

TOP NEWS OF J&K



JAMMU, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 09, 2025

Daily Evening Newspaper



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Yami talks about moving away from damsel-in-distress roles



Akhilesh demands toll fee waiver for vehicles in UP during Maha Kumbh

Trump is signing up local law officers to help with immigration enforcement

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BRIEFLY

PTI flag, balloons found hanging on walnut tree in Doda

DODA, Feb 9 (Agencies): A flag of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), the party led by former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, was found entangled with a cluster of balloons on a walnut tree in Gurekhra village of Gandoh, in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district, on Saturday evening, officials said.

Images and videos from the scene show the PTI flag suspended among the tree branches, caught with colorful balloons, as per visuals available. The incident has raised concerns, prompting local authorities to initiate an investigation into its origin and significance.

A police official, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed that security agencies are verifying all aspects of the case. "We are assessing whether this was an intentional act, cross-border mischief, or merely an airborne object carried by the wind," the official said.

Instances of Pakistani political symbols appearing in Jammu and Kashmir have been reported in the past, often leading to security alerts. Authorities remain vigilant to prevent any potential unrest or misinterpretation of the event.

Further details will be shared following the investigation, officials added.

Fire breaks out in hotel in Sonamarg, fire tenders on job

GANDERBAL, Feb 9 (Agencies): A fire broke out in a hotel in Sonamarg market in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Saturday evening, officials said.

An official said that fire broke out in hotel Sounsar in the Sonamarg market this evening.

He said that soon after the incident, fire trucks rushed to the spot to douse off the flames.

More details are awaited.

Three cops injured as Mehbooba Mufti's escort vehicle skids off road in Baramulla

SRINAGAR, Feb 9 (Agencies): Three Jammu and Kashmir Police personnel sustained minor injuries after an escort

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Delhi CM Atishi submits resignation to Lt Governor Saxena

NEW DELHI, Feb 9 (Agencies): Delhi Chief Minister Atishi handed over her resignation to Lt Governor V K Saxena on Sunday, a day after her Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) faced a crushing defeat in the assembly polls.

Atishi, who retained her Kalkaji seat, handed over her resignation to Saxena at Raj Niwas, officials said.



The LG's office said that Saxena has asked the

outgoing CM to continue on the post till formation

of a new government. The BJP is expected to stake claim to power next week after Prime Minister Narendra Modi returns from a foreign visit, party leaders said. "Hon'ble Lt Governor, Shri VK Saxena today received the resignation of Hon'ble CM, Ms Atishi. He asked her to continue in her position till the formation of the

■ Turn to page 9

Div Com Kashmir visits Sonamarg, assures full support to fire victims

GANDERBAL, Feb 9 (Agencies): Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, on Sunday visited Sonamarg to take stock of the situation emerged after devastating fire incident which left dozens of shops and other commercial establishments gutted.



He expressed solidarity with the affected fire victims and assures full support in their rehabilitation. He also urged people to install fire extinguishers and insure their properties to prevent losses caused by fire mishaps.

Talking to reporters,

■ Turn to page 9

Tarun Chugh slams AAP after Delhi bypoll defeat, calls It 'people's punishment

JAMMU, Feb 9 (Agencies): BJP General Secretary Tarun Chugh has taken a sharp dig at the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) following its defeat in the Delhi bypolls, calling it a punishment by the People of Delhi to those who looted Delhi in the form of 'AAP-da'.

Chugh said that the people of Delhi have decisively rejected those who "looted" the city, referring to AAP as



"AAP-da."

He said that the Congress had already faced a humiliating defeat in Delhi, failing to secure even a single seat.

Chugh asserted that voters are continuously responding to those who "defame the country" and that Delhi's electoral results mark the end of Arvind Kejriwal's "politics of lies and hypocrisy."

The BJP leader also claimed that people in Punjab are eager to oust AAP from power, signaling broader discontent with the party beyond

■ Turn to page 9

PDP's Iltija Mufti Meets family of youth who died by suicide after alleged torture in Kathua

JAMMU, Feb 9 (Agencies): PDP leader Iltija Mufti on Sunday met the family of a youth who recently committed suicide after alleged torture by police over his suspected links with terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, party leaders said. Jammu travel guide

This comes a day after Iltija claimed that she and her mother Mehbooba Mufti had been placed under house arrest.

Makhan Din (25), a Gujar youth from Billaar area of Kathua, ended his life by consuming insecticide at his home on Tuesday

evening and recorded the act on a video claiming innocence. He denied any connection with terrorists, prompting separate probes by the police and the local administration.

PDP president and former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti

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Liquor, Non-Veg Food prohibited around Vaishno Devi Shrine for two more months

JAMMU, Feb 9 (Agencies): Authorities have extended by two more months the ban on the sale, possession and consumption of liquor and non-vegetarian food in Katra, the base camp for pilgrims visiting Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu and Kashmir's

Reasi district, officials said on Sunday.

The prohibition will be enforced on the 12-km track from Katra to the holy cave on the Trikuta hill and adjoining areas, they said and added that the order would remain in force for two months from the date of its issuance, unless revoked earlier.

Katra sub-divisional magistrate Piyush Dhotra has prohibited the sale, possession and consumption of liquor and non-vegetarian food, under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik

■ Turn to page 9

J&K Police intensify inspections to curb misuse of SIM cards by Terrorists

SRINAGAR, Feb 9 (Agencies): Police have ramped up efforts to curb the misuse of Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) cards by terrorists and criminal elements and carried out extensive inspections in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

Police on Sunday said extensive inspections have been carried out across multiple districts, including Srinagar, Ganderbal, Anantnag, Budgam, Pulwama, Shopian, Bandipora, Samba, and Kishtwar, to ensure strict compliance with Know Your Customer (KYC) norms by SIM card vendors.

Over the past year, more than 30 individuals have been arrested for procuring SIM cards in their names and passing them on to terrorists for unlawful activities,

police said.

These measures aim to prevent unauthorised issuance and misuse of SIM cards, maintaining the security and integrity of communication networks.

Over the past year, more than 30 individuals have been arrested for procuring SIM cards in their names and passing them on to terrorists for unlawful activities, police said.

The State Investigation Agency and district police units continue to take firm action against such violations.

J&K Police remain committed to public safety and will continue enforcement measures to prevent the exploitation of communication networks by anti-national and criminal elements.

The police urged the

■ Turn to page 9

Wanted criminal evading arrest for two years held in Jammu

JAMMU, Feb 9 (Agencies): A wanted criminal was arrested here on Sunday after a two-year hunt, police said.

Surjan Sansi, a resident of Rehal village of Bishnah, is a history-sheeter and his arrest is a major success for police in its drive against gangsters, a police spokesperson said.

He said Sansi was evading arrest for the past two years and was wanted in connection with the killing of a man identified as Akshay Kumar in Ramgarh area of Samba district in December 2023.

A police party from Bishnah police station arrested Sansi from his hideout in Jammu.

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10TH DAY/KRIYA/RASAM PAGRI/UTHALA

With profound grief & sorrow, we regret to inform you that our beloved mother **Smt Karan Devi** W/o Th. Karam Singh Manhas originally R/o Village Tope Manhasan presently R/o H.No. 156 Rampura left for heavenly abode on 30th January 2025.

10th Day will be performed on 8th Feb. 2025 at Durga Bhawan at 11 AM.

Kriya will be performed on 11th Feb. 2025 at home at 11 AM.

Rasam Pagri/Uthala on 12th Feb. 2025 at 2 PM onward followed by Pritibhoj at Durga Bhawan.

GRIEF STRICKEN**Daughters-in-law & Sons**

Mrs Neelam & Kanwal Singh Manhas - 9419125441

Mrs Rosina & Narinder Singh Manhas

Grand Children: Anshu, Ashish, Abhishek, Tejaswani.



Smt Karan Devi
(1944 - 2025)

UTHALA/RASAM PAGRI

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform you of the sad demise of our beloved father **Shri Bal Krishan Taggar (Retired ZEO)** R/o Samba on 30th January 2025

Uthala/Rasam Pagri will be performed on 10th February 2025 (Monday) at Dina Nath Memorial Hall, New Bus Stand, Samba between 01:00 PM to 02:00 PM.

Grief Stricken

Kovid Taggar and Sonali Mahajan - **Son and Daughter in law**

Kinnary Taggar and Sanjeev Sharma - **Daughter and Son in law**

Advik Taggar, Aarvika Taggar and Daivik Sharma - **Grandchildren**

Taggar Family, Samba

9419699972 / 9810597671



Shri Bal Krishan Taggar

10TH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

"ALWAYS OF OUR'S HEART"

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform that our beloved (Father) **Sh. Parth Singh Charak** S/o Lt. Sh. Purjag Singh Charak H.No. 86 (Private), Sec 2 Chhanni Himmat, Jammu left for heavenly abode on 30-1-2025.

10TH DAY will be performed on 7th of Feb (Friday) 2025 at our residence at 11 AM.

KRIYA will be performed on 10th of Feb (Monday) 2025 at our residence at 12 AM.

UTHALA will also be performed on 10th of Feb (Monday) 2025 at our residence at 2 PM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt. Bimla Devi - **Wife**

Brothers and Bhabhis

Lt Sub Sh. Chaitar Singh Charak and Lt. Smt. Shakuntla Devi

Sh. Kehar Singh Charak and Neelam Charak

Son's-in-law and Daughters-in-law

Keshav Singh Charak and Laxmi Charak

Labh Singh Charak and Rajni Charak

Son's-in-law & Daughter

Dalit Singh Chib and Sushma Chib

Haram Singh and Meenu Thakur

Mobile Nos : 9858510575, 9906310575, 9419122089, 9419797224



Sh. Parth Singh Charak

10TH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

For our beloved mother, **Parkasho Devi**, wife of the Late Sh. Govind Ram Sharma, will be held on Feb 8, 2025, Saturday at 12:00 hrs at residence.

Kriya: Feb 9, 2025, Sunday at 12:00 hrs. at residence

Uthala: Feb 10, 2025, Monday from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm at Geeta Bhawan, Vinayak Nagar, Upper Muthi.

Deepest Regards From:

Sons & Daughters-in-law

Sh Ram Lal Sharma & Smt Anita Sharma

Sh Anil Chand Sharma & Smt Soodi Sharma

Sh K D Sharma & Smt Sangeeta Sharma

Sh Prithvi Sharma & Smt Veena Sharma

Smt Ram Payari & Sh Kaka Ram Sharma (Daughter and Son-in-law)

Smt Swarna W/o Late Sh Bharat Bhushan Sharma (Daughter and Son-in-law)

Smt Vaishno & Sh Tribhuvan Sharma (Daughter and Son-in-law)

Contact:- 9419100359, 9560277750, 9419362296, 9622088361

R/O Village Mathwar



Parkasho Devi

OBITUARY/10th DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved father, **Shri Chaman Lal Khachroo**, originally from Shalayar, Habbakadal, Srinagar and presently residing at E-606, Stellar Jeevan, Sector 1 Greater Noida West Noida, left for his heavenly abode on 3rd February 2025.

The **10TH DAY KRIYA** will be held at Chhota Haridwar/ Gangah Nahar Ghat, Muradnagar on 12th February 2025 at 8.30 am.

IN GRIEF

Ratani Bamzai (Wife)

Indu Munshi and S N Munshi (Daughter and Son in Law)

Kiran Kaboo and Sunil Kaboo (Daughter and Son in Law)

Youngley and Jubbi - **Nephews**

Raje and, Vyoma Kaboo and, Anoj (Grand Children and their spouses)

Saany - (Great Grand Child)

KHACHROOS, BAMZAI'S, LAJPAT NAGAR WALE, MUNSHIS, KABOOS, KOULS AND KAULS, MATTOOS



Shri Chaman Lal Khachroo

KRIYA AND UTHALA

With profound grief, we announce the sad demise of **Smt. Savita Sharma**, W/o Late Dr. Shiv Kumar Sharma, R/o 60, Roukhi Bakshi Nagar, Jammu on 31.01.2025.

Kriya will be performed on Monday, 10th February, 2025, at 12 noon at their Residence, H.No. 60, Bakshi Nagar, Jammu.

Uthala and Rasam Pagri will be performed on Monday, 10th February, 2025 from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Geeta Mandir Smriti Bhawan, Bakshi Nagar, Jammu.

Grief Stricken:**Sons and Daughters-in-Law**

Dhruv Sharma and Priyanka Sharma

Karan Sharma and Swati Sharma

Bhanu Sharma and Neha Sharma

Grand Children: Dhvani, Devansh, Priyanshu

Contact: 94193-60446, 98166-61022

"Forever in our hearts. May her soul rest in peace."



Smt. Savita Sharma

10TH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform about the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Rajinder Gupta** S/o Late Sh. Shiv Ram Gupta R/o Shakti Nagar, Kalibari, Kathua on 03.02.2025.

10TH DAY will be performed on 12.02.2025 (Wednesday) at 11am at Tangari Palace, Kathua

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt. Suman Gupta (Wife)

Sons & Daughter In Law

Gaurav & Bharti Gupta

Ritesh & Priya Gupta

Brothers And Sister In Law

Sh. Chaman Lal Gupta & Late Smt Kailash Gupta

Sh. Manohar Lal Gupta & Late Smt Nirmal Gupta

Late Sh. Subash Gupta & Smt Sureshta Gupta

Sister & Brother In Law

Smt. Kailash Gupta & Late Sh. Harbans Lal Gupta

M: 9697627171, 9622942100



SH. RAJINDER GUPTA
14.05.1951-03.02.2025
(CHANN ARRORIAN WALEY)

TENTH DAY/KIRYA/UTHALA

With profound grief, we regret to inform you that our beloved **Smt Kusum Khajuria**, W/o Dr.Yash Pal Sharma, R/o 132 Raghunath Pura, Jammu Tawi, has joined the lotus feet of Almighty, on January 30, 2025.

Tenth Day rituals will be performed on 08-02-2025 (Saturday) 11:00 AM onwards at Tootlyan, Rani Park, Jammu. **Rasam Kriya**

will be performed at our residence 132 Raghunath Pura, Jammu on 09-2-2025 (Sunday). **Uthala** will be performed on 10-2-2025 (Monday) at 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM at Brahman Sabha, Parade Jammu.

Grief Stricken

Sh Arvind Sharma & Smt Anjana Sharma (Son & Daughter-in-Law)

(**Brother & Sister-in-Law**)

Sh Rajinder Khajuria (Rtd. Pri. Tech Officer IIM Jammu) & Smt Madhu Khajuria

Col Ajay Khajuria & Smt Lajjo Khajuria (**Brother & Sister-in-Law**)

Sanjay Khajuria- Reporter Times of India (**Brother**)

Smt Vijay Bai W/o late Sh Bhim Sen Bai (**Sister & Brother in Law**)

Smt Khashyma and Sh Bhupinder Singh (**Sister & Brother in Law**)

Diksha Khajuria, Arunuma Khajuria, Raghunandan Khajuria, Adityanadan Singh,

Sidhant Khajuria (**Nephews and Nieces**)

Vishwas Ball and Isha Ball (**Nephew and Daughter in law**)

9419194549; 99880 49292; 9419211301 8493805403



Smt Kusum Khajuria

OBITUARY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform that **Smt Kanta Kaw** W/o Sh. B.L. Kaw originally R/o Madanyar Srinagar at present Bhawani Nagar Jammu left us for her heavenly abode on 2-2-2025 at Bombay.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed at Akhnor Ghat on 10-2-2025.

PRAYERS/ASSEMBLY will be held at our residence 35 B Lane No-6, Bhawani Nagar Jammu at 11:30 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Mr. Bansil Lal Kaw - **Husband**

Mr C.L. Kaw & Mrs. Rajni Kaw - **Brother-in-law & Sister-in-law**

Mr Shivake Kaw & Mrs. Priyanka Kaw - **Son & Daughter-in-law**

Mrs Sumit Kaw & Mrs.Ashwini Naik Kaw - **Son & Daughter-in-law**

Mr Raj Kumar & Mrs Kailash Devi - **Brother & Bhabhi**

Ms Santosh Kumari & Ms Bholi Devi - **Sister**

BHAT'S, RAZDAN'S, RAINA'S, KUNDU'S, ZUTSHI'S

CONTACT NO: 9540941892, 8491971092, 9419286664, 8828158942



SMT KANTA KAW

10th Day/Kriya/Uthala

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved father **Sh. Om Parkash Manhas** S/o Late Sh. Bal Krishan Manhas R/o Bahu Fort Jammu on 29-01-2025.

Tenth Day will be performed on 07-02-2025 (Friday) at our residence at 11.00 am. **Karam Kriya** will be performed on 08-02-2025 (Saturday) at our residence.

Pagri/Uthala will be performed on 10-02-2025 (Monday) at our residence at 04.00 pm.

Grief Stricken

Smt. Rama Manhas- **Wife**

Sh. Vikram Manhas- **Son**

Smt. Nidhi Manhas- **Daughter-in-Law**

Sh. Rohini Manhas- **Son**

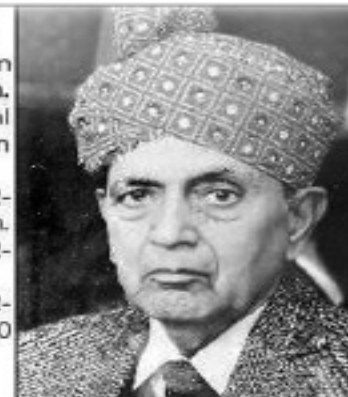
Smt. Priya Manhas- **Daughter-in-Law**

Sh. Ashok Manhas- **Brother**

Sh. Kishore Manhas- **Brother**

Smt. Juhli Manhas & Sh. Ajay- **Daughter & Son-in-Law**

Mob.: 7006272451, 9419108226



Sh. Om Parkash Manhas

10TH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform about the sad demise of our beloved **Sh Kushal Magotra** S/o Late Sh Thakur Dass, R/o Magotra House, Opp.Tawi Apartments, Sidhra, Jammu.

The **10th Day** will be performed at our residence Magotra House, Opp.Tawi Apartments, Sidhra on 09-02-2025 (Sunday) from 12 noon onwards.

Kriya will be held at our residence Magotra House, Opp.Tawi Apartments, Sidhra on 10-02-2025 (Monday) at 12 noon.

GRIEF-STRICKEN:

Rama Devi (**Mother**)

Nidhi Magotra (**Wife**)

Ananya & Shiv Magotra (**Daughter-in-law & Son**)

Usha & Ram Krishan Sharma (**Sister & Brother-in-law**)

Sunanda & Jugal Kishore Sharma-Ex Minister (**Bhabhi & Brother**)

Ramni & Late Mohinder Sharma (**Bhabhi & Brother**)

Sarla & Deepak Raina (**Sister & Brother-in-law**)

Anju & Kuldeep Magotra (**Bhabhi & Brother**)

Mob: 9622559699



Sh Kushal Magotra

10TH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform about the sad demise of our beloved **Sh Kushal Magotra** S/o Late Sh Thakur Dass, R/o Magotra House, Opp.Tawi Apartments, Sidhra, Jammu.

The **10th Day** will be performed at our residence Magotra House, Opp.Tawi Apartments, Sidhra on 09-02-2025 (Sunday) from 12 noon onwards.

Kriya will be held at our residence Magotra House, Opp.Tawi Apartments, Sidhra on 10-02-2025 (Monday) at 12 noon.

GRIEF-STRICKEN

Rama Devi (**Mother**)

Nidhi Magotra (**Wife**)

Ananya & Shiv Magotra (**Daughter-in-law & Son**)

Usha & Ram Krishan Sharma (**Sister & Brother-in-law**)

Sunanda & Jugal Kishore Sharma-Ex Minister (**Bhabhi & Brother**)

Ramni & Late Mohinder Sharma (**Bhabhi & Brother**)

Sarla & Deepak Raina (**Sister & Brother-in-law**)

Anju & Kuldeep Magotra (**Bhabhi & Brother**)

Mob: 9622559699



Sh Kushal Magotra

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform about the sad demise of our beloved mother **Karamyogi Smt. Gopi Shori Raina** W/o Lt. Sh. Soom Nath Raina originally resident of Village Gled Gled, Distt. Kupwara (Kashmir); Presently at H.No.87, Lane no.6, Laxmi Nagar, Muthi, Jammu, J&K UT; left for her heavenly abode on 2nd of February 2025.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed at Akhnor Ghat on 11/02/2025 (7:30 AM) and the Assembly will be held at Muthi Ghat near Director School Education office around 11:00 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Sh. Jager Nath Bhat (Brother)

Smt. Pooja J. and Dr. H N Bhat (Bhabhi and Brother)

Smt. Disha J. Bhat (Bhabhi)

Smt. Nisha J. and Sh. Tejendra Raina (Daughter in law and Son)

Smt. Usha J. and Mr. Lal Pandita (Daughter and Son in law)

Smt. Disha J. and Manohar Lal Raina (Daughter in law and Son)

Smt. Shikha J. and Deepak Raina (Daughter in law and Son)

Smt. Nisha and Sh. Sunny Raina (Grand Daughter in law & Grandson)

Smt. Rajal Bhat and Sh. Anil Bhat (Granddaughter & Grand Son in Law)

Smt. Shalini Gupta and Sh. Gaurav Gupta (Granddaughter & Grand Son in Law)

Smt. Pooja Pandit & Sh. Anil Pandit (Grand Daughter in law & Grandson)

Smt. Usha Bhat and Sh. Samit Bhat (Granddaughter & Grand Son in Law)

Smt. Shalini Chattervedi and Sh. Shubham Chattervedi (Granddaughter & Grand Son in Law)

Dr. Varsha Tandon and Dr. Karan Tandon (Granddaughter & Grand Son in Law)

Grand Grand Children: Shyama, Ananya, Myra, Janki, Gaurav, Divyanshu, Karishma, Divyanshu, Vishnu, Darsh

CONTACT NO: 700625375 ; 9419131565 ; 9419131565 ; 997565334



SMT. GOPI SHORI RAINA

TENTH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

India's quantum leap testified by global success stories 'Vaccine', 'Chandrayaan': Dr Jitendra

Top News Report

JAMMU / NEW DELHI, Feb 9 : Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh said here on Sunday that India's quantum leap was testified by global success stories like "Vaccine" and "Chandrayaan". He was speaking after inaugurating the new premises of "Vigyan Bharati" in the national capital, describing the same as a long-felt need. He emphasized that the office would serve as a center for exchange of ideas and a seat of learning. Addressing the ceremony, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh stated that India is witnessing a transformative era in science under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He highlighted how the Prime Minister not only encourages but also provides unwavering support to the scientific



community, strengthening it with resources and enabling collaborations with non-governmental sectors to achieve the best outcomes. Reflecting on the advancements of the past decade, Dr. Jitendra Singh stressed that while India has always had immense scientific acumen and talent, the missing element was commitment and prioritization from the political leadership—something that is now being actively addressed under PM Modi's governance. Dr. Jitendra Singh underscored the significant progress India has made, particularly in healthcare. He noted that India, once not taken seriously in curative healthcare, is now

emerging as a global leader in preventive healthcare. He proudly mentioned India's achievements, including : The first DNA vaccine developed during the pandemic. The first indigenous HPV vaccine to combat cervical cancer and rapid advancements in space technology, despite a late start in the sector. He also spoke about India's commitment to global climate change efforts, reaffirming the country's target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070. Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted the importance of Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL), calling it a valuable repository of indigenous wisdom. He cited exam-

ples such as: The Konark Temple in Odisha, which remained intact even after the super cyclone of 2000, showcasing India's architectural resilience. The growing interest in traditional medicine, as seen during the pandemic when the West explored homeopathy and naturopathy for potential remedies. He also referenced India's success in using steel slag for road construction in Arunachal Pradesh, in collaboration with the Tata Group, drawing parallels with the durable routes of Ajanta and Ellora that have withstood the test of time. Quoting Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Dr. Singh remarked, "By

remaining committed to our legacy, we should not deprive ourselves of what is happening across the world." He urged Vigyan Bharati to act as an interface for identifying initiatives and fostering collaborations, similar to how IN-SPACe and BIRAC have become successful platforms for the space and biotechnology sectors, respectively. He also proudly announced India's recent breakthrough in pharmaceuticals with the creation of the indigenous antibiotic 'Nafithromycin', positioning India as a leader in both traditional and cutting-edge technologies. Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized that integration is no longer an option but a necessity and called upon Vigyan Bharati to become a key medium for broader scientific integration. He expressed confidence that such efforts would drive India's continued rise as a global powerhouse in science and technology.

Director Agriculture Jammu inspects developmental activities at RS Pura Sub Division

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 9: The Director of Agriculture Production & Farmer Welfare Jammu, Shri Arvinder Singh Reen, conducted a comprehensive inspection of the ongoing developmental activities in the RS Pura Sub Division today. The visit aimed to assess various field activities and highlight the advanced farming techniques being implemented in the region. On this occasion, Ex-Sarpanch Balbir Kour, SDAO RS Pura Surinder Gupta, Subject Matter Specialists, Agriculture Extension Officers and the staff of the Sub-Division Agriculture Office RS Pura were also present. The tour began with a demonstration of drone technology for foliar spraying of Nano Urea and Sagrika in the Pan-chayat Trewa area of RS Pura. Wheat crops were sown using a super seeder, and the fertilizers were precisely applied using drones, ensuring uniform distribution and minimal wastage. Nano Urea, which enhances nitrogen use efficiency, and Sagrika, a growth-promoting fertilizer, were the key inputs. Director A.S. Reen empha-

sized the revolutionary approach to modern farming and the potential to improve crop yield and reduce labor costs with this technology. "The use of drones in this demonstration is a game-changer for farmers," said Director Agriculture. "It not only highlights an innovative method for crop management but also shows how technology can reduce costs and enhance productivity in the agricultural sector." Later, Director A.S Reen visited the Polycarbonate Structure (Nursery Unit) of Beneficiary Tilak Raj in Village Puro Bhana. This nursery, with a size of 111 sq. meters, is part of the Promotion of Commercial Floriculture (HADP) initiative. The Director also inspected a Green Shade Net House (148 sq. meters) under the same program, where he discussed the advantages of these structures in promoting commercial floriculture in the region. Further, the Director visited the Potato Seed Village at Arnia, where he examined the ongoing harvesting operations. He also inspected a Hi-Tech Polyhouse (500 sq. meters) under the Promotion of Exotic Vegetables (HADP), belonging to

Beneficiary Raman Gupta in Village Badyal Brahmina. Director highlighted the immense benefits of the poly house for cultivating exotic vegetables, including employment generation for local communities. Continuing his tour, Director A.S Reen visited the Micro Irrigation Unit (Drip Irrigation) of Beneficiary Rajinder Kumar in Village Badyal Brahmana, Zone Kirpind. He underscored the importance of micro-irrigation in enhancing water use efficiency, particularly in dry and water-scarce regions. The Director also visited the exotic vegetable fields, where he inspected broccoli crops and interacted with local farmers to understand their concerns and how the Agriculture Department's schemes have benefitted them. The final stop of the inspection was the Round-the-Year Controlled Conditioned Mushroom Unit of Farmer Raman Gupta. Arvinder Singh Reen highlighted the advantages of controlled environmental conditions for mushroom cultivation, which ensures year-round production and improved quality.

Dimple leads protest for J&K statehood restoration



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 9: Sunil Dimple, president of Mission Statehood Jammu Kashmir, led a strong protest rally demanding the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's Dogra statehood and special status. He warned of a complete Jammu and Kashmir bandh if the state is not restored as per Supreme Court directives during the ongoing budget session. Addressing the rally, Dimple called upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah to fulfill their commitments and ensure the reinstatement of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood. He emphasized that the protest movement is gain

ing support from various political parties and organizations across Jammu, Kashmir, Pir Panjal, and Chenab Valley regions. "We are in contact with all stakeholders, and if our demands are not met, we will go for an entire Jammu and Kashmir bandh to push for the restoration of statehood, special status, and the implementation of Maharaja Hari Singh's Instrument of Accession conditions," Dimple stated. He also urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to resume the traditional Darbar Move from April. Additionally, Dimple demanded the government provide free drinking water, 200 units of electricity, 12 LPG cylinders, and double

rations for the people of Jammu and Kashmir starting this March. He specifically called for free electricity in areas where smart meters have been installed and warned of strong agitation if water meters are introduced. Criticizing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the central government, Dimple accused them of failing to act despite the Supreme Court's order to restore Jammu and Kashmir's statehood. He demanded the reimplementation of the Instrument of Accession conditions and the revival of the state subject system. Prominent leaders who participated in the protest rally included Swarn Lal, Arun Verma, Vijay Viridi, Mohan Lal, Skala Singh, Vikas, Deepak, Babu Singh, and several others.

Drug Control Officer Ramban conducts inspection of Medical Shops in Banihal

Top News Report

RAMBAN, Feb 9: In line with the directives of the State Drugs Controller and the District Administration, Drug Control Officer Ramban, Imtiyaz Ahmad, conducted inspections of medical shops across various villages in Banihal, including Bankoot, Kas-koot, Nowgam, Chereel, and Banihal Town. The inspection aimed to ensure compliance with regulations regarding the installation of CCTV cameras, implementation of computerized billing systems, and maintenance of psychotropic drug records. During the inspections, two medical shops were closed down for failing to comply with the provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act and were instructed to adhere to the prescribed norms. The inspecting team verified that all other medical establishments had installed CCTV cameras and adopted computerized billing systems as mandated.

The Drug Control Officer emphasized the importance of actively monitoring CCTV footage to ensure these systems effectively deter any malpractice. The implementation of these measures is expected to enhance transparency in transactions, improve inventory management, and reinforce accountability within the district's pharmaceutical sector. The proactive approach of the Drug Control Department will remain continuous in the district to safeguard public health and promote ethical practices in the pharmaceutical trade. The department will continue to regulate and monitor pharmaceutical activities to prevent the misuse or unauthorized distribution of drugs, ensuring the well-being of the public.

DPAP demands special package for development of Sarthal Devi Mandir under PRASAD scheme



Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Feb 9: Thakur Randeep Bhandari, Spokesperson of the DPAP, on Sunday urged J&K LG to announce a special package for the development of Sarthal Devi Mandir, a revered Hindu

temple in Kishtwar. "Sarthal Devi Mandir is not only a sacred place of worship but also a significant tourist destination, attracting thousands of devotees and visitors every year," said Thakur Randeep Bhandari. The DPAP spokesperson emphasized the need for a special package to upgrade the temple's infrastructure, and public amenities. He also stressed the importance of promoting tourism in the region, creating employment opportunities for local youth, and preserving the temple's rich cultural heritage. "We request the government to consider our demand and announce a special package for the development of Sarthal Devi Mandir," added Thakur Randeep Bhandari. Sarthal Devi Mandir, situated at an altitude of approximately 6,000 feet, is a cave temple dedicated to Goddess Durga. The temple is famous for its annual pilgrimage, known as Sarthal Yatra, which takes place in July.

NMC appeals CM to enhance medical allowance

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 9: President of the National Mazdoor Conference (NMC) Subash Shastri today appealed to the Chief Minister to enhance the medical allowance from Rs. 300 to Rs. 1000 per month as per the norm of UT administrations, throughout the country. Addressing a NMC workers during a meet Shastri said that UT of Ladakh has already hiked Medical allowance of the pensioners to Rs. 1000 per month from 1st of April 2020. "Medical allowance in UT J&K is just Rs. 300 for per month for the last two decade as the prices of medicines and other medi-

cal related expenditure has increased to a large extent so medical allowance should also be increased at par with UT Ladakh Administration." he maintained hoping that J&K UT Administration should take a decision in this regard soon so that pensioners may heave a sigh of relief from rising prices of medicines and other expenses. Shastri also demanded increase of 2% house rent in favour of UT J&K employees as the DA crossed 50%. Stressing on the need in releasing of pending DA / DR of 18 months from the month of January 2020 to ending June 2021 Shastri also appealed to the Central

Government to release the outstanding 3 DA instalments arrears blocked while rearing the same to its employees and pensioners 3 years ago. He said that since the price index and inflation on rise day today which has made salaried class and pensioners to face hardship to manage their livelihood. Shastri pointed out that it is the fitness of things that financial assistance so accrued by way of rising Dearness Allowance (DA) is released without any further delay. Shastri further hoped that the central Govt. will consider the burning demand of both Central/States/UTs

employees and pensioners in releasing the 3 DA instalments blocked arrears in favour of these employees and pensioners at the earliest. Release of 4% DA due from January 01, 2025 besides merging of 50% DA with pension and pay. Shastri further demanded regularization of the daily rated workers under SRO-64. Among other who were also present in the meeting included Rajan Babu Khajuria, B.S Jamwal, Surinder Kumar, Ram Singh, Anil Gupta, Ramesh Sharma, Chaman Lal, Birbal, Raman Sharma, Vinod Kumar, Sukhdev Singh, Subash Sharma and Ram Lal Sharma.

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Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
TAWI CANAL CONSTRUCTION DIVISION, RTIC, CANAL ROAD, JAMMU-180001
SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER
SHORT E-NIT 17 of 2024-25 Dated 07.02.2025

The Executive Engineer Tawi Canal Construction Division, Jammu on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of J&K UT invites tenders by e-tendering mode for the below mentioned works from reputed and eligible dealers registered with J&K UT Government and having renewed validity for the current year:

S.No	Name of work	Estimated Cost in Rs.	Cost of Document in Rs.	Earnest Money	Time of Completion	Class of Contractor
1.	Construction of Tractor crossing/culvert on Shamachak minor of D-10 of MTC near RD 450 M (BOQ as per SSR 2022)	339140/-	500/-	2% of advertised cost	30 days	A, B,C and D
2.	Construction of Tractor crossing/culvert on Sarba Minor of D-9 of MTC near RD 1800 M (BOQ as per SSR 2022)	200935/-	200/-	2% of advertised cost	30 days	A, B,C and D
3.	Construction of damaged flare wall of Main Tawi Canal RD 18750 M and RD 20800 M (BOQ as per SSR 2020)	456793/-	500/-	2% of advertised cost	30 days	A, B,C and D

Position of A.A.A : Accorded
Position of T. S : Accorded
Position of Funds : Partially Available
Important Dates:
i) Date of Publishing from : 07.02.2025 (6:00 PM)
ii) Downloading from : 08.02.2025 (10:00 AM)
iii) Uploading from : 08.02.2025 (10:00 AM)
iv) Uploading stops on : 15.02.2025 (6:00 PM)
v) Tender opens on : 17.02.2025 (2:00 PM- Subjective)

1. The bidding documents can be downloaded from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in>
2. The bids shall be uploaded/ submitted in electronic format on the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> The complete bidding process will be ONLINE.
3. The tender uploaded on the website up to due date will be opened on 17.02.2025 (2:00 PM - Subjective) in the office of the Executive Engineer Tawi Canal Construction Division, Jammu in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

-Sd-

No: TCCD/J/3269-82
Dated: 07.02.2025

DIP/J-9977/24

Executive Engineer
Tawi Canal Const Division
Jammu

EDITORIAL

ESSENCE OF HUMANITY

Life is the most precious gift, and saving lives is one of the noblest acts a person can perform. Throughout history, individuals and organizations have dedicated their efforts to preserving human life, whether through medical advancements, humanitarian aid, emergency services, or even small, everyday actions that make a significant impact. The act of saving lives transcends professions, cultures, and beliefs, emphasizing the shared responsibility of humanity to protect and uplift one another.

One of the most direct ways of saving lives is through medical science and healthcare. Over the years, advancements in medicine, technology, and research have drastically reduced mortality rates and increased life expectancy. Innovations such as vaccines, antibiotics, and surgical procedures have saved millions from fatal diseases and injuries.

Emergency medical services (EMS) play a crucial role in life-saving efforts. Paramedics, doctors, and nurses work tirelessly to provide immediate care in critical situations. Trauma centers and intensive care units serve as lifelines for those facing life-threatening conditions. Organ transplants, cancer treatments, and mental health interventions are other vital areas where modern medicine contributes to saving lives.

However, access to healthcare remains a challenge in many parts of the world. Efforts by global health organizations, governments, and NGOs to provide medical aid in underserved regions are critical in bridging this gap. Vaccination campaigns, mobile health clinics, and international medical missions have saved countless lives in communities that lack basic healthcare facilities.

Natural disasters, accidents, and conflicts pose significant threats to human life. Emergency responders, including firefighters, search-and-rescue teams, and disaster relief workers, are often the first line of defense in these situations. Their swift actions in evacuations, medical assistance, and infrastructure restoration help mitigate casualties and prevent further loss of life.

Organizations such as the Red Cross, United Nations relief agencies, and local community groups play a crucial role in disaster response. They provide food, shelter, medical aid, and psychological support to affected populations. Their coordinated efforts ensure that vulnerable individuals receive timely help, reducing the risk of casualties from secondary impacts such as disease outbreaks, malnutrition, or exposure.

Preventive healthcare and safety measures are fundamental in reducing mortality rates. Public awareness campaigns on road safety, fire hazards, drowning prevention, and disease control educate individuals on how to protect themselves and others. Wearing seat belts, installing smoke detectors, practicing proper hygiene, and following safety protocols at workplaces are small yet impactful actions that can prevent tragic incidents.

Mental health awareness is another critical aspect of saving lives. Suicide prevention programs, counseling services, and community support initiatives help individuals struggling with mental health issues. Encouraging open conversations about mental well-being and providing accessible resources can significantly reduce the risk of self-harm and suicide.

Beyond medical and emergency responses, humanitarian efforts contribute significantly to saving lives. Providing clean water, nutritious food, and education in impoverished areas ensures better health and survival rates. Efforts to combat climate change and pollution directly impact the longevity of human life by reducing environmental hazards.

Individuals can contribute to saving lives in various ways, such as donating blood, registering as organ donors, volunteering at shelters, or supporting charitable organizations. Acts of kindness, such as checking on elderly neighbors, helping the homeless, or advocating for social justice, can make a life-saving difference.

Technology has revolutionized life-saving efforts. From early warning systems for natural disasters to AI-driven diagnostics in healthcare, innovation plays a vital role in preserving human life. Drones are now being used for search-and-rescue operations, delivering medical supplies to remote areas, and even monitoring dangerous zones for safety.

The rise of telemedicine has made healthcare accessible to people in distant locations, enabling early diagnosis and timely medical intervention. Wearable health devices alert users about potential health issues, allowing them to seek medical help before conditions worsen.

Saving lives is not limited to medical professionals or emergency responders. It is a shared responsibility that every individual can partake in. Whether through direct action, advocacy, or simply being informed and prepared, we all have the power to make a difference.

By fostering a culture of compassion, responsibility, and proactive intervention, we can create a safer and healthier world. Every life saved is a testament to the power of human kindness, resilience, and innovation—reminding us that in protecting others, we uphold the very essence of humanity.

Death may be just an illusion..... nothing else....!

By: Dr. Anurag Pathak

When it comes to the mysteries of our universe and human life, the biggest mystery that many are curious, but also clueless about, is death. Religions have called death the only truth and afterlife as the gift (or curse) that we get depending on our conduct on this planet.

But none of this has been proven -- no one really knows what lies ahead. However, one American medical doctor and scientist, Robert Lanza, in his book, Biocentrism, states that death could actually be a door to an endless number of universes.

Einstein said “Now Besso has departed from this strange world a little ahead of me. That means nothing. People like us ... know that the distinction between past, present and future is only a stubbornly persistent illusion.”

New evidence continues to suggest that Einstein was right, death is an illusion.

Most fundamental law of Nature. Conservation of energy. Energy can neither be created nor destroyed; rather, it can only be transformed or transferred from one form to another.

When star ends its life, turn into dust, and by gravity into another star. Even 100% of momentum is conserved. Energy is conserved in 100%, only changes form. There is no “death” in this Universe.

When one ends life, only make space for other forms of life. All carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen, oxygen, and other elements that build human being and any other life on Earth, do not change in moment of death. Nothing happens. Same elements will be used to build other form of life very soon.

We don’t come into this world, we come out of it. Like a mushroom coming to the surface. In fact the mushroom is only the fleshy fruit body of the much bigger fungal network in the

soil. If the mushroom gets eaten or cut off it doesn’t affect the fungal network underground. Similarly we could be seen like a fruit growing out of this world. We identify with this “fruit” and we say we are a separate being. Therefore many people are terrified by the thought of death and disappearing into nothingness forever. Because we are just this little mushroom on the surface, isolated, fragile and helpless against all the predators and dangers, standing there alone not knowing where we came from and where we’re heading, not knowing that we are connected with the giant fungal network in the ground, that we in fact are this whole network. Another example is golden jewelry. There are all kinds of forms, rings, chains, crosses etc. made from gold. But in fact the nature of all these different items is not its form but the gold itself. The form of the gold is just in our minds, our minds give meaning to it. But it can be molten and remodeled into other shapes and it remains just gold.

The state we are in now, thinking of ourselves as separate beings that have a start and an end, would be fake and the state after and before it would be the reality. So if that was true, the question of what happens after death would be irrelevant as we were never this separate being in the first place. One could say we were never born and will never die.

We believe in death because we’ve been taught we die. Also, of course, because we associate ourselves with our body and we know bodies die. End of story. But biocentrism, a new theory of everything, tells us death may not be the terminal event we think. Amazingly, if you add life and consciousness to the equation, you can explain some of the biggest puzzles of science. For instance, it becomes clear why space and time—and even the properties of matter itself—

depend on the observer. It also becomes clear why the laws, forces, and constants of the universe appear to be exquisitely fine-tuned for the existence of life.

Until we recognize the universe in our heads, attempts to understand reality will remain a road to nowhere.

Consider the weather ‘outside’: You see a blue sky, but the cells in your brain could be changed so the sky looks green or red. In fact, with a little genetic engineering we could probably make everything that is red vibrate or make a noise, or even make you want to have sex, as it does with some birds. You think its bright out, but your brain circuits could be changed so it looks dark out. You think it feels hot and humid, but to a tropical frog it would feel cold and dry. This logic applies to virtually everything. Bottom line: What you see could not be present without your consciousness.

In truth, you can’t see anything through the bone that surrounds your brain. Your eyes are not portals to the world. Everything you see and experience right now, even your body, is a whirl of information occurring in your mind. According to biocentrism, space and time aren’t the hard, cold objects we think. Wave your hand through the air—if you take everything away, what’s left? Nothing. The same thing applies for time. Space and time are simply the tools for putting everything together.

Consider the famous two-slit experiment. When scientists watch a particle pass through two slits in a barrier, the particle behaves like a bullet and goes through one slit or the other. But if you don’t watch, it acts like a wave and can go through both slits at the same time. So how can a particle change its behavior depending on whether you watch it or not? The answer is simple, reality is a process that involves your consciousness.

Or consider Heisenberg’s famous uncertainty principle. If there is really a world out there with particles just bouncing around, then we should be able to measure all their properties. But you can’t. For instance, a particle’s exact location and momentum can’t be known at the same time. So why should it matter to a particle what you decide to measure? And how can pairs of entangled particles be instantaneously connected on opposite sides of the galaxy as if space and time don’t exist? Again, the answer is simple: because they’re not just ‘out there’—space and time are simply tools of our mind.

Death doesn’t exist in a timeless, space less world. Immortality doesn’t mean a perpetual existence in time, but resides outside of time altogether.

Our linear way of thinking about time is also inconsistent with another series of recent experiments. In 2002, scientists showed that particles of light “photons” knew, in advance, what their distant twins would do in the future. They tested the communication between pairs of photons. They let one photon finish its journey—it had to decide whether to be either a wave or a particle. Researchers stretched the distance the other photon took to reach its own detector. However, they could add a scrambler to prevent it from collapsing into a particle. Somehow, the first particle knew what the researcher was going to do before it happened, and across distances instantaneously as if there were no space or time between them. They decide not to become particles before their twin even encounters the scrambler. It doesn’t matter how we set up the experiment. Our mind and its knowledge is the only thing that determines how they behave. Experiments consistently confirm these observer-dependent effects.

Hi ! Is Election Commission Really Dead?

By: Omkar Dattatray

It is height of moral bankruptcy of the Smajwadi Party chief and former chief minister of UP that he has stooped abysmal low and equated Election Commission as Dead perhaps saying that the ECI does not take cognizance of the election malpractices by the ruling BJP in Milkipur Ayodhya by polls .It is very unfortunate ,disturbing that SP Supremo Akhilesh Yadav leveled serious accusations against the BJP ,alleging electoral misconduct and also declaring the Election Commission “dead.” It is nothing beyond ideological and moral bankruptcy and it can be termed as dirty politicking through and through. He claimed that the ruling party ,with police assistance ,engaged in widespread voter suppression and malpractices in Milkipur by polls. ”This is the manner in which BJP contests elections. The Election Commission is dead .We will have to gift them white cloth.”The SP Chief told ANI ,criticizing what he described as deliberate manipulation of electoral proceedings. Akhiles Yadav is leveling baseless and unsubstantiated allegations and accusations on ruling BJP and election commissions silence and has used most un -parliamentary and bad language to describe the election commission which in fact is the independent, impartial and non-partisan institution of the country. To call ECI dead is absurd and amounts to dishonor of this autonomous agency of the country. Election commission is up and doing and its activism is worth appreciating and again it is energetic and living and to call it dead is absurd and grossly incorrect and misleading. The former UP chief minister stated that police officials were illegally checking voters ID at polling stations ,which he viewed as voter intimidation .Ayodhya Milkipur went to polls on Wednesday and saw 57.13% voter participation .In a post on X ,he said, ”The election Commission should immediately take cognizance of the pictures related to this news that Ayodhya police is checking the ID cards of voters in Milkipur ,in which senior police officers are also involved .This is

a democratic crime of indirectly influencing voting by creating fear among voters .Such people should be removed immediately and punitive action should be taken.”He alleged that BJP supporters caused disturbances at several locations under police protection, with officials deliberately overlooking violations of electoral conduct. Yadav also pointed out issues with EVM’s mentioning that disruptions at locations like Kutta Amaniganj lasted over two hours,preventing voter participation. However Ayodhya police countered these claims ,clarifying that they were only verifying booth agents credentials and accused Yadav of spreading false information.BJP Spokesperson Rakesh Tripathi dismissed these allegations as unfounded and indicative of SP’s anxiety over anticipated defeat .”The Samajwadi Party is spreading lies out of frustration after its imminent loss in Milkipur ,”he stated, accusing Yadav of using propaganda to deflect responsibility .It is very absurd and obnoxious that the former UP CM called the Election Commission “dead” for failing to perform duty .”The Election Commission is completely dead ,the EC has killed its conscience and has mortgaged it to the BJP . We will have to get them white cloth.The election commission helps the BJP and not acted upon the overwhelming evidence of foul play and large-scale rigging in Milkipur ,”Mr. Yadav said outside parliament in New Delhi. Traditionally ,bypolls have witnessed a much reduced voter turnout than the assembly elections but this time there was significant rise in voter participation and Akhilesh is nerved on this increased voter turnout and he smell the victory of BJP in this bypoll .Milkipur Assembly seat in Ayodhya ,UP recorded a voting of 65.35% in the bypoll conducted on February 5—a remarkable jump of more than 5% turnout from 2022 –amid allegations of voting irregularities ,intimidations of opposition booth agents ,bogus voting and attempts by police to influence the voting in favor of the BJP. The ECI said they found no irregularities in voting. After the BJP suffered an embarrassing defeat in the Faizabad Lok Sabha last summer ,the party cannot afford to lose Mal-

kipur. The Opposition also views Malkipur as its opportunity to balance its defeat in the bypolls held in November last when the BJP won seven out of nine seats ,amid large scale complaints of communally –targeted voter suppression and misuse of administrative power by the ruling party. After Adityanath dismissed Avadesh Prasad’s emotional breakdown as “nautanki” [theatrics],the senior SP leader launched a massive counter –attack to have the final say before Milkipur braces itself to vote.” They have called me a dog ,referred to me as the tail of a dog. My heart is aching .The ministers of this [Uttar Pradesh] government have said that since people here elected a Dalit as their MP ,the dignity of Ayodhya has fallen ,”said Prasad. The 79 year –old veteran leader ,who has won nine Assembly elections since 1977,was reflecting on the personal hurt he was feeling due to insults by Adityanath –led BJP. It is conventional for politicians to make emotional appeals during elections ,but Prasad’s assertion of his Dalit identity and evocation of caste-linked insults truly launched the question of caste to the centre stage of the February 5 election .This appears detrimental to saffron party ,which has tried to communalize the election on religious grounds .However, the micro issues have been overshadowed by Awadhesh Prasad’s emotional reaction to the murder of a young Dalit woman whose body was found in a field in Ayodhya on February 1.Accusing the central and UP government of rigging Milkipur bypoll ,SP Chief Akhilesh Yadav said the Election Commission was” dead” and should be covered with” white cloth”[as coffin] because it failed to ensure free and fair election despite innumerable complaints from SP on the polling day and earlier as well. ”I had come to Parliament else I would have brought a white cloth to cover the Election Commission ,”Akhilesh said .Later ,the SP leader along with all party MP’s ,staged a protest carrying a white sheet of cloth in hand .with Chunav Ayog written on it .In response ,the BJP strongly criticized Yadav’s remarks .Party MP Sambit Patra condemned Yadav’s statement about EC ,calling it an attack on a constitutional institution

.Patra noted that the opposition has a history of targeting institutions when electoral outcomes do not go their way .”This is a new low .The SP has no respect for constitutional bodies .Such language has never been used in the parliamentary proceedings before ,”Patra said.BJP MP Praveen Khandelwal also condemned the remarks ,saying that the opposition repeatedly attacks constitutional institutions after losing elections .He called for an apology from Yadav and SP ,saying their words were an insult to democracy .In fact the ECI is performing its constitutional responsibility and duty very well .It is ensuring free and fair elections anywhere and everywhere in the country and thus to accuse it of silence and inertia is absolutely wrong .it is in fact the EC which manages the elections in the country and to call it dead is politics at its very low..The opposition calls EVM’s choir when they fail to win an election and when they win .EC is doing its job well. It is indeed double speak of Opposition .Calling EC dead is very unfortunate and absurd and it is insult to the constitution as ECI is an constitutional body which is entrusted to manage elections across the country. SP chief Akhilesh Yadav should tender an unconditional apology for having said EC was dead. The fact is EC is living ,up and doing , active ,energetic and doing its constitutional duty of ensuring free and fair elections well and thus to say that election commission is dead is worst politics and SP chief should desist from such remarks which amount to insult to constitution and constitutional bodies. Finally Milkipur seat was won by BJP .Hats off to CEC Rajiv Kumar and his team for ensuring free and fair election in the country and this time in Delhi and Bypoll in Milkipur UP.

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

Omar become softened, no signs of restoration of statehood in near future

NC turned back on its election promises, silent on return of KPs: Sahni

Top News Report
JAMMU, Feb 9: The attitude of Omar government, which passed the proposal of restoration of statehood and special privileges for Jammu and Kashmir on the lines of North-Eastern states in the first cabinet meeting, has now cooled down. To avoid a situation of conflict, there is procrastination in fulfilling the promises of free electricity, drinking water, minimum wages, regularization of daily wagers etc. The surrendered attitude of NC has given a severe blow to the expectations of the people, stated by Manish Sahni, President, Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu and Kashmir unit. In a press conference held today at the party's state central office, state chief Manish Sahni said that in the situation of two



power systems in Jammu and Kashmir, the people and their basic issues are being crushed. NC, which won the assembly elections, has surrendered on its main issues to avoid a situation of conflict. At the same time, in the 2025-26 budget, the Center is bringing the Police at par with the Delhi Police by keeping the Jammu and Kashmir Police budget under the estimates of the Ministry of Home Affairs. From which it is clear

that the full statehood of Jammu and Kashmir is not going to be restored in the near future. At the same time, the silence and soft attitude of the Omar government on this is an indication that something is definitely cooking between the NC and the BJP. At the same time, the Omar government has turned away to avoid a confrontation on the promises of free electricity, drinking water, minimum wages, employment, regularization of daily wagers, women empowerment etc. Sahni said that turning away from public issues and promises and getting close to the BJP will prove fatal for the political future of the NC. No concrete efforts are visible on the ground from the Center and Omar government regarding the safe return of Kashmiri Pandits to the valley.

Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' benefitting all sections: Balbir



Top News Report
JAMMU, Feb 9: The Modi government's flagship initiative, 'Sabka saath, sabka vikas, sabka vishwas' continues to uplift every section of the Indian society through inclusive development, ensuring that growth reaches the last mile. Balbir Ram Rattan, Spokesperson, Jammu and Kashmir BJP & former Vice Chairperson, said this during his meeting with a group of party activists. He said that this vision of collective progress has been instrumental in fostering economic empowerment, social welfare, and infrastructural growth, benefitting millions across the nation. Under this initiative, he said that, key sectors such as education, healthcare, employment, and rural development have witnessed unprecedented advancements. Balbir Ram Rattan, while elaborating on this vision, pointed out that the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) and Ayushman Bharat have provided affordable housing and healthcare to the underprivileged, while Mudra Yojana has empowered small entrepreneurs with financial assistance. These efforts have created new opportunities, reduced poverty, and enhanced the quality of life for millions. He further shared that marginalized communities, including women, farmers, and youth, have been central to this mission. "Women empowerment programmes such as Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao and Ujjwala Yojana have ensured better education, financial independence, and health benefits for women" Balbir said, adding that farmers have benefitted from PM-Kissan Samman Nidhi and Soil Health Card schemes, ensuring financial stability, improved agricultural productivity, and better access to resources. Youth-focused initiatives like Skill India and Start-Up India have generated employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, enabling self-reliance. Balbir said that the union government's focus on infrastructure development, including roads, electricity, and digital connectivity, has further bridged the urban-rural divide. The push for a Digital India has facilitated financial inclusion, e-governance, and job creation, ensuring that technology reaches every citizen. The sustainable development efforts like clean energy promotion and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan have significantly improved environmental and public health conditions. With 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas' India is moving towards a more equitable and prosperous future. The government remains committed to empowering every individual, reinforcing the idea of Antyodaya—uplifting the last person in the queue, ensuring growth for all. Party activists Hans Raj Loria, G.R.Bhagat, K.K.Digra, Seema Devi, Raj Kumari, Vaishno Devi, were present in the meeting.

Army unites culture and strength: Pir Panjal festival begins



Top News Report
POONCH , Feb 9: The Indian Army is orchestrating the Pir Panjal Winter Festival from 09 February to 31 March 2025 in Poonch. This grandiose festival is a testament to the Indian Army's unwavering commitment to youth empowerment, cultural preservation, and social reformation, particularly in advocating against drug abuse. The festival encompasses a diverse array of sports and cultural spectacles, including Under-25 Boys Cricket Tournament, Under-25 boys and Under 21 girls Volleyball Tournament, Open Kho-Kho Tournament (for girls), Gujarati and pahari Folk Dance Performances with Music and dance talent hunt, Solo and Group Singing Competitions, and Live Musical Extravaganza by Famous Artist and his ensemble on the grand

finale. This initiative serves as a catalyst for fostering sportsmanship, cultural renaissance, and holistic development among the youth, particularly those hailing from remote and marginalized communities of District Poonch. The overwhelming response from the enthusiastic populace of Poonch underscores the profound reverence and camaraderie shared between the community and the Indian Army. Beyond mere festivities, the Pir Panjal Winter Festival embodies a transformative movement, inspiring young minds to eschew the perils of substance abuse and channel their energies toward constructive, life-affirming pursuits.

Army organizes Medical Patrol at Katenar

Top News Report
RAJOURI, Feb 9: In a humanitarian effort, the Indian Army conducted a medical patrol in Katenar and Mangota, Rajouri District. The initiative aimed to extend medical services to needy individuals in remote areas, providing them with basic medical treatment at their doorstep. A total of 35 civilians benefited from the medical patrol, which is part of the Indian Army's ongoing efforts to support local communities. By offering medical aid to those living in areas far from medical facilities, the Indian Army seeks to build trust and strengthen its bond with the local population. The medical patrol is a

testament to the Indian Army's commitment to serving the nation and supporting local communities, particularly in remote and inaccessible areas. The initiative has been well-received by the local population, who appreciate the Indian Army's efforts in providing medical aid and support.

Heartfelt initiative for health and well-being held in Gund Darvesh

Top News Report
SHOPIAN, Feb 09: In a beautiful display of community spirit and compassion, the Kashmir Foundation, in collaboration with Smile Foundation Srinagar, organized a Free Medical Camp and Health Check-up Camp in the remote area of Gund Darvesh, located in the Shopian district. This initiative aimed to bring essential healthcare services to those who often face challenges accessing medical facilities. The camp was set up to provide free consultations, health screenings, and medications to the local community, ensuring that everyone had the opportunity to receive the care they need. The event saw an overwhelming turnout, with families from far and wide gathering to take advantage of the services offered. Sajjad Ahmad Sholla, President Smile foundation NGO shared, "It's heartwarming to see the community come together for their health. We believe that everyone deserves access to quality healthcare, irrespective of their location." Doctor speaking with media said "Every person we examined today has a story, and it's our privilege to be able to listen to them and help in any way we can. Moments like these remind us why we do what we do." The camp featured various health services, including general check-ups, health consultations. Each patient left not only with medical attention but also with a sense of hope and community support. One local resident expressed gratitude, saying, "I never thought I would have access to such services right here in my village. This camp has truly made a difference in our lives." As the day wrapped up, the smiles and laughter shared among families, volunteers, and healthcare professionals truly highlighted the essence of this initiative. We The Kashmir Foundation and Smile Foundation Srinagar are committed to continuing their efforts to bridge the gap in healthcare access, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Kaith Biradari hails Naira on being presented medal by Nrattya Bhumi

Top News Report
JAMMU, Feb 9: Kaith Biradari today hailed dancing star Naira for performing amazingly well in dance championship held at Jammu club, and receiving the medal from Nrattya Bhumi. Naira said, Dance is her favourite hobby and she enjoys it a lot. She started dancing when she was three years old and won her first trophy in dancing at Police Auditorium. When she got older, her

parents enrolled her in dance classes to pursue this passion. She cannot go a day without dance, that's how much she loves dancing. Thus, dance has been very therapeutic for her as well, her parents stated. R.L.Kaith said, "Dear Naira, you are precious and special and quite active! ...May god bless you with everything you desire!".



Chandan Datta appointed Pradesh Mantri of Rashtriya Parshuram Parishad J&K



Top News Report
JAMMU, Feb 9: The Rashtriya Parshuram Parishad (RPP) Jammu and Kashmir has appointed social activist and Chairman of Kotli Welfare Trust, Sh. Chandan Datta, as Pradesh Mantri of RPP Jammu and Kashmir. The announcement was made under the leadership of National Founder Pt. Sunil Bharala and State Head & President Pt. Jeeva Nand Sharma. Datta has also been assigned operational duties and the implementation of the RPP agenda across three districts—Jammu, Udhampur, and Reasi—to strengthen the organization. Recognizing his commitment and past activities, President RPP JN Sharma entrusted him with an additional role as Office Incharge of RPP Jammu and Kashmir. A renowned social activist in the Jammu region, Datta has been actively working for over a decade on various social causes, including drug abuse prevention. He has been motivating the youth to stay away from drugs and channel their energy toward nation-building. His contributions also include working for the upliftment of marginalized communities and organizing numerous social welfare activities in the past. Welcoming Datta into the organization, President Pt. Jeeva Nand Sharma expressed confidence in his leadership to strengthen the RPP in Jammu and Kashmir. The Rashtriya Parshuram Parishad aims to preserve and promote Sanatan Dharma while uniting Brahmins on a single platform to work for the welfare and upliftment of the community. Among the prominent leaders present at the event were Raman Thappa (State Secretary), Ramesh Chander (Vice President), Garu Ram (Vice President), Vinod Mehta (State Secretary for Rural Areas), Opinder Sharma (RSS J&K), Pawan Sharma (Secretary, RPP), Prof. Sameer Sharma (Secretary), and other senior functionaries along with the general public.

Bharat Darshan Tour 2025 organised by 139 Bn BSF, Trehgam concludes

Top News Report
KUPWARA, Feb 9: The Bharat Darshan Tour 2025, organized by 139 Bn BSF, Trehgam, Kupwara, Kashmir, under the Ministry of Home Affairs' Bharat Darshan Programme, concluded. The tour, which took place from February 2-7, 2025, was attended by 15 Kashmiri students and a teacher from Government Higher Secondary School Keran and Government High School Mandian, located near the Line of Control. Upon their return, the group was warmly received and addressed by Brigadier Manish Dutt Upadhyay, DIG SHQ



BSF Kupwara, Kashmir Frontiers, and Anil Kumar Guleria, Commandant 139 Bn BSF. The students enthusiastically shared their experiences and learnings from the tour, which included visits to historical and cultural landmarks in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The students visited major tourist attractions in Ahmedabad, including the Sabarmati riverfront, Adalaj stepwell, Science City, Narendra Modi stadium, Ahmedabad, and the Statue of Unity, Sardar Sarovar dam in Kevadia. They explored the statue of Unity, Jungle Safari, Cactus garden and surrounding area, and enjoyed activities like the mirror maze and valley of flowers. They witnessed the multicultural and multilingual diversity of India and carried the mes-

sage of love and peace from the Kashmir Valley to the rest of India. The Chief Guest presented the group with a photo album containing their tour memories, followed by tea and snacks. The participants appreciated the Bharat Darshan Tour 2025 and the arrangements made for them, including accommodation, food, transport, curriculum, and quality of items issued. This tour provided the students with a unique opportunity to experience India's rich culture and gain firsthand knowledge of various developments across the country.

Actor Swapnil Joshi and producer Anand Pandit feel a well-told story in any language can be a pan-Indian success

Playing a cop on screen is a dream come true for any artiste and when a chance knocked on actor Swapnil Joshi's door, he opened it with elan! Playing an encounter specialist in the recently released Anand Pandit production, Marathi film Jilabi, Swapnil says it was a whole new experience for him.

"I play Vijay Karmarkar, an undercover encounter cop in the film, who has many more dimensions than he reveals in the beginning. This character's trajectory intrigued me and his take on life really drew me into his inner world. It is a crime thriller, but also a very compelling human story packed with powerful performances. It will remind you of the gritty world of cult hits like Satya and Company," shares Swapnil.

Swapnil, who first appeared in the Ramanand Sagar show Uttar Ramayan as a nine-year-old, has been part of television shows such as Krishna, Eka



Lagnachi Dusri Goshta, as well as films like Duniyadari and Mumbai-Pune-Mumbai. Swapnil believes the lines between regional and mainstream cinema are fast blurring with the advent of pan-Indian films.

"Regional languages are the heartbeat of India's cultural and artistic diversity. It's not just about entertainment, but about preserving and celebrating every language. Subtitles and also dubbing expand the reach of such stories, and blur the lines between regional and pan-Indian cinema," he says.

He also holds the opinion that each

industry has its unique strengths and comparing them isn't always fair because the scale, resources and audience bases are vastly different. "The South Indian film industry is known for its larger-than-life storytelling, incredible technical finesse, and deeply rooted cultural pride. Marathi cinema has smaller budgets, but has a very unique resonance that makes it very distinctive. Cinema has its own language and if a theme attracts me, I go for it."

Keen eye for talent Anand Pandit, who is a well-known name in the world of production with projects like Total Dhamaal (2019),

Missing (2018), Sarkar 3 (2018), and Great Grand Masti (2016), to his credit, says it was the compelling storyline that initially drew him to Jilabi. "It aligned perfectly with my vision of creating an edge-of-the-seat Marathi thriller. As a producer, I am always looking for something fresh and new, and this script struck the right balance by blending mystery, drama and relatability. The screenplay is not jaded or conventional; it will break new ground," he shares.

Anand, who has produced movies in multiple regional languages alongside Hindi films, too believes regional and pan-Indian cinema

are gradually merging. "Some of the biggest hits in recent times, including franchises like Baahubali, Pushpa and KGF, have set new benchmarks of success. Malayalam cinema too is breaking new ground with its brave themes and artistic heft. A well-told story in any language has the potential to be a pan-Indian success and this trend is only going to grow. The future of regional cinema is highly promising."

So, how can the reach of regional films be expanded globally? "There is an audience today not just for lavishly mounted blockbusters, but also for related, rooted, human stories. The success of my Gujarati films Fakt Mahilao Maate, Tron Ekka and Fakt Purusho Maate speaks for itself. As a producer, I will continue to do my best to identify fresh talent across industries and back promising stories, so that they can reach a wider audience."

Yami talks about moving away from damsel-in-distress roles



Actor Yami Gautam Dhar says she has been working consistently to create a filmography that is different from some of her roles in the past.

The actress made her

debut with Shoojit Sircar's Vicky Donor, but played second fiddle to the hero in movies like Badlapur, Kaabil and a few others.

Yami, who will next be seen in romantic

comedy Dhoom Dhaam on Netflix this Valentine's Day, has proved her mettle as a performer with films such as Uri: The Surgical Strike, A Thursday and Article 370.

The actress has no regrets and respects the choices she made at that point in her career.

"That was my past life. I can't recall anything," Yami replied when asked about moving away from damsel-in-distress roles.

"No one's had this conversation in a long time with me. Sometimes I might address but I don't because it was in the past. It's been almost four or five years that the filmography I'm trying to be consistent with doesn't have those elements at all remotely," she said.

In fact, her role in Dhoom Dhaam is the antithesis of a damsel in distress as a no-nonsense and fearless heroine, who likes to be in the driving seat of her life.

Looking back at that phase in her life, Yami said she always knew the kind of roles she was capable of but it took some time to prove that to others.

Shruti Haasan's The Eye to open Wench Film Festival

British psychological thriller The Eye, starring Shruti Haasan in the lead role, will serve as the opening film at the 5th Wench Film Festival in Mumbai. Founded by filmmaker Sapna Bhavnani, the gala is touted as India's first horror film festival. The 2025 edition of the festival will run from February 27 to March 2. Haasan's The Eye is directed by Daphne Schmon and also stars Mark Rowley.

In the movie, the actress plays the role of Diana, who goes to an island, where her husband Felix drowned. She is then tempted by a dark choice that could bring him back. The festival will close with the screening of Schirkoa—In Lies We Trust, starring Iranian-French actor Golshifteh Farahani. This year, the festival will screen 42 movies, including 35



by women filmmakers. The line-up is inclusive of LGBTQ women and non-binary filmmakers.

The films will be showcased in three categories—Blood Thirsty, consisting of movies with runtime of 60 minutes and above; Dwarves, featuring films of 10 to

40 minutes length; and Elves, which includes short films of less than 10 minutes duration.

The jury members include Chris Orgelt and Harini Laxminarayan for Blood Thirsty; Aruna Raje Patil for Dwarves; and Carolyn Mauricette for Elves.

Not easy for TV actors to get into films, need to still prove themselves: Rashmi Desai

Popular TV star Rashmi Desai says small screen actors still find it tough to make it to the film industry as they have to convince filmmakers to see them in different roles, which can be a challenge.

Desai, known for starring in popular daily soaps such as "Uttaran" and "Dil Se Dil Tak" as well as reality show "Bigg Boss", said things have improved for better but not much.

"Earlier it was very difficult and even now it's not very easy to get into films. I'll be very honest because it is difficult to convince the other person as there are too many things that are involved at the end in the making of a film."

"The best way is to audition, but sometimes that also becomes a very lengthy process. After working for so many years, you need



to prove yourself, prove that you are best," Desai told agency.

"In TV, you have your commitment every day with your audience, when you're doing a reality show. As an actor, you want to go and convince people that I really want to try something new but it becomes a lengthy process," she added.

Despite the struggles, Desai said she is grateful for good projects she has been a part of, including the feature film "Hisaab Barabar", in which she shares screen space with R Madhavan.

"Hisaab Barabar" is a satirical drama film, which was released on streaming service ZEE5 recently. It revolves around Radhe Mohan Sharma, a railway ticket checker who uncovers a small discrepancy in his bank account. It soon

leads to a dangerous journey filled with fraud, deceit and corruption.

Desai, who earlier had a cameo appearance in "Dabangg 2", and also acted in Gujarati films like "Supertar" and "Mom Tane Nai Samjay", essays the role of Madhavan's neighbour in the movie.

"My character is different, she is a practical person... In this film, I've grey mindset, and they've shown it in a beautiful and comic way. I have really wanted to do a comedy for a long time, and I'm glad I got to play this role," she said.

Also starring Kirti Kulhari and Neil Nitin Mukesh, "Hisaab Barabar" is directed by Ashwini Dhir.

The film, which was released in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu, is produced by Jio Studios and SP Cinecorp.

Singer-actress Lisa Mishra to perform with global icon Ed Sheeran in Delhi

Singing sensation and actress Lisa Mishra is set to create history, as she joins global music icon Ed Sheeran on stage in Delhi on February 15. This marks the biggest international show ever in the capital, with Lisa sharing the spotlight alongside one of the world's most celebrated artistes.

Lisa is ready to make the most of this milestone moment. While she has captivated audiences with her chart-topping tracks and acting prowess, this performance solidifies her place in the global music arena. One can expect a special treat as Lisa might also unveil some of her unreleased music during the event. Lisa shared, "Performing with Ed Sheeran is nothing short of a dream come true. He has been one of my biggest inspirations, and to share the same stage with him is surreal. This is a defining moment in my career—one that reinforces my belief in the power of music and hard work. I've always wanted to push boundaries, and this oppor-



tunity is a huge step forward in that journey. I'm incredibly grate-

ful for the love and support I've received."

My mother had to give up her dreams, says Angelina Jolie

At the Santa Barbara International Film Festival in Washington, Angelina Jolie shared a deeply personal memory from her past, recounting a poignant moment involving her mother, Marcheline Bertrand and the Oscars.

Angelina was there to receive the prestigious Maltin Modern Master Award, presented by filmmaker Ava DuVernay, and engaged in a conversation with critic Leonard Maltin about her impressive career spanning decades.

The 49-year-old actress began by recalling the year her father, Jon Voight, won the Academy Award for Best Actor for Coming Home in 1979. At the time, Voight was separated from Bertrand,



Jolie's mother, and their divorce was finalised a year later.

While Voight attended the star-studded Oscars ceremony with actress Stacey Pickren, the 'other woman', Jolie's mother was at home with her two young children. Jolie said that Bertrand, who had given birth to Jolie at a young age, watched the ceremony from their apartment. "She was divorced from a very famous man and she was home with her babies, watching him win an Oscar with the other woman," she said.

The actress described the lasting emotional impact of her mother's experience, noting that it was a part of their family history that stayed with her.

Asia’s largest air show, Aero India-2025, set to take off on February 10 in Bengaluru

The event showcases nation’s technological prowess and innovations

NEW DELHI, Feb 9 (Agencies): With the theme of ‘The Runway to a Billion Opportunities’, Asia’s largest aviation show, Aero India-2025, that is lined up to take off on February 10 at the Yelahanka Air Force Station in Bengaluru, promises to throw up numerous commercial and technical development opportunities in the military and civilian aviation sectors, while also enthralling aircraft enthusiasts.

This is the 15th edition of the show, organised biennially by the Ministry of Defence, that brings together global industry leaders, government officials, technology experts, and defence strategists under one roof. The event not only showcases the nation’s technological prowess and innovations but also provides a dynamic platform for international cooperation and strategic dialogue.

Aero India has evolved into a major international event that not only highlights the latest advancements in aerospace technology but also serves as a critical forum for strategic interactions between domestic and international stakeholders. According to the Ministry of Defence, the show is a reflection of the nation’s commitment to advancing its aerospace and defence capabilities.

Over the years, Aero India has been instrumental in showcasing cutting-edge technologies—the event regularly features demonstrations of state-of-the-art aerospace systems, innovative defence solutions and breakthrough technologies that are shaping the future of air and space travel.

India has been fostering strategic dialogues through high-level interactions. It has provided an arena for discussions on policy, defence collaborations, and the future roadmap of the aerospace sector.

The air show has also been enhancing international partnerships, as it underscores India’s growing stature as a key player in the international aerospace community with participation from global aerospace giants



and defence agencies.

Aero India-2025 is being projected as a landmark chapter that leverages the successes of its preceding editions while charting new territories in aerospace and defence technology. The first three days are dedicated to business visitors, while the last two days are open to the general public.

The five-day event comprises a Defence Ministers’ Conclave, CEOs’ round-table, iDEX start-up event, air shows and flying displays, a large exhibition area comprising the India Pavilion and a trade fair of aerospace companies.

To facilitate dialogue towards strategic partnership with friendly countries, India is hosting the conclave on the theme ‘BRIDGE – Building Resilience through International Defence and Global Engagement’. It encapsulates the dynamic geopolitical conditions and the path to mutual prosperity, which can be BRIDGED through cooperation among nations with shared vision of security and development.

A number of bilateral meetings are planned at the levels of the Defence Minister, Minister of State for Defence, Chief of Defence Staff and Defence Secretary among others on the sidelines of the event. The focus will be on bolstering the defence and aerospace ties with friendly countries by exploring newer avenues to take the partnership to the next level.

The CEOs’ roundtable is

expected to provide a platform to foreign original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) for production of equipment in India. CEOs of global firms and heads of domestic public sector undertakings and private defence and aerospace manufacturing companies from India will be participating in the event.

The India Pavilion will showcase indigenous defence manufacturing capabilities and cutting-edge technologies ready for the global stage, including future prospects. Promotion of Indian start-ups is a focus area at Aero India-2025 and a wide spectrum of state-of-the-art technologies/products developed by them will be presented at an exclusive pavilion for the MoD’s Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) scheme.

In addition to aerobatic displays and live technology demonstrations and showcasing the potential of modern aerospace platforms and technologies, a number of seminars on various contemporary themes are also scheduled during the event.

There would be 13 Indian aerial displays that include skydiving by the IAF’s Akash Ganga team, flypasts by fighters, helicopters, trainers and transport aircraft and performances by the Surya Kiran aerobatic display team.

The foreign component of the aerial display will consist of two latest fifth-generation stealth fighters, the Russian Su-57 Felon and the American F-35 Lightning-II. In addition, the

B-1B Lancer supersonic long-range bomber and the KC-135 mid-air refueller, both American, will also be taking to the skies over Bengaluru.

Apart from a vast array of indigenous and foreign aircraft in service with the Indian Army, Indian Air Force, Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard being lined up for static display, foreign aircraft that would be seen on the tarmac include the F-16 fighter from US, A330 and A400M from Airbus, C-390 transporter from Brazil, H-125 helicopter from Airbus, as well as Vicaran and Flexrotor UAVs. The Su-57 and F-35 would also be on ground display.

About a thousand exhibitors from India and abroad are expected to showcase a vast array of products, including aircraft, weapons, avionics, surveillance equipment, aircraft components and subsystems and service solutions.

Major exhibitors include Defence Research and Development Organisation, Airbus, Boeing, Dassault Aviation, Lockheed Martin, Israel Aerospace Industry, BrahMos Aerospace, Army Aviation, HC Robotics, SAAB, Safran, Rolls Royce, Larsen and Toubro, Bharat Forge Limited, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Bharat Electronics Limited, Bharat Dynamics Limited and BEML Limited.

According to MoD data, 809 exhibitors from over 100 countries had participated in Aero India’s 14th edition in 2023, which was the largest since the show’s inception in 1996, recording a total footfall of more than seven lakh visitors.

The successes and challenges of Aero India-2023 have provided valuable lessons that have been incorporated into the planning and execution of Aero India-2025, the MoD said, while adding that the focus on operational excellence, international collaboration, and technological innovation serve as the cornerstone for the upcoming edition with expectations of greater achievements, enhanced protocols, refined strategies and an expanded global participation.

Kumbh not for 5-star culture, true devotees uninterested in glitz, glamour: Mahant Dharmendra Das

M A H A K U M B H NAGAR (UP), Feb 9 (Agencies): A section of the sadhus are unhappy with the chatter around viral sensations at the Maha Kumbh, saying they divert attention from what the festival is really about — spirituality and faith of devotees. “Mahakumbh is not a hub of glamour and five-star culture, it is the centre of sadhus, devotees and the Sanatan faith,” said Mahant Dharmendra Das, head of Udasin Akhara Bandhwa Kala Cantonment and chairman of All India Udasin Communal Sangat.

Since the beginning of the Maha Kumbh last month, many influencers, models and actors have had their brief moment in the sun of virality: model-turned-sadhvi Harsha Richaria, garland seller Mona Lisa, ‘IIT baba’ Abhay Singh and actor Mamata Kulkarni to name a few.

“If the media promotes such people instead of serving so many sadhus, then the fault lies with the media. Why are media houses doing this? You people should think about it yourself,” Das told agency in an interview at Sector 20 of Triveni Road Mela Sthal in Prayagraj Mahakumbh.

Das said many devotees come to the Sangam to spend the night under the open sky and bathe in the Ganga. They are unbothered by arrangements made for them and uninterested in “glitz and glamour” or “big tents”.

He said this referring to the stampede on Mauni Amavasya, considered to be the most auspicious day of the festival, in which many people were killed.

Das said the devotees who came to the Kumbh for their faith get “true salvation”. “They have come for the Sangam. We should learn a big lesson from them.” When asked about Mamata Kulkarni being conferred with the title of ‘mahamandaleshwar’ by an akhara, he said, “The post of Mahamandaleshwar and Mandaleshwar are given after consultation with the seers of the akharas. If someone is a great scholar and his service is commendable, then he is made Mandalesh.

“The title of Mandaleshwar is temporary and if someone does something wrong, the akhara has the right to take it back,” he said. The Kinnar Akhara later removed Kulkarni from the post.

Asked about the stampede at the Kumbh, Das said he was yet to recover from the pain of that day.

According to official figures, 30 people died in the incident and 60 more were injured.

Das said, “UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath worked hard and frequently visited the Maha Kumbh to monitor the arrangements, but the officials seemed more busy with VIP movement and did not have time to look after the common devotees.” “The officials were more interested in giving special facilities to their relatives and friends and they spoiled the efforts of Yogi Adityanath,” he said.

Many who were caught in the stampede were devotees who were waiting for the ‘snan’ or holy dip to begin on Mauni Amavasya.

When asked if the tragedy could have

been averted had there been better facilities for the devotees, Das said “Some devotees have such faith that they come here and sleep on the sand. You can build as big a tent city as you can, make all the arrangements but there is some faith and love for Ganga in some people — they stay on the sand and spend the night under the open sky and go home after bathing in the morning.” If 50 crore people are expected at the Maha Kumbh, 15-20 crore are of this type, he said. According to the UP government, nearly 39 crore pilgrims have visited the Maha Kumbh till February 6.

On the stampede, he called for an investigation into who ordered the closure of pontoon bridges “due to which a huge crowd gathered at the Sangam Nose” where the stampede occurred.

UP government has formed a judicial commission and now it is their responsibility to find who is at fault, he said. Police blamed abrupt overcrowding for the incident.

When asked about Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav’s allegations of “mismanagement” at the Kumbh, he said, “This is a ‘mela’, not a five-star hotel. Those who spend time on the banks of Ganga, sing bhajans in the morning and return after their ‘snan’ are not troubled. Those who want five-star service are troubled.” Opposition parties have decried the stampede as Adityanath’s mismanagement of the mega gathering.

The Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj began on January 13 and will continue till February 26.

Akhilesh demands toll fee waiver for vehicles in UP during Maha Kumbh

LUCKNOW, Feb 9 (Agencies): Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday demanded that toll fee be waived off for vehicles entering Uttar Pradesh during the duration of the Maha Kumbh to reduce travel hindrances and jams.

Due to heavy rush of devotees, long traffic jams are being witnessed on roads leading to Prayagraj.

In a post on X, Yadav said, “On the occasion of Maha Kumbh, vehicles should be made



toll free in UP, this will reduce travel hindrances and also the problem of traffic jams. When films can be made entertainment tax free, then why not vehicles

be made toll free on the grand festival of Maha Kumbh?”

The Maha Kumbh, which started on January 13, will continue until February 26.

31 Naxalites, 2 cops killed in encounter in Chhattisgarh’s Bijapur

BIJAPUR, Feb 9 (Agencies): In a major operation against Left Wing Extremism, security forces gunned down 31 Naxalites during an encounter in Chhattisgarh’s Bijapur district on Sunday, police said.

Two security personnel were also killed and as many others injured in the face-off, they said.

With this incident, 81 Naxalites have been gunned down by security forces in separate encounters in the state so far this year.

The latest gunfight took place at a forest in Indravati National Park area in the morning when a joint team of personnel from different security forces was out on an anti-Naxalite operation, Inspector General of Police,



Bastar Range, Sundarraj P said.

“Thirty one Naxalites have been killed in the encounter,” he said.

A huge cache of weapons

and explosives has also been seized from the site, the official said.

Two security personnel, one belonging to the state police’s District Reserve Guard and the

other from the Special Task Force, were also killed in the gunfight and two others suffered injuries, he said.

The two injured jawans, reported to be out of danger, were being airlifted to a better medical facility for treatment, he said.

Reinforcement has been rushed to the spot and search operation is still underway in the area, he added.

Out of the 81 Naxalites gunned down in the state so far this year, 65 were killed in the Bastar division comprising seven districts, including Bijapur.

Last year, 219 Naxalites were neutralised by security forces in separate encounters in Chhattisgarh, according to police.

Hazare happy at Kejriwal’s defeat, silent on allegations against Modi govt, claims Raut

MUMBAI, Feb 9 (Agencies): Veteran social activist Anna Hazare is happy at the defeat of Arvind Kejriwal in the Delhi Assembly polls, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said on Sunday.

The BJP ended the Aam Aadmi Party’s reign in Delhi by winning 48 seats in the 70-member Assembly there. Among the prominent losers was Kejriwal from New Delhi constituency. Raut also questioned the silence

of Hazare on corruption allegations made over the past some years against the Narendra Modi government at the Centre.

“Where was Hazare when corruption occurred during Modi’s rule? Hazare is happy over Kejriwal’s defeat. The country is being looted with wealth concentrated in the hands of a single industrialist. How can democracy continue in such a situation? What could be the secret behind Hazare’s



silence at such a time,” Raut questioned.

“There was a similar pattern regarding voters’ list confusion in Maharashtra as well as in Delhi. However, Hazare chose to remain silent

on such issues. Similar complaints were made in Haryana as well. These will come up in the Bihar polls too,” the Shiv Sena (UBT) Rajya Sabha MP said. Since the BJP came to

power in 2014, elections have not followed constitutional procedures, he alleged. “Victory is being secured through manipulation and money power,” Raut claimed.

The outcome of the Delhi polls would have been different if the AAP and Congress had contested in alliance, he opined.

Hazare, while speaking to reporters on Saturday, after the Delhi poll results were declared, claimed Kejriwal did not pay attention to what he

had told him and “only focussed on liquor”, a reference to the scrapped excise policy brought in by the outgoing government.

“I have always said a candidate’s conduct and thoughts must be pure. His life should be without blame and it must involve sacrifice. These are the qualities that build trust among voters. I had told this to Kejriwal but he did not pay heed. He was overwhelmed by money power,” Hazare had said a day earlier.

Manipur police arrest three militants in Imphal West; two from UNLF-Pambei, one from PLA

IMPHAL, Feb 9 (Agencies): Manipur Police arrested three militants from Imphal West district, an officer said on Sunday.

Police arrested two militants of the banned United National Liberation Front (UNLF-Pambei) group from Narankonjil area of the district on Saturday.

The two militants were involved in extortion activity and also in ille-

gal smuggling of arms and ammunition, the officer said.

One .32 pistol and Rs 3,120 in cash was seized from their possession, he said.

One militant of the banned outfit People’s Liberation Army (PLA) involved in extortion activity was arrested from Kangjabi Leirak Machin area on Saturday, the officer added.

Trump is signing up local law officers to help with immigration enforcement

Advocates for immigrants, meanwhile, are raising alarm about new pacts that put local law officers on immigration enforcement

WASHINGTON, Feb 9 (Agencies): For years, the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office in suburban Indianapolis has wanted to partner with federal immigration authorities to identify and detain immigrants who are in the US illegally and facing charges.

President Joe Biden's administration never returned its calls, the sheriff's office said. But as President Donald Trump cracks down on illegal immigration, Hamilton County deputies soon could become the first in Indiana empowered to carry out federal immigration duties and one of many nationally that Trump's administration hopes to enlist.

"We definitely are joining," Chief Deputy John Lowes told agency. "We want to collaborate with ICE to make sure we keep our community safe."

Under Trump, US Customs and Immigration Enforcement is reviving and expanding a decades-old programme that trains local law officers to interrogate immigrants in their custody and detain them for potential deportation. The 287(g) programme — named for a section of the 1996 law that created it — currently applies only to those already jailed or imprisoned on charges.

But Trump's border czar, Tom Homan, recently told sheriffs that he wants to expand it to include local task forces that can make arrests on the streets, reviving a model that former President Barack Obama discontinued amid concerns about racial profiling. It's unclear whether that could allow local officers to stop people solely to check their immigration status.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis announced that the Florida Highway Patrol had struck an agreement with ICE to interrogate, arrest and detain immigrants suspected of being in the country illegally and deliver them to federal authorities.



The arrangement will help "fulfill the president's mission to effectuate the largest deportation program in American history," DeSantis said.

Advocates for immigrants, meanwhile, are raising alarm about new pacts that put local law officers on immigration enforcement.

"All of these agreements, in practice, have the same track record of racial profiling, of sweeping in US citizens or people who have lawful status, of having a chilling effect in terms of communities reporting crime to local law enforcement agencies," said Nayna Gupta, policy director at the nonprofit American Immigration Council.

In the early 2000s, many of the initial participants in the 287(g) programme had agreements that allowed them to enforce immigration laws in their communities, not just their jails. But problems arose in several places, including Arizona.

In 2011, a civil rights investigation by the US Department of Justice found that deputies in Maricopa County, which includes Phoenix, had engaged in a pattern of racial profiling, unlawful stops and arrests of Latinos. The Department of Homeland Security ended its agreement with the county.

The program became "the hallmark of far-right, anti-immigrant sheriffs" as a means "to feed people on the basis of

their ethnicity into the deportation machine," asserted Lena Graber, senior staff attorney at the nonprofit Immigrant Legal Resource Center.

In recent years, ICE has offered two types of 287(g) agreements to law enforcement agencies. One model requires four weeks of training and allows local officers to question suspected noncitizens who are jailed on other charges and detain them for ICE. The other model, which Trump launched during his first term, requires just eight hours of training and only allows local officers to serve federal immigration warrants.

As of December, ICE had 135 agreements with sheriff's offices, police departments and prison systems in 21 states, with requests pending from 35 others. Two-thirds of the agreements were in just three states — Florida, Texas and North Carolina. But no agreements had been signed during Biden's four years as president, according to ICE data.

On his first day back in office, Trump ordered the Department of Homeland Security to maximize 287(g) agreements for local law officers to investigate, apprehend and detain immigrants. At a recent National Sheriffs' Association conference, Homan said the administration is looking to lighten detention facility regulations and shorten the training to encour-

age greater collaboration with federal immigration officials.

The association's president, Kieran Donahue, applauded the announcement.

"There's going to be local sheriffs' offices throughout the country, no question, they're going to sign onto this program," Donahue told the AP.

But Donahue is not planning to sign up his own department in Canyon County, Idaho.

"I don't have that kind of manpower," he said, adding: "I have no bed space in my facility. Zero."

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement in 2002 was the first to sign a 287(g) agreement with the federal government, running a task force for immigration enforcement. Twenty years later, Florida became the first state to require all local agencies with county jails to join the program or inform the state why they couldn't.

After a Venezuelan man who was illegally in the U.S. killed University of Georgia student Laken Riley, Georgia passed a law last year requiring local law enforcement agencies to apply for the programme.

This year, Republican lawmakers in about a dozen states are seeking to require or incentivize cooperative agreements with ICE. One measure is sponsored by Texas state Rep. David Spiller, a Republican who also authored a law allowing any law enforcement officer to arrest migrants suspected of entering the country illegally. That law is on hold amid a legal challenge.

Spiller said mandatory participation in ICE programs is essential.

"President Trump and border czar Homan cannot remove and deport all the people that are a public safety threat to our state and our nation over the next year and a half without the help of our local law enforcement," Spiller said.

N Korea blames US, Japan, South Korea for tensions in region; vows to bolster nuke forces

In his speech during his visit to North Korea's Ministry of National Defence, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported on Sunday that Kim referred to a series of new plans for bolstering 'all deterrences' and reaffirmed the country's 'unshakable policy of more highly developing the nuclear forces.'



SEOUL, Feb 9 (Agencies): North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, whom American President Donald Trump says he shares a good relationship with, has blamed the United States, Japan and South Korea for escalating tensions in the region, saying the allies' military cooperation has destabilized the security environment, as per state media of the nuclear-armed country.

In his speech during his visit to North Korea's Ministry of National Defence, Kim referred to a series of new plans for bolstering "all deterrences" and reaffirmed the country's "unshakable policy of more highly developing the nuclear forces," Yonhap reported citing the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Further, the North Korean leader criticized the United States for "standing in the centre behind the scene of the war machine," Japanese news outlet Kyodo report cited KCNA.

US nuclear strategic assets deployed on the Korean Peninsula, the US-led nuclear war simulation exercises and the US-Japan-South Korea military cooperation are "inviting military imbalance" on the peninsula and in Northeast Asia, causing "a new conflicting structure" and posing a grave challenge to North Korea, Kim was quoted as saying.

While stressing the need for vigilance against the trilateral "military alliance," Kim also voiced concern that their collaboration could bring about the formation of a "NATO of Asian version," the Korean news agency further said.

The development came after the first in-person summit between Donald Trump and the Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba in Washington on February 7.

Kim also blamed the US for the Russia-Ukraine war, expressing "serious concern" that the US and Western

countries are prolonging the war with the "unrealizable dream to deal strategic setbacks to Russia.

Notably, North Korea is an active participant in the war in Ukraine with having deployed over 11,000 troops to assist Russian President Vladimir Putin's war effort.

After White House released a statement saying that Washington will seek "complete denuclearization of North Korea," under Trump, North Korea said Saturday its nuclear weapons are not a "bargaining chip" but designed for combat use against any attempts by its enemies to invade the North, reaffirming its stance to further develop its nuclear arsenal.

Meanwhile, Trump said that the US "will have relations with North Korea" at a joint press conference with Japanese PM Shigeru Ishiba.

"We had a good relationship and I think it's a very big asset for everybody that I do get along with him. I get along with him, he gets along with me. And that's a good thing, not a bad thing," Trump said.

In his first term as US President, Trump had held two summit meetings with Kim in Singapore in June 2018 and a second summit in Hanoi, Vietnam in 2019.

Sam Nujoma, Namibia's fiery freedom fighter, first president, dies aged 95



WINDHOEK, Feb 9 (Agencies): Sam Nujoma, the fiery freedom fighter who led Namibia to independence from apartheid South Africa in 1990 and served as its first president for 15 years, and was known as the father of the nation, has died. He was 95.

Nujoma's death was announced Sunday by current Namibian President Nangolo Mbumba. Mbumba said Nujoma died on Saturday night after being hospitalised in the capital, Windhoek.

Nujoma was revered in his homeland as a charismatic father figure who steered his country to democracy and stability after long colonial rule by Germany and a bitter war of independence from South Africa.

He was the last of a generation of African leaders who led their countries out of colonial or white minority rule that included South Africa's Nelson Mandela, Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe, Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda and Mozambique's Samora Machel.

Many Namibians credited Nujoma's leadership for the process of national healing and reconciliation after the deep divisions caused by the independence war and South Africa's policies of dividing the country into ethnically based regional governments, with separate education and health care for each race.

Even his political opponents praised Nujoma — who was branded a Marxist and accused of ruthless suppression of dissent while in exile — for establishing a democratic Constitution and involving white businessmen and politicians in government after independence.

Despite his pragmatism and nation-building at home, Nujoma often hit foreign headlines for his fierce anti-Western rhetoric. He claimed AIDS was a man-made biological weapon and also occasionally waged a verbal war on homosexuality, calling gays "idiots" and branding homosexuality a "foreign and corrupt ideology".

Army should return to its constitutional limits: Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD, Feb 9 (Agencies): Jailed former Pakistan premier Imran Khan on Sunday penned an open letter to Army chief Gen Asim Munir in which he criticised the military's unlawful actions and its engagement in politics and urged it "to return to its constitutional limits".

In the letter posted on X, the Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) founder alleged mistreatment in prison, including placing him in solitary confinement in a death-row cell for 20 days with no access to sunlight or electricity.

Khan has been incarcerated in Adiala Jail Rawalpindi for over a year.

This follows his first letter on February 3, which urged the military to review its approach towards national security and governance.

After the first letter, security sources said it had not been received by the military and dismissed reports in the media about its existence. They claimed that the establishment was not interested in receiving such a letter.

In his latest letter, Khan said the response to "my (first) letter was dismissive and irresponsible", adding that his concern "is purely for the reputation of our armed forces and the dangerous consequences of the widening gulf between the military and the public. This is why I wrote this letter".

He highlighted six points that have deepened the rift between the people and the military.

These points included the manipulation of election results through pre-poll rigging orchestrated by intelligence agencies, the forced passage of the 26th Constitutional Amendment in Parliament at gunpoint to take control of the judiciary and appoint handpicked judges and the imposition of draconian legislation like the amendments to PECA (Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act) to silence dissent.

Khan noted that political instability and the "might is right" policy plunged the country's economy into chaos. Khan regretted that the country's "largest political party" was being targeted and all state institutions were being used for political engineering and revenge.

He mentioned that if a public referendum were held on the six points he highlighted, "I believe that 90 per cent of Pakistanis would support them".

He said these alleged actions were not only harming public sentiment but also worsening the rift between the people and the army.

"For Pakistan's stability and security, it is imperative to bridge the growing gap between the military and the public," he wrote in the



letter.

"The only way to achieve this is for the military to return to its constitutional limits, disengage from politics and fulfil its designated responsibilities," he said.

The letter came after several leaders of Khan's party were arrested on Saturday as it held rallies to mark February 8 as 'Black Day' over the alleged rigging of the general elections last year.

"The army is a vital institution of the country, but a few black sheep within it are causing severe damage to its reputation," Khan said.

Khan also accused a military officer stationed at Adiala Jail of orchestrating harassment and rights violations against him.

"This officer ignores court orders and behaves like an 'occu-

pying' force," he alleged.

Khan claimed that he was kept in complete isolation for 20 days in a dark cell with no access to sunlight. Electricity to his cell was cut off for five days, leaving him in darkness, and even his exercise equipment, television and newspapers were confiscated and access to books was arbitrarily restricted.

He claimed that he was allowed only three phone calls with his sons in six months, despite court orders permitting more. PTI workers travelling from distant areas were denied meetings with him.

He also accused the authorities of violating court orders by denying him meetings with his wife, Bushra Bibi, whom he alleged was being kept in solitary confinement.

He claimed that four

convictions against him were politically motivated, with judges allegedly forced into issuing predetermined verdicts.

Khan said that one judge allegedly suffered severe stress-related health issues due to the pressure of ruling against him and that the PTI was being targeted through pre-poll rigging and forced electoral outcomes.

Khan said that on May 9, 2023, and Nov 26, 2024, the government allegedly brutally cracked down on peaceful PTI supporters.

"Live ammunition was fired at peaceful citizens. Under the guise of political retaliation, raids were conducted on the homes of hundreds of thousands of citizens over the past three years. More than 20,000 of our workers and supporters were arrested, while hundreds were abducted and subjected to torture," Khan alleged.

"Thousands of innocent people were imprisoned for months on false charges. Due to pressure from intelligence agencies, over 2,000 of our workers, supporters and party leaders have had their bail petitions indefinitely delayed by high court judges," he added.

He said the treatment of PTI's female supporters over the past three years had been shameful and deeply concerning. "Never before in

Pakistan's history have politicians' female family members been targeted in this manner," he said.

"This goes against our traditions and has fuelled growing resentment against the military. If corrective measures are not taken immediately, the consequences for both the military and the country could be irreversible," he cautioned.

Khan warned that continued actions against PTI were deepening public resentment towards the military. He alleged that a few individuals within the institution were harming its reputation and causing lasting damage.

"Our soldiers are making sacrifices for Pakistan, and for success in the war against terrorism, it is essential that the nation stands behind its military," Khan wrote.

"However, it is deeply concerning that due to the establishment's policies and unlawful actions, public resentment towards the military is continuously increasing. This is a violation of the military's oath. No national army treats its own citizens this way," he alleged.

If corrective measures are not taken, the widening divide between the military and the Public will become a dangerous fault line in terms of national security, he said.

Madhuparamhans delivers religious sermons in Rakhbandhu



Top News Report

SAMBA, Feb 9: On the occasion of Kabir Sahib's Antardhyan Diwas, Sadguru Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj, while delighting the congregation with the nectar of his discourses in Rakhbandhu, said that there have been many devotees in the world, they did devotion, but could not understand devotion. Devotion means to be away from Bhaag. There are 14 worlds in Bhaag. No one can escape from it. There have been many fights in the world over this. Mahabharata happened for this. Ram-Ravan war happened for this. Not only humans, other creatures also kill each other for this thing. When a cow comes into menstruation, many bulls follow her. Then they fight with each other. Lions also

do the same. Dogs also do the same thing. Kabir Sahib never married, but people made big things. Loi means knowledge. He is saying that listen people Loi. He did not come to the world with the body of Maya. He appeared on his own and even when he left, his body was not found. That is why Kabir Sahib only has his disappearance day. There is no death day. No one else has his disappearance day. All the saints have said a lot about Kabir Sahib. But Garibdas ji and Dadu Dayal ji have said something amazing. They said that many saints are like wells. Many saints are like rivers. But the true Kabir Sahib is the ocean. Once Dadu Dayal ji was in a meeting. He was doing satsang. He

asked whoever has seen Kabir Sahib, raise their hands. An old man stood up and said that he has seen him. Dadu Dayal asked how did you see him. He said that my grandfather was a devotee of Kabir Sahib and was in the army of Kashi King. He used to take me along. One day I saw that wherever Kabir Sahib was sitting, everything behind him was visible. When I went behind again, everything in front was visible. Dadu Dayal asked his disciples to bring water. Dadu Dayal washed the eyes of that old man and drank it. His disciples said what is this. He said that blessed are those eyes that saw Kabir Sahib. Sahib said that I am not against any devotion. The true name of Sahib that you got, in that someone among your ancestors had done devotion of Sahib. You got the name due to his good deeds. Or you got the name when you came in contact with him. Or you did Sagun Bhakti for many births, even then you get the name of Sahib due to its good deeds. That is why I am not against any devotion.

District level Sports Meet organised by NYKS concludes

Top News Report

POONCH, Feb 9: The 2 days District Level Sports Meet organised by Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Govt of India successfully concluded today at Poonch. The program was held under the aegis of MY Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat) an initiative of Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. A total of 6 Sports Events were organised under the Meet in which the winners of 6 clusters level sports meet participated. The cluster level meet were held in the months of December, 2024 and January 2025 in Poonch, Mendhar, Surankote and Mandi. In the Volleyball Mens Group event, Chandak youth club emerged vic-

torious while the Makhdoomi Youth Club Mandi emerged runner up. In the Kho Kho Women's Round, HSS Seri khawaja emerged victorious while Mendhar MM was the Runner Up. In the Badminton Singles Women Round, Shabnam secured First and Second Spot while Rozia Nazir was third. In the Skipping Rope Women Round, Neha secured the top spot while Nazish Fareed were the runner ups. In the 100 Metre Men's Event, Sajid Rafiq, Azeem Khan, Rafiq Ahmed secured first, second and third prize respectively. In the Men's Shot Put Event, Mohd Hans, Sajid Rafiq and Mohd Hans secured first, second and Third prize respectively. Pankaj Sudan JKPS

DySP Hqrs Poonch. Dr Shameen Ahmed Bandy HoD Zoology GDC Poonch and Aijaz Choudhary DySP Ops Poonch graced the tournament as Guests. The Guests congratulated the winners and lauded the efforts of the departments in successful holding of the event. They extended their best wishes to the winners for the UT Level Tournament. The program was held under the guidance of Nitin Hangloo DYD NYKS Rajouri. Ex Sarpanches were also present in the Event. Mohd Shafiq State Level Resource Person NYKS coordinated the event. Sarfaraz Ahmed, Maqsood Ahmed, Waseem Ahmed and other youth club members also coordinated the event.

Bukhari expresses solidarity with Sonamarg fire victims

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Feb 9: Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari on Sunday expressed grief and sorrow over the extensive damage caused by a devastating fire in the Sonamarg market on Saturday evening. Pertinently, more than 50 shops, including restaurants, were gutted, resulting in significant damage to property and goods at the tourist destination of Sonamarg last evening. In his statement, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari said, "The devastating fire in Sonamarg has caused extensive

damage, which is deeply distressing. I extend my heartfelt sympathies to the victims. Thankfully, there was no loss of life in this tragic incident. However, those affected have suffered immense losses, which is truly heartbreaking." Urging authorities to provide compensation to the fire victims, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari said, "The rehabilitation process must begin soon, and the administration should not waste any time in providing assistance and adequate compensation to the victims so they can rebuild their businesses as quickly as possible."

Forest Conservator Chenab Circle Sandeep Kumar visits Anjole village, hears public grievances



Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Feb 9: Conservator of Forests, Chenab Circle Division Doda, Sandeep Kumar IFS, paid his maiden visit to Anjole village in Thakraie Forest Range, Division Doda, where he held a grievance camp and interacted with the local villagers. Accompanied by Forest Range Officer Sajjad Ahmed and other officials, the Conservator listened to various demands raised by the inhabitants of Anjole. Key concerns included the supply of Kail timber, construction of a forest hut building, and the development of paths in the forest area to

improve connectivity between villages. Assuring the villagers, Sandeep Kumar stated that all genuine demands would be addressed at the earliest. He also issued a stern warning against timber smuggling, emphasizing that strict action would be taken against anyone involved in illegal green felling. He urged locals to remain vigilant and immediately report any unauthorized cutting of trees to the forest authorities. The villagers expressed their appreciation for the Conservator's proactive approach in protecting natural resources and addressing their concerns.

ZNS NIST Shiksha Academy hosts Grand Bridal Photo Shoot event

Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Feb 9: ZNS NIST Shiksha Academy, Udhampur, successfully organized a Bridal Photo Shoot Event at Malhar Resort, providing a dynamic platform for students to showcase their expertise as professional makeup artists. The event featured breathtaking bridal transformations, where over 50 students displayed their skills on professional models, blending traditional and modern bridal aesthetics with remarkable creativity and precision. Dr. Jagdish Chander, Secretary/CEO of



KVIB J&K, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and lauded the students and faculty for their outstanding efforts. He underscored the significance of vocational education in equipping youth with industry-relevant skills and commended the

academy for its commitment to bridging the gap between education and professional careers. The event concluded with high praise for the students' efforts, reinforcing ZNS NIST Shiksha Academy's role in shaping future professionals in the beauty and makeup industry.

Max Hospital, Mohali Organizes Seminar on 'Clinical Updates on Breast Cancer 2025'



Top News Report

JAMMU / MOHALI, Feb 9: Max Super Specialty Hospital, Mohali, hosted a seminar today titled 'Clinical Updates on Breast Cancer 2025.' The event brought together over 80 oncology experts from Tricity and Punjab to discuss the latest advancements in oncology, specifically focusing on breast cancer treatment. The seminar was led by Dr. Sachin Gupta, Director, Medical Oncology and Hemato-Oncology, Max Super Specialty Hospital, Mohali. It began with a warm welcome from Dr. Gupta, who set the tone for the event, emphasizing the importance of learning, innovation, and collaboration in healthcare. During the seminar, Dr. Sachin Gupta addressed the audi-

ence, stating, "The treatment for breast cancer depends on the subtype of cancer and its stage. If the cancer has spread beyond the breast to the lymph nodes (stages II or III) or other parts of the body (stage IV), the treatment plan may vary. Today, thanks to precision diagnosis and personalized medicine, breast cancer patients can be managed more effectively. In recent years, several new targeted therapies have been approved for breast cancer, but there remains a need for more and better treatment options, especially for complex cases like triple-negative breast cancer, where chemotherapy is currently the only option." Dr. Gupta further explained, "Radiation therapy plays a crucial role in treating residual

microscopic cancer cells left in the breast tissue or lymph nodes, reducing the chances of cancer recurring on the chest wall. In more advanced stages, cancer can erode through the skin, leading to open sores (ulceration), though these may not always be painful. Women with breast wounds that do not heal should seek medical attention to have a biopsy performed." Technological innovations such as radiomics and artificial intelligence, along with the tireless efforts of researchers, have opened the door to precision diagnosis, enhanced treatment strategies, and more personalized care for breast cancer patients. The future of breast cancer treatment is being shaped by the dedication and commitment of the scientific community.

FromPage No:1

Delhi CM Atishi submits resignation to Lt Governor Saxena

new government," Raj Niwas, Delhi posted from its official X handle. The LG dissolved the Delhi Assembly effective from Saturday, February 8.

A notification by the assembly secretary issued a day before read, "In exercise of the power conferred upon me by sub-section (2)(b) of section 6 of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991, I, Vinai Kumar Saxena, Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, hereby dissolve the Seventh Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi with effect from February 8, 2025."

The BJP returned to power in Delhi after more than 26 years, winning 48 of the 70 assembly seats. The AAP won 22 seats while the Congress drew a blank in the polls held on February 5.

Atishi took oath as chief minister in September last year after AAP convenor and her predecessor Arvind Kejriwal resigned from the post amid corruption allegations against him.

AAP spokesperson Priyanka Kakkar on Sunday said the party will play the role of a "constructive opposition" in Delhi.

Div Com Kashmir visits Sonamarg, assures full support to fire victims

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Vijay Kumar Bidhuri assured that the administration would provide all possible help to the affected shopkeepers and business owners. "I request all establishments to take preventive measures and opt for insurance. No one would have thought two days ago that such an incident would occur," he said. He said that fire acts like an enemy, and we must take precautionary measures to mitigate its impact. The unfortunate incident led to significant financial losses, though, fortunately, there was no loss of life due to the alertness and quick response of local residents and the administration, he added. Div Com Bidhuri informed that land has been identified for the estab-

lishment of a Fire and Emergency Service Station in Sonamarg to improve fire safety measures in the area. "As an interim measure, two fire tenders will be stationed at Z-Morh and near the Youth Hostel to ensure a prompt response to emergencies," he added. He further stated that relief measures are being proposed for the affected shopkeepers and discussions with market associations have been held. "We have assured them that they will be provided all possible assistance to resume their normal lives at the earliest," he said.

J&K Police intensify inspections to curb misuse of SIM cards by Terrorists

citizens to exercise caution regarding SIM cards issued in their names. Any individual found facilitating the misuse of SIM cards for terrorism or organised crime will face strict legal consequences, police warned.

Tarun Chugh slams AAP after Delhi bypoll defeat, calls it 'people's punishment

Delhi. He described the defeat of the opposition INDI alliance in Delhi as the "last nail in the coffin" for the coalition, suggesting its political relevance is fading. Chugh's remarks come amid growing tensions between BJP and the opposition, with the results seen as a significant setback for AAP and its allies.

PDP's Iltija Mufti Meets family of youth who died by suicide after alleged torture in Kathua

wrote on X, "Finally Iltija managed to reach Bawar in Kathua to meet the bereaved family of Makhan Din, who was driven to suicide by police torture." "It's deeply saddening that she (Iltija) had to endure so many obstacles and travel like a fugitive just to offer comfort to the victim's family. The ruling party has shirked responsibility conveniently attributing all issues to the Lieutenant Governor. However, as a responsible opposition PDP will always strive to reach out to the people to offer solace," she said. On Saturday, Iltija claimed in a

social media post that she and her mother were under house arrest in Srinagar.

"I intended to visit Kathua to meet Makhan Din's family and (I) am not being allowed to even move out. Nothing has changed in Kashmir even after elections. Now even comforting the families of victims is being criminalised," she said on X. "My mother and I both have been placed under house arrest. Our gates have been locked up because she (Mehbooba) was meant to visit Sopore where Waseem Mir (truck driver) was shot dead by the army," Iltija said.

Liquor, Non-Veg Food prohibited aroundVaishno Devi Shrine for two more months

Suraksha Sanhita, the officials said. Besides the track, the prohibition would be applicable in villages within a distance of up to two Km on either sides of the track, including Arli, Hansali and Matyal villages, within 200 metres on either sides of Katra-Tikri road, including villages Chamba, Serli and Bhagta and within 200 metres on either side of Katra-Jammu road including villages Kundorian, Kotli Bajallian, Nomain and Maghal, the

officials said.

The ban also covers 200 metres on both sides of Katra-Reasi road from Katra to Nau Devian and Aghar Jitto and Nau Devian markets, within 200 metres on either side of railway station Katra-Sool Road and within 100 metre on either side of Panthal-Domail road.

Three cops injured as Mehbooba Mufti's escort vehicle skids off road in Baramulla

vehicle in the cavalcade of former Chief Minister and PDP President Mehbooba Mufti met with an accident in Hadipora village of Block Rohama in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Sunday.

An official told Kashmir Dot Com that the Bolero escort vehicle bearing registration no. CH 80395 lost control and skidded off the road, injuring three police personnel.

The injured policemen have been identified as Head Constable Firdous Ahmad, Selection Grade Constable Mohd Ayaz, and Selection Grade Constable Nisar Ahmad.

He said, the injured personnel were shifted to the hospital for treatment where there conditions is said to be stable.

Meanwhile, police have taken cognizance of the incident.

By 2047, India's real estate market will double to 15.5 pc of GDP from 7.3 pc now

By 2030, the market size is expected to reach USD 1 trillion, a sharp rise from USD 200 billion in 2021. The retail, hospitality, and commercial real estate segments are also witnessing significant growth, providing crucial infrastructure for India's expanding economy.

NEW DELHI, Feb 9 (Agencies): India's real estate sector is poised for massive expansion, projected to grow to USD 5.8 trillion by 2047, contributing 15.5 per cent to the country's GDP, up from the current 7.3 per cent, according to CIRIL report.

By 2030, the market size is expected to reach USD 1 trillion, a sharp rise from USD 200 billion in 2021. The retail, hospitality, and commercial real estate segments are also witnessing significant growth, providing crucial infrastructure for India's expanding economy.

The real estate market is set to maintain strong investment momentum in 2025, backed by robust domestic economic fundamentals and a strategic focus on technology and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) integration in investment decisions. The government is expected to extend infrastruc-



ture development beyond metro cities to achieve its Vision 2047.

The sector has shown remarkable performance in 2024, with residential, office, logistics, hospitality, and retail segments expected to grow at a CAGR of 9.2 per cent between 2024-

2028. Urbanization, rental market growth, and steady price appreciation are key factors driving this upward trajectory.

Vijay Sarathi, Chairman of CIRIL, said, "We expect 2025 to continue its strong growth momentum with new invest-

ment avenues emerging in tourism and hospitality, retail, warehousing, co-working, and co-living projects."

India's economic growth is projected at 6.6 per cent in 2025, driven by private consumption and investment, according to a United Nations report. Increased capital expenditure on infrastructure is expected to have strong multiplier effects on economic expansion.

Investment in real estate remains strong, with Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) reaching a record-high 16.46 per cent market share in September 2024, up from 16.25 per cent, with net inflows of Rs1.03 lakh crore.

Despite foreign institutional investor (FII) outflows in October 2024, DII investment remained at record levels, a trend expected to continue in 2025.

Another rate cut expected by April if inflation remains favourable: SBI



NEW DELHI, Feb 9 (Agencies): The Reserve Bank of India's commitment to long-term price stability and sustained economic growth remains unwavering, with analysts anticipating another rate cut as early as April - provided inflation continues to trend favourably, according to SBI research.

SBI stated, "April could see the next rate cut again."

The policy's clear communication and data-driven approach reinforce market confidence while keeping regulatory scrutiny intact.

The central bank has acknowledged that food inflation remains a key factor, influenced by positive indicators like strong kharif production and easing vegetable prices, but also mentioned risks such as adverse weather events.

A key highlight of the policy statement is the emphasis on flexible inflation targeting (FIT). The RBI reaffirmed that FIT effectively combines rules with discretionary decisions, ensuring that

regulatory measures evolve based on economic conditions.

Reflecting this approach, the RBI has deferred the implementation of draft norms for the Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR), Expected Credit Loss (ECL), and provisioning guidelines, allowing for further assessment before enforcement.

The introduction of forward contracts in government securities (G-sec) is expected to enhance price discovery and liquidity. Allowing physical settlement alongside cash settlement will make bond trading more efficient.

The RBI has retained its FY25 inflation forecast at 4.8 per cent, with Q4 inflation projected at 4.4 per cent. For FY26, CPI inflation is estimated at 4.2 per cent.

As anticipated, the MPC has unanimously voted to adjust the repo rate for the first time in two years, lowering it by 25 basis points to 6.25 per cent.

The committee also reaffirmed its commitment to a neutral monetary policy stance, maintaining a clear focus on ensuring sustained alignment of inflation with the target while fostering economic growth.

The RBI Governor highlighted the effectiveness of the flexible inflation targeting (FIT) framework, emphasizing how the central bank has successfully managed to keep inflation within the prescribed range.

Union Bank of India sees lower inflation for FY25 and FY26 than MPC estimates

NEW DELHI, Feb 9 (Agencies): The Union Bank of India highlighted that inflation for FY25 could be lower than the Monetary Policy Committee's (MPC) revised forecast of 4.4 per cent, with Q4 FY25 Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation likely tracking at 4 per cent. For FY26, the bank projects inflation at 4.0 per cent, slightly below the MPC's estimate of 4.2 per cent.

It has raised concerns over downside risks to India's growth and inflation projections for the coming years.

The UBI stated, "MPC revised FY25 growth projection to 6.4 per cent from 6.6 per cent previously even as it projects recovery to 6.7 per cent in FY26. We see downside risk to 6.4 per cent growth forecast for FY25 as it assumes Dec'24 quarter growth above 6.5 per cent while its tracking close to 6 per cent as of now."

It added, "However, we are still pencilling in FY26 growth at 6.5 per cent from 6-6.2 per cent this



year; 7 per cent growth in Q2 FY26 looks optimistic to us in the current global environment."

Looking ahead, the bank maintains an FY26 growth estimate of 6.5 per cent, though it remains cautious about the MPC's optimism regarding a 7 per cent growth rate in Q2 FY26 amid global economic challenges.

Union Bank of India maintains its view of a shallow rate cut cycle, initially expecting a total reduction of 50 basis points, with 25 basis

points already implemented.

Given the ongoing global uncertainty, the bank expects the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to assess further rate cuts around April. It notes that with the MPC's 4.2 per cent CPI forecast for FY26, the repo rate is likely to settle at 6 per cent, while inflation risks will continue to be monitored closely.

The RBI-led MPC unanimously decided to reduce the policy repo rate by 25 basis points to 6.25 per cent—the first rate cut in five years.

However, it maintained a neutral stance to retain policy flexibility amid global financial volatility, trade uncertainties, and potential climate-related disruptions. The committee emphasized that while growth is expected to recover from Q2 FY25 lows, it remains lower than the previous year.

Inflation is expected to moderate further in FY26, aligning with the 4 per cent target, supported by a favourable food inflation outlook and the transmission of past monetary policy actions.

Lab Grown diamonds will drive \$ 1 billion global diamond certification market by 2028: Report

NEW DELHI, Feb 9 (Agencies): The global diamond certification market is projected to grow to USD 1 billion by 2028, up from USD 600 million currently, driven by a 25 per cent increase in lab-grown diamond (LGD) certifications, according to Morgan Stanley.

In December, India's LGD imports surged by 50 per cent month-on-month, while exports rose by 26 per cent, indicating inventory buildup and market share expansion.

India is a key player in the global LGD industry, ranking first in LGD exports with a 29 per cent market share. Alongside China, India accounts for nearly 80 per cent of global LGD production.



IGI is the second-largest global diamond certification provider, holding a 33 per cent market share. It dominates 65 per cent of the LGD certification market and has a 42 per cent market share in studied jewellery certification.

In India, IGI enjoys a 50 per cent market share in certification services, benefiting from the country's position as

a hub for diamond cutting and polishing.

Certification is a defensive business with high barriers to entry, similar to credit rating agencies in the financial sector. The industry is largely controlled by Gemological Institute of America (GIA) and International Gemological Institute (IGI), which together account for 80 per cent of the global certification

market.

IGI, a key player in this industry, is well-positioned to benefit from this surge. The company is projected to enhance its EBITDA margins from 54.6 per cent in 2024 to 56.9 per cent in 2026, reinforcing its strong market presence and operational efficiency.

IGI is set for robust earnings growth, driven by rising demand for diamond certification services, particularly in the lab-grown diamond (LGD) segment, according to Morgan Stanley.

The company is expected to deliver a 14 per cent revenue CAGR over 2024-28, supported by strong growth in India (14 per cent), the Netherlands (16 per cent), and Belgium (13 per cent).

Some species are susceptible to broad range of viruses: Study

LONDON, Feb 9 (Agencies): A study on fruit flies revealed that certain species are extremely vulnerable to a variety of viruses.

In the study - by the University of Exeter - 35 fruit fly species were exposed to 11 different viruses of diverse types

As expected, fly species that were less affected by a certain virus also tended to respond well to related viruses.

But the findings also show "positive correlations in susceptibility" to viruses in general. In other words, fly species that were resistant to one virus were generally resistant to others - including very different types of viruses.

"Large-scale tests like this help us understand how pathogens shift to new host species, with findings broadly applicable to other animals - including humans," said Dr Ryan Imrie, now at the MRC-University of Glasgow Centre for Virus Research.

"These flies shared a common ancestor 50 million years ago, giving them equivalent diversity to mammals, and so we are asking questions over the evolutionary distances which host



shifts typically occur. Lots of people are trying to predict the next pandemic.

"It's impossible to test every virus, so we need to try and understand general rules about how viruses behave in new hosts."

Professor Ben Longdon, of the Centre for Ecology and Conservation at Exeter's Penryn Campus in Cornwall, added: "Information about new viruses can partly be inferred from their relatedness to existing viruses."

"However, a small number of mutations can change that - giving new viruses very different properties than their close relatives."

"Studies like this can help reveal the fundamental processes behind this."

Susceptibility in the study was measured by

"viral load" - how much a virus had replicated and persisted two days into an infection.

Explaining why some fly species might be generally poor at resisting viruses, Dr Longdon said: "Immunity is very costly, so the highly susceptible species in our study may be ones that evolved in an environment with relatively few viruses, or species that viruses are particularly well able to hijack and successfully infect."

"We found no negative correlations (where high resistance to one virus came with low resistance to another)."

"This could suggest that, as fruit fly immune systems have evolved in response to infection, they have not resulted in 'trade-offs' where increased resistance to one virus has decreased resistance to others."

More screen time may lower language development skills in toddlers: Study

NEW DELHI, Feb 9 (Agencies): Increased exposure to screens, such as television and smartphones, may lead to lower language development skills in toddlers, according to an international study.

The findings led by researchers from 20 Latin American countries found that book exposure and shared screen time with adults could boost language skills in toddlers.

The researchers analysed data from 1,878 toddlers aged 12 to 48 months across Latin America between August 2021 and March 2023. The toddlers were evaluated based on parent-reported surveys of screen use, shared media engagement, book exposure, language skills, and developmental milestones.

The team also screened the socio-economic status of the participants to understand basic needs, parental education, and occupation.

The results, published in the journal PLOS ONE, showed that TV and background TV were the most frequently used media, with average daily exposure exceeding one hour. These lowered language development skills in toddlers.

The team also found that entertainment content was the most consumed by toddlers. It was followed by music and educational programming. Further, families with lower socio-economic status reported less use of books and fewer educational resources.

Children with more screen exposure had lower lexical density and delayed language milestone achievement.

On the other hand, those with more exposure to books or had screen engagement with adults had better language skills.

The relationship between screen use and motor development was not significant.

The findings support previous research that excessive screen use negatively impacts early language development. Shared engagement with adults and appropriate content types may mitigate some of these effects.

With screen use poised to increase and become more complex, the researchers suggest future experimental designs control variables and isolate their impact.

Exposure to air pollution can affect one's cognition, daily task performance: Study

NEW DELHI, Feb 9 (Agencies): The short-term exposure to air pollution can cloud one's judgment, affecting emotional intelligence and focus and potentially making routine activities more challenging, according to a new study.

Researchers, including those from the University of Birmingham, UK, compared the performance of 26 adults divided into two groups — one exposed to high levels of air pollution, using candle smoke, and the other to clean air.

The team found that brief exposure to high levels of particulate matter (PM) pollution could affect the participants' higher-order cognitive functions, including self-control and sustained attention, which are critical for work and other aspects of life.

Air pollution has been studied as a major risk factor for neurological diseases, including Alzheimer's and dementia, where cognition and memory are affected.

The long-term exposure to PM2.5 air pollution has also been linked with poor learning and memory among children.

However, the study, published in the Nature Communications journal, showed that "even short-term exposure to particulate matter can have immediate negative effects on brain functions essential for daily activities, such as doing the weekly supermarket shop," co-author Thomas Faherty from the University of Birmingham said.

For the study, the cognitive abilities of the participants, including attention and emotion recognition, were tested before exposure to polluted air and four hours after.

"Results showed significant reduc-

tions in selective attention and emotion expression discrimination after enhanced PM exposure versus clean air exposure," the authors wrote.

Working memory, which serves as a 'temporary workspace' for storing and manipulating just-learned information, was also measured and found to be unaffected.

Therefore, the researchers suggested that inflammation in the brain triggered by pollution could be responsible for the deficits in focusing and recognising emotions.

The results also indicated that certain brain functions could be more resilient to short-term exposure to pollution, they added.

Cognitive functioning, including attention and controlled behaviour, is crucial for accomplishing everyday tasks both at work and in other aspects of life.

For example, selective attention — focusing on what is important and ignoring what is not — is known to help with decision-making and achieving goals.

Recognising one's own and others' emotions helps in understanding how to behave in a socially acceptable manner. "Poor air quality undermines intellectual development and worker productivity, with significant societal and economic implications in a high-tech world reliant on cognitive excellence," co-author Francis Pope from the University of Birmingham said.

"Reduced productivity impacts economic growth, further highlighting the urgent need for stricter air quality regulations and public health measures to combat the harmful effects of pollution on brain health, particularly in highly polluted urban areas," Pope said.

Shuttler Sindhu pulls out of BAMTC 2025 due to hamstring issues

Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships is set to be played in China's Qingdao from February 11-16

NEW DELHI, Feb 9 (Agencies): Two-time Olympic medalist shuttler PV Sindhu has pulled out of the Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships in China due to a hamstring issue, dealing a huge blow to the country's chances of improving the colour of their medal in the prestigious edition. The tournament is set to be played in Qingdao from February 11-16 with the Indian shuttlers currently undergoing training at a camp in Guwahati. Besides Sindhu, the other leading players in the camp are Lakshya Sen, and HS Prannoy, along with the formidable doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty. Sindhu was a part of the squad that won bronze in the previous edition of the tournament. "It is with a heavy heart that I



share I won't be travelling with the team for BAMTC 2025. While training on the 4th (February) in Guwahati, I felt a twinge in my hamstring. Despite my efforts to

push through with heavy taping for our country, an MRI has revealed that my recovery will take slightly longer than I initially expected," said the 29-year-old

Sindhu in a post on 'X'. Sindhu has grappled with injuries since winning her maiden women's singles gold medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. However, the star shuttler sustained a left foot stress fracture injury during the Games, which kept her out of all remaining tournaments in 2022, including the World Championships and the World Tour Finals. India are placed in a tough Group D alongside runners-up South Korea and Macau. They will begin their campaign against Macau on February 12, which will be followed by a tough outing against South Korea on February 13. Sindhu wished the team luck, saying she would be "cheering from the sidelines".

Smith, Lyon, Kuhnemann shine as Australia secure first series win in Sri Lanka after 14 years



GALLE, Feb 9 (Agencies): An excellent performance from Australian spinners Matthew Kuhnemann and Nathan Lyon complemented fine centuries from Steve Smith and Alex Carey as visitors defeated Sri Lanka by nine wickets in the second Test at Galle on Sunday. After 14 years, Australia has finally managed to secure a series win in Sri Lanka and for the first time since 2006, they have clean swept a series in Asia. Sri Lanka won the toss and opted to bat first. Half-centuries from Kusal Mendis (85 in 139 balls, with 10 fours and a six) and Dinesh Chandimal (74 in 163

balls, with six fours and a six) took Sri Lanka to 257 in 97.4 overs. Sri Lanka lost their wickets regularly, but a 65-run seventh wicket stand between Kusal and Ramesh Mendis (28 in 94 balls, with two fours) stretched SL past the 200-run mark. Mitchell Starc (3/27), Matthew Kuhnemann (3/63), and Nathan Lyon (3/96) were top wicket-takers for Australia. In their first innings, Australia lost Travis Head (21), Marnus Labuschagne (4), and Usman Khawaja (36) early, leaving the team struggling at 91/3. However, centuries from Alex Carey (156 in 188 balls, with 15 fours and two sixes)

and Steve Smith (131 in 254 balls, with 10 fours and a six) pushed Australia beyond the 300-run mark as they put on 259 runs for the fourth wicket. A valuable knock of 31 by Beau Webster took the Aussies to 414 runs, giving them a lead of 157 runs. Prabath Jayasuriya (5/151) took another five-wicket haul, while Nishan Peiris (3/94) and Ramesh (2/81) also delivered with the ball. In their second innings, Sri Lanka lost wickets early once again, reduced to 81/4. Half-centuries from Angelo Mathews (76 in 149 balls, with four boundaries and a six) and Kusal Mendis (50 in 54 balls, with five fours and a six) took the Lankan Lions to 231 runs, giving them a 74-run lead. Kuhnemann (4/63) and Lyon (4/84) were top wicket-getters for Aussies yet again. Australia was given 75 runs to win, which they chased down with Usman Khawaja (27*) and Marnus Labuschagne (26*) unbeaten after Travis Head (20) fell to Jayasuriya. Carey earned the 'Player of the Match' award for his knock of 156 while Smith earned the 'Player of the Series' for his two centuries.

Diksha slips to tied-14th while rookie Avani makes cut on pro debut

RABAT, Feb 9 (Agencies): Diksha Dagar slipped to T-14th at the end of the second round of the Lalla Meryem Cup after rounds of 71-73. She is 3-under for two rounds at the Par-73 course at Royal Golf Dar Es Salam. Meanwhile, Avani Prashanth, making her pro debut made the cut. Avani Prashanth, who added 74 to her first round 71 and is now 1-under 145. She is Tied-24th, while the third Indian in the field, Tvesa Malik missed the cut with cards of 79-76. With Top-60 and ties making the cut, 56 players made the cut which fell at 3-over. It is a three-day event over 54 holes. The leader is Singapore's Shannon Tan completed a strong second round firing

4-under 69. A year ago Tan, won the Magical Kenya Ladies Open, the season-opener in 2024 and now she is in the lead at the 2025 season's first event. Diksha, who was in Top-10 after Day 1, birdies twice on the front nine and rose up the leaderboard. However, she dropped shots on the 10th and the 18th with no birdies in between to finish even par for the day. Avani had two birdies and one bogey on the front nine had two bogeys and no birdies on the back nine for a card of 1-over 74. Avani has won pro events on the LET Access and her Women's Pro Golf Tour in India while being an amateur. Singapore's Tan, who started the day on the 10th tee, had a shaky start with bogeys



on holes 10, 13, and 16, but pulled it back on the front nine. The 20-year-old had a swing of birdies on holes one, two, and three, before also putting back-to-back birdies on five and six. Three players sit in a share of second place on five-under-par after 36 holes. Spain's Nuria Ilturroz, Germany's Helen Briem, and Ireland's Sara Byrne all fired rounds of 69 (-4).

Australia Masters unveil squad for International Masters League, Shane Watson to lead

NEW DELHI, Feb 9 (Agencies): The excitement of the International Masters League (IML) is at its peak, and all eyes are on Australia Masters. Under the captaincy of Shane Watson, the team is fully prepared to make an impact in IML 2025, with their first match scheduled against West Indies Masters on February 24, 2025, in Navi Mumbai. This league will see Australia facing some of the biggest legends of the game, including Sachin Tendulkar from India, Brian Lara from West Indies, Jacques Kallis from South Africa, Kumar Sangakkara from Sri Lanka, and Eoin Morgan from England. Australia Masters have a well-balanced squad featuring experienced players like Shaun Marsh, Dan Christian, Ben Cutting, and James Pattinson, who bring both batting and bowling depth to the team. World Cup-winning captain Shane Watson expressed his excitement, saying, "It is always special to be back in India, a place that holds so many great memories for me. The rivalry between Australia and India is intense, and we thrive on that challenge. Leading Australia Masters in the IML is an honour, and our only goal is to lift the trophy. With the legends of the game competing, it would not be easy, but we are ready to give it everything."



vs. Australia match will feature a battle between Sachin Tendulkar's batting brilliance and Shane Watson's lethal bowling. Meanwhile, Brian Lara's aggressive batting will be a major threat to Australia's bowlers, and Jacques Kallis' all-round abilities will make South Africa a tough competitor. Kumar Sangakkara's experience as a wicketkeeper-batsman will play a crucial role for Sri Lanka, while Eoin Morgan's England side will aim to give Australia a fierce fight. Among the co-owners of Australia Masters are Indian-American entrepreneurs Hari Agrawal, Ajay Gupta, and Ruchika Gupta. Hari Agrawal, the founder of CNA Group, is on a mission to promote sustainability in sports. He stated, "Sports demand strategy, precision, and endurance--but now, sustainability must be part of the game. Having witnessed global efforts toward a cleaner planet, I see the IML as an opportunity to set new standards for eco-

friendly sports, ensuring a greener future for cricket and beyond. Sustainability is not just a responsibility--it's a necessity. And through cricket, we can make it a way of life." Ajay Gupta, Chairman of Indus Communities, strongly believes in the power of sports to unite communities. He shared, "At Indus Communities, we have always focused on building not just homes, but thriving communities. Cricket has the same power--it brings people together, fosters camaraderie, and creates lifelong memories." Meanwhile, Ruchika Gupta, Founder and CEO of Health Click Away, is determined to bridge the gap between sports, fitness, and technology. Speaking about her vision, she said, "Health and performance go hand in hand. India and Australia share a deep-rooted connection through cricket, a sport that unites both nations in passion, discipline, and excellence. Drawing inspiration from

this shared legacy, we can further empower individuals to make balanced nutrition and mindful eating an integral part of their daily lives, enhancing both sporting excellence and overall well-being." Australia Masters Full Schedule February 24, 2025, 19:30 IST, Navi Mumbai: West Indies vs. Australia February 28, 2025, 19:30 IST, Vadodara: Sri Lanka vs. Australia March 5, 2025, 19:30 IST, Vadodara: India vs. Australia March 7, 2025, 19:30 IST, Vadodara: Australia vs. South Africa March 12, 2025, 19:30 IST, Raipur: England vs. Australia March 13, 2025, 19:30 IST, Raipur: Semi-Final 1 March 14, 2025, 19:30 IST, Raipur: Semi-Final 2 March 16, 2025, 19:30 IST, Raipur: Final Australia Masters Squad Shane Watson (C) Shaun Marsh Dan Christian Ben Cutting James Pattinson Ben Hilfenhaus Peter Nevill Ben Dunk Nathan Reardon Jason Krejza Nathan Coulter-Nile Ben Laughlin Callum Ferguson Bryce McGain Xavier Doherty Australia Masters are all set to dominate the tournament, but the competition is fierce. It remains to be seen whether Watson can lead his team to glory, or if legends like Sachin, Lara, Kallis, and Sangakkara will stand in his way.

England women's team reaches India ahead of FIH Pro League matches in Bhubaneswar



BHUBANESWAR, Feb 9 (Agencies): The England Women's Hockey Team arrived at the Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar, Odisha on Sunday ahead of the FIH Hockey Pro League 2022/25 India leg matches. The world number seven side will face the hosts India and current world number one

Netherlands in the FIH Hockey Pro League 2024/25 India leg, scheduled to take place in Bhubaneswar from February 15-25. With one win and three losses so far, England has made a rocky start to their FIH Pro League campaign and will be hoping to turn things around despite facing challenging opponents. Forward Darcy Bourne

shared her excitement upon arriving in India saying, "We are very excited to be in India especially after the Hockey India League, expecting the atmosphere to be really big. This is my first time in India, but the buzz around hockey here is nothing like I have ever seen so I am extremely excited." Despite struggling at

the World Cups recently, England is the current Commonwealth champions after the gold medal win in 2022. With big names in the squad this year, England is one of the teams to watch out for. Head coach David Ralph also echoed the excitement and stated, "We are expecting the matches to be very challenging but we are excited. It is going to be wonderful for the girls to play in front of the Indian crowd. In hockey, this is one of the best things you can experience." The FIH Pro League matches of the India leg will be televised on Jio Cinema and Sports 18.

Sprinters complain of start list at National Games


NEW DELHI, Feb 9 (Agencies): The athletics competition of the ongoing National Games has caught undue controversy after a few of the sprinters complained about the start list. The start list of the men's 100 metres competition had listed over 16 sprinters, including Animesh Kujur and Amlan Borghohain, which led to a few of the competitors questioning whether the competition was being held as per the rules. The competition rules for the National Games — since the 2022 Games in Ahmedabad — stipulate that the top-16 ranked athletes in individual disciplines and the top-8 ranked in



the team events would be eligible to participate. However, the start list before the heats had in total nineteen runners split into three races. "I am surprised to know the runners in the 100m field. It seems they are not following the competition rules at all. I thought only top-16 athletes can compete in individual events," said

a source. However, the director of competition, Stanley Jones, denied any foul play on the part of the organisers, saying the numbers keep on fluctuating depending on the number of wildcards being availed by the states. "I think there is some confusion. First of all, host states enter a few


athletes other than the top-16 in the country. Further, other states can avail a wildcard entry in competitions where they do not have representation. So I do not know why anyone is complaining," Jones told The Tribune. There is another issue that has dogged the long jump athletes. The local organisers have mixed marble ash with the mud in the long jump pit, causing a lot of anxiety among them. Jones, once again, clarified that jumpers do not need to worry one bit. "It was mixed with the mud and there was no issue and we had jumps in the morning and it was fine," he said.



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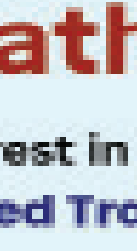
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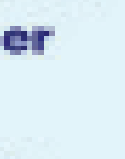
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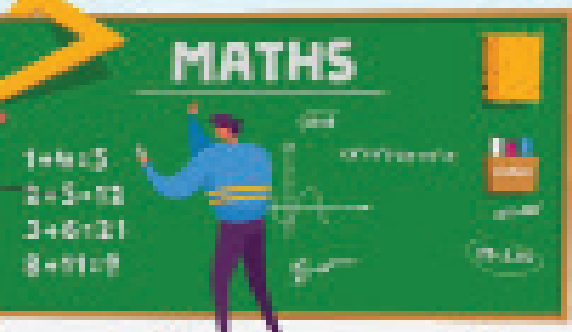
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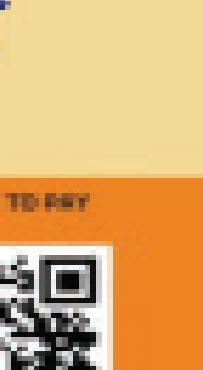
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