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BRIEFLY

Search Operation underway in Doda

JAMMU, Jan 30 (Agencies): Security forces on Thursday launched a cordon and search operation following information about suspected movement of terrorists in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir, police officials said.

The search operation was jointly launched by police and CRPF in Dorhu, Basti and adjoining forest area in Bhaderwah at 8.30 am.

They said the search operation was going on when the last reports were received.

Some local residents noticed the suspicious movement in the area and subsequently informed the police, the officials said.

Fire breaks out in Chattabal, Srinagar

SRINAGAR, Jan 30 (Agencies): A fire broke out in a residential house at Bagiyas area of Chattabal, Srinagar, on Thursday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that a three-story residential house near Chattabal, Srinagar, was engulfed in flames due to a fire incident in the area on Thursday.

He said that as per the preliminary report, one three-storied residential house is involved in the fire. The Fire and Emergency Department, along with the police, is on the spot and dousing the flames.

Meanwhile, details are awaited.

Four minor Rohingya girls missing from shelter Baramulla Home

SRINAGAR, Jan 30 (Agencies): Four minor Rohingya girls, who had been rescued from a human trafficking network six months ago, have gone missing from the Children-cum-Shelter Home in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Officials said that four girls were found missing from the shelter home on January 25 and immediately police was informed who registered a case and started an investigation.

"The CCTV footage showed these girls escaping from the back side of the shelter home at around 3 am on January 25," a senior officer of children-cum-shelter home Baramulla said. "The four girls were here for the last six months."

The four minor girls from Rohingya in

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Passenger jet with 64 aboard collides with Army helicopter while landing at Reagan Airport near DC

ARLINGTON (US), Jan 30 (Agencies): A jet with 60 passengers and four crew members aboard collided Wednesday with an Army helicopter while landing at Ronald Reagan National Airport near Washington, prompting a large search-and-rescue operation in the nearby Potomac River.

There was no immediate word on casualties or the cause of the collision, but all takeoffs and landings from the airport near Washington were halted as helicopters from law enforcement agencies across the region flew over the scene in search of survivors. Inflatable rescue boats were launched into the Potomac River from a point near the airport along the George Washington Parkway, just north of the airport.

President Donald Trump said he had been "fully briefed on this terrible accident" and, refer-



ring to the passengers, added, "May God Bless their souls."

The Federal Aviation Administration said the midair crash occurred around 9 pm EST when a regional jet that had departed from Wichita, Kansas, collided with a military Blackhawk helicopter while on approach to an airport runway. It occurred in some of the most tightly controlled and monitored airspace in the world, just over three miles south of the White House and the Capitol.

Investigators will try to piece together the aircrafts' final moments before their collision, including contact with air traffic controllers as well as a loss of altitude by the passenger jet.

American Airlines flight 5342 was inbound to Reagan National at an altitude of about 400 feet and a speed of about 140 miles per hour when it suffered a rapid loss of altitude over the Potomac River, according to data from its radio transponder. The Canadian-made Bombardier

CRJ-701 twin-engine jet was manufactured in 2004 and can be configured to carry up to 70 passengers.

A few minutes before landing, air traffic controllers asked the arriving commercial jet if it could land on the shorter Runway 33 at Reagan National and the pilots said they were able. Controllers then cleared the plane to land on Runway 33. Flight tracking sites showed the plane adjust its approach to the new runway.

Less than 30 seconds before the crash, an air traffic controller asks the helicopter if it has the arriving plane in sight. The controller makes another radio call to the helicopter moments later: "PAT 25 pass behind the CRJ." Seconds after that the two aircraft collide.

The plane's radio transponder stopped transmitting about 2,400 feet short of the runway, roughly over the middle of the river.

The tower immediately began diverting other aircraft from Reagan.

Video from an observation camera at the nearby Kennedy Center showed two sets of lights consistent with aircraft appearing to join in a fireball.

The crash is serving as a major test for two of the Trump administration's newest agency leaders. Pete Hegseth, sworn in days ago as

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J&K Govt orders transfers, postings of IAS officers

Nitish Rajora is new Director Information J&K

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 30: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Thursday ordered the transfer and posting of five senior IAS officials in the interest of administration.

As per an order, Jatin Kishore (IAS, AGMUT:2020), Additional Secretary in the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat and holding additional charge as Director, Information J&K, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Ganderbal.

Shishir Gupta (IAS, AGMUT:2020), Additional Deputy Commissioner, Jammu, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Shopian. Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar (JKAS), whom he replaces, will report to the General

Administration Department for further posting.

Nitish Rajora (IAS, AGMUT:2021), Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Jammu (North), has been transferred and posted as Director, Information J&K.

Rakesh Kumar (IAS, AGMUT:2021), Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Hiranagar, has been transferred and posted as Additional Deputy Commissioner, Jammu.

Shubhankar Pratyush Pathak (IAS, AGMUT:2022), Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Akhnoor, Jammu, has been transferred and posted as Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Uri, Baramulla. He replaces Javid Ahmad Rather (JKAS), who will report to the General Administration Department for further posting.

Statehood to J-K likely be restored in upcoming budget session; NC hopes

SRINAGAR, Jan 30 (Agencies): The ruling National Conference (NC) on Thursday said that they are hopeful that the statehood to Jammu and Kashmir will likely be restored in the upcoming budget session.

"We hope that the Statehood will be restored in the upcoming budget session. The dual-power centre is never ever in the interest of any nation, so the restoration of statehood becomes imperative to address the concerns



of people and ensure jobs and other things to the masses," NC leader and MLA Zadibal Tanvir Sadiq told reporters in Srinagar.

He said it is easy to fight with centre and

stage protests, but the Prime Minister has himself made a commitment to the people and thus, there was no need to lock horns with the centre over the

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Four officials of private company chargesheeted for duping doctor in Jammu

JAMMU, Jan 30 (Agencies): Crime Branch of Jammu and Kashmir Police has filed a chargesheet against four officials of a private company based in Bengaluru, Karnataka, for duping a doctor here of Rs 30.50 lakh on the pretext of setting up a gym in a joint venture.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Crime

Branch, Benam Tosh, said the case against the office-bearers of Messrs Chisel Fitness LLP was filed on February 20, 2023 following a written complaint by dental doctor Anuj Arora, a resident of Jammu.

The chargesheet in the case has been filed in the court of law for judicial determination, the SSP said.

The officials said those chargesheeted in the case include founding director of Chisel Fitness LLP Satya Shardul Sinha, her brother and director supply chain Sushil Kumar Tongbram, director corporate and legal affairs Kingmoohan and architect Gangoni Poorna Chandra — all residents of Karnataka.

Last month, a team of

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Kashmir higher reaches receive fresh snowfall

SRINAGAR, Jan 29 (Agencies): The higher reaches of the Kashmir Valley, including popular tourist destinations of Gulmarg and Pahalgam, experienced light snowfall, while some plains received rainfall, officials said on Thursday.

The Meteorological Centre has predicted

wet weather in the coming days.

The ski resort of Gulmarg in north Kashmir recorded 2.5 cm of snowfall and 3.8 mm of rainfall, while Pahalgam in south Kashmir received 2.7 cm of snowfall and 1.8 mm of rainfall overnight, according to the MeT office.

Central Kashmir's Sonamarg in the Ganderbal district and its surrounding mountain passes were also blanketed in snow, transforming the region into a winter wonderland for tourists. Additionally, the upper reaches of north Kashmir's Kupwara

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JKGPA delegation meets Health Minister, submits demands

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 30: A delegation of the Jammu Kashmir Government Pharmacists Association (JKGPA), led by its President Bharat Bhushan Bhagat, along with Sushil Sudan, President of JKMEF and Member of the Pharmacy Council of India, and Sheikh Merajudin, Chairman of JKGPA Kashmir Province, met with the Health Minister Sakina Itoo to present a series of demands concerning government pharmacists.

Pharmacists in many Indian states have had their designation changed to Pharmacy Officer. The delegation urged the government to adopt the same nomenclature for pharmacists in Jammu and Kashmir, noting that the matter has been pending for years.

Citing Jammu Kashmir



Government order no. 457HME of 2023 dated June 2, 2023, which created the post of Technical Officer Pharmacy in GMC Jammu, the association demanded the creation of similar posts in all District and Sub-District Hospitals to ensure fair treatment of pharmacists in the health department.

Many pharmacist positions remain unfilled across various institu-

tions in Jammu and Kashmir, leading to staff shortages and affecting healthcare delivery. The association emphasized the need for urgent recruitment to improve health services.

In line with the Pharmacy Act of 1948, the delegation called for pharmacy education up to the graduate level to be regulated by the Jammu Kashmir Pharmacy Council instead

of the Jammu Kashmir Paramedical Council. They urged the formation of a dedicated board to oversee pharmacy education and examinations.

The delegation sought the creation of new posts such as Block Pharmacy Officer, District Pharmacy Officer, and Senior Pharmacist at Primary Health Centers (PHCs) and Community Health Centers (CHCs).

Additionally, they requested an increase in Junior Pharmacist posts at Non-Tribal Primary Health Centers (NTPHCs), CHCs, Sub-District Hospitals (SDHs), and District Hospitals to enhance medical care services.

Retired pharmacists previously received RMP registration, but the practice has been discontinued for unknown reasons. The delegation urged the government to reinstate this registration to ensure justice for retired pharmacists.

The Health Minister, Sakina Itoo attentively listened to the deputation and assured that their demands would be reviewed.

Other members accompanying the delegation included Surjeet Rajan, Tejinder Singh (Public Secretary, JKMEF), Sahil, Vinod Kumar, Madan Lal Sharma, Bahadur Singh, and several others.

Dimple meets Minister Javed Dar, seeks employment package for youth

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 30: Sunil Dimple, President of Mission Statehood Jammu Kashmir, met with Javed Dar, Cabinet Minister for Agriculture, Rural Development, Panchayat, and Cooperative, to discuss employment-related concerns and youth welfare initiatives.

Dimple urged Minister Javed Dar to announce a comprehensive employment package to address rising unemployment.

He pressed for the regularization of daily-rated, casual workers, including Kissan Khidmatgar (KKG) employees in the Agriculture Department who have been working for the

past eight months without salaries.

Dimple demanded regularization of NREGA, REK, NYC, Janglat, Sehjat, SPOs, and other workers across different departments.

He called for the appointment of local Vice Chancellors in universities and the regularization of daily wagers across all government departments.

Dimple also advocated for the restoration of Jammu & Kashmir's statehood, reinstatement of Articles 370 and 35-A, and the conduct of Raja Sabha, Panchayat, Cooperative, ULB, Corporation, and Municipality elections.

Minister Javed Dar assured that the Omar Abdullah-led govern-

ment is committed to addressing unemployment through various schemes. He emphasized that vacant government posts would be filled on a priority basis. Additionally, he announced plans to establish fair price shops, agricultural centers, and skill training centers in rural areas, along with financial assistance for young entrepreneurs.

He also confirmed that the Chief Minister had directed the regularization of daily-rated and casual workers in a phased manner. Acknowledging Dimple's concerns, the minister issued on-the-spot directives for immediate redressal of some demands.

Army dedicates new war memorial to commemorate Martyr's Day at Pathahirri Garrison



Top News Report

KUPWARA, Jan 30: Martyrs Day is celebrated every year on 30 January to remember the sacrifice of Mahatma Gandhi and to honour those who laid their lives while fighting for India. To honour Fallen Heroes of Kupwara region the Indian Army's Kupwara Terriers dedi-

cated a War Memorial at Pathahirri Garrison. This Wall of Fame has been created by Indian Army's Kupwara Terriers to honour those brave soldiers of the unit who made the supreme sacrifice during various Counter Insurgency Operations in Kashmir valley. It stands as a poignant reminder of the valour and sacrifice of the Indian

Army's Kupwara Terriers to eradicate terrorism in the Valley especially in Kupwara Region.

CO Kupwara Terriers along with other officers, Veer Naris, Veterans and all other ranks of the unit dedicated this iconic War Memorial by paying Guard of Honour to the martyrs and lighting the Internal flame (Amar Jyoti). Wreaths were laid

by all present followed by two minute silence to remember the ultimate sacrifice of the bravehearts.

The design of this War Memorial reflects Simplicity and Solemnity. A Wall known as 'Wall of Fame' bears the names of the soldiers martyred during different operations in the Valley. A flame burns brightly there symbolising the indomitable spirit and sacrifice of the soldiers.

At the end, an interaction with the Veer Naris and NOKs of the fallen heroes in the presence of a rep from Zilla Sainik Welfare Board Kupwara was carried out to address any problem faced by them. A sincere gratitude was extended to brave families in a form of gifts by the unit. Indian Army's Kupwara Terrier is always ready to provide continuous possible support and assistance to the families.

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 30: A delegation from the Motor Parts Dealers Association (MPDA) Transport Nagar visited Vice Chairman JDA, Pankaj Kumar Sharma, to highlight pressing concerns of the Transport Nagar community and discuss future actions by JDA Jammu.

Many files have been pending for NOC approval in JDA for the last five to nine years. MPDA members have submitted original documents with complete formalities, as shopkeepers require loans from financial institutions to support their businesses. The delegation urged immediate clearance of these files.

MPDA reiterated its long-standing demand

for land possession to establish a free dispensary for mechanics in Transport Nagar. This proposal had been approved by the former V.C. JDA, but the file remains pending with the Land Director, JDA Jammu.

There is an urgent need for public sanitation facilities, with one toilet unit required in Yard No. 7 and another in Yard No. 1. The proposal, along with land identification and site plan approval, has already been sanctioned. JMC Jammu requires physical possession of the land to proceed with further action for the benefit of the Transport Nagar community and commuters.

The Vice Chairman of JDA attentively listened

to the demands and issued digital directives to concerned authorities for timely resolution. He assured the delegation of positive action in favor of the Transport Nagar community, recognizing its importance to the general public.

MPDA President Rajinder P. Kakkar, along with Vice President Jaswinder Singh, appreciated the dynamic leadership of the VC JDA.

They acknowledged the progress made in previous joint meetings with JMC officials, leading to a cleaner Transport Nagar with allocated funds. They expressed confidence that the highlighted demands would be resolved in a short span of time.

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GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
DIRECTORATE OF TOURISM, JAMMU.

E-NOTICE INVITING BIDS FOR OUTSOURCING OF HUT AT KALSOTE UDHAMPUR

e-NIT No. 23 of 2025 Dated: 22/01/2025

On behalf of Lieutenant Governor of J&K, e-tenders are invited from registered Individuals/Firms/Companies for outsourcing the following assets for a period of 05 years extendable by another 5 years subject to satisfactory performance (as is where is basis) of the Directorate of Tourism, Jammu.

S.No	Name of the Asset	Minimum Franchise Fee	Franchise Period	Earnest Money	Cost of tender document
1	02 Room Hut at Kalsote Udhampur (01No)	Rs. 88,800/- per Annually with increase of 15% after every 3 years on bid amount of the Successful bidder.	05 years extendable by another 5 years subject to satisfactory performance	Rs. 10,000/- (Ten thousand only)	Rs.500/-
Ground Floor					
	Room with attached Toilet & Store	1 No.			
	Room with attached toilet	1 No.			
	Lobby	1 No.			
	Kitchen	1 No.			
	Verandah	1 No.			
	Stair	1 No.			
	Passage 4"x6" wide	1 No.			

- The Bidding documents can be downloaded from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from on 23/01/2025 1000 Hrs to 14/02/2025 1600 Hrs.
- The Bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 23/01/2025 1000 Hrs to 14/02/2025 1600 Hrs.
- Bids of bidders shall be opened online in the office of Director Tourism, Jammu on 17/02/2025 at 1400 Hrs. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the tender document, bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
- Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> containing qualifying criteria for bidder, specifications, conditions and other details.
- Bids must be accompanied by cost of Tender Document and Earnest money as specified in column 6 & 7 of the table payable at Jammu pledged in favour of Accounts Officer, Directorate of Tourism, and Jammu. Bid security will have to be in form of CDR/FDR. The cost of downloaded tender documents shall be in form of Treasury Challan payable in favour of **Accounts Officer, Directorate of Tourism, Jammu.**

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EDITORIAL

VIP Culture:
Deep-Rooted Issue

VIP culture is a pervasive phenomenon in many countries, characterized by preferential treatment given to a select group of individuals based on their social, political, or economic status. This culture manifests in various forms, such as exclusive privileges, special security arrangements, priority access to public services, and exemption from rules that apply to ordinary citizens. While the concept of respecting and honoring individuals holding significant responsibilities is understandable, the excessive extension of these privileges often leads to social inequality, resentment, and inefficiency in governance.

VIP culture has its roots in monarchies and feudal systems, where rulers and aristocrats enjoyed exclusive rights and benefits unavailable to common citizens. Over time, as societies evolved into democracies, the fundamental principle of equality before the law was expected to eliminate such disparities. However, the remnants of hierarchical structures persisted, giving rise to modern VIP culture, particularly in bureaucracies, politics, and elite social circles.

Today, VIP culture is evident in many aspects of daily life. Politicians, bureaucrats, celebrities, and wealthy individuals often receive preferential treatment in public spaces, government offices, transportation, and even in legal proceedings. This undue privilege disrupts the normal functioning of institutions and creates a divide between the influential elite and ordinary citizens.

One of the most significant drawbacks of VIP culture is its contradiction to democratic ideals. Democracy is built on the foundation of equality, where every citizen has the same rights and responsibilities. However, when certain individuals are treated as superior, it undermines the principles of fairness and justice.

The most visible impact of VIP culture is the inconvenience caused to ordinary citizens. Roads are blocked for VIP convoys, causing traffic jams and delays. Special treatment at public offices means that common people have to wait longer for services, creating frustration and resentment among the masses.

VIP culture often leads to the misallocation of resources. Security personnel, government vehicles, and public funds are excessively used to cater to the needs of a few individuals rather than being directed towards public welfare. This inefficient utilization of resources hampers development and economic growth.

VIP culture nurtures corruption and nepotism by encouraging a system where power and influence dictate access to opportunities and resources. Government contracts, job appointments, and policy decisions are often influenced by favoritism rather than merit, leading to inefficiency and injustice.

Another critical issue arising from VIP culture is the unequal treatment before the law. Influential individuals often escape legal scrutiny or receive lenient punishments, while ordinary citizens face the full force of the law. This disparity undermines public trust in the justice system and promotes a culture of impunity.

Several measures have been suggested and implemented in various countries to minimize the effects of VIP culture.

Implementing strict laws that prohibit unnecessary privileges for public officials and elites can help curb VIP culture. Countries like the United States and some European nations have regulations that ensure equal treatment for all citizens.

Raising awareness about the negative impact of VIP culture and encouraging public participation in governance can create pressure on authorities to abolish undue privileges. Social media has become a powerful tool for citizens to voice their concerns and demand accountability.

Governments must ensure that public resources, including security personnel and government vehicles, are used for the benefit of the general public rather than serving a select few. Transparent allocation of resources can help bridge the gap between the elite and the common people.

Ensuring that government appointments and promotions are based on merit rather than influence can help dismantle the structures that support VIP culture. A transparent system of governance promotes efficiency and equal opportunities for all.

The legal system should treat all individuals equally, irrespective of their status or influence. Stringent measures should be taken against those who misuse their position to gain unlawful advantages.

Maha Kumbh Ka Atal Sandesh Ikk Jutt Hua Apna Desh

By: Omkar Dattatray

The Maha Kumbh 2025 has occurred after a very long time of 144 years is thus a rare phenomenon of planetary alignments. It is the biggest human, religious congregations of India and one of the world's biggest congregations attracting crores of devotees and people not only from India, but from all over the globe. Beyond religiosity, spirituality, divinity, faith, Maha Kumbh is the spectacle of unity rather unity in diversity as well as cultural extravaganza. Maha Kumbh, held every 144 years, symbolizes cosmic alignment enhancing the collective consciousness. The Maha Kumbh is a festival that incorporated science, astrology and spirituality. The dates of Maha Kumbh are calculated using scientific techniques, the majority of which utilize planetary placements. Kumbh Mela is a profound celebration of faith, spirituality, and Maha Kumbh or simply Kumbh is symbol of not only India's unity but is the instance of world human unity and it vividly is the extension and reflection of the Indian cultural and Sanatan doctrine of Vasudev-kutumbkam which means that whole world is but a one family and Maha Kumbh is the living, best and beautiful example of world being one family. Unity in diversity permeates from Maha Kumbh and essential oneness of the world is best exemplified by this biggest congregation. Maha Kumbh is not only a religious, spiritual and divine gathering of men, women, children, young

,old and even of the transgenders-kinners but is besides the confluence of the three sacred rivers of Ganga, Yamuna and mystical sarswati, a confluence of religion, divinity, faith, spirituality, India's unity in diversity. It is in fact a spectacle and tamashi reflecting Indian culture and traditions vividly and clearly. Thus what permeates to the eye is the sangam of humanity and its essential unity as the devotees and people from all parts of India and beyond it participate in this grand religious and pilgrim tourist extravaganza and the beautiful thing about the Kumbh Mela is that it is not solely a Hindu and Indian festival as the people of different religions from India and even abroad are visiting Prayaj Raj and take a dip in the holy water at the sangam. Hindus seek to purify their sins and cleanse the impurities of their soul and also to seek Mukti that is Moksha which is salvation meaning liberation from the cycle of birth and death. People from other faiths also take great pleasure in participating in the Kumbh or Maha Kumbh Mela and they also take dip in the holy waters and see this world's one of the largest gatherings as symbolizing and showing the cultural vibrancy and dynamism of India. It is no ordinary matter but is in fact extraordinary that in Kumbh and Maha Kumbh people and devotees from all the four corners of the world are attracted towards this festival and it is shows that Maha Kumbh has gravitational attraction and thus attracts people from very far and wide. Besides, the holy dip in the trivani, the saints, religious

gurus and sadhus from India and abroad assemble in Maha Kumbh at Prayaj Raj and give religious and discourses on culture and Sanatan Dhrama, thereby making the people assembled here aware of their great and grand Sanatan Dhrama, cultural heritage and the flourishing of unity in diversity as this largest gathering is the best, pristine and glorious symbol of unity in diversity for which India is famous throughout the world as people from other faiths and countries shower heaps of praises and appreciation of India for practicing and following its golden doctrine of unity in diversity which is the hallmark and distinctive characteristic feature of India and its culture and its governance and political system. Maha Kumbh fosters patriotism, nationalism and above all Indian-ness that is Bharatiyata in its entirety. So the importance and significance of Maha Kumbh transcends religious barriers and people from various faith embrace it and are benefitted with its experience and cultural grandeur. The fact that People from all across India are visiting Prayaj Raj and taking part in religious rituals and ceremonies besides taking a holy dip in the waters of Sangam of the three sacred rivers is enough to surmise that people of India are basically and essentially religious and spiritual and thus they are attracted towards this pilgrimage of rare occurrence and they seek blessings of the Almighty and also seek forgiving of their sins. Indian's irrespective of their religious belief are visiting Prayaj Raj and they participate in their

own way in the Maha Kumbh and thus the meaning and significance of Maha Kumbh cannot be restricted to Hinduism and Sanatan dhama as it is the festival of humanity as the sea of humanity is visiting this place and Prayaj Raj has become not only mini-India which in fact it is, it has become a mini-world. So there is no exaggeration in labeling Maha Kumbh as the festival of humanity as its contours go beyond our national boundaries and embrace and attract the devotees and people from across the world. In fact Maha Kumbh is the marvelous as well as mesmerizing and enchanting experience and it is a best, beautiful and glorious pageant of religiosity, divinity, spirituality, faith and above all of togetherness and Indianness. Maha Kumbh will disseminate knowledge, education and information about the essential unity of the mankind and it throws light on the Sanatan doctrine of whole world being one family and world being the multiplication of self. In the end it can be said that Maha Kumbh is of great importance to not only to India's, but it is the great saga of humanity. It teaches and preaches the unity of humankind. We should not belittle the significance of Maha Kumbh but celebrate its humanity and universal appeal and importance.

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

Indian marriage is no less than festival

By: Vijay Garg

They are observed according to various religious and personal priorities. But most of them are observed with expensive decorations, music, dance, food and costumes. During the marriage season it is seen that people spend a lot of money to satisfy their ego. Thus all the wealthied wealthy can be kept in some creative use. Every year there are about 10 million marriages in India. Just spend an average every year in these marriage systems. Imagine the amount going. The focus of marriage has shifted from rituals to a show of business. In the current scenario, when dowry still remains a major problem in India, people use their life saving in unnecessary arrangements and decorations which is just a day's case. They think that by making extraordinary arrangements they will create an impression on their friends and relatives and will be remembered for a long time. People also try to imitate others in which social media plays a major role. Because it affects people's mind very easily. It is very important to bring people out of this rat race and teach them the concept of simple marriage. A simple marriage can be made equally memorable as an extraordinary. People need to feel that this

is the presence of people who make the marriage grand and not decoration or food. Marriage should be kept simple by keeping limited dishes, simple decorations and limited expenses of fabrics and jewelry. Money saved from a simple marriage in bank account. Many other creative uses such as savings can be placed in the form of fixed deposits used for health care etc. People need to feel that it is the presence of people that makes a grand and decoration or food of marriage. The concept of a 'grand' marriage is not bad, but the amount behind an opportunity is unnecessary. During the wedding season you have seen people spending your lot O ... Simple Marriage: A Wise Choice Marriage is an important Mi in someone's life. The stone of L is a symbol of the beginning of a new chapter filled with love, companionship and commitment. However, in recent times, there has been a growing trend of extraordinary weddings that focus more on showing money and satisfying the ego rather than the real essence of the festival. This excessive expenditure often leads to financial stress and wastage of resources. Instead, selection for simple marriage can not only save money, but can also promote more meaningful and durable ways to start life together. Financial

discretion - simple Marriage encourages financial discretion by reducing unnecessary expenses that often burden couples and their families. - Along with saving money, couples can invest in their future, such as getting a down payment for home or starting a business. - By avoiding extraordinary weddings, couples can avoid the debt cycle and focus on creating a strong base for their married life. Emphasis on love and solidarity - Simple marriages focus on the essence of celebration from materialistic performance - D. Love and commitment between people. - A small, intimate wedding allows couples to spend more quality time with their loved ones, promote deep connections and nutritional memories. - The emphasis on love and solidarity creates a more meaningful wedding experience that will be remembered for a lifetime. Environmental stability - extraordinary marriages often produce excessive waste, from detailed decorations to excessive food and packaging. - To choose a simple marriage means selecting for durable practices, such as using environmentally friendly decorations, supporting local vendors, and reducing food waste. - By making environmentally aware options, couples can contribute to the conservation of our planet by celebrating their

union. Setting an example - simple marriages can serve as an inspiration for others, challenging social norms and expectations. - By demonstrating that love and commitment are not measured by the size of one's marriage, couples are worthless on materialistic performances to others. Can encourage priority to a connection. - Establishing an example of simplicity and discretion can lead to a positive change in the social outlook towards weddings. Finally, simple marriages provide many benefits on extraordinary weddings. Financial discretion, love and solidarity, preference to environmental stability and by setting a positive example, couples can create a wedding experience that is not only meaningful, but also contributes to their future happiness and welfare. Let us embrace the concept of simple marriage. Apply and celebrate the true essence of love

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

IIM Jammu's Centre for Diversity and Inclusion commended for BGA Business School Impact Award 2025

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 30: The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu has been highly commended for the BGA Business School Impact Award 2025, recognizing its commitment to fostering positive change for students, graduates, communities, and economies. Conferred by the Business Graduates Association (BGA), this prestigious recognition honours institutions that align with BGA's vision and charter by driving transformative initiatives that promote responsible management, continuous improvement, and societal betterment through both quantitative and qualitative impact.

IIM Jammu's Centre for Diversity & Inclusion, the first of its kind in India for underprivileged communities, was specifically commended for its role in advancing equity and inclusivity. Originally established as "The Diversity Cell" in collaboration with the Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICC) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the Centre was inaugurated on 9th June 2022 by then President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, in the presence of Hon'ble Minister



of State (Independent Charge), Dr. Jitendra Singh, Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, Manoj Sinha, Dr. Milind Kamble, Chairman, Board of Governors, IIM Jammu and Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu.

Since its inception, the Centre has been instrumental in empowering entrepreneurs from the SC & ST communities, providing them with essential resources, mentorship, and training to thrive in the business world.

Dr. Milind P. Kamble, Chairman, Board of Governors, IIM Jammu, emphasized that this recognition underscores IIM Jammu's commitment to fostering an

inclusive and equitable society. He highlighted that the Centre for Diversity & Inclusion serves as a model for academic institutions, reinforcing the importance of diversity in shaping the future of entrepreneurship and leadership. He reiterated that this achievement is a reflection of the institute's sustained efforts to bridge socio-economic gaps through education and empowerment.

Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, expressed happiness for this recognition, stating that the Centre for Diversity and Inclusion is a testament to IIM Jammu's pioneering efforts in social responsibility. This award reaffirms

IIM Jammu's dedication to social responsibility and impactful leadership. He emphasized that the institute would continue to create a safe and supportive environment for underprivileged communities, equipping them with the necessary tools for entrepreneurial success.

Prof. Jabir Ali, Dean Academics, IIM Jammu, underscored the critical role of academia in driving meaningful societal change. He reiterated that IIM Jammu remains committed to integrating diversity, inclusion, and responsible management into its core academic and outreach programs, shaping future leaders who can drive sustainable impact in an evolving global economy.

The AMBA & BGA Excellence Awards 2025 were held on January 24, 2025, at the Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington, London. The event brought together over 200 global business education leaders to celebrate excellence in business schools, MBA students, graduates, suppliers, and employers.

The finalists were shortlisted by AMBA & BGA's senior management team, followed by a panel of AMBA board members, busi-

ness experts, deans, and management leaders selecting winners and highly commended entries. The BGA Business School Impact Award recognizes BGA member, validated, and accredited schools demonstrating impact on stakeholders in line with BGA's vision and charter.

This award acknowledges business schools making a measurable difference in students' lives, communities, and the economy. By showcasing positive impact, continuous improvement, and responsible management, nominees highlight their contributions to society through both quantitative and qualitative analyses.

The BGA Business School Impact Awards celebrate outstanding achievements in the global business education community. This year, the awards featured 12 categories, providing numerous opportunities for AMBA & BGA accredited business schools, students, and graduates to showcase their accomplishments. This recognition further cements IIM Jammu's position as a leading institution and global B-school dedicated to academic excellence, social impact, and nation-building.

GDC R S Pura orchestrates road safety awareness rally



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 30: As part of the road safety month, Road Safety Club and NCC Unit of Govt. Degree College R. S. Pura organized an Awareness Rally in the main Bazar of R. S. Pura with the coordination of SHO R. S. Pura, Sh. Ravi Singh Parihar on 30th January 2025 to spread awareness about road safety and responsible driving.

Students of the college enthusiastically participated by chanting slogans to promote traffic rule awareness. Placards displayed during the rally carried important road safety messages.

The event aimed to raise awareness about road safety issues, educate participants and onlookers on safe practices, and promote a sense of responsibility among the community members. The rally commenced at 11:30 am at college

campus. Prof. (Dr.) Preetpal Kour, Principal of the college gave green signal to begin the rally where over 50 students and faculty members participated.

She apprised the students that the primary objective of such activities was to engage the community actively, emphasizing the importance of following traffic rules, responsible driving, and adopting safety measures to reduce road accidents and fatalities. Some of the key messages needed to be highlighted during the rally were obeying speed limits, avoiding drunk driving, wearing helmets and seatbelts, avoiding mobile phone use while driving, and following traffic rules.

The road safety awareness rally helped in spreading consciousness about responsible road behavior in an impactful manner, she added. Speaking at the event, Prof. Sanjeev Upadhyay, Convener

RSC mentioned that Road Safety Month is being observed nationwide from Jan 11.

He stated that, like every year, this year too, the event aims to raise public awareness. The enthusiastic participation from students will help ingrain road safety habits from a young age. The rally concluded with a pledge by the participants to follow and promote road safety rules, reinforcing the theme of "Sadak Suraksha, Jeevan Raksha."

The initiative was widely appreciated by the local community and is expected to contribute significantly to fostering a culture of road safety in the region.

The faculty members who contribute for the success of the event were Dr. Neena Gupta, Dr. Sudesh Kumar, Prof. Sankait Gupta, Dr. Rakesh Choudhary, Dr. Sunil Kumar Mangoch, Prof. Rajinder Singh, Dr. Rakesh Kalotra, Dr. Roopali Slathia and Vikram Singh Jamwal.

District Leprosy Society Doda observes Anti-Leprosy Day



Top News Report

DODA, Jan 30: Under the aegis of the District Leprosy Society, Doda, the health department organized a series of events to observe Anti-Leprosy Day, focusing on raising awareness about leprosy and eliminating the stigma associated with the disease on Thursday.

In this connection, an awareness programme was held at the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Office, Doda, graced by CMO Doda, Dr. Om Kumar. The event highlighted the significance of early detection, treat-

ment, and community participation in leprosy eradication. A pledge was administered to all participants, reaffirming their commitment to spreading awareness and supporting the cause.

A separate awareness session was also conducted at ANMT School, Doda, where Medical Officer (Leprosy), Dr. Javed Ahmed Parry, briefed participants on leprosy, its symptoms, treatment, and the need for collective efforts to eliminate the disease. CMO Doda, Dr. Om Kumar, also addressed the gathering, empha-

sizing the government's initiatives for leprosy eradication and the importance of public awareness.

The event also marked the launch of "Sparsh"—a fortnight-long Leprosy Awareness Campaign, aimed at intensifying efforts to educate people across the district about leprosy prevention, early detection, and treatment.

Later, CMO Doda flagged off the "Sparsh Leprosy Rally-cum-Awareness Van," which will travel across the district to educate the public and dispel misconceptions about

leprosy as part of the Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign.

The event was attended by BMO Ghat Dr Abdul Gafoor, Principal ANMT Doda, Smt. Vidya Kotwal, Javed Iqbal (Head Assistant), Mohd Shafi Attu (Health Educator), Mr Sanjeev Rana (I/c Legal Section), Mr Mohd Faheem Butt (FLO NCD), Leprosy Staff members Mr. Ram Raj and Mr. Sajad Ahmed (both PMAs) and staff of ANMT School, among others.

Similar awareness programmes were also conducted across all medical blocks of the district, including Assar, Bhaderwah, Gandoh, Ghat, and Thathri, ensuring widespread sensitization on this important health issue.

The observance of Anti-Leprosy Day in Doda reaffirmed the health department's commitment to a leprosy-free society through education, awareness, and timely medical intervention.

Shiv Sena demands extension of e-bus service to cross Tawi and main temples of Jammu

Advice top bureaucracy to change attitude towards Jammu



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 30: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu-Kashmir unit has demanded an extension of air-conditioned electric bus services run under Smart City Scheme to Tawi cross areas of Jammu.

In a press conference

held today at the party's state central office, state chief Manish Sahni said that more than 8 months have passed since the e-bus service started in various areas of the Jammu city. But it is a matter of great surprise that e-bus service is not available for religious and tourist places like

Babe Wala Mandir, Har Ki Podi Mandir, Mahamaya, Tirupati Balaji etc. including most of the areas of cross Tawi in Jammu city.

Sahni said that rail service has reached Kashmir but the wait of the people of cross Tawi areas of Jammu regarding the air-conditioned

and noise pollution free e-buses is not ending.

Sahni strongly criticizing the working style of administrative officers, said that the outsiders sitting in high positions probably do not consider the areas across Tawi like Gandhi Nagar, Trikuta Nagar, Chhanni Himmat, Sainik Colony, Greater Kailash etc. as part of Jammu city and do not feel it necessary to make them pollution free.

Sahni has demanded from the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Honorable Manoj Sinha, to issue instructions to provide e-bus service in the said areas with immediate effect.

LPEF Doda pays tribute to Comrade Krishan Dev Sethi on 3rd Death Anniversary

Top News Report

DODA, Jan 30: The Low-Paid Government Employees Federation (LPEF), Doda, held a tribute program in memory of Comrade Krishan Dev Sethi on his 3rd death anniversary. The event, presided over by District President Mr. Niaz Ahmad Rahi, was attended by senior leaders and members of the federation.

During the program, senior LPEF leaders Ghulam Hassan Pamponi and Shakeel Ahmad Dev highlighted Comrade Sethi's unwavering dedication to the rights of poor employees and the working class. They described him as

a fearless voice for laborers and underprivileged workers.

Speaking on the occasion, Er. Nazir Ahmad Sheikh, District President of the Pensioners Association (affiliated with LPEF Doda), recalled Sethi as a true patriot who was deeply committed to the unity of Jammu & Kashmir. He emphasized Sethi's efforts to safeguard the honor of Kashmir as an integral part of India.

In his concluding remarks, LPEF President Niaz Ahmad Rahi paid homage to Comrade Sethi's lifelong service to the working class. He praised Sethi's relentless efforts in pro-

tecting labor rights and inspiring many to continue his legacy.

The program was attended by prominent members, including Rashpal Singh, Ghulam Hassan Bagwan, Paras Ram Sharma, Brij Lal, Shakeel Ahmad Gattu, Nizam Din Butt, Nizam Din Zargar, Bhori Singh, Rashpal Singh (Bhagwa), Ishwar Lal, Gopal Singh, Ghulam Rasool, and Ghulam Hussain Butt.

The event concluded with a collective pledge to uphold Comrade Sethi's vision and continue the fight for the rights of low-paid employees and laborers.

DC Kishtwar flags off farmers' exposure visit under HADP

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Jan 30: With the aim of equipping farmers with the latest agricultural technologies and best practices, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishtwar, Rajesh Kumar Shavan (JKAS), today flagged off a 03 Days "Exposure Visit" for farmers to Doda and Bhaderwah under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP).

The flag-off ceremony was held at the Mini Secretariat, New DC Office, Kishtwar, where a group of more than 50 farmers, including women farmers from different parts of the district, embarked on this educational tour.

Key components of the HADP exposure visit



include the promotion of year-round mushroom cultivation and the promotion of commercial floriculture.

The exposure visit will take farmers to KVK Bhaderwah, the Food Processing Centre, the High-Tech Poly Greenhouse in Doda, and the Controlled-Condition Cropping Room in Bhaderwah. This initiative

aims to enhance their knowledge and skills in soil health management, sustainable hill agriculture, and modern farming techniques.

Additionally, the visit will focus on educating farmers about various beneficiary-oriented schemes, advancements in agricultural technologies, and opportunities to interact

with progressive farmers in the floriculture sector and agricultural scientists.

The farmers are being accompanied by Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO) Kishtwar, Amjad Hussain Malik, who, along with experts, will guide them through various renowned agricultural units. The participants will also gain hands-on experience in the manufacturing process of value-added agricultural products.

Present at the flag-off ceremony were Chief Agriculture Officer Amjad Hussain Malik, SDO Kishtwar, DAO Kishtwar, SDAO Paddar, and other officials from the Agriculture Department.

The song Do Taare by Abhilaksh Sharma Lakshi embraces the timeless bond of love for grandparents

Abhilaksh Sharma Lakshi, also known by his stage name ASL Boyy, has unveiled his new song, Do Taare. Making his debut in October, 2020, ASL Boyy has since released 12 songs in Punjabi and English. He has continued to impress listeners with his distinctive ability to blend emotion with cultural depth.

Do Taare marked his 13th release and serves as a heartfelt tribute to the love, sacrifices and wisdom passed down by grandparents, capturing the essence of Punjabi culture through powerful lyrics and a soulful melody. The song is all set to create an unforgettable impact with its emotional resonance and cultural richness.

The music video for Do Taare was filmed in the beautiful, serene locations of Film City, Samrala, Punjab. The picturesque backdrop complements the song's emotional themes, reflecting the deep cultural roots and familial bonds it celebrates.

"Do Taare is a tribute to the unwavering love and sacrifices of parents. Through this song, I wanted to express my gratitude for everything they do for us and I hope listeners can connect with the emotional jour-



ney it takes them on. I connect deeply with the lyrics because, as someone who is rooted with the culture, this song reflects values that are incredibly close to my heart. I'm proud to see that the love, respect, and reverence for our grandparents and culture are still very much alive today, which forms the core of this song," he said.

"I'm incredibly proud of the team behind this project—Suraj Kumar, Ashish Sharma, Dilbir Saggi, and the amazing cast, including Dalbir Singh, Manjeet Kaur, Sahib Singh, and Avyan Kaushik, who have brought this vision to life with their hard work," he added.

Under the direction of Suraj Kumar, the music video has become more than just a visual accompaniment. It is an integral part of the song's storytelling.

The heartfelt lyrics of Do Taare were penned by Ashish Sharma, a well-known poet who has been recognised with several prestigious awards, including World Record Holder by World Book of Records UK for writing 100 poems in 100 days on environment and the Proud Indian Award 2016 by The Consulate General of India in Medan, Indonesia.

Kriti Sanon talks about her role in Tere Ishk Mein



Actress Kriti Sanon, who has boarded the cast of Aanand L Rai's Tere Ishk Mein, co-star-

ring Dhanush, will play the character of Mukti, according to her Instagram post.

Tere Ishk Mein marks the third collaboration between Dhanush and director Rai after 2013's Raanjhanaa and Atrangi Re (2021). The upcoming movie is slated to be released in theatres on November 28. "Some love stories are destined to rise from the flames. Witness Shankar and Mukti in #TereIshkMein. From the #WorldOfRanjhanaa—a story that's unforgettable. In cinemas 28.11.2025," Sanon wrote in her post.

Kriti also shared an Instagram Story expressing her excitement about joining the project. "An intense love story directed by my fav @aanandrai, music by the maestro @arrhman!! A huge tick in my wish-list. Need your love and blessings. P.S. Really looking forward to collaborating with you @dhanushkraj (sic)" she wrote. Sanon was last seen in Do Patti, which also marked her debut as a producer.

Shahid Kapoor talks about the Deewaar connect in his upcoming film Deva

Bollywood star Shahid Kapoor teased a connection between Deva and the 1975 classic Deewaar, suggesting that there was a 'relevance' of Amitabh Bachchan's iconic character Vijay in his upcoming movie. In Deva, Kapoor essays the role of a brilliant but defiant police officer. The action thriller is directed by Ross-han Andrews, and also stars Pooja Hegde and Pavail Gulati.

The movie's teaser poster, which came out earlier this year, featured Shahid smoking a cigarette in front of a mural of Bachchan from Deewaar as Vijay, the feisty dockworker with a beedi dangling from his lips. About the connection between Deva and Deewaar, the actor said, "This question should be for Ross-han because he was the one who chose that visual.



But there is a relevance (of Bachchan's Deewaar character) within the film."

Deewaar, which turned 50 on January 21, is counted among the best Hindi films of all time. Shahid, who grew up idolising Bachchan, later said, "Talking

about Amit ji we have all grown up watching him, we have idolised him as a star.

The film had a strong story, very good interpersonal dynamics, great dialogues and stellar performances. It's a great memory for all of us."

Karan Johar confirms Saif's son Ibrahim Ali Khan's acting debut: Make way for new wave of talent

Filmmaker Karan Johar confirmed that Ibrahim Ali Khan, the son of actors Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh, is set to make his acting debut soon with a film backed by his banner Dharma Productions.

In a long post on Instagram, Johar expressed excitement about launching a new talent from a family he has known for 40 years.

"I know this family for the heart they have. Films are in their blood, their genes and their passion. We make way for a new wave of talent, one that I cannot wait for the world to see. So, stay tuned as @jakpataudi makes his way into your hearts and soon...onto the screens!" the filmmaker said.

Johar, however, didn't disclose any details about Ibrahim's maiden project, including its name and the rest of the cast. Ibrahim earlier served as an assistant on Johar's 2023 directorial "Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahaani".

The filmmaker recalled meeting Ibrahim's mother Amrita



when he was just 12.

"She did a film for @dharma-movies with my father called 'Duniya', and I remember so vividly the grace, the energy & the

commandment over the camera she had. BUT, what I remember the most is the warmest chinese dinner with her and her hairstylist of the time after our first

meeting, followed by a James Bond movie! "She treated me like her own the second we met and that was the power of her grace...which lives on through her and her children too," he wrote.

Besides "Duniya", Amrita also starred in Dharma Productions' 2014 film "2 States", headlined by Arjun Kapoor and Alia Bhatt.

His first meeting with Saif was at film producer Anand Mahendru's office, Johar said. They later collaborated on films such as "Kal Ho Naa Ho" (2003) and "Kurbaan" (2009).

"Young, suave, charming & effortless...VERY much like the first time I met Ibrahim. And a strong friendship that continues from our generation to luckily our kids!! (sic)" he said.

"I know this family for 40 years. Worked with them in different capacities - 'Duniya' and the wonderful '2 States' with Amrita, 'Kal Ho Naa Ho' to Kurbaan with Saif and of course, 'Simmba' with Sara (Ali Khan) followed by many more (to come!!)," Johar said.

Khushi Kapoor says people on social media 'want actresses to feel insecure'

Khushi Kapoor is only one film old, but her association with the industry dates back to her birth. As the daughter of Boney Kapoor and the late Sridevi, and the sister of Janhvi Kapoor, she has a powerful legacy. But as she puts it, she is finally finding her own way in Bollywood. Ahead of the release of her new film, Loveyapa, Khushi talks with HT about the film, her learnings in the industry so far, and being a shy actor.

I just ask my dad (laughs). But I think with this one, I kind of had a gut feeling as well. I love Advait (Chandan, the director), and I loved Secret Superstar. I'd watched the original film (Love Today), and I also like that. I think the story is very different, young and relevant. It was definitely something I wanted to do. And Bani's (her character in Loveyapa) personality is very different from mine in real life. So, for me, it was a challenge. And in

The Archies, I was very reserved, and that's very much like how I am in life. So, for me, it was just, how do you break from that and explore different characters and stories.

During The Archies, we were cast because we were so close to our character because we were all new. So Zoya had cast us because she saw our characters in us already. But I think as an actor, you want to be versatile enough to do any role and any character. Bani was very much like that. The first thing Advait had said was, "I didn't know if you would be able to yell on the phone". Because I don't raise my voice in life in general. And I think during Loveyapa, I found my voice a little bit because I had to scream so much.

I am very much a people-pleaser. A lot of the time, my stylist will come with outfits, and I'll say, "Let's try everything." And they'll have to say that if you don't



like something, tell us. And I'd be too afraid to say I don't like something. I just say yes to everything because I don't want to disappoint anyone.

I feel like if we were to clash really hard over something, then I would take their advice over my instinct, at least right now, I feel like they

have much more experience than I do. And luckily, we've not been in a situation where I've really liked or not liked something, and it was the opposite for them.

It's tough. I feel like my social media personality has been a very small part of who I am, and that's why I feel people have a very different

impression. I am quite protective of my life and my people, and I don't think I need to share everything all the time. If people like you and connect with you, then great, but I don't want to create a perception that's not me. So the social media is all Khushi, but it's a very filtered version of me.

I feel like people want actresses to feel insecure about another person. I feel like it's not necessary to pit everyone against each other. Everyone is good at different things. Everyone has their own space. I'm sure other actresses are way better at certain things than I am, and I'm sure I also have some skills. We have to be secure enough to not think about these things and just have faith in ourselves.

Loveyapa, directed by Advait Chandan stars Khushi and Junaid Khan, alongside Ashutosh Rana and Kiku Sharda. The film is releasing in theatres on February 7.

Sad to watch new govt dismantling all freedoms we've been fighting for: Madonna



Pop icon Madonna has criticised the newly elected Donald Trump administration for its decision to remove protections for transgender people and end diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, urging citizens to keep fighting for their rights.

It's the latest push

by Trump to reverse policies set by former president Joe Biden's government to protect transgender people and their care.

Trump directed the Pentagon to conduct a review that is likely to lead to them being barred from military service.

Madonna, a longtime advocate for the LGBTQ community, expressed her disappointment in an X post.

"It's so sad to watch our new Government slowly dismantling all the Freedoms we have been fighting for and WON over the years. Don't give up the Fight! (sic)" she wrote, adding the LGBTQ pride flag and broken red heart emojis.

Earlier, singer-actor Selena Gomez, whose father is of Mexican descent, got emotional over the Trump administration's stand over the deportation of undocumented immigrants on social media in a now-deleted Instagram video.

"All my people are getting attacked ... the children. I don't understand. I'm so sorry. I wish I could do something but I can't. I don't know what to do. I'll try everything, I promise," she tearfully said.

Prez Murmu, PM Modi lead nation in paying tributes to Mahatma Gandhi

NEW DELHI, Jan 30 (Agencies): President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the nation in paying homage to Mahatma Gandhi on his 77th death anniversary on Thursday.

Murmu laid a wreath at Gandhi's memorial Rajhat.

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, PM Modi and Union ministers Rajnath Singh and Manohar Lal Khattar, among others, also paid floral tributes to the Father of the Nation. A two-minute silence was



observed in memory of Gandhi.

Earlier, Modi said in a post on X, "Tributes to Pujya Bapu on his Punya Tithi. His ideals motivate us to build a developed India."

I also pay tributes to all those martyred for our nation and recall their service as well as sacrifices."

Gandhi, the most prominent face of India's freedom movement, was assassinated by Nathuram Godse on this day in 1948.

Apologise to people of Haryana, Delhi for 'poison' in Yamuna remarks: Nadda to Kejriwal



NEW DELHI, Jan 30 (Agencies): BJP chief J P Nadda on Thursday said the AAP's blame game on Yamuna pollution has exposed its government's inefficiency and asked its supremo Arvind Kejriwal to apologise to the people of Haryana and Delhi for his "poison mixed in Yamuna" remarks.

He also tagged in his X post an infographic from @infoindata that said pollution spikes as soon as the Yamuna enters Delhi "AAP-Da's blame game on Yamuna pollution exposes its inefficiency and failed governance," Nadda said in his post.

"Instead of taking responsibility, AAP-Da

government has started spreading fear among people for political gains. Arvind Kejriwal should apologise to the people of Haryana and Delhi for his statement," he added.

Nadda alleged that the Kejriwal government has delivered nothing but corruption, lies, and hollow promises for over 10 years. "Despite receiving Rs 8,500 crores from the central government, no meaningful work has been done to clean the river," he said.

According to details on the 'infoindata' handle on X, the user joined the microblogging site in May 2023 and had 1,914 followers till Thursday afternoon when this report was filed.

BAC to decide on issues to be discussed in Budget Session: Rijju

NEW DELHI, Jan 30 (Agencies): Union minister Kiren Rijju on Thursday urged all parties to ensure that the Budget Session of Parliament is productive and said that the Business Advisory Committee will decide on the issues that will be taken up for discussion.

Addressing reporters after an all-party meeting, the parliamentary affairs minister said the meeting, which was attended by 52 leaders from 36 parties, was positive. "Party leaders raised some issues and demanded discussion on those issues. The Business Advisory Committee will decide which

issues will be taken up for discussion," Rijju said.

Asked about the opposition's demand for a discussion on the stampede at the Maha Kumbh, which claimed 30 lives, the minister said the decision will be taken by the committee. "There are many important issues... the Kumbh was also mentioned," Rijju said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh chaired the customary meet, which is convened to inform political parties about the government's legislative agenda and to seek their inputs on issues they would like to raise during the session.

Meanwhile, Congress leader Pramod Tiwari said opposition leaders have decided that the INDIA bloc will raise all issues together during the Budget Session.

Emerging from the all-party meeting convened by the government on the eve of the session, Tiwari also slammed the "politicisation of the Kumbh", saying VIP movement during the event was creating difficulties for the common man. He said the Congress will flag the issue of the religious congregation becoming a gathering of VIPs linked to the ruling BJP.

The issues of "rising" unemployment and



farmers "plight" will also be raised during the session, he said.

Tiwari said the INDIA bloc will raise all issues together to highlight the problems of common people.

The Budget Session will commence on Friday with the President

addressing the joint sitting of the two Houses. The Union Budget will be presented on February 1.

The first leg of the session will conclude on February 13 and the second leg will start on March 10. The session will conclude on April 4.

CRPF Jawan calls police before shooting wife in Bhopal, kills self later

BHOPAL, Jan 30 (Agencies): A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawan allegedly shot his wife dead before killing himself in similar fashion at their rented house in Bhopal's Misrod area on Wednesday-Thursday intervening night.

The Bhopal Police Control Room and Dial 100 emergency service received a call at around 1:30 am. Identifying himself as

CRPF jawan Ravikant Verma, the caller informed the police that he had shot his wife, Renu Verma.

A team from Misrod police station rushed to the house, where the couple lived with their two children—a six-year-old son and a two-and-a-half-year-old daughter.

Upon arrival, officers found the two children weeping in one

room, while the blood-stained bodies of 35-year-old Ravikant Verma and 32-year-old Renu Verma lay in another.

An INSAS rifle was found near the bodies.

According to police, preliminary investigations suggest that the CRPF jawan first shot his wife dead before turning the rifle on himself.

Both bodies have been sent for

post-mortem at AIIMS Bhopal. Neighbours, who rushed to the house after hearing gunshots, told the police that the couple often had loud arguments. However, it remains unclear what led to the fatal incident.

While the CRPF camp is located in the Bangraisiya area, Ravikant Verma had been living with his family in a rented house in a nearby residential colony.

Some politicians hand in glove with those who want to break Manipur: CM Biren Singh

IMPHAL, Jan 30 (Agencies): Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Thursday claimed that too much politics over the ethnic issues in Manipur has confused the people and created internal conflicts, and a section of politicians are hand in glove with those who want to break the state.

Speaking at a programme at Khangabok in Thoubal district, Singh said that many people still do not understand the current issues in the state which is gripped by violence between Meitei and Kuki communities leaving over 250 people dead and thousands homeless since May 2023.

He said that the state government's opposi-

tion is to the new immigrants in the state who are engaged in drug-related activities and not against anyone who has settled before.

"Our duty is to understand and realise who the real opponents are and who has launched attacks on us. We have to defend ourselves from them. However, too much politics has confused the people and created internal conflicts. Even some politicians are hand in glove with those who want to break Manipur," he said. The chief minister, however, did not name any politician or political party.

"Those who want to break Manipur have used agents to provoke us. Such agents are in



Imphal valley and are siding with those who want to break Manipur. We have to be careful about them," the CM said.

Singh also asserted that Manipur will be saved and will not break. "We are all one. (Members of the communities like) Thadou, Mate,

Gangte, Vaiphei, Paite along with Tangkhul, Mao and Maram are all brothers.

All those who have been settled before are all staying together. Our opposition was only to the new immigrants who are engaged in drug-related activities" he said.

Urban planning 'failure', pollution to be blamed for rising GBS cases: Supriya Sule

PUNE, Jan 30 (Agencies): NCP (SP) Lok Sabha member Supriya Sule on Thursday slammed the Pune civic administration as she blamed the "urban planning failure" and rising pollution for the outbreak of Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS), a rare never disorder, in the city.

There is a need to find the scientific cause behind the prevalence of GBS cases, the parliamentarian representing Baramati in Maharashtra's Pune district told reporters.

Sule demanded that the government bear all medical expenses of the GBS patients, claiming the disease was prevalent due to the "flawed management".

She visited a well, located in Nanded village off Sinhgad Road area here, from where contaminated water is suspected to have been supplied to adjoining localities, leading to the rise in GBS cases.

A 56-year-old woman from Pune is suspected to have died of GBS on Wednesday, while a 40-year-old man from Solapur died on Sunday. Till Wednesday, 127 suspected patients of



GBS were found in Pune and elsewhere in the state, as per officials.

"I visited the well and the (nearby) area to understand the current GBS situation. People in the area are living in tremendous fear. I am going to put forth this issue in today's district planning and development committee meeting," Sule said.

Termining the current GBS situation as an "outbreak" (of the disease), Sule said all round efforts are needed to contain it.

The MP said she has been writing to the civic body and the state government about these localities, which were recently brought under the purview of the Pune Municipal Corporation.

Despite the basic infrastructure such as STPs

(sewage treatment plants) lacking, permissions to new buildings and projects are being given, she claimed.

"Now the current situation (of GBS) is all because of urban planning failure. After a few days, reports from labs will be available but as of today, it looks that due to urban planning failure, pollution, be it water, air, diseases are increasing and immediate steps need to be taken," she said.

"There is a need to find the scientific cause behind this prevalence of GBS cases by consulting experts," the NCP (SP) working president said.

Sule said rivers and dams are getting polluted and the government should pay heed to all these things.

"Though we are in opposition, we are ready to cooperate with the government on these issues," she said.

"The common people should not be held hostage just because your policies are flawed," Sule added.

The Lok Sabha member said she has already spoken to the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change over the GBS issue.

Authorities here on Wednesday said 144 water samples from different parts of the city have been sent for chemical and biological analysis to a public health laboratory, and samples from eight water sources found contaminated.

GBS is a rare condition that causes sudden numbness and muscle weakness, with symptoms including severe weakness in the limbs, loose motions, etc. Bacterial and viral infections generally lead to GBS as they weaken the immunity of patients, and in the present case, the disease is suspected to have been triggered by contaminated water, according to doctors.

At least three dead, several trapped as roof collapses at JK Cement Factory in Madhya Pradesh

BHOPAL, Jan 30 (Agencies): A major accident at the JK Cement Factory in Panna, Madhya Pradesh, has reportedly led to the death of at least three labourers.

Around 10 to 15 labourers are feared trapped under the col-

lapsed roof of an under-construction building at the cement plant in Simariya, Panna district, following the collapse of the roof slab.

Panna district Police Superintendent Sai Krishna Thota stated that 10 to 15 labourers are feared trapped

under the debris of the collapsed section. However, sources at the site have said that the number of trapped labourers could be higher, as over 50 labourers were working at the site when the accident occurred.

Official sources report

at least three casualties in the mishap so far, but the number may rise as several labourers are feared trapped under the collapsed portion. Sources added that the mishap happened when the slab of the under-construction roof collapsed.

Bill introduced in US Senate to restrict birthright citizenship

The legislative move comes after an executive order on the matter, signed by President Donald Trump on the first day of his presidency, was blocked by a federal judge in Washington

WASHINGTON, Jan 30 (Agencies): A group of Republican Senators has introduced a bill in the US Senate to restrict birthright citizenship to the children of illegal immigrants and non-immigrants on temporary visas.

According to Senators Lindsey Graham, Ted Cruz and Katie Britt, who introduced the bill, the exploitation of birthright citizenship is a major pull factor for illegal immigration and a weakness for national security.

The US is one of only 33 countries in the world with no restrictions on birthright citizenship, they said.

The legislative move comes after an executive order on the matter, signed by President Donald Trump on the first day of his presidency, was blocked by a federal judge in Washington.

The Center for Immigration Studies estimates that in 2023, there were 2,25,000 to 2,50,000 births to illegal immigrants, amounting to close to seven per cent of births in the US.

It is long overdue for the United States to change its policy on birthright citizenship because



it is being abused in so many ways, said Graham.

"One example is birth tourism, where wealthy individuals from China and other nations come to the United States simply to have a child who will be an American citizen. When you look at the magnets that draw people to America, birthright citizenship is one of the largest," he said.

"I also appreciate President Trump's executive order to address birthright citizenship. It is time for the United States to align itself with the rest of the world and restrict this practice once and for all," Graham said.

"The promise of American

citizenship should not incentivise illegal migration, but that's exactly what has happened for far too long," said Britt.

It's time to fix this, she said. "Senator Lindsey Graham's and my Birthright Citizenship Act would codify President Trump's commonsense stance and end the abuse of birthright citizenship that I do not believe is consistent with the original meaning of the 14th Amendment's Citizenship Clause," she added.

"This will protect our nation's sovereignty, disincentivise illegal migration, and ensure America's citizenship practices are stronger and better aligned

with peer countries around the globe," Britt said.

The three Senators said in September 2024, two individuals from California were found guilty in a "birth tourism" scheme.

Predominantly Chinese clients paid the operators of a "maternity hotel" tens of thousands of dollars to come to the US to give birth. Clients were coached on how to lie during the admissions process.

A 2022 Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee report found a birthing company catering to the wives of Russian oligarchs, celebrities, athletes and public figures.

The Birthright Citizenship Act of 2025 specifies who can receive citizenship by virtue of their birth in the United States, including children born to at least one parent who is either a citizen or national of the US, a lawful permanent resident of the US, or an alien performing active service in the armed forces.

This bill only applies to children born after the date of enactment.

4 dead in Russian strikes on Ukraine's Sumy, Zelenskyy calls it terrible tragedy



SUMY, Jan 30 (Agencies): A Russian drone struck a multi-storey apartment building in the northeastern Ukrainian city of Sumy early on Thursday, killing four people and injuring nine, including a child, the regional authorities said.

"This is a terrible tragedy, a terrible Russian crime. It is very important that the world does not stop putting pressure on Russia for this terror," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said via the Telegram messaging app.

Russia launched

81 drones at Ukraine overnight, damaging businesses and homes around the country, the Ukrainian military said on Thursday.

The air force shot down 37 drones and 39 others did not reach their targets. It did not specify what happened to the five remaining drones.

Sumy Governor Volodymyr Artyukh, shown in a video on Telegram in front of a crane and piles of rubble, said emergency services were pulling residents out from parts of the building.

The attack ruined five

apartments and damaged over 20 cars, authorities said. Work on site continued into Thursday morning, with emergency services sharing pictures of rescuers sifting through the rubble.

The region borders Russia's Kursk region, where Ukraine launched an incursion in August 2024, and has been regularly attacked by Russian drones.

The overnight attack on the southern region of Odesa also damaged a grain warehouse, a hospital and two private residences without causing any casualties, according to the governor.

Russia denies deliberately targeting civilians, but thousands have been killed and injured after Moscow's troops launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

6 people abducted in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province

PESHAWAR, Jan 30 (Agencies): Six people, including a paramilitary soldier, were abducted by unidentified armed men in two separate incidents in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, police said on Thursday.

Police said armed men travelling in two vehicles forcibly took away five civilians while firing shots into the air.

These civilians were trying to fix electricity poles in the Hassan Khel village of Mir Ali sub-division, Shiwa tehsil, North Waziristan when they were kid-

napped.

In another incident, a paramilitary Frontier Corps personnel was abducted while he was returning from the market in the Hassan Khel area in North Waziristan.

The armed men also set fire to one of the

vehicles.

Police have launched a massive combing operation in the area.

No group claimed responsibility for the abductions.

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

such abductions in the past.

The TTP, set up as an umbrella group of several militant outfits in 2007, is believed to be close to al-Qaeda.

The group has been blamed for several deadly attacks across Pakistan.

Palestinian militants begin handover of three Israeli hostages in latest stage of ceasefire deal

JERUSALEM / CAIRO, Jan 30 (Agencies): Palestinian militants began handing over three Israeli hostages in Gaza on Thursday in return for 110 Palestinian prisoners to be freed in the latest stage of a ceasefire deal.

A female Israeli soldier, Agam Berger, waved at the crowd from a podium in Jabalia in northern Gaza before being handed to the Red Cross.

Gadi Moses, 80, and Arbel Yahud, 29, both abducted from Kibbutz Nir Oz in the Hamas-led assault on Israel on Oct 7 2023, hugged one another in the presence of masked gunmen in black uniforms at another exchange site, in Khan Younis, southern Gaza, a video released

by Hamas ally Islamic Jihad showed.

The spokesman from the group's armed wing said on Telegram it had "completed procedures to hand over two Israeli hostages." An Israeli official told agency that the three hostages were expected to be taken to three different hospitals in Israel, though that could change depending on their immediate inspection from doctors upon arrival.

Israelis began to gather in what has become known as Hostages Square, a central square in Tel Aviv, which has become the central location for efforts to campaign on behalf of hostages being held in Gaza.

Three Israeli civilians and four soldiers - all

women - have been released so far in the ceasefire, which began on Jan. 19.

In return, Israel has released 290 Palestinian convicts and detainees.

More than 250 hostages were abducted in the Hamas attack in Israel.

Around half were released the following month during the only previous truce, and others have been recovered dead or alive during Israel's military campaign in Gaza, which has left tens of thousands of Palestinians dead and turned the tiny coastal enclave into a wasteland of rubble.

Israel still lists 90 captives in Gaza, with around 30 declared dead in absentia.

European Parliament launches 'Friends of Tibet' to champion Tibetan rights and cultural preservation

BRUSSELS, Jan 30 (Agencies): The European Parliament officially established the European Parliamentary Friends of Tibet group in Brussels today, according to Central Tibet Administration (CTA). Over 20 Members of European Parliament (MEPs) from several major political groups supported this initiative, which was led by Lithuanian MEP Dainius Zilimas and demonstrated a shared commitment to the Tibetan cause, CTA reported.

Seven MEPs and several Parliamentary Assistants from 12 EU member states participated in the event, which was held in the midst of the Holocaust remembrance commemoration. Their attendance demon-



strated how critical it is to address Tibet's worsening human rights situation on the European scene as per a report by CTA.

CTA stated that Zilimas in his opening remarks highlighted the group's mission, stating, "The establishment of the European Parliamentary Friends of Tibet marks a crucial step in our ongoing efforts to support the Tibetan

cause. We are united in our commitment to advocating for the rights and freedoms of the Tibetan people and ensuring their voices are heard in the European Parliament."

In the European Parliament, Representative Rigzin Genkhang of the Office of Tibet, Brussels, thanked the participants and underscored the importance of this day for Tibet, giving a thor-

ough briefing on Tibet's urgent issues, such as the aftermath of the recent earthquake and the continued repression of basic rights as cited by CTA.

To further solidify worldwide support for the Tibetan cause, Rigzin Genkhang also urged MEPs to confirm their attendance at the 9th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet, which is sched-

uled to be held in Tokyo in June according to CTA.

CTA further emphasized other MEPs present said they were prepared to use every resource at their disposal to re-establish Tibet's predicament as a top priority for the European Parliament. Their declarations reaffirmed a shared commitment to protect human rights, peace, and Tibet's distinct cultural character.

The event concluded with the traditional offering of Tibetan scarves, symbolizing goodwill and solidarity. Attendees, including Vincent Metten and Melanie from the International Campaign for Tibet, left with a renewed commitment to advocating for Tibet and its people.

Ex-minister Suella Braverman says UK could become Islamist nation with nukes

LONDON, Jan 30 (Agencies): The UK might have its own spin on MAGA soon. In a recent speech, former UK Home Secretary Suella Braverman said there was a need to "Make Britain Great Again". There's also more. She cautioned the world and the UK by saying Britain could "fall into the hands of Muslim fundamentalism" and could become an Iran-style enemy of the West in the next two decades. To add to that, this speech was at the right-wing think tank, Heritage Foundation's event in Washington.

Braverman praised US President Donald Trump to the skies and said his win would finally be the fall of "progressive thinking" in the West.

Braverman is one of the most hard-right personalities in the Conservative Party in the UK. The former Interior Minister has made several controversial remarks in the past, such as that it was her dream to see immigrants being deported to Rwanda or living on the streets was a "lifestyle choice" for some people. She was sacked as minister in 2023 by then UK PM Rishi Sunak.

In her latest speech, Braverman showed her disagreement with the Labour Party's government in the UK and her endorsement of Trump and US Vice President JD Vance.

"Vice-president JD Vance said at the National Conservatism conference, at which I also spoke in the summer, that the UK was going to be the first Islamist nation with nuclear weapons. I don't think he was joking," said Braverman, according to a London Economic Report.

She even discussed how, in the next two



decades, how the UK and not China or Russia could be the greatest threat to the US.

"Is it an impossibility that 20 years from now it will be the UK, not China or Russia, that will

emerge as the greatest strategic threat to the USA?", she asked.

Braverman blamed the "broken leadership" of the UK for the same. She also discussed the spread of Sharia law across the UK.

"Born out of a broken relationship and weak leadership. What happens if the UK falls into the hands of Muslim fundamentalism, our legal system gets substituted for Sharia Law and our nuclear capabilities vest in a regime not too dissimilar to that of Iran today?", she said.

"Regardless of whether one thinks that is a

realistic outcome, which I do not, should we not have the courage to ask these questions?", she added.

The former Home Secretary also discussed how the UK PM could not have been "more at odds" with US President Donald Trump, despite Trump's praise for Starmer.

Trump told reporters on January 25 that the UK PM "is a very good person and I think he's done a very good job thus far" and then the two got on a 45-minute phone call.

But Braverman believes that UK-US

relations are "in tatters" due to the Labour government.

"Under Keir Starmer, the UK is now more likely than ever to worship at the altar of punitive net-zero policies, bend the knee at the cross of a distorted notion of human rights and submit to the will of supranational institutions rather than sticking up for the UK's national security and long-term allies," she said.

Braverman's husband, Rael Braverman, joined Nigel Farage's Reform Party. Many are speculating that she could take a similar path.

Lieutenant Governor pays tributes to Mahatma Gandhi on his Punya Tithi



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 30: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha paid tributes to the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi on his Punya Tithi, today.

"The principles and values of truth and non-violence to which Gandhiji was always committed are beyond time and place. They are as relevant today as they were during his lifetime. He has guided us for peaceful resolution of differences and well-being of every Indian," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Attending the Shanti Doot Sammelan, organised by Gandhi Global Family, the Lieutenant Governor honoured the family members of the army brave-hearts, and also paid homage to all the leaders, fighters, and martyrs who devoted themselves towards India's freedom.

"The world, that we live in today, is witnessing conflicts. In many parts of the globe, societies are facing disruption because of ongoing aggression. In such a scenario, the need for peace and non-violence is deeply felt. I am confident in this situation Bapu's ideals will show the right path to humanity," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon every section of the society to rededicate themselves

to the ideals and values of Mahatma Gandhi and come together for the cause of empowerment of poor, youth, women and farmers and make their valuable contribution to realise the vision of Viksit Bharat.

"Puja Bapu had once said that the mission of his life was to wipe tears from every eye. It should be our life motto. Welfare of the deprived section should be the government's topmost priority and society's collective strength must bring the poorest of poor to the mainstream of development," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the Gandhi Global Family J&K, for its constant endeavours to promote Gandhian values and spreading the noble message of Truth, Non-Violence and Social Harmony.

Responding to the demand put forth by the President of Gandhi Global Family J&K, Padma Shri Dr S.P. Varma, Lieutenant Governor assured that the month-long Gandhi Jayanti celebrations will continue across J&K as per the past practice. He said that the humanity can achieve the right path and goal of peace, harmony and development in Jammu Kashmir, the country and the world only by following the ideals of Bapu.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor

was honoured with Shanti Doot Samman by the Gandhi Global Family.

Padma Shri Awardees including Dr. S.P. Varma, Prof. Vishwa Murti Shastri, Dr. Jitendra Udhamपुरi, and Sh Romalo Ram; meritorious students and Youth were also felicitated by the Lieutenant Governor with Gandhi Doot Samman.

A two-minute silence was observed as a mark of respect to the Father of the Nation and the martyrs who made supreme sacrifice in the struggle for India's freedom. A pledge was also administered to uphold and promote Gandhiji's vision, ideals and philosophies.

Sh Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Sh Anand Jain, ADGP Jammu; Sh Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu; retired and serving officials of Civil Administration, Police and Security Forces; members of Gandhi Global Family; family members of martyrs and freedom fighters, representatives of various social organizations and students in large numbers were present.

Sh Yudhvir Sethi, Member of Legislative Assembly, Jammu East; Sh Arjun Singh Raju, Member of Legislative Assembly, Ramban and prominent citizens were also present on the occasion.

Samsung Integrates EMBIBE's AI-Powered Learning Platform into 'Education Hub App'

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 30: Samsung, India's leading consumer electronics brand, has partnered with EMBIBE, an AI-powered personalized learning platform, to integrate it into the Samsung Education Hub app.

This designed-for-TV education app aims to transform televisions into effective educational tools by offering students a personalized and immersive learning experience.

With this collaboration, EMBIBE will provide comprehensive educational coverage, supporting all major curricula, including CBSE, ICSE, IB, Cambridge, and State Boards. Additionally, students preparing for major entrance exams such as IIT JEE and NEET will benefit from extensive resources, including interactive and award-winning 3D explainer videos designed to simplify complex topics and enhance engagement.

"The Samsung Education Hub app aims to expand the role of TVs in homes, transforming them from mere entertainment hubs to a seamless platform for online learning.

This innovative 'designed-for-TV' education app is set to revolutionize the online learning experience, making it engaging and accessible to all. Our vision is to create a future where education knows no boundaries and knowledge is within easy reach at the click of a button," said Viplesh Dang, Senior Director, Visual Display Business, Samsung India.

EMBIBE's AI-powered adaptive learning system is at the core of this initiative, tailoring practice sessions to each student's learning level. Through the Samsung Education Hub, students will gain access

to video-based learning resources and AI-driven adaptive practice in English, Hindi, and 10 major regional languages. The platform, backed by over 10 years of engagement data from more than two crore students, offers 54,000 practice tests and score-improvement insights.

"Our partnership with Samsung TV marks a significant leap in delivering a truly personal, engaging learning experience through one of the most trusted and loved mediums. Samsung has partnered with EMBIBE because we've solved two critical challenges: creating stunning interactive, multi-modal content and delivering it through a deeply personalized experience powered by AI. The synergy between Samsung's innovation and EMBIBE's expertise in ed-tech is a powerful combination that sets a new standard for educational excellence, creating a transformative learning experience for everyone," said Aditi Avasthi, Founder & CEO at EMBIBE.

As part of the partnership, Samsung TV users will receive an exclusive 50% discount on EMBIBE's annual subscription when purchased on TV. EMBIBE's content will be available on all 2024 Samsung TVs and smart monitors, with gradual rollout planned for earlier models. Existing EMBIBE subscribers who own Samsung TVs will have seamless login and access to the platform.

This move follows Samsung's previous collaboration with leading ed-tech platform Physics Wallah for Samsung Education Hub on 2023 and 2024 Samsung TVs, further strengthening its commitment to digital learning transformation.

Anguished MGNREGA job card holders protest in Chenab Valley Zone

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Jan 30: Senior National Conference leader and spokesperson of the Chenab Valley Zone, Ajeet Bhagat, voiced strong opposition against the Rural Development Department's (RDD) decision to enforce biometric attendance for MGNREGA Job Card holders at the end of the season.

Bhagat highlighted that under MGNREGA, one Job Card is issued per family, entitling the entire household to 100 days of work annually. However, the new biometric attendance

requirement would compel one individual to be physically present every day, limiting the family's ability to manage work efficiently.

He pointed out that the financial year, spanning from April to March, is nearing closure. Despite this, the RDD has issued orders requiring Job Card holders to complete their work before the deadline, disregarding the fact that many have already completed around 80% of their assigned tasks as per Gram Sabha approvals.

Bhagat strongly criticized this move, calling it a violation of

fundamental rights. He emphasized that compelling laborers to finish their remaining work in the last five months constitutes forced labor, which is unacceptable.

The National Conference leader urged the Rural Development Department (RDD) to revoke the biometric attendance directive. He also called upon Jammu and Kashmir's Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Chief Secretary to intervene and ensure justice for the poor workers of Kishtwar, Doda, and Ramban districts in the Chenab Valley Zone.

Motor Vehicle Department organises debate competition at GHSS Khour



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 30: To raise awareness about road safety among young minds, the Motor Vehicle Department, in collaboration with Government Higher Secondary School Khour, organized a debate competition today. The event aimed to ignite discussions on the critical issue that can save thousands of lives daily.

As many as 20 students shared insightful perspectives and solutions to improve road safety awareness.

The students took a solemn pledge to pro

mote the message about road safety in the community. A team of medical officials gave a demonstration on the First Aid, sharing life saving tips with the students.

Later, certificates of participation were presented to the participants.

The event concluded with a strong message—road safety starts with each one of us. Obey rules; drive responsibly, and save lives!

Earlier, ARTO Hq. Rehana Tabassam highlighted the crucial role of parents in instilling road discipline among their

children.

She emphasized that road safety is not just a slogan but a practice that must begin at home. She added that with the rising number of vehicles, the need to adhere to traffic rules has never been more urgent.

The ARTO urged students to be role models for society—avoiding overloaded vehicles, never hanging onto bars of moving transport, and ensuring they start driving only after the legal age of 18. She also reinforced the importance of speed limits, traffic signals, and responsible driving behavior.

ARTO F.S Bipin Singh Charak, Principal Government Higher Secondary School Khour, Rupinder Kour, MVI Vikas Srivats, SMVI Amnish Sharma, Tarunot Singh besides representatives from Health and Medical Department and J&K Bank were also present on the occasion.

Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign 2025 launched in Ramban

Top News Report

RAMBAN, Jan 30: World Leprosy Day was observed today at District Hospital Ramban and all medical block levels across the district under the supervision of Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. Kamal Ji Zadu, along with District Health Officer Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, Orthopedic Specialist Dr. Mohd Rafi and Physician Dr. Mohd Syed.

As part of the observance, a rally was organized to raise awareness about leprosy, focusing on its early detection and elimination of social stigma associated with the disease. The rally wit-

nessed active participation from Senior and junior staff of District Hospital Ramban and students of Government ANM School Ramban.

On this occasion, the SPARSH Leprosy Awareness Campaign 2025 was also launched, which will continue from January 30 to February 13, 2025. The campaign aims to educate communities, promote early diagnosis, and ensure stigma-free treatment for leprosy patients.

Authorities urged the public to support the initiative by spreading awareness and ensuring timely medical intervention for those affected by leprosy.

Road safety related information given to children of Govt Excellent Senior Secondary School Gahlian

Top News Report

JAMMU / KANGRA, Jan 30: The children of Government Excellent Senior Secondary School Gahlian took out an awareness rally on road safety and motivated people to strictly follow the traffic rules. On this occasion, the students of the institute took the oath of road safety.

Part from this, Sub Inspector Hakam Chand along with his team Amit Sipahiya, Sunil Kumar and Narendra Kumar etc. from Police Station



Lanj participated in this program.

Sub Inspector Hakam Chand made the students and teachers aware about road safety and shared important information and Amit Sipahiya gave information to the children about cyber crime.

Principal Gulshan

Awasthi thanked the officers who came from Lanj Police Station. Sanjeev Sharma, Vinod Kumar, Rajiv Dogra, Sangeeta Randhawa, Vikas Chaudhary, Navneet Walia etc. from the institute made a commendable contribution in making this program successful.

DC flags off Awareness Van under Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign at Samba

Top News Report

SAMBA, Jan 30: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Samba Rajesh Sharma today flagged off an awareness van from the District Office Complex, Samba, marking the launch of the Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign.

The initiative is being carried out under the overall supervision of Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. Vidhi Bhatial. The campaign will be observed across all health institutions in District Samba from January 30 to February 13,



2025, under the theme "Fortnight IEC Activities. It aims to educate the public about the signs and symptoms of leprosy, its prevention, early diagnosis, and the availability of free treatment in government health institutions. The campaign also emphasizes the need to eliminate

stigma and discrimination against individuals affected by leprosy.

The launch event was attended by DHO Samba, District Nodal Officer (RBSK), Nodal Officer (School Health Programme), officials from the CMO/Dy. CMO office Samba, and other dignitaries.

From Page No:1

Passenger jet with 64 aboard collides with Army helicopter while landing at Reagan Airport near DC

defense secretary, posted on social media that his department was "actively monitoring" the situation that involved an Army helicopter. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy, just sworn in earlier this week, said in a social media post that he was "at the FAA HQ and closely monitoring the situation."

Reagan National is located along the Potomac River, just southwest of the city. It's a popular choice because it's much closer than the larger Dulles International Airport, which is deeper in Virginia.

Depending on the runway being

used, flights into Reagan can offer passengers spectacular views of landmarks like the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the National Mall and the U.S. Capitol. It's a postcard-worthy welcome for tourists visiting the city.

The incident recalled the crash of an Air Florida flight that plummeted into the Potomac on January 13, 1982, that killed 78 people. That crash was attributed to bad weather.

The last fatal crash involving a U.S. commercial airline occurred in 2009 near Buffalo, New York. Everyone aboard the Bombardier DHC-8 propeller plane was killed, including 45 passengers, 2 pilots and 2 flight attendants. Another person on the ground also died, bringing the total death toll to 50. An investigation determined that the captain accidentally caused the plane to stall as it approached the airport in Buffalo.

Statehood to J-K

likely be restored in upcoming budget session; NC hopes

restoration of statehood. Also, he said that Constituency Development Fund (CDF) for the MLAs will be Rs 40 crore each. "This has been promised by the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to all the MLAs from NC as well as from the opposition. The proposal in this regard will be submitted soon," he said.

Four officials of private company chargesheeted for duping doctor in Jammu

Crime Branch officers conducted

raids in collaboration with Police Station Wilsen Garden, Bengaluru, and Police Station Ashok Nagar, Bengaluru.

However, it was found that the office premises of M/S Chisel Fitness LLP was closed over the past several years, the officials said.

The investigation of the case has been completed, leading to the filing of the chargesheet, they said.

Kashmir higher reaches receive fresh snowfall

district received light snowfall, while the plains in the area were lashed with rain.

Meanwhile, the 40-day-long harshest phase of winter, locally known as "Chillai Kalan," would end tonight. This period, usually characterized by intense cold and frequent snowfall, remained largely dry this year, except for two brief spells of snow.

The MeT office said the weather will generally remain cloudy with the possibility of fairly widespread light to moderate rain, snow and thunderstorm on Thursday.

The weather generally will remain dry and cloudy with the possibility of light rain and snow over the isolated reaches on Friday while another fairly widespread spell of rain and snow is possible on Saturday, the MeT office said.

The wet weather will continue till February 4 with the forecast of widespread rain and snow over Jammu and Kashmir on February 3.

Meanwhile, the night temperature witnessed a fall again at most of the weather stations following snowfall over the higher catchments in Kashmir valley on Thursday.

The minimum temperature slightly dropped in Srinagar during the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday at -1.5 C against the 1.9 C recorded the previous night

and this was 0.6 C below normal for the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir.

The day temperature recorded in Srinagar on Wednesday was 5.8 C above the normal of 7.9 C.

The minimum temperature also plummeted at the tourist resort of Pahalgam to a low of -3.4 C against the -0.8 C and the ski resort of Gulmarg slipped down to a low of -6.5 C against the -2.5 C on the previous night.

Four minor Rohingya girls missing from shelter Baramulla Home

Myanmar were rescued in July last year after a human trafficking module was busted in Baramulla district by police. The human trafficking module was operating in the Ushkura area of the Baramulla.

DC Reasi reviews working of Revenue Department

Calls for removal of encroachments, strict enforcement measures

Top News Report

REASI, Jan 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Nidhi Malik chaired a comprehensive review of the Revenue Department to assess digitization of land records, including Jamabandies, eviction of encroachments from state land, status of revenue court cases, SAMITVA schemes, online services on the Jan Sugam portal and land acquisition cases. The meeting focused on expediting critical processes to



enhance efficiency and transparency in revenue administration.

The Tehsildars were asked to complete the verification of digitalized Jamabandies within a week and address concerns related to dual verification. Stressing

the importance of safeguarding state land, she instructed revenue officials to ensure no fresh encroachments occur and to expedite the resolution of pending revenue court cases. Additionally, she emphasized the need

for increased field visits, particularly to schools, to strengthen on-ground monitoring and governance.

The DC underscored the importance of adhering to construction regulations, urging officials to encourage

citizens to obtain proper permissions and take stringent action against illegal structures. She reiterated the administration's commitment to transparent and effective revenue management, calling for proactive measures to streamline online services and improve overall service delivery.

Meeting was attended by ACR Anshumali Sharma, SDM Piyush Dhotra, SDM Mazzahir Hussain and Tehsildar's.

DDC reviews implementation of FPO Scheme in Doda District



Top News Report

DODA, Jan 30: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Harvinder Singh today chaired a meeting of the District-Level Monitoring Committee to review the progress of the Central Sector Scheme for the formation and promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations

(FPOs).

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Manesh Kumar; DDM NABARD Rakesh Kumar and representatives from other implementing agencies, including NCDC, SFAC, NAFED, and FDRVC, along with Cluster-Based Business Organizations.

The progress of FPOs

operating in the district was reviewed in detail. Discussions focused on the number of shareholders, the status of equity grants and the paid-up capital of these organizations.

The DDC emphasised the need for effective coordination between implementing agencies and stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of the scheme and maximize benefits for farmers.

The DDC directed concerned officials to expedite the formation and strengthening of FPOs, ensuring their sustainability and market linkage. He also stressed capacity-building measures and financial support mechanisms to enhance the economic viability of farmer collectives.

District Leprosy Society Doda observes Anti-Leprosy Day in Doda

Top News Report

DODA, Jan 30: Under the aegis of the District Leprosy Society, Doda, the health department organized a series of events to observe Anti-Leprosy Day, focusing on raising awareness about leprosy and eliminating the stigma associated with the disease today.

In this connection, an awareness programme was held at the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Office, Doda, graced by CMO Doda, Dr. Om Kumar. The event highlighted the significance of early detection, treatment, and community participation in leprosy eradication. A pledge was administered to all participants, reaffirming their commitment to spreading awareness

and supporting the cause.

A separate awareness session was also conducted at ANMT School, Doda, where Medical Officer (Leprosy), Dr. Javed Ahmed Parray, briefed participants on leprosy, its symptoms, treatment, and the need for collective efforts to eliminate the disease. CMO Doda, Dr. Om Kumar, also addressed the gathering, emphasizing the government's initiatives for leprosy eradication and the importance of public awareness.

The event also marked the launch of "Sparsh"—a fortnight-long Leprosy Awareness Campaign, aimed at intensifying efforts to educate people across the district about leprosy prevention, early detection,



and treatment.

Similar awareness programmes were also conducted across all medical blocks of the district, including Assar, Bhaderwah, Gandoh, Ghat, and Thathri, ensuring widespread sensitization on this important health issue. The observance of

Anti-Leprosy Day in Doda reaffirmed the health department's commitment to a leprosy-free society through education, awareness, and timely medical intervention.

The event was attended by BMO Ghat, Dr. Abdul Gafoor, Principal ANMT Doda, Vidya

Kotwal, Javed Iqbal (Head Assistant), Mohd Shafi Attu (Health Educator), Sanjeev Rana (I/c Legal Section), Mohd Faheem Butt (FLO NCD), along with Leprosy Staff members Ram Raj and Sajad Ahmed (both PMAs) and staff of ANMT School, among others.

7 Day NSS Special Winter Camp concludes at GDC Neeli Nallah

Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Jan 30: NSS Unit, "Sewak", Government Degree College Neeli Nallah, Udhampur, successfully organized "Seven Day Special Winter Camp" under the theme "Not Me, But You," which concluded today.

The camp aimed to provide an opportunity to NSS volunteers to engage in social service activities, such as community outreach and environmental conservation.

The seven day camp featured varied activities organized under the



guidance of Prof. Shaista Yasmeen, NSS PO.

The college Principal Prof. Dr. Seema Arora inaugurated the winter camp and said "As we embark on this special winter camp, I want to remind you that this is not just an event, but

an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others. Your participation in this camp will not only help you develop new skills and build life-long friendships, but also enable you to contribute to the betterment of our society."

Army conducts upgradation of Army Public School Arnora

Top News Report

DODA, Jan 30: The youth of our nation when nurtured and channelised effectively can become capable future leaders that build a bright and better future.

In a significant display of commitment to community development and education, Indian Army has extended a helping hand to Army Public School, Arnora on 26 January 2025 by distributing office furniture, sports kits, books for all age group and constructing a shed over the morning assembly area, as a step towards enhancing the learning environment for the students under Operation Sadbhavana.

Indian Army's involvement in this initiative underscores its dedication to fostering positive change in the local community. A total of 70 students & 09 teachers attended the event.

The principle



expressed deep gratitude for Indian Army's benevolence, stating, "This generous upgradation is a turning point in our school's journey. We are grateful to the Indian Army for their commitment to the welfare of our students. The equipment provided will significantly enhance our teaching and learning capabilities".

Indian Army is working relentlessly for development of the region with

primary focus on generating employment in the area.

This gesture not only reinforces the Indian Army's commitment to fostering education but also strengthens the bond between the armed forces and the community.

The Indian Army continues to be a steadfast partner in driving positive change and development in regions across the nation.

HRSJCI in collaboration with GGF honors Mahatma Gandhi's Legacy with Awards for Social Activists

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 30: The Human Rights Social Justice Council of India (HRSJCI), in collaboration with the Gandhi Global Foundation under the dynamic leadership of its Director General, Advocate Zargar Patnavi, celebrated Gandhian Day in Jammu, highlighting the principles of Mahatma Gandhi and their relevance in contemporary society.

The event saw the participation of several prominent dignitaries and social activists, all of whom came together to honor the ideals of peace, non-violence, and social justice.

The Chief Guest on this occasion was Cabinet Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Javid Ahmed Dar.

During the celebration, the prestigious Gandhian Sewak Awards were conferred upon individuals recognized for their exemplary contributions to social service. These awards aim



to acknowledge and encourage efforts that reflect Gandhiji's vision of a just and equitable society.

The event served as a platform for inspiring dialogue on social issues and reinforcing the commitment to uphold human rights.

The presence of esteemed guests and their insights into the importance of Gandhian philosophy resonated throughout the proceedings, motivating attendees to continue their advocacy for social change.

Overall, the event was a significant reminder of the enduring legacy of Mahatma Gandhi and the vital role of commu-

nity service in fostering a better society.

Gandhi's approach of nonviolent resistance aimed at opposing oppression without violence.

He believed in the moral authority of peaceful protests and civil disobedience. The principle of nonviolence was central to his beliefs. Gandhi emphasized the importance of love and compassion in social and political struggles.

He advocated for swadeshi (self-sufficiency) and encouraged the use of local goods, particularly through the spinning of khadi (hand-spun fabric).

He was assassinated

on January 30, 1948, by Nathuram Godse, a Hindu nationalist who opposed Gandhi's philosophy and approach.

October 2 is celebrated as Gandhi Jayanti in India and is also observed as the International Day of Non-Violence. His life and philosophies continue to impact social and political movements around the world.

Zargar Patnavi, National President of the Gandhi Global Foundation, delivered a compelling speech during the occasion, highlighting the relevance of Gandhian values in today's society. Alveen, Chairper-

son, also stressed the importance of peace and added that Gandhi contributed significantly to India's independence movement. General Secretary Parvaiz emphasized that we should follow Gandhi Ji's path of righteousness.

Minister Javid Ahmed Dar, in his speech, made an appeal to the people of the nation to follow Gandhian principles. He highlighted Gandhi's role in the freedom struggle and called for adherence to his ideals.

MLA delivered a speech emphasizing Gandhi's influence. Provincial Judge Med and Zonal Vice Secretary Anjan urged people to work for the betterment of society.

Vikas Sharma, Co-Coordinator of JK NC Jammu, and Anil from the Gandhi Global Foundation reiterated their commitment to Gandhian values and the cause of social justice.

DC Kulgam reviews annual Urs arrangements of Sufi Saint Hazrat Syed Noor Shah Wali Bagdadi (RA) Kund

Top News Report

KULGAM, Jan 29: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan (IAS) today chaired a meeting to review arrangements for annual urs of sufi saint Hazrat Syed Noor Shah Saheb Wali Bagdadi (RA).

Chairman Local Intizamia Committee Kund informed the Chair that the Urs of the saint will commence from February 01 and shall be observed with reverence & religious fervour at Waltengo and Oriel Shrines of Kund Valley. During the review meeting Deputy Com-

missioner (DC) directed the officers to ensure uninterrupted power supply, safe drinking water supply, proper sanitation measures besides healthcare facilities and security arrangements at shrine during Urs days. DC emphasized the KPDCCL to ensure the

uninterrupted power supply during the festival days in entire Kund block besides the repairs of high mast lights if needed in advance.

The concerned Mechanical department was asked to keep men and machinery available and in ready mode

to clear roads in case of snowfall during these days to ensure hassle-free movement of devotees. DC stressed upon the officers to work in coordination and to put in place all the requisite arrangements in advance to avoid any inconvenience to the people and smooth cel-

ebrations of the Urs.

Transport department was directed to ensure hassle-free movement of devotees besides availability of late evening public transport services to Kund area during the festival days the press release reads out. The meeting was attended by ACR

Mushtaq Rasool, DDC member Kund Gulzar Ahmad, SDPO Qazigund Rameez Raja, Tehsildar Devsar Rakib Ahmad, Executive Engineers of KPDCCL, PWD, Mechanical, Jal Shakti Qazigund, C.M.O.A.D Fisheries, Range Officer Kulgam and other Officers.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Smt. Bachno Devi, W/o Late Sh. Bachan Singh, R/o, resident of Hamirpur Kona, tehsil Pragal, dist. Jammu, has been approved to receive a monthly family pension from the Indian Defence Force. If there is anyone who is in objection of this approval can object within 7 days in the court of law.

4th T20I: Samson's weakness against raw pace, finishing woes in focus

Samson is one of head coach Gautam Gambhir's favourites

PUNE, Jan 30 (Agencies): Sanju Samson's technical weaknesses against express pace along with Rinku Singh's dip in form and fitness issues will be a concern for India when they take on a resurgent England in the fourth T20 International here on Friday.

Having fluffed their chances in the third T20I in Rajkot, the penultimate game of the five-match series gives the hosts another opportunity to seal the series going into the final game in Mumbai on February 2. Suryakumar Yadav's men won the first two games in Kolkata and Chennai.

Samson, the maverick keeper-batter from Kerala, whose sympathetic and loyal fan base never fails to remind everyone of the limited chances he has got, started the T20I season with three hundreds against Bangladesh and South Africa prior to the ongoing series.

In the current rubber, he has had scores of 26, 5 and 3 and it is not these numbers that are concerning. In T20 cricket, if one factors in risk, there would always be a lot of less profitable days at the office considering the kind of strokes batters play these days.

But in Samson's case, what is concerning is his palpable discomfort against anything bowled above 145 clicks.

Against Bangladesh at home, he faced Taskin Ahmed and Tanzim Hasan Shakib, while in South Africa, Andile Simelane and Lutho Sipamla were among the bowlers.

These are not exactly intimi-



dating fast bowlers and he rightfully took them to the cleaners. These are bowlers who fire in between 130 to 140 clicks and can be hit through the line on flat decks.

However, Jofra Archer and Mark Wood are different beasts, bowling between 145 kmph to 155 kmph and that pace is creating problems for Samson.

During all three games, the Kerala batter couldn't even get his bat down as deliveries would thud into Phil Salt's gloves.

The hard lengths and steep bounce are creating a problem and even on batting shirt-fronts, it is not easy to hit through the line if one doesn't have proper technique or doesn't regularly face this quality of fast bowling.

Samson is one of head coach Gautam Gambhir's favourites and it is expected that he would be persisted with going into next year's T20 World Cup.

But his technical issues need to be sorted out at the earliest by Gambhir, new batting coach Sitanshu Kotak and himself.

Dhruv Jurel looks a misfit Rinku Singh's back spasms forced the team management to try Dhruv Jurel in the No.7 position but he has looked out of place in this particular format unlike Test cricket.

Rinku was rested for the first two games and he is expected to be fit before the fourth match.

But even Rinku, after a glorious start to his T20I career, has gone off the rails.

When Gambhir became Kolkata Knight Riders mentor, Rinku got to play a total of 70 odd balls in the 2024 IPL. As a result, he couldn't make it to the T20 World Cup as Shivam Dube, with his bowling ability, was considered better in Americas.

The Indian middle order hasn't exactly played England spinner Adil Rashid well so far and with Dube back in the mix, will Gambhir take a chance with him?

Looks unlikely as given the pace of England speedsters even the burly Mumbaikar would

be ill at ease.

The third option is Randeep Singh, who also looks exciting as a finisher and is a better seamer than Dube. But even he is untested against quality pace attack.

Will Arshdeep be back in order to seal the series?

Mohammed Shami needs a lot of bowling in match situations and the Rajkot game was a decent restart to his international career without being spectacular.

While a bilateral series win counts for little, Gambhir wouldn't like the ignominy of being the first coach under whom India lost a home T20I series against England.

Hence, it would be interesting if Arshdeep Singh, India's best T20I bowler in absence of Jasprit Bumrah is in line to come back and give some breakthroughs in the Powerplay overs.

Teams:

India: Suryakumar Yadav (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (wk), Tilak Varma, Axar Patel, Hardik Pandya, Washington Sundar, Varun Chakravarthy, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, Mohammed Shami, Dhruv Jurel (wk), Rinku Singh, Shivam Dube, Randeep Singh, Harshit Rana.

England: Jos Buttler (captain), Phil Salt (wk), Ben Duckett, Harry Brook, Liam Livingstone, Jamie Smith (wk), Adil Rashid, Brydon Carse, Jamie Overton, Gus Atkinson, Rehan Ahmed, Jofra Archer, Mark Wood, Jacob Bethell, Saqib Mahmood.

Match Starts at 7 pm IST.

32-member men's team announced by Hockey India ahead of FIH Pro League 2024-25 in Bhubaneswar

NEW DELHI, Jan 30 (Agencies): Hockey India on Thursday announced a 32-member Indian Men's Hockey squad ahead of the Bhubaneswar leg of the FIH Pro League 2024-25, which will be held at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium.

Veteran drag-flicker Harmanpreet Singh will continue to lead the side as captain with deputy Hardik Singh by his side.

India will kick start its campaign with matches against Spain, Germany, Ireland and England from 15th to 25th February playing each team twice. The squad includes first-choice goalkeeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak along with Suraj Karkera and Prinedeep Singh in goal.

Jarmanpreet Singh, Amit Rohidas, captain Harmanpreet Singh, Sumit, Sanjay, Jugraj Singh, Nilam Sanjeev Xess, Varun Kumar and Yashdeep Siwach will be stationed in defence.

In the midfield, the team features Rajkumar Pal, Shamsheer Singh, Manpreet Singh, Vice Captain Hardik Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Nilakanta Sharma, Moirangthem Rabichandra Singh and Rajinder Singh.

Playing in the attack will be Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, Mandeep Singh, Gurjant Singh, Bobby Singh Dhami, Shilanand Lakra, Dilpreet Singh, Arajjeet Singh Hundal, Uttam Singh and lastly Angad Bir Singh and Arshdeep Singh make the cut.

Impressive performances in the junior team and the ongoing Hockey India League have won 22-year-old Angad Bir Singh and 20-year-old Arshdeep Singh their first senior team call-ups for the upcoming FIH Pro League matches.

Speaking on the squad selection, Indian men's team head coach Craig Fulton stated as quoted by the Hockey India press release, "Extremely happy with the squad we have selected for the upcoming Bhubaneswar leg matches of the FIH Pro League 2024-25. I believe this team can win us games, perform in harmony and most importantly play an impressive brand of hockey. Looking forward to training with the players in the camp and starting our Pro League campaign on the right note."

"I have been scouting these players over the last few weeks and am

excited to see what they do against some of the best international teams in the world," he added.

Indian Men's Hockey Team for FIH Pro League 2024-25:

- Goalkeepers:
1. Krishan Bahadur Pathak
2. Suraj Karkera
3. Prinedeep Singh
Defenders:
4. Jarmanpreet Singh
5. Amit Rohidas
6. Harmanpreet Singh
7. Sumit
8. Sanjay
9. Jugraj Singh
10. Nilam Sanjeev Xess
11. Varun Kumar
12. Yashdeep Siwach
Midfielders:
13. Rajkumar Pal
14. Shamsheer Singh
15. Manpreet Singh
16. Hardik Singh
17. Vivek Sagar Prasad
18. Nilakanta Sharma
19. Moirangthem Rabichandra Singh
20. Rajinder Singh
Forwards:
21. Abhishek
22. Sukhjeet Singh
23. Lalit Kumar Upadhyay
24. Mandeep Singh
25. Gurjant Singh
26. Angad Bir Singh
27. Bobby Singh Dhami
28. Shilanand Lakra
29. Dilpreet Singh
30. Arajjeet Singh Hundal
31. Uttam Singh
32. Arshdeep Singh.

BAI-REC to host first-ever BWF Level 1 course in India to standardise coaching ecosystem

NEW DELHI, Jan 30 (Agencies): Continuing its effort to create a standardised coaching structure and build a strong network of qualified coaches, the Badminton Association of India (BAI), in association with REC Limited (a leading Maharatna company under the Ministry of Power) and the Sports Authority of India (SAI), will conduct the first-ever BWF Level 1 Course for coaches along with BAI Level 1 (Advanced) Courses at multiple venues in February and March.

The advanced coaching courses are part of BAI's continuous efforts to up-skill grassroots coaches and also encourage top players to take up coaching after they retire. The BWF Level 1 courses, which are supported by both the REC Limited and SAI, will be held in Goa, Raipur, and Guwahati with each state association allowed to nominate preferably one male & one female representative between the age of 25-45, who fulfil the basic criteria of having represented the state in National or Zonal championships and have coaching experience of three years with the association.

The first leg of the coaching courses began in Goa on Monday while the second edition will be held in Raipur from February 4-10, 2025. Guwahati will host the third edition from February 12-18.

Speaking about the initiative, BAI Secretary General Sanjay Mishra said, "For the last few years, BAI has been working toward creating a standardised coaching structure to ensure that every player in the country gets the same quality of coaching from the grassroots to elite level. Having successfully conducted the grassroots coaches' courses last year, it was a natural progress to now conduct the BWF Level 1 and BAI Level 1 (Advanced) courses to upskill the coaches further," as quoted from a release by BAI.

Last year, BAI launched its first-ever Grassroots Coaches training program through which it trained around 250 coaches with training imparted to them across 112 days from March to October 2024. During the grassroots courses, the coaches got an opportunity to interact with qualified trainers, including former internationals, and were also explained the nuances of a holistic training programme, with experts from the field of sports psychology, nutrition, physiotherapy and even menstruation and its impact on women in sports.

Only those coaches who bagged Grade A in the BAI Grassroots Coaches Courses will be eligible for the BAI Level 1 (Advanced) Courses which will be held in Guwahati (February 14-23 and February 24-March 5) and Raipur (February 14-23).

World Pickleball League revolutionizes the sport with game-changing innovations

NEW DELHI, Jan 30 (Agencies): The World Pickleball League (WPBL) is transforming the landscape of professional pickleball with groundbreaking rule innovations designed to make the sport faster, more strategic, and highly engaging for players and fans, a release from the league said.

These new rules, being implemented for the first time, promise to enhance the spectator experience both in the stadium and through live broadcasts, as per the WPBL press release.

Currently, Mumbai Pickle Power leads the table with four tie wins and 47 points, followed by Bengaluru Jawans with 40 points. Hyderabad Superstars stands third with 28 points, Dilli Dillwale are at 24 points just 2 points above Pune United. Chennai Super Champs are at 16 points at the bottom of the table. The league action continues today



with Mumbai Pickle Power taking on Bengaluru Jawans, and Dilli Dillwale facing Pune United.

The innovative format, conceptualized by former Indian tennis players Gaurav Natekar and Arati Ponnappa Natekar, has been widely praised, making the games fast-paced and ensuring an adrenaline-filled experience.

bringing a new level of accuracy and fairness to the sport. This advanced officiating tool has received an overwhelmingly positive response from players, allowing for quick and precise line calls, reducing disputes, and maintaining the integrity of the game.

One of the most talked-about innovations is PicklePlay, a strategic element that allows coaches to substitute a player for five serves at any point after the first five minutes of the match. Each player is eligible for only one PicklePlay per tie, adding a fresh tactical dimension to the sport.

This new rule has been a game-changer, introducing strategic depth and unpredictability, as teams must decide the optimal moment to use their substitution to gain a competitive edge.

The impact of these rule changes has been so significant that this format is expected to be

adopted by pickleball leagues worldwide. The overwhelmingly positive response from players and fans has set a new benchmark in the sport, making WPBL's format the future of professional pickleball.

Gaurav Natekar, Co-founder and CEO of the World Pickleball League expressed his excitement about the success of the format.

"These innovative rules are designed to elevate pickleball to new heights, making it even more engaging for players and fans alike. From the tactical brilliance of PicklePlay to the introduction of Hawk-Eye technology and the thrill of timed matches, WPBL is redefining the way the game is played. The response from players and spectators has been phenomenal, and we are proud to be setting a new standard for the sport," Gaurav Natekar said as the release concluded.

Christina Matthews inducted into Australian Cricket Hall of Fame ahead of Women's Ashes Test

MELBOURNE, Jan 30 (Agencies): Christina Matthews, the former Australia wicket-keeper, vice-captain, and long-time cricket administrator, has been inducted into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame. She received her award just before the opening day of the historic women's Ashes Test at the MCG.

Matthews holds the record for the most Test matches played by an Australian woman, with 20, and is tied for sixth place globally. She also has the most dismissals in women's Test history, with 58, over a career spanning from 1984 to 1995. In addition to her Test career, Matthews played 47 ODIs and was part of Australia's World Cup-winning team in 1988 at the MCG.

Starting her career in Victoria, Matthews also played for New South Wales (NSW) and the Australian Capital Territory. Though she played more Test matches than any other Australian woman, Matthews is perhaps best known for her significant contributions to Australian cricket as an administrator.

She served on Australia's women's selection panel from 2007 to 2011 while working at Cricket NSW. In 2012, she was appointed Chief Executive Officer of Western Australia (WA) Cricket, where she oversaw a remarkable period of success spanning 12 years. Under her leadership, WA and the Perth Scorchers claimed multiple domestic trophies in both men's and women's cricket. Matthews also formed strong relationships with key figures like men's coaches Justin Langer and Adam Voges, as well as cricket general manager Kade Harvey. She played a vital role in the development of women's cricket in Australia.

After stepping down from her role as WA Cricket's CEO, Matthews made history in December 2024 by becoming the first female president of the Australian Cricketers Association. In recognition of her service to cricket as both a player and administrator, Matthews was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2024. She is also an Honorary



Member of the Melbourne Cricket Club and a life member of the Marylebone Cricket Club.

Matthews was inducted into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame by Chair Peter King outside the MCG, just 30 minutes before the toss for the opening day of the Ashes Test.

"Thank you to all my teammates who have been part of making this happen, those coaches who helped me enormously," Matthews said, as quoted by ESPNcricinfo.

"And I also want to acknowledge my partner and family who are here today to celebrate

this with me and also my mum and dad are no longer with us, but you can't achieve any of these things without the start they give you," she said.

"I had a choice where it could be presented and I didn't hesitate to choose this, such a historic occasion. And being from Melbourne myself, the MCG looms large as kind of the iconic ground in the world. So to be part of this and to be recognized in such a great environment is just incredible," she added.

"I did play World Cup final here, which we won in 1988 and I think I spent the whole day just looking around. There'll be plenty more people here today than there was then. But to get to play on this ground was an unbelievable dream," she noted.

Cricket Australia CEO Nick Hockley paid tribute to Matthews' contribution to Australian cricket. "I'm absolutely delighted Christina's outstanding contribution to cricket over more than 50 years has been acknowledged with her induction into the Australian Cricket Hall

of Fame," Cricket Australia CEO Nick Hockley paid tribute to Matthews, as quoted by ESPNcricinfo.

"Christina was an excellent Australian wicketkeeper and vice-captain and her records for most Test appearances for Australia as well as the most Test dismissals for any nation still stand today," he said.

"After her playing days, Christina became an absolute powerhouse of Australian Cricket with her passion for our game inspiring many transformative changes - particularly for the inclusion of women and girls," he added.

"In her role as WA Cricket CEO she oversaw a period of incredible success on and off the field, and she has in turn had a significant impact on Australian Cricket as a whole as a pioneer, leader and articulate voice for our game," he noted.

"Christina's induction seems particularly fitting as we celebrate the 90th anniversary of the first Women's Test match with the day/night Ashes Test at the MCG," he said.

Delegation of Physical Education Teachers call on Lt Governor Brig Mishra

Top News Report

LEH, Jan 30: A delegation of Physical Education Teachers from Kargil District called on the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd), at the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat on Thursday.

The delegation sought the HLG's intervention in addressing their long-pending transfer cases. Advisor to the HLG Dr. Pawan Kotwal, IAS; OSD to the Secretary Youth Service & Sports Dr. Stanzin Thakchos and Physical Education Teachers from Kargil



District were present during the meeting. The delegation apprised the LG that

they are serving as physical education teachers under the Department of Youth,

Service, and Sports. They conveyed that their transfer requests have been pending for over

nine years, resulting in them being stationed at the same location for an extended period. The LG acknowledged their concerns and directed the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Kargil to examine the cases in detail.

The HLG further instructed the delegation to submit a formal written representation detailing their grievances. He assured them that appropriate action would be taken following a thorough review of the submitted documentation.

Tsewang Dorjay, President of PAGIR call on Lt Governor Brig Mishra

Top News Report

LEH, Jan 30: Tsewang Dorjay, President of the People Action Group of Inclusion and Rights (PAGIR), called on the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) at the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat. During the meeting, Dorjay sought the Lieutenant Governor's assistance in the preparation for the Para Ice Hockey Girls Tournament.

Advisor to the LG, Dr. Pawan Kotwal, IAS; OSD to the Secretary Youth, Service, and Sports, Dr. Stanzin Thakchos; and the President of PAGIR, Tsewang Dorjay were present during the meeting.

Dorjay informed the HLG that the Para Ice Hockey Girls Tournament is scheduled to take place in Korea in the months of June and



July.

He requested assistance for the participation of the Para Ice Hockey Girls Team from Ladakh in the tournament, specifically in the registration of the Para Ice Hockey Association as a society and the procurement of equipment for training purposes.

In response, the Lieutenant Governor instructed the OSD to the Secretary Youth, Service, and Sports to visit and observe the games, assess the standard of practice and equipment, and make the necessary selec-

tions and preparations for the team. Additionally, the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor directed the OSD to form a Federation and assist in the registration process through the Sports Authority of India and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. Furthermore, a letter will be written to the Ministry to facilitate the team's participation in Korea.

The LG instructed OSD Dr. Thakchos to submit a report on the matter to the Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor by 18 February 2025.

Pamban Railway Bridge Reconstruction Nears Completion



Top News Report

JAMMU / RAMANATHAPURAM, Jan 30: The much-anticipated reconstruction of the iconic Pamban Railway Bridge, a crucial link connecting the Indian mainland to Rameswaram Island in Tamil Nadu, is nearing completion. Undertaken by the Southern Railway, the project is set to be finished by November 2024.

Sanctioned in February 2019,

the reconstruction replaces the historic Pamban Bridge, originally commissioned in 1914 for Metre Gauge traffic and later adapted for Broad Gauge in 2007.

The new bridge incorporates state-of-the-art technology, including an electro-mechanical navigational span system integrated with train control mechanisms, replacing the old manual lifting system.

Spanning 2.10 km, the new

bridge has been built at a cost of Rs 531 crore. Its construction rests on a robust pile foundation with 333 piles extending 38 meters below the seabed. The structure comprises 99 spans of 18.30 meters each and a central span of 72.50 meters. A key highlight is the vertical lift mechanism, capable of rising 17 meters in just 5 minutes and 30 seconds, facilitating seamless maritime navigation.

Trains will operate on the

bridge at speeds of up to 75 km/h. Additionally, the bridge has been designed to accommodate future double-line electrification. The construction involves the use of 5,772 metric tonnes of stainless steel reinforcement and 4,500 metric tonnes of structural steel, ensuring long-term durability and resilience.

Given its location in a highly corrosive marine environment, the bridge is coated with a specialised anti-corrosion system, including zinc metallising and polysiloxane paint, significantly extending its lifespan.

Once operational, the Pamban Railway Bridge is expected to enhance connectivity to Rameswaram, providing a major boost to regional economic growth and tourism. The bridge's advanced technology and superior design make it a significant milestone in India's railway infrastructure development, promising safer and more efficient transportation for passengers and freight alike.

Bhagat, Kaith, others express deep sorrow over tragic stampede at Maha Kumbh Mela



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 30: Former Retired IAS Officer Guldev Raj Bhagat, R.L.Kaith, Hans Raj Loria, Ex

Subedar Baldev Chand Sandhu, Ex Havildar Des Raj Kaith, Master Naresh Kumar Kaith, Vicky Kaith, Jagdish Raj Kaith and many others at a condolence

meeting held here on Thursday, expressed their deep sorrow over the tragic stampede that took place on 29 January, 2025 that took place at the Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh.

The incident, which occurred during the Amrit Snan on the Amavasya, resulted in at least 15 fatalities and many injuries.

All present offered condolences to the families of victims, and also wished a speedy recovery for the injured.

Several delegations of Ex-servicemen groups call on Lt Governor Brig Mishra



Top News Report

LEH, Jan 30: Several delegations of ex-servicemen groups called on the Lieutenant Governor Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) at the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat on Thursday. The meetings were attended by Advisor to the LG, Dr. Pawan Kotwal, IAS; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Shabbir Hussain, JKAS; SDM Kharu; OSD Secretary Tourism, Mohd Ali Tak; and Councillor Shara, Sonam Thardot.

In one of the meetings, ex-servicemen

groups from Shara Sharnos requested the HLG to allot land at Shara-Upshi for the construction of their office. They informed the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor that they engage in welfare activities which would benefit from the allotment of the land. In response, the Advisor to the HLG directed SDM Kharu to seek a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Nambardar of Shara and send the recommendation to the Revenue Department.

In another meeting, ex-servicemen groups

from the Durbuk region requested the LG for the resettlement of ex-servicemen from the region to the border areas in view of the recent promotion of Border Tourism. In response, the HLG contacted the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the 3 Division and sought details regarding the matter. The HLG assured the delegation that infrastructure related to tourism would be created by the Army and that the management of these facilities would be outsourced to the local ex-servicemen of the Durbuk region.

Jaundice in Qazigund; Situation under control, no need to panic: BMO

Urges residents to ensure safe water and sanitation practices to prevent further infections

Top News Report

QAZIGUND, Jan 30: The situation in Khahgund area which falls under medical block Qazigund where ten persons have tested positive for jaundice is under control, and there is no cause for panic while special teams of experts are actively monitoring the situation on ground, official said on Thursday.


Block Medical Officer (BMO) Qazigund, Dr. Nighat Nasreen told that things are totally under control and emphasized there is no need to panic.

"A combined team of experts from health department are working on ground and they have taken samples, but the report is yet to come regarding the cause of the jaundice in the area".

She said that the screening process is underway, and so far, 10 people have tested positive for jaundice in the area.

"The situation is under control as all patients are stable and recovering well," she said.

She urged authorities and residents to ensure safe water and sanitation practices to prevent further infections.



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