we are on a pathway of increasing defence expenditure. That is the case. And a part of that is expenditure under the AUKUS agreement, which is a collaboration between the three countries in order to assure, amongst other things, assure stability and peace in the region, to assure deterrence and to enhance Australia's maritime capability. So, you know, we are on a trajectory which is seeing increasing defence spending. Our focus is very much on how do we continue to deliver on AUKUS, because we do believe that capability is so important for deterrence, which is the way in which you can secure peace," she said.

As per agency, Rubio appeared to have ended months of speculation on whether the Trump administration would back the AUKUS submarine deal, saying it will have Trump's strong support.

Fire at nursing home kills eight in Serbia, state TV says

BELGRADE, Jan 20 (Agencies): Eight people died on Monday in a fire at a home for the elderly on the outskirts of the Serbian capital, Belgrade, officials and media said.

Seven people were injured in the blaze that erupted around 3:30 a.m. in Barajevo, a municipality on the southern edge of Belgrade, the state RTS television reported.

Police did not immediately issue an official statement.

The RTS report quoted emergency sector officer Luka Causic as saying 30 people in the home.

"This is a huge tragedy but it could have been even worse," he said.

The Serbian government's social care minister Nemanja Starovic told RTS initial findings suggest the cause was arson.

The RTS report said the injured were transferred to a hospital in Belgrade.



Yemen's Houthis signal they'll limit attacks in Red Sea corridor to Israeli ships

DUBAI, Jan 20 (Agencies): Yemen's Houthi rebels have signaled they will limit their attacks in the Red Sea corridor to only Israeli-affiliated ships, just as a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip entered its second day Monday.

The Houthis' announcement, made in an email sent to shippers and others on Sunday, likely won't be enough to encourage global firms to reenter the route that's crucial for cargo and energy shipments moving between Asia and Europe. Their attacks have halved traffic through the region, cutting deeply into revenues for Egypt, which runs the Suez Canal linking the Red Sea to the Mediterranean.

The Houthis separately planned a military statement on Monday, likely about the decision.

The Houthis made the announcement through their Humanitarian Operations Coordination Center, saying it was "stopping sanctions" on the other vessels it has previously targeted since November 2023.

However, it left open resuming attacks against both the United States and the United Kingdom, which have launched

airstrikes targeting the rebels over their seaborne assaults.

"In the event of any aggression ... the sanctions will be reinstated against the aggressor state," the center said. "You will be promptly informed of such measures should they be implemented."

The Houthis have targeted about 100 merchant vessels with missiles and drones since the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip started in October 2023, after Hamas' surprise attack on Israel that killed 1,200 people and saw 250 others taken hostage.

Israel's military offensive in Gaza has killed over 46,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials who do not distinguish between civilians and combatants but say women and children make up more than half the fatalities.

The Houthis have seized one vessel and sunk two in a campaign that has also killed four sailors.

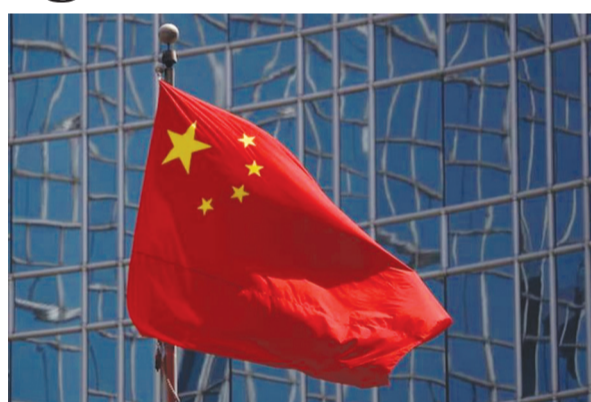
Other missiles and drones have either been intercepted by separate U.S.- and European-led coalitions in the Red Sea or failed to reach their targets, which have also included Western military vessels.

China executes man who killed 35 people in car rampage

BEIJING, Jan 20 (Agencies): China on Monday executed a man who killed 35 people in a car rampage in the southern city of Zhuhai in November, in the country's deadliest mass attack in years.

On November 11, Fan Weiqiu, 62, deliberately drove a small SUV through crowds of people exercising outside a sports complex, also injuring 45 in China's worst such crime since 2014. He was sentenced to death last month, with a court saying his motives "were extremely vile, (and) the nature of the crime extremely egregious".

State broadcaster CCTV said Monday a Zhuhai court "executed Fan Weiqiu in accordance with the execution order issued by



the Supreme People's Court".

The municipal public prosecutor "sent personnel to supervise (the execution) in accordance with the law", CCTV reported.

Fan's attack sparked widespread public shock and soul-searching in China about the state of society.

He was detained at the scene with self-inflicted knife wounds and fell into a coma, police said

the consequences particularly severe, posing significant harm to society".

Second execution
Violent crime is generally rarer in China than many Western countries, but the country saw a string of mass casualty events last year. Stabbings and car attacks challenged the ruling Communist Party's reputation for strict public security and crime prevention.

They also carried a shock factor that led some to question perceived social ills such as frustration with a slowing economy, high unemployment and diminishing social mobility.

CCTV reported Monday that a separate court in eastern Jiangsu province had carried out the death penalty on a

man who killed eight people and wounded 17 in a mass stabbing in November.

Xu Jiajin, a 21-year-old former student who attacked a vocational school in the city of Wuxi, was executed "in accordance with the law", CCTV reported.

He too had been sentenced to death in December, with the court concluding that his crime was "extraordinarily serious", CCTV said.

Xu was permitted to "meet with his close relatives" before his execution, the broadcaster added.

China classifies death penalty statistics as a state secret, but rights groups including Amnesty believe the country executes thousands every year.

Drones attack Russian military industrial hub 600 miles from Ukraine

Russia's air transport agency restricted flights at 3 airports in the region.

MOSCOW, Jan 20 (Agencies): Russia and Ukraine exchanged large drone attacks on Sunday night into Monday, with UAVs forcing flight restrictions at three Russian airports and prompting reports of an attack on a major military aviation hub.

Russia's Defense Ministry claimed to have shot down 30 Ukrainian drones overnight over western Russian regions -- 14 over Bryansk region, six over Kaluga region, three over Belgorod region, three over Kursk region, two over Ryazan region, and two over Oryol region.

Another drone was shot down over the Republic of Tatarstan, the ministry statement said. The capital of Tatarstan, Kazan, is more than 600 miles from the closest Ukrainian-controlled territory.

Russia's Rosaviatsia federal air transport agency announced temporary restrictions on flights at the Kazan International Airport and

Begishevo Airport -- both in the Tatarstan region.

The restrictions were lifted around four hours later. Kazan International Airport said on Telegram the stoppages were intended "to ensure the safety of civil aircraft flights." Three planes were diverted away from Kazan while the restrictions were in place, the airport said.

Flights were also restricted at the Izhevsk Airport in the neighboring Udmurt Republic, Rosaviatsia said.

Authorities in Tatarstan said drones targeted industrial facilities in the region, Russia's RBC news outlet reported. Officials said all drones were neutralized with no casualties or damage reported, though added that emergency responders were working at the scene, RBC said.

Photos and videos posted to social media by residents indicated an attack in the vicinity Kazan.



ABC News was unable to immediately verify the footage.

Andriy Kovalenko, the head of Ukraine's Center for Countering Disinformation -- which operates

as part of the country's Security and Defense Council -- reported "explosions in Kazan," claiming that "military facilities were attacked by unknown drones."

Kovalenko noted that the city "is home to several important aviation enterprises that play a key role in the Russian military-industrial complex," among them the aviation plant and a helicopter plant.

Kazan also operates an explosives factory manufacturing aerial munitions including Kalibr and Iskander missiles, Kovalenko said. "Not the first attacks, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to cover the skies of Russia," Kovalenko wrote on Telegram.

The Kazan Aviation Plant -- a major aviation industrial site -- was among the sensitive sites noted by Kovalenko.

The plant was put under European Union sanctions after Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, with the bloc noting the site "manufactures and repairs the Tu-160 strategic missile carriers and the TU-22M3M/TU-22M3 long-range bombers." The facility also "produces parts used in the construc-

tion of Il-76 strategic airlifters," the EU said.

Elsewhere, Kaluga governor Vladislav Shapsha said on Telegram that drone debris fell on an industrial site in the region causing a fire, though "preliminary data" indicated "no casualties or damage to infrastructure."

Bryansk governor Alexander Bogomaz said on Telegram that air defenses shot down four U.S.-made HIMARS missiles and 14 drones over the region on Sunday night, reporting no casualties or damage.

Ukraine, meanwhile, said Russia launched 141 drones and one ballistic missile into the country on Sunday night.

Ukraine's air force said it downed 93 attack UAVs, with another 47 lost in flight. Two of the drones flew back into Russia airspace, the air force said in a statement posted to Telegram.

Seven-day divisional level training on Scientific Beekeeping commences at Kisan Kendra

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: A seven-day training program on scientific beekeeping, organized by Apiculture Development Scheme, Department of Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Jammu under the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM), commenced on Monday at Baba Jitto Kisan Kendra, Jammu.

The program is aimed at raising awareness and building skills among 50 prospective beekeepers from Jammu and Samba districts of the Jammu division.

The training programme was inaugurated by Arvinder Singh Reen, Director Agriculture Jammu, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

During his address, Director Agriculture Jammu emphasized the vital role of beekeeping in generating income and employment opportunities.

He encouraged the



unemployed youth of the region to adopt beekeeping as a profession, noting the immense potential in Jammu & Kashmir due to its diverse agro-climatic conditions, rich biodiversity, and the growing demand for honey, driven by its medicinal and nutritional significance.

Director A.S Reen further highlighted the department's commitment to supporting beekeepers, saying, "Advanced-level training programs and exposure

visits to national institutes will be organized to meet the wider aspirations of beekeepers. The department is also committed to providing both technical and financial assistance, particularly for the migration of bee colonies to optimize honey harvests and the production of various types of honey with unique aroma and taste."

He encouraged the trainees to make the most of the opportunities offered under the HADP and other department

schemes designed to promote beekeeping.

He also informed participants that department will provide sale outlets for sale of local products including honey through opening of farmers facilitation centres at sub divisional level.

Assistant Entomologist Rajesh Verma provided details about the seven-day training program, which will cover all aspects of scientific beekeeping.

He informed that experts from SKUAST-Jammu and the Department of Agriculture will deliver lectures on key topics such as seasonal management, pest and disease management, value addition, and marketing strategies.

Practical, hands-on training on bee hive operations and bee colonies management will also be conducted at the Apiculture Demonstration cum Training Centre in Chimney Chak, Jammu.

The participants will

also visit the AICRP for Honey Bees and Pollinators at SKUAST-Jammu to gain knowledge about the value addition of honey and its potential to make beekeeping a profitable enterprise.

An interactive session, including a feedback session, was also held, where participants expressed satisfaction with the quality and relevance of the training. They appreciated the comprehensive lectures and the practical insights provided during the program.

The inaugural session was attended by Deputy Director (Central) Jammu Dr. Ashwani Sharma, Agronomist (VIS) Vikas Padha, Deputy Director Trainings (J) Alok Pandotra, and Dr. Adil Rashid, Assistant Soil Survey Officer.

The officers and staff of the Apiculture Development Scheme, Directorate of Agriculture Jammu, conducted the proceedings of the program.

GDC Vijaypur organizes poetry recitation under Republic Day celebrations

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: Department of Dogri of GDC Vijaypur in collaboration with Department of Hindi organised a poetry recitation activity to commemorate 'Republic Day 2025'. The aim of organizing poetry recitation was to aware students regarding the importance of gaining independence, freedom and constitution of our country.

Republic Day is celebrated as a national holiday in India commemorating the adoption of the Constitution of India, and the country's transition to a republic which came into effect on 26 January 1950. Students of Dogri and Hindi participated actively in the event with great enthusiasm, fervor and zeal.

The event commenced with the welcome address by Dr. Manoj Heer (HOD

Dogri) delivering an insightful speech, sharing valuable thoughts on Republic Day with the participants.

Participating students through their patriotic poems shed light on how the constitution came into effect in 1950 after gaining independence in 1947. Proceedings of the event were also carried out by Dr. Manoj Heer.

Whole of the event was conducted under the able guidance of Dr. Vandana Gupta, Principal of the College.

While speaking on the occasion, she congratulated the organizing team for organizing such an event whereas she stressed upon the importance of celebrating such days.

She further articulated that with the 1950 constitution, the country was officially known as the Republic of India

— a "sovereign socialist secular democratic republic" that "secures all its citizens justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity," according to its preamble.

Whole of the event was organized with the full support of the senior faculty members like Prof. Mamta Gupta (HOD Commerce), Dr. Anoop Kumar Bhagat (HOD Sociology) Prof. Ritu Bhagat (HOD Education).

The whole event was coordinated by Prof. Poonam Kundan (HOD Environmental Science), Dr. Naseem Chowdhary (NSS PO and HOD English) and Dr. Manoj Heer (HOD Dogri).

The event was co-ordinated by Dr. Gunjeet Mahiwal (Lecturer Education), Prof. Sonia Devi (Lecturer Hindi), Dr. Nain Singh (Lecturer Hindi) and Dr. Indu Koul (Lecturer English).

GDC Vijaypur completes five days programme on ASER

Top News Report

VIJAYPUR, Jan 20: Govt. Degree College (GDC) Vijaypur in collaboration with Pratham Education Foundation, Jammu and Kashmir completed five days programme for the students of the college to develop research and data collection skills.

The main aim of five days programme was to aware the students in the collection of data for ASER (Annual Status of Education Report).

This programme was to make students develop skills in research and data collection, the programme empowered the students to actively participate in important assessment tasks, like :In Preparing the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER).

ASER is a largest



citizen-led household survey of children's education in rural India and it aims for continuous improvement in our Education System.

The trainer from ASER Baby Rani (Master Trainer) guided the students in an effective manner regarding the collection of data and information related to the report.

The programme completed under the guidance of Principal Dr.

Vandana Verma. Principal of the college appreciated the efforts of the IQAC team for coordinating with ASER.

The Programme was coordinated by Prof. Ritu Bhagat (Convener IQAC and HOD Education).

It was co-ordinated by Prof. Poonam Kundan (HOD Environmental Sciences), Dr. Naseem Chowdhary (HOD English) and Dr. Gunjeet Mahiwal (Lecturer Education).

JMC Commissioner hands over Dogri version PM SVANidhi plates to street vendors

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Dr. Devansh Yadav today handed over Dogri version PM SVANidhi plates to the street vendors of Gandhi Nagar and Jewel areas at a function held here.

Addressing the gathering, the Commissioner said that PM SVANidhi is a special micro-credit facility launched by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs under Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiative. He asked the Street vendors to come forward and avail the benefits of the scheme which would go a long way in ameliorating their



livelihood.

The scheme was launched with the aim to provide financial support to the street vendors through working capital loans, incentivize regular repayment, and to promote digital transaction, the Commissioner said

and assured that the welfare of street vendors would be the top priority.

The Commissioner urged upon vendors not to keep their rehries on footpaths and roads, as this causes inconvenience to pedestrians and contributes to

traffic congestion. He encouraged them to install their rehries at designated places within the Municipal jurisdiction to maintain a smooth flow of traffic and public convenience.

Earlier, the Commissioner conducted an extensive tour of Gandhi Nagar area to take stock of the pace of developmental activities being carried out in the area. He also visited the Apsara Road and took stock of the parking arrangements put in place there by the JMC.

Among others, Joint Commissioner, (R&E), Deputy Commissioner (South) Lal Chand and other senior officers were also present on the occasion.

FromPage No:1

Mysterious illness: Screening of 9000-10000 houses done in Rajouri, say officials

conducted both actively and passively over the last two months.

"We have set up teams for the entire district and workers at the field level. We have 8 different teams for 8 clusters. So, for the last two months, we have been working on active and passive surveillance and base camps," he said.

Dr M L Raina further mentioned that as per the test reports, there is no need to declare a 'public health emergency.'

"We have checked the system so that there are no problems. You can see that everything has been cleared from our side. The viral test results are still positive. None of them have come. All are negative. Even if we go to the vectorology side, it is negative. If we go to the viral side, it is negative. There is no public health emergency," he said.

A resident Surjeet Singh Thakur said, "The health team here worked well from day one. Our police department is working with them to complete the investigation. The investigation is ongoing and we are not sure why these casualties occurred. We have found out that this was not a bacterial disease or a virus. The samples of food, water, and all the daily needs are being collected. We have not found out that this is not a disease, it has been cleared....it is poison or something."

"The department is working well. I have told you earlier that the entire police administration, civil administration and medical team are present here. I think they have seen some small clues somewhere. But it will not be right to speak in front

of you. This is part of the investigation. When this investigation is done properly, then you will get to know," he further added.

Meanwhile, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday ordered the constitution of an inter-ministerial team led by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to investigate the causes of unexplained deaths in three incidents reported over the past six weeks.

The Indian Army has been deployed to the area to provide essential supplies, including food, water, and shelter, to the residents.

Army soldier critically injured in Sopore gunfight succumbs

and police cordoned off the Gujjarpati area during which a hideout was busted. "During the searches, the security forces' team was fired upon, leading to an encounter in the area", official said.

Indian Army's Daredevils set new World Record for highest human pyramid

exceptional skill continue to inspire and showcase the prowess of the Indian Army.

Meanwhile, in line with the objective to increase 'Jan Bhagidari' in events of national importance, approx. 10,000 special guests have been invited to witness the 76th Republic Day Parade at Kartavya Path, New Delhi on January 26, 2025. These architects of 'Swarnim Bharat', with diverse backgrounds, include best performers in various fields and those who have made best use of the

schemes of the Government. Sarpanches, whose villages have achieved targets in selected government initiatives have been invited. A national-level competition was announced by Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances among panchayats. Panchayats which have achieved targets in at least six flagship schemes were selected as Special Guests.

Some of the invited guests are carrying out exemplary work to ensure income & employment generation and environment protection through Self Help Groups (SHGs). SHGs working in areas of food, nutrition, health, water sanitation & hygiene, Panchayati Raj Institutions-Community Based Organisations Convergence and gender activities have been invited. Preference has been given to a SHG member who has not visited Delhi.

PM-JANMAN mission participants, Tribal artisans/Van Dhan Vikas Yojna members, National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation ventures, ASHA workers, MyBharat volunteers have also been invited.

Trial of Yasin Malik | SC asks J&K HC registrar to ensure proper VC facilities at Jammu Court

the killing of four Indian Air Force personnel on January 25, 1990 in Srinagar and the other to the abduction of Sayeed, daughter of then union home minister Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, on December 8, 1989.

Malik, chief of the banned organisation JKLF, is facing trial in both cases.

The top court was hearing a CBI plea against the September 20,

2022 order of a Jammu trial court directing Malik, serving a life term in Tihar jail, to be produced before it physically to cross-examine prosecution witnesses in the Sayeed case.

The CBI said Malik was a threat to national security and cannot be allowed to be taken outside the Tihar jail premises.

Sayed, who was freed five days after her abduction when the then BJP-backed V P Singh government at the Centre released five terrorists in exchange, now lives in Tamil Nadu. She is a prosecution witness for the CBI, which took over the case in early 1990s.

Malik has been lodged in Tihar jail after he was sentenced by a special NIA court in May 2023 in a terror-funding case.

Govt-supplied medicines found dumped in Rajouri, Probe ordered

action against the guilty. Chief Medical Officer (Rajouri) Manohar Lal Rana said an inquiry had been ordered and assured strict action against the persons involved.

A three-member panel headed by the Darhal block medical officer has been set up to conduct an inquiry and identify the accused persons so that appropriate action can be taken against them, he added.

Bhaderwah covered in thick blanket of snow; tourists flock to Guldanda meadow

enjoying the beauty of snow at Guldanda Meadow and describ-

ing it as one of the best places to visit. They also appealed to others to visit Bhaderwah and explore it. It is notable that after a heavy snowfall, the roads leading to Guldanda and other tourist destinations were closed but with the efforts of the District Administration led by DC Doda Harvinder Singh and BRO, the Bhaderwah-Basholi-Pathankot highway has been restored and traffic movement has been allowed for the visitors.

Meanwhile, scenic visuals have also emerged from Srinagar's Dal Lake amidst the cold wave in the city.

According to the India Meteorological Department, the lowest temperature in Srinagar is -2°C and the maximum is 7°C with a forecast of a partly cloudy sky.

Notably, the period of Chillai Kalan has started in Jammu and Kashmir. It is a 40-day period of extreme cold in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in the Kashmir Valley.

Also known as Chilla-i-Kalan, meaning "forty days of intense cold," this period is marked by sub-zero temperatures, frozen water bodies, and landscapes covered in frost and snow. The region typically experiences significant snowfall, disrupting daily life. During this time, temperatures often drop to extremely low levels, leading to the freezing of water bodies, including parts of the famous Dal Lake in Srinagar.

Cold wave returns to Kashmir, weather improves in Jammu

city recorded minus 3.2 degrees Celsius as the minimum temperature on Monday.

Jammu division recorded a visible improvement in the weather as the minimum temperature in Jammu city was 9.6 degrees.

Srinagar city had minus 3.2 degrees, Gulmarg ski resort minus 5.4 and Pahalgam minus 6.4 as the minimum temperature.

Jammu city had 9.6 degrees, Mata Vaishno Devi base camp town Katra 10.2, Batote 3.9, Banihal 0.7 and Bhaderwah 2 degrees as the night's lowest temperature.

A Meteorological (MeT) department statement said, "On January 20 and 21, generally cloudy sky with possibility of light rain/ snow at scattered places. On January 22, generally cloudy sky with the possibility of light to moderate rain (Plains of Jammu)/snow at many places. Higher reaches of Chenab Valley and Pir Panjal Range may also receive light to moderate snow. On January 23, generally cloudy sky with the possibility of light rain (Plains of Jammu)/snow at scattered places."

"Between January 24 and 28, generally dry weather. From January 29 to 31, generally a cloudy sky with light rain/snow at isolated places," the MeT department further added..

The department issued an advisory saying that the "tourists/travellers/transporters are advised to follow the Admin/Traffic advisory". The 40-day long period of harsh winter cold called the 'Chillai Kalan' started on December 21 and will end on January 30 after which the weather will start improving gradually in the Valley till the Spring season begins.

Doctors have cautioned children and elderly people not to expose themselves to extreme cold for long as this results in constriction of blood vessels. Doctors said that international research has shown that constriction of blood vessels causes myocardial infarction that results in heart attack and heart failure. It is to protect themselves from such exposure to extreme cold that locals wear loose tweed overgarments called the 'Pheran'. An earthen firepot woven in a basket of willow wicker called the 'Kangri' is filled with ember and kept under the Pheran to provide instant warmth to the body.

Army conducts seminar on “adapting modern peacekeeping strategies to contemporary threats”

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: A pivotal seminar titled “Adapting Modern Peacekeeping Strategies to Contemporary Threats” was held today at the Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi, organised by the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) in collaboration with the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS).

The event focused on the evolving global landscape of peacekeeping, addressing complex challenges faced by peacekeepers across the world and exploring strategies to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of peacekeeping operations.

The keynote address was delivered by Tanmay Lal, Secretary (West) of the Ministry of External Affairs, and Lieutenant General Rakesh Kapoor, Deputy Chief of Army Staff (Information Systems and Communication).

The speeches underscored the changing role of peacekeepers in the modern world, highlighting the increasing demand for peacekeepers to address humanitarian concerns, contribute to community engagement, and facilitate post-conflict recovery in addition to maintaining ceasefires and containing violence.

The seminar was designed to provide a platform for exploring new strategies, lessons learned, and innovative solutions for peacekeeping operations, particularly in volatile regions like the Middle East.

It also aimed to foster discussions on critical issues such as gender inclusivity, humanitarian law, education, and the future



direction of peacekeeping operations in an increasingly complex global environment.

A distinguished panel of speakers contributed to the seminar, which included Ruchira Kamboj, Former Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations; Ambassador DP Srivastava, Former Ambassador to Iran and Ex-Director, UNP Division, Ministry of External Affairs; Susan Ferguson, Head of UN Women, India; Major Radhika Sen, Awarded UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year 2023; Prof CSR Murthy, Former Professor, CIPOD, JNU.

Senior and Former Force Commanders such as Lieutenant General S Mohan, FC UNMISS; Lieutenant General Iqbal Singh Singha, Former Force Commander UNDOF; and Lieutenant General JS Lidder, Former DSRG (P) and Force Commander UNMIS.

The seminar addressed several key topics, including Peacekeeping in Transition; Navigating the Complexities of a Changing Global Landscape, Gender Inclusive Peacekeeping; The Role of Women, The

Changing Role of Female Engagement Teams in UN Peacekeeping Operations; The Current Imbroglio in the Middle East: Impact on UN Peacekeepers and Future Prognosis; Gaps in Regional Security Paradigms and the Impact on Operational Efficacy of Peacekeepers; Digitisation and Infusion Technology, Renewable Energy in Peacekeeping and Protection of Civilians.

The seminar was grounded in the concept that the global landscape of peacekeeping operations has evolved significantly, with new challenges emerging across conflict zones worldwide. Today, peacekeepers are expected to go beyond the traditional roles of maintaining ceasefires and containing violence.

The United Nations must now address humanitarian concerns, support community engagement, and play an active role in post-conflict recovery. This seminar was an important step in exploring these new dimensions of peacekeeping and developing practical solutions for their integration into future operations.

The discussions held at the seminar are expected to contribute to future policy frameworks and operational improvements, particularly from an Indian perspective.

As India has long been a significant contributor to UN peacekeeping missions, its insights and leadership are critical in shaping the future of global peacekeeping.

The outcomes of the seminar will provide a roadmap for enhancing the efficacy of peacekeeping missions, ensuring that they are better equipped to address contemporary global threats.

The seminar not only highlighted the evolving challenges faced by peacekeepers but also served as a platform to explore innovative solutions aimed at making peacekeeping operations more effective and inclusive.

The discussions focused on key themes such as gender inclusion, humanitarian responses, education, and the application of international law, offering actionable recommendations to redefine the strategic direction of UN peacekeeping missions.

India's growing contribution to global peacekeeping efforts, coupled with the need for reforms within the UN system, positions the country as a key player in shaping future peacekeeping operations.

The seminar's outcomes will contribute to ensuring that peacekeepers are better equipped to tackle the complexities of modern conflicts, fostering greater resilience and innovation in peacekeeping strategies worldwide.

Army organizes Badakhana at Parat



Top News Report

RAJOURI, Jan 20: In ongoing efforts to connect with locals and address the critical issues faced by villagers, the Indian Army organized a Badakhana for the Gujjar and Bakkarwal communities at Parat, Nowshera, in the Rajouri District.

The program was attended by members of the Gujjar and Bakkarwal communities from the Parat, Solki, and Sarsoti areas.

The aim of the event was to highlight critical issues faced by the Gujjar and Bakkarwal communities through meaningful discussions and to strengthen relationships with the Indian Army.

The event encouraged open and constructive dialogues on various topics, including community development, enhancing socio-economic status, infrastructure development, healthcare services, mental hygiene, education, and sustainable

community initiatives. In an effort to enhance the development and security of the area, this initiative served as an important step in fostering stronger relationships between the Indian Army personnel and the Gujjar and Bakkarwal communities.

Approximately 250 members of the Gujjar and Bakkarwal communities attended the Badakhana, expressing their gratitude for the continuous support provided by the Indian Army.

E-Rickshaw drivers appeal for fair fare revision amid soaring costs



Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 20: The recent decision by the Jammu and Kashmir Transport Department Commissioner to cap e-rickshaw fares at Rs 10 per kilometer per vehicle or Rs 2.50 per kilometer per passenger has sparked widespread discontent among e-rickshaw drivers across the region.

A large number of striking drivers have pointed out that the fixed rates fail to account for the significant rise in their operational costs, including loan installments, maintenance, renewal charges, and other essential expenses. They also expressed concerns about the growing inflationary pressures severely impacting their livelihoods. Many drivers have voiced deep worries about their ability to sustain a decent income under the current rate structure, which they believe no longer meets the financial demands of their profession.

“We have unemployed youth and degree holders who, after failing to secure government jobs, have taken loans to buy e-rickshaws,” said Aaqib Ahmad, an e-rickshaw driver. “We’re paying monthly loan installments with 11% interest rates,

along with electricity charging charges of Rs 2,500 to Rs 3,000 per vehicle. These low fares only add to our financial struggles.”

Veteran Trade Leader Mohammad Sadiq Baqal also expressed his concerns over the fare structure, labeling it as impractical. “The government should have consulted all stakeholders before implementing such rates. Thousands of highly qualified unemployed youth are driving these e-rickshaws to support their families. Many are drowning in debt due to the high cost of purchasing and maintaining these vehicles,” Baqal said. “I appeal to the J&K Government to address and resolve this issue promptly, ensuring a fair and practical solution that takes into account the welfare of e-rickshaw drivers and the public.”

Shakir Kuchay, a dealer with Arzoo Company, shed light on the pressing financial challenges faced by e-rickshaw owners and drivers. “The average monthly maintenance for these vehicles ranges from Rs 2,000 to Rs 2,500, while loan installments are between Rs 5,000 and Rs 7,000. Lithium batteries need replacement every three years,

and lead-acid batteries every two years, significantly increasing the burden. Despite earning between Rs 15,000 and Rs 16,000 a month, most drivers struggle to cover their basic costs, leaving them with little to sustain their families.”

Drivers further emphasized the broader financial burden, citing rising prices of essential items and household expenses. “We’re just trying to survive. The government needs to take our situation into account and adjust the fares accordingly,” said Mohammad Shafi, an e-rickshaw driver supporting a family of five members.

“This is not just about us,” said driver Mohammad Altaf. “It’s about fairness and ensuring the sustainability of a service that benefits the public and provides a livelihood for thousands.”

Meanwhile, social media users and the general public have also voiced their support for the drivers. Many described the earlier fare structure as more reasonable and lamented the ongoing strikes disrupting daily passengers.

In light of these financial hardships, Shakir Kuchay, along with the e-rickshaw drivers, has made an urgent appeal to the J&K government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Transport Minister Satish Sharma, Transport Commissioner, and the RTOs of Kashmir and Jammu to urgently revise the fare structure. They emphasized that the current

Army organizes medical camp for local youth at Bhatta Dhurian

Top News Report

POONCH, Jan 20: In an effort to address the healthcare needs of residents in the remote areas of Poonch, the Indian Army organized a free medical camp at Kamlo Gali.

This initiative aimed to provide crucial medical services to underprivileged communities, fos-

tering health and well-being.

The camp offered free consultations, basic health check-ups, and the distribution of essential medicines.

The Indian Army is committed to ensuring that residents in these remote areas have access to quality healthcare, promoting a healthier and stronger

community.

This initiative aligns with the Indian Army's ongoing commitment to serving the nation beyond defense, exemplifying their dedication to the well-being of citizens.

A total of 318 locals (Male: 186, Female: 72, Children: 60) attended the camp and received proper medical care and



free medicines from the doctors of the Indian Army.

The free medical camp underscores the Army's

ethos of solidarity and support, showcasing the positive impact that collaborative efforts can have on public health.

Army distributes solar lights, blankets to communities at Barakh

Top News Report

REASI, Jan 20: In a gesture of goodwill and commitment to the welfare of remote communities, the Indian Army distributed solar lights and blankets to the Gujjar and Bakkarwal communities at Barakh.

The event, attended by 38 members of the Gujjar and Bakkarwal communities, along with 4 Sarpanchs and Panchs, aimed to promote development



and improve the quality of life in remote areas.

The Gujjar and Bakkarwal communities, who are nomadic ethnic groups, expressed their

gratitude to the Indian Army for its contributions to their welfare.

The distribution of solar lights and blankets is expected to positively impact the daily lives

of the community members, providing them with essential amenities and comfort.

The Indian Army's efforts to engage with local communities and promote their welfare are ongoing.

By organizing such events, the Indian Army aims to foster a sense of goodwill and cooperation among the local population while also promoting development and improving the quality of life in remote areas.

Two days handball tournament begins



Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Jan 20: Two days Handball tournament organised by Kargil Martyrs Handball Club at Mini Stadium Handball Court Udhampur in the age group of U-14 & U-17 yrs boys & girls. Total 11 teams participated in this event. Romesh Chander Mishra DYSSO Udhampur was

the distinguished Chief Guest at the opening ceremony.

Other important persons present were Sushma Gupta ZPEO Jib, Deep Kumar ZPEO Udhampur, Sanjeev Magotra, Vinod Dogra, Arun Mehta, Manmeet Singh, Ajay Sharma, Pawan Jamwal, Vinod Sharma.

Technical Commit-

tee for smooth conduct of tournament Rishi Sharma, Bhoopinder Singh, Karun Magotra, Sanjeev Kumar, Vipin Photra and Anshu Khanna.

In the opening match Hr Sec Boys School Udhampur bt GHSS Barta by 12-5. In Girls section SPM Convent School Udhampur bt GHSS Barta by 11-7.

Army organizes marathon under Op Sadbhavana for Youth at Chhatru Kishtwar

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Jan 20: In a significant initiative aimed at promoting fitness, community engagement, and fostering goodwill, the Indian Army organized a marathon under the ambit of Operation Sadbhavana in Chhatru Village, Kishtwar, J&K.

The event featured multiple race categories to ensure wide participation from different age groups and sections of the community. The 10 km Marathon for Boys above 18 years showcased the endurance and competitive spirit of young men. The 5 km Run for Boys aged



between 14 to 18 years encouraged younger participants to discover their athletic abilities.

The 3 km Run for Fun for Ex-Servicemen and Girls was a special category honoring the

contributions of ex-servicemen while encouraging girls to embrace a healthy and active lifestyle in a fun and supportive environment across the region. The winners in each category

were felicitated with exciting prizes, including LED TVs, smart tablets, smartphones, smartwatches, and trolley bags. A total of 302 participants, including 67 girls, 96 boys, and 15 veterans from across the region, participated in the event. Certificates of participation were awarded to all participants, recognizing their efforts and enthusiasm in contributing to the event's success.

The event concluded with a prize distribution ceremony, leaving a lasting impression of unity, fitness, and the enduring partnership between the Indian Army and the people of the region.

Punjab CM Mann congratulates Team India for securing men's, women's titles at Kho Kho WC 2025

NEW DELHI, Jan 20 (Agencies): Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Monday congratulated Indian men's and women's teams for winning the Kho Kho World Cup 2025.

The inaugural Kho Kho World Cup in New Delhi concluded on a historic note with India securing the titles in both men's and women's competitions.

In a masterclass of speed, strategy, and skill, the Indian women's kho kho team scripted history by clinching the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup 2025 title at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium on a magical Sunday night.

The Women in Blue dominated Nepal in a spectacular final, sealing their victory with an emphatic score of 78-40. The men's team also secured a 54-36 win over Nepal in the title clash.

India's path to glory included commanding victories over



South Korea, IR Iran, and Malaysia in the group stages, followed by a triumph against Bangladesh in the quarter-finals and a masterful win over South Africa in the semi-finals.

This historic achievement not only crowns India as the inaugural world champion but also marks a watershed moment for this Indigenous sport on the global stage.

Taking to X, Bhagwant Mann said that the men's and wom-

en's teams have made all the Indians feel proud with their triumph at the Kho Kho World Cup 2025.

"The Indian boys' team defeated the Nepalese team by 54-36 and the Indian girls' team defeated the Nepalese team by a huge margin of 78-40, making Indians feel proud all over the world.

Congratulations to the players, coaches and other management staff of both the teams. Chak De

India," Bhagwant Mann wrote on X.

On the other hand, the Men in Blue dominated the final against Nepal with a commanding 54-36 victory, led by outstanding performances from captain Pratik Waikar and tournament stand-out Ramji Kashyap. They joined the women's team, who dominated Nepal in another excellent final, sealing their victory with an emphatic score of 78-40.

The team's journey to the championship was nothing short of remarkable. India showcased their dominance throughout the tournament, beginning with convincing victories over Brazil, Peru, and Bhutan in the group stages.

Their momentum continued through the knockout rounds, where they outclassed Bangladesh in the quarterfinals before overcoming a strong South African side in the semifinals.

Mohammed Shami starts training with Team India in Kolkata ahead of England T20s



KOLKATA, Jan 20 (Agencies): Seamer Mohammed Shami started training with the India squad at the iconic Eden Gardens ahead of the T20I series against England. With Jasprit Bumrah out of the squad for the upcoming five-match T20I series, Shami is expected to lead the Men in Blue attack.

Last year, Shami returned to domestic cricket with Bengal after undergoing an ankle surgery that kept him sidelined for nearly a year. Shami had also been a part of Bengal's squad for the Vijay Hazare Trophy.

Shami had made an

impressive comeback to competitive cricket, having last featured in the ODI World Cup 2023 final. Following ankle surgery and overcoming a series of setbacks, he returned to action for Bengal in a Ranji Trophy match against Madhya Pradesh in November.

Earlier on January 11, Shami was added to the India squad for the upcoming T20I series against England.

Taking to X, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) shared a few glimpses of the 34-year-old getting back on the track with the Men in Blue. Team India bowling coach Morne Morkel was keeping

a close eye on Shami during his first practice session with the Men in Blue after coming back from injury.

Meanwhile, Shami took to his official Instagram handle and said that he is ready to make the citizens proud once again.

"All set Ready to make you all proud once again.. keep your love support," Shami wrote on Instagram.

The five-match T20I series will kick off on January 22 in Kolkata. The second and third matches will be held on January 25 and 28 in Chennai and Rajkot, respectively. The fourth game of the series will be played on January 31 in Pune. Mumbai will host the final match of the T20I series on February 2.

India's squad for the T20I series against England: Suryakumar Yadav (C), Sanju Samson (WK), Abhishek Sharma, Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya, Rinku Singh, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Axar Patel (VC), Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Mohammad Shami, Varun Chakravarthy, Ravi Bishnoi, Washington Sundar, Dhruv Jurel (WK).

Gujarat Giants' WPL stars draw Inspiration from UAE prodigies like Aayan Khan during ILT20 visit

SHARJAH, Jan 20 (Agencies): Bharti Fulmali, Prakashika Naik, and Kashvee Gautam, the new recruits of the Gujarat Giants in the Women's Premier League 2025, attended the ILT20 match between the Gulf Giants and Dubai Capitals at Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

According to a release from Gujarat Giants, Fulmali, who has been with the team since season two, scored 64 runs in three matches, including an impressive 42 runs off 36 balls. The Vidarbha batter revealed she's a fan of Shimron Hetmyer, drawing parallels between their batting styles.

"I admire Shimron Hetmyer. He's one of my favourite batters because he's a hitter, just like me. We both bat in the middle order, and I'm eager to watch him

play. My batting style and mindset are very similar to his. As a finisher, you typically have only four or five overs to bat, so you need to hit from the first ball. During our pre-season camp, my coach mentioned promoting me in the batting order, so I'm preparing for those situations," Fulmali was quoted in a release from Gujarat Giants as saying.

Kashvee Gautam, who became the most expensive uncapped Indian player in the 2024 WPL auction when Gujarat Giants acquired her for Rs 2 crore, made history in 2020 by taking 10 wickets in an innings while playing for Chandigarh in the Women's U-19 One Day Trophy. After missing the previous season due to injury, she's ready to make her mark.

Gautam is particularly excited to play along-

side West Indian cricketer Deandra Dottin, a T20 World Cup winner known for her explosive batting. "She's a great athlete who can hit big sixes and take blinders. As an all-rounder, I relate to her role and look forward to sharing the dressing room with her," Gautam said.

Kashvee also praised leagues like ILT20 and WPL for nurturing young talent. "Both leagues have given opportunities to young players, and it's great to see them evolving. They're showcasing their talent alongside elite athletes. As a WPL player, I'm honoured to share the dressing room with legends we've all watched and admired on TV."

Prakashika Naik, picked by Gujarat Giants at the Tata WPL Auction 2025 for Rs 10 lakhs, shared her impression of the Sharjah Cricket Sta-



dium. "The ground and atmosphere here are excellent. While it's challenging for leg-spinners, it's a great venue. It's inspiring to see Aayan Afzal Khan bowling and consistently taking wickets on these pitches. It is a great learning to see him bowl."

Naik looks forward to learning from her new teammates, particularly Australia's Phoebe Litchfield. "Australian players have a tough mindset, and I'm excited to work with them. Phoebe Litchfield is young but has a great

approach. The way she bats and leads by example is impressive."

Discussing the upcoming season, Gautam expressed confidence in her team: "Our squad is well-balanced with good all-rounders. That's crucial in T20s - you need a long batting lineup and fast bowlers. I'm looking forward to winning many games with my team."

Gujarat Giants will begin their WPL 2025 campaign against defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru on February 14 in Vadodara.

Nigeria script history after beating New Zealand to set U-19 World Cup ablaze

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 20 (Agencies): Nigeria's Women's Under-19 cricket team etched their name in history by securing their maiden victory in the ICC U19 T20 World Cup, defeating New Zealand by two runs in a nail-biting contest in Malaysia on January 20. What turned out to be a scintillating display of cricket in a reduced action show that went on to become Nigeria's first-ever victory in the tournament, making the occasion even more special as it was their debut appearance.

Rain played spoilsport earlier in the competition, washing out Nigeria's opening game against Samoa. The match against New Zealand was also affected by weather, reducing the game to 13 overs per side. Opting to bowl first, New Zealand delivered an early blow as Hannah O'Connor dismissed Victory Igbinedion for 1. Skipper Lucky Piety steadied the innings with a composed 18 off 22, supported by Lilian Udeh, who top-scored with a crucial 19 off 25



deliveries. Nigeria concluded their innings at 65/6, setting a modest target.

In response, New Zealand's chase began on a disastrous note when Kate Irwin was run out on the very first ball. Usen Peace struck shortly after, dismissing Emma McLeod, leaving New Zealand reeling at 7/2. Anika Todd (19) and Eve Wolland attempted to rebuild, taking the score to 31 before Piety's breakthrough shifted the momentum.

With the equation coming down to nine runs needed in the final over, Tash Wakeelin, batting on 18, stood as New Zealand's last hope. Udeh, bowling the decisive over, showcased exceptional composure under pressure. She conceded just four singles in her first four

deliveries and bowled a dot ball on the fifth. New Zealand managed only two runs on the last ball, resulting in Wakeelin's run-out and sealing Nigeria's two-run victory.

This triumph placed Nigeria at the top of Group C with three points, ahead of South Africa, Samoa, and New Zealand. Despite being one of the group favourites, New Zealand failed to capitalise on their opportunities, struggling to counter Nigeria's disciplined bowling and spirited fielding.

Nigeria's next challenge is against South Africa in their final group stage game. With their confidence sky-high after this historic win, the team will aim to continue their dream run in the tournament.

Yograj Singh urges Kohli-Rohit to play domestic cricket: No one's bigger than game

NEW DELHI, Jan 20 (Agencies): Former India cricketer Yograj Singh has urged senior players Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma to play domestic cricket as the senior duo will not be playing any games until the ODI series against England. The BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India) has come up with new directives for its players after their recent Test series loss in Australia as they made it mandatory for players to feature in domestic cricket while not on national duty.

Yograj also shared his views on the new rule and mentioned that no one is bigger than the game. He even gave examples of the legendary players Sir Vivian Richards and Sir Don Bradman and stated that even they were not bigger than the sport, urging senior players to participate in domestic cricket when they're not on national duty.

"You can never become bigger than the game. Neither Viv Richards nor Don Bradman, they were never bigger than cricket and neither can anyone become. So what you do is you come back from the tours, you must start playing domestic cricket. When Test players play domestic cricket, then the rest of the youngsters playing with them get a lot of confidence," Yograj told ANI.

Furthermore, Yograj gave examples of his own son, Yuvraj Singh and mentioned how he used to play domestic cricket whenever he was out of the team.

"Whenever Yuvi (Yuvraj Singh) all the time when he was not in the Indian squad, he used to go and play Ranji Trophy. When the team was not playing any tournament. So, I think this is one thing that they should come and play, all of them, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli. There should be a fitness camp for the players. Nothing happens in the nets, everything happens in centre," he added.

Meanwhile, the effect of BCCI's new rules is already being seen as Ravindra Jadeja, Rishabh Pant and Rohit Sharma have confirmed their availability for the next round of the Ranji Trophy 2024-25. However, star batters Virat Kohli and KL Rahul won't be seen participating due to their respective injuries.

Cricketer Rinku Singh to marry SP MP Priya Saroj

JAUNPUR, Jan 20 (Agencies): Indian cricketer Rinku Singh is set to get hitched to Samajwadi Party (SP) MP Priya Saroj, according to her family.

Priya Saroj's father and SP MLA from Kerkat Tufani Saroj told agency that his family held "meaningful talks" with Singh's father in Aligarh on February 16 regarding the marriage of their children and both sides agreed to the matrimonial alliance.

No ring ceremony or pre-wedding programme has been held so far, he said.

According to Tufani Saroj, a three-time MP, his daughter and Singh got acquainted through one of her friends whose father is also a cricketer.

"Rinku and Priya have known each other for more than a year now. They both liked each



other but needed the consent of their families for their relationship. Both the families have agreed to this marriage," he said.

Dates of engagement and wedding will be decided after the Parliament session. The engagement will be held in Lucknow, he said.

According to sources, the two families met at Singh's house in Ozone City, Aligarh and finalised the marriage by exchanging 'shagun' and gifts.

Priya Saroj is a resident of Karkhiyaon vil-

lage in Varanasi. She has been associated with the SP for several years now and was elected to the Lok Sabha from Machhlishahr constituency in Jaunpur district last year at the age of 25.

A former Supreme Court lawyer, Priya Saroj first shot into the limelight while campaigning for her father in the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls.

She graduated in arts from Delhi University before getting a law degree from Amity University, Noida.

Openers are fixed but everyone else need to be flexible about batting slots: Axar Patel



KOLKATA, Jan 20 (Agencies): Openers Sanju Samson and Abhishek Sharma have fixed slots but batters from one down till No. 7 need to be flexible enough to be used as floaters as per match situation, Axar Patel, India's T20I vice-captain for the England series, said here on

Monday. India will start their campaign against England in a five-match T20I series at the Eden Gardens on Wednesday.

Asked about being a floater in batting order, the all-rounder replied: "Openers are fixed. Then from No. 3 to 7, everyone was told you

can go as per situation wise, depending on the combinations, match-ups. There is no fixed position. Not for me only but it is the same for everyone. It is about adjusting (to the demands of situation)."

There is not much that changes for Axar as vice-captain though, except for the fact that he is also part of certain hard calls that are taken by team management of which the left-hander is a member.

"The T20 team is settled. There is not much pressure. When you are in the leadership group you have to make some harsh decisions. These are the discussions we have," Axar said.

JKGPA asks Govt to redress grievances of pharmacists



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: The Jammu Kashmir Government Pharmacists Association (JKGPA) on Monday convened a meeting at the Jammu Kashmir Medical Federation office, Directorate of Health Services Complex, here.

The meeting was chaired by Sushil Sudan, President of JKMEF and Member of the Pharmacy Council of India, alongside Bharat Bhushan Bhagat, President of JKGPA.

The primary focus was to address the grievances of pharmacists and discuss critical issues affecting the pharmacist community.

One of the significant topics discussed was the demand for a change in the nomenclature of pharmacists. In many states across India, pharmacists are now designated as Pharmacy Officers.

The association emphasized that this change should be implemented in Jammu & Kashmir as well, noting that the matter has been pending with the government for several years.

The association acknowledged the issuance of Order No. 457-HME of 2023, dated June 2, 2023, which created such posts at GMC Jammu.

However, they demanded that similar

posts be established at all District Hospitals and Sub-District Hospitals to ensure equitable opportunities for pharmacists in the Health Department.

The association also highlighted the urgent need to fill vacant posts of pharmacists across the Union Territory. Many institutions are facing staff shortages, which impacts their ability to deliver adequate healthcare services. Filling these vacancies would help ensure that the benefits of health services reach the people effectively.

Another demand pertained to the regulation of pharmacy education in Jammu & Kashmir. The association pointed out that, under the Pharmacy Act of 1948, the Pharmacy Council of India regulates pharmacy education up to the graduate level.

They proposed that the Jammu & Kashmir Pharmacy Council take charge of regulating Diploma and Degree programs in Pharmacy.

They also called for the formation of a dedicated board to oversee pharmacy education and examinations within the region, replacing the current oversight by the Jammu & Kashmir Paramedical Council.

The creation of additional posts to strengthen healthcare services was also discussed.

The association proposed establishing positions such as Block Pharmacy Officer and District Pharmacy Officer, along with Senior Pharmacist roles at PHCs and CHCs. Furthermore, they advocated for an increase in the number of Junior Pharmacist posts at NTPHCs, CHCs, SDHs, and District Hospitals to meet the growing public healthcare demands.

The restoration of RMP (Registered Medical Practitioner) registration for retired pharmacists was another critical issue raised. Previously, retired pharmacists were granted RMP registration, but this practice has been discontinued for unknown reasons. The association urged the government to restore this registration to ensure fairness and justice for retired professionals.

The meeting saw participation from several prominent members, including Surjeet Rajan, Naresh Sharma, Pawan Kumar, Shiv Kumar, Bahadur Singh, Rajesh Kumar, Madan Lal Sharma, Sanjay Choudhary, Vikas Sabarwal, Subash Chander, Yash Paul, Rajinder Sharma, Ashwani Kumar, Krishan Lal, Ajeet Singh, Shashi Malhotra, Vinod Kumar, and others. Their contributions enriched the discussion, underscoring the pressing need to address these issues.

Kaith, others praise singer Daleep Kumar's programme on Kishore Da



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: R.L.Kaith and his associates: Hans Raj Loria, Des Raj, Tilak Raj, Naresh Kumar and many others attended the programme on 'Kishore Kumar Special', organised in the auditorium of Govt MAM PG College.

Kaith said, "Kishore Kumar was one of the greatest, most influen-

tial and dynamic singers in the history of modern Indian music, notable for his yodelling and ability to sing songs in different voices".

Kaith praised Daleep Kumar's songs on Kishore lavishly, as he sang with his natural zeal, confidence and God-given natural talent.

There was a divine touch in Daleep Kumar's little son that enchanted the listeners.

Kishtwari Sangathan Jammu holds its 3rd AGM, elects new body



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: Kishtwari Sangathan Jammu (KSJ) on Monday held its third Annual General Meeting (AGM), where a new body was elected.

Following the elections, an oath-taking ceremony was held for the newly elected members.

The AGM witnessed the participation of about 200 members, who actively engaged in the democratic process.

Several prominent speakers addressed the gathering, highlighting the importance of the Sangathan and its role.

In his address, KSJ Chairmam Ashok Kumar Sen reviewed the company's performance, and outlined strategic

steps taken during the year.

The outgoing President Rajinder Singh highlighted the achievements by the Sangathan and briefed the challenges faced during the year.

The Sangathan elected Bholu Nath Bhandari as President, Indresh Sharma as Vice President, Advocate Vineet Sharma as General Secretary, Kuldeep Bhandari as Joint Secretary, Rishi Kumar as Cashier besides Mohinder Kumar Sen as Executive Member for Kishtwar block, Baldev Singh as Executive Member for Thakra block, C R Parihar for Nagsene block and Ranbir Singh Rana for block Paddar.

The newly elected President issued a passionate appeal for increased donations from its members and the wider community. Emphasizing the power of collective action, he said that "teamwork will take the Sangathan to its heights."

"By joining together and contributing generously, we can achieve remarkable things for our community. Every contribution, no matter the size, makes a significant difference," he added.

To facilitate contributions, the Sangathan has introduced a convenient subscription system. This system allows members and supporters to easily contribute regularly and track their donations.

Apni Party leaders extend condolences on passing of former minister

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 20: Apni Party leaders have extended their condolences to the bereaved family of Ghulam Hassan Geelani, a former minister who was elected five times as a legislator from the Budgam constituency.

According to a press release issued here, Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, General Secretary Rafi Ahmad Mir, Chief Spokesperson Muntazir Mohiuddin, and Media Advisor Farooq Andrabi expressed grief and sorrow over the death of former minister Ghulam Hassan Geelani, who passed away this morning.

"Apni Party leaders have expressed solidarity with the bereaved family of Geelani Sahib and prayed for eternal peace for the departed soul," the press release stated.

Acknowledging the unparalleled contributions of the deceased, Apni Party leaders said, "Ghulam Hassan Geelani Sahib dedicated his entire life to serving the people of his constituency. His contributions are invaluable, and his passing is an incredible loss for the people of Budgam."

Dimple demands restoration of J&K Statehood



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 20: Sunil Dimple, President of Mission Statehood Jammu Kashmir, addressed a press conference where he urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to fulfill his election promises and abide by the directives of the Supreme Court regarding the restoration of Jammu & Kashmir's statehood. He also demanded the immediate announcement of elections for the four Rajya Sabha seats in J&K.

Dimple called upon Dr. Farooq Abdullah, President of the National Conference, and Omar Abdullah, former Chief Minister, to oppose any move by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to dilute Articles 370 and

35-A. He emphasized that Mission Statehood will not accept any attempt to undermine these special provisions or the unique demands of the region.

He accused the BJP of delaying the restoration of J&K's statehood and disregarding the special status demands that have been submitted to the Prime Minister and Home Minister. Dimple further alleged that the BJP is pressuring the National Conference to support the dilution of Articles 370 and 35-A and form a BJP-NC alliance government.

Dimple demanded immediate restoration of Jammu & Kashmir's statehood and special status, announcement of election dates for J&K's four Rajya Sabha seats, corpora-

tions, urban local bodies (ULBs), and municipalities, nomination of a Jammu Dogra representative for one of the Rajya Sabha seats, and provision of free electricity, drinking water, 12 free LPG cylinders, double ration for all residents, and an employment package for unemployed educated youth.

Dimple announced a strong protest to be held in February at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi, demanding the restoration of statehood, Articles 370 and 35-A, and adherence to the Instrument of Accession's conditions. He also stated that an all-party meeting would soon be convened to unite political forces in the fight for Jammu & Kashmir's statehood.

Dimple alleged that dual power centers have created confusion among the youth and the general public, leaving them uncertain about where to seek resolution for their issues.

Senior leaders present during the press conference included Sudershan Sharma, Mohan Lal, Bishan Das, Rinku Sharma, Sanjay Kumar, and Brahma Dutt.



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