

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 01, 2025

Daily Evening Newspaper



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President Lai warns against China's escalating "United Front" tactics



e-paper: www.topnewsjk.in

RNI No. JKENG/2010/39369

Regd. No. JK-435

Vol.-16 Issue-31 Pages-12 Rs.-2/-

BRIEFLY

Sports Budget Raised by Over Rs 350 Crore, Khelo India Gets Biggest Share

SRINAGAR, Feb 1 (Agencies): The government's flagship Khelo India programme to scout and nurture athletes at the grassroots level was the biggest beneficiary as the allocation for sports was hiked substantially by Rs 351.98 crore in the Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman here on Saturday.

The ambitious scheme has been allocated Rs 1,000 crore for the financial year 2025-26. This is Rs 200 crore more than the grant of Rs 800 crore in 2024-25.

Overall, the Ministry for Youth Affairs and Sports was designated Rs 3,794.30 crore, an overall jump of Rs 351.98 crore.

The increase is substantial considering there is no major sporting event like the Olympics, Commonwealth or Asian Games lined up in the next one year.

The assigned amount for assistance to National Sports Federations has also been hiked marginally from Rs 340 crore to Rs 400 crore.

India is currently pushing through with an ambitious bid to host the 2036 Olympic Games for which a letter of intent has been submitted to the International Olympic Committee.

Punjab once again ignored in Union Budget: CM Mann



CHANDIGARH, Feb 1 (Agencies): Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann expressed disappointment over the Union Budget on Saturday, claiming that the border state has been "ignored" once again and not given anything.

Describing it as an "election budget", the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader said it only made announcements for Bihar. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented her eighth budget in Parliament on Saturday.

Reacting to the budget, Mann alleged that Punjab has once again been "ignored" in the budget presented by the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre.

"The Union government has not given anything to" **Turn to page 9**

Nil tax for individuals earning up to Rs 12 lakh annually under new regime: FM

NEW DELHI, Feb 1 (Agencies): Individuals earning up to Rs 12 lakh annually will not have to pay any income tax under the new tax regime as Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday gave relief to middle class by raising exemption limit and rejigging slabs.

For salaried employees, this nil tax limit will be Rs 12.75 lakh per annum, after taking into account a standard deduction of Rs 75,000.

Higher exemptions and rejigs have been effected under the new income tax regime.

"I am now happy to announce that there will be no income tax payable up to income of Rs 12 lakh (i.e. average income of Rs 1 lakh per month other than special rate income such as capital



gains) under the new regime," the finance minister said.

"The new structure will substantially reduce the taxes of

the middle class and leave more money in their hands, boosting household consumption, savings and investment," Sitharaman said in her Budget speech.

As per the rejig, for people earning more than Rs 12 lakh per annum, there will be nil tax for income up to Rs 4 lakh, 5 per cent for income between Rs 4 and 8 lakh, 10 per cent for Rs 8-12 lakh, 15 per cent for Rs 12-16 lakh.

A 20 per cent income tax will be levied on income between Rs 16 and 20 lakh, 25 per cent on Rs 20-24 lakh and 30 per cent above Rs 24 lakh per annum.

A taxpayer in the new regime with an income of Rs 12 lakh will get a benefit of Rs 80,000 in tax. A person having income of Rs 18 lakh will get a benefit of Rs 70,000 in tax.

A person with an income of Rs 25 lakh gets a benefit of Rs 1.10 lakh.

J&K Police gets 9325 crore

SRINAGAR, Feb 1 (Agencies): The Government of India has allocated Rs 9325 crore for the Jammu & Kashmir Police, which is under the administrative control of the Union Home Ministry, in the Union Budget for 2025-26.

As per the Ministry of Home Affairs' (MHA) demands for grants for 2025-26, Rs 9325.73 crore have been allocated to the J&K Police in the Union Budget. Of this amount, Rs 8897.72 crore has been earmarked for the revenue expenditure and Rs 428.01 crore for

the capital expenditure, according to documents.

These budgetary provisions have been made to meet the administrative expenditures of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, which is responsible for maintaining and enforcing law and order and managing traffic in J&K.

Since 2024-25, the J&K Police's budget has been part of the Union Budget. While the Union government has described the takeover of the J&K Police budget as an act of financial benevolence, opposition parties have

argued that it indicates J&K will continue to remain under the Union government's control for a longer period.

In 2019, the Union Government took over the power of legislating on J&K Police through the J&K Reorganisation Act. "Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Legislative Assembly may make laws for the whole or any part of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir with respect to any of the matters enumerated in the State List except the subjects

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Ladakh gets Rs 4692.15 crore for 2025-26

SRINAGAR, Feb 1 (Agencies): The Union Government on Saturday proposed allocation of Rs 4692.15 crore for the Union Territory of Ladakh for 2025-26.

As per budget documents in possession of news agency, the Union Finance Ministry has proposed allocation of Rs 2450 crore as

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Shiv Sena, Sant Samaj demand free treatment for Hindus in Shri Mata Vaishnodevi Hospital

Top News Report

KATRA, Feb 1: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu-Kashmir unit chief Manish Sahni and Swami Rajeshwaranand Ji Maharaj, from Sant samaj while raising voice in favor of formation of Sanatan Board, have demanded priority for Hindus in admission in the university run by Shri. Mata Vaishnodevi Shrine Board, free treatment in Super Specialty Narayan Hospital asso-



ciated with Shrine Board, and making public the details of donations and offerings of Mata Vaishnodevi Darbar. A Hawan-Yagya was

performed today at Shri Rajmata Ji Ashram Shani Mandir, Katra for the peace of the souls of the devotees who

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Snow higher up, rain in plains end dry spell in Kashmir



SRINAGAR, Feb 1 (Agencies): Fresh snowfall in higher reaches and rain in the plains ended the prolonged dry spell in the Kashmir valley,

with the Meteorological Department forecasting a possibility of more precipitation over the next four days.

Intermittent snow-

fall was reported in the higher reaches of Baramulla, Bandipora, Kupwara and Sonmarg districts of the valley, officials said.

They said traces of snowfall were seen early morning in some parts of South Kashmir.

In Srinagar and adjoining areas, intermittent rainfall has been going on since last evening.

The downpour brought down the maximum temperature on Friday by

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Union Budget 2025 | J&K to get Rs 410000 Crore Central assistance for Next Fiscal



JAMMU, Feb 1 (Agencies): The Union Government on Saturday proposed allocation of Rs 41000.07 crore to Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory for next financial year, 2025-26.

As part of fund transfers for Union Territories, the Union Finance Ministry today proposed an allocation of Rs 41000.07 crore to Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory in the Union Budget for 2025-26.

The budgetary figures show that there has been no increase in central assistance to J&K for the next fiscal in the Union Budget.

Of Rs 410000.07 crore allotted to J&K, Rs 40619.30 crore has been kept as central assistance for J&K to bridge its resource gap.

According to budget documents, Rs 279 crore have been proposed to be allocated as

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10th Day / Kriya

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **Sh. Parkesh Singh Chib** S/o Late Sh. Mian Singh Chib R/o Uttam Nagar Kunjwani Jammu who left for heavenly abode on 25-01-2025.

10th Day will be performed on 03-02-2025 (Monday) at our residence Uttam Nagar Kunjwani at 11.30 am.

Kriya will be held on Thursday 06-02-2025 at our residence H.No. 284/C Uttam Nagar, Kunjwani at 12.00 Noon.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt. Simro Devi - Wife

Romesh Singh Chib & Anuradha Chib - Son & Daughter-in-law
Daughter & Son-in-law

Neelam Jasrotia & Upjinder Singh Jasrotia

Reeta Charak & Kuldeep Singh Charak

Late Sh. Janak Singh Chib & Sita Devi - Brother & Sister-in-law

Sh. Vijay Singh Chib & Prem Lata - Brother & Sister-in-law

Late Sh. Reghbir Singh Chib & Kanta Devi - Brother & Sister-in-law

M.No: 9419144882 / 7006636040



Retd. N/Sub.
Sh. Parkesh Singh Chib
(12 JAKRIF)

TENTH DAY

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW WE INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED MOTHER **SMT. SUDARSHAN GANDOTRA** W/O LATE SH. KRISHAN KUMAR GANDOTRA.

TENTH DAY WILL BE PERFORMED ON 2ND OF FEBRUARY 2025 AT OUR RESIDENCE 107/B NEW PLOT NEAR KRISHNA BUILDING JAMMU AT 11:00 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Sunil Kumar Gandotra and Rachna (Son and Daughter-in-law)

Achla Sharma and Rajesh Sharma (Daughter and Son-in-law)

Sangeeta Gandotra (Daughter)

Tilak Raj Gandotra and Suma Gandotra (Devar and Devrani)

Gulshan Uppal and Late Vijay Uppal (Brother and Sister-in-law)

Praveen Uppal (Brother)

Grandchildren :

Natasha and Karan Dev Ray

Sanidhya Gandotra, Sushant Gandotra, Sali Sharma

Great Grand Son:

Devyansh Dev Ray

Mob. 9419193357, 9419300737



SMT. SUDARSHAN GANDOTRA

10th Day / Kriya

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **Sh. Parkesh Singh Chib** S/o Late Sh. Mian Singh Chib R/o Uttam Nagar Kunjwani Jammu who left for heavenly abode on 25-01-2025.

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Kriya will be held on Thursday 06-02-2025 at our residence H.No. 284/C Uttam Nagar, Kunjwani at 12.00 Noon.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt. Simro Devi - Wife

Romesh Singh Chib & Anuradha Chib - Son & Daughter-in-law

Daughter & Son-in-law

Neelam Jasrotia & Upjinder Singh Jasrotia

Reeta Charak & Kuldeep Singh Charak

Late Sh. Janak Singh Chib & Sita Devi - Brother & Sister-in-law

Sh. Vijay Singh Chib & Prem Lata - Brother & Sister-in-law

Late Sh. Reghbir Singh Chib & Kanta Devi - Brother & Sister-in-law

M.No: 9419144882 / 7006636040



Retd. N/Sub.
Sh. Parkesh Singh Chib
(12 JAKRIF)

TENTH DAY/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt. Ram Pyari** (Retd. HOD DIET) wife of Late Prof. Prem Chand R/o H.No. 85, W. No.4, Court Road, Udhampur on 25-01-2025.

10th Day/Uthala shall be held at Parshotam Hall, Dhar Road, Udhampur on Monday, 3rd Feb, 2025.

Satsang 12 Noon

Uthala 1 p.m.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-

Sons & Daughter-in-laws

Sh. Vinay Kumar (LIC) & Smt. Vijay Kumari

Dr. Anil Kumar & Smt. Mridhu Bhardwaj

Dr. Sunil Kumar & Dr. Prabhkiran Kaur

Dr. Simriti & Dr. Bias Dev - Daughter & Son-in-law

Contact: 9419160558, 9419160949



Smt. Ram Pyari
(Retd. HOD DIET)

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief, sorrow and with heavy heart, we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved father **Sh. Niranjan Nath Tikoo** S/o Lt. Sh. Subhashan Tikoo erstwhile resident of Bulgam Sopore/H.No. 11, Lane No. 1, Adarsh Nagar Barama (Bantala) Jammu at present E-45/46 Arya Samaj Road Uttam Nagar, New Delhi for heavenly abode on 27/1/2025.

10th Day Kriya will be performed at Mutdinagar Ghat (U.P) on 04/02/2025 and Assembly will be held at Uttam Nagar residence at 1 PM onwards.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt. Shanta - Wife

Sons & Daughters-in-law

Sanjay & Yogita Tikoo

Sunil & Renu Tikoo

Daughters & Sons-in-law

Sushma & P.K Samf

Purni & Opinder Saraf

Fancy & Kuldeep Bakshi

and All Grand Children

Contact : 9899143274, 9210333272, 9419144815



Sh. Niranjan Nath
Tikoo

BHOG/ANTIM ARDAS

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sdn. Parvinder Kour (Pholli)** W/o S. Manmohan Singh ji & D/o Late S. Jaswant Singh (ZEO) & Sdn. Surinder Kour R/o Mussa Chak Tehsil R.S. Pura, Jammu who left for heavenly abode on 25.01.2025.

Armbh Shri Akhand Path Sahib ji on Friday 31.01.2025 at their residence at 9.30 A.M.

Bhog Shri Akhand Path Sahib ji on Sunday 02.02.2025 at their residence at 9.30 A.M.

Antim Ardas and Kirtan at Gurudwara Sahib, Mussa Chak R.S Pura, Jammu on Sunday 02.02.2025 at 10.00 A.M to 12.00 Noon.

Deeply & Fondly Remembered By :-

S. Sarabjeet Singh (Brother)

Sdn. Upinder Kour (Bhabhi)

Sdn. Ravneet Kour (Niece)

S. Gurpreet Singh (Nephew)

Contact No. 7006464875



Sdn. Parvinder Kour (Pholli)

10TH DAY/KRIYA/RASAM PAGRI

With profound grief & sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Manohar Lal Gupta** (Retired Chief Manager J&K Bank) S/o Lt. Sh. Ram Parkash Gupta (Ex GM J&K Bank) R/o House No. 131, Sector No. 4, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu who left for heavenly abode on 21/Jan/25.

10th Day will be performed on 29/Jan/2025 (Wednesday) from 11 AM to 12 Noon at Panch Mandir Sector 5 Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

Kriya will be performed on 1/Feb/2025 (Saturday) at 12 Noon at our residence.

Rasam Pagri/Uthala will be performed on 5 Feb, 2025 (Wednesday) at 12 Noon to 1 PM at Panch Mandir Sector 5 Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt. Neelam Gupta (Wife)

Sons and Daughters-in-law

Sh. Kunal Mahajan and Smt. Ambika Arora Mahajan

Sh. Kapil Mahajan and Smt. Sonali Mahajan

Grand-Children: Anvi Mahajan, Avyan Mahajan

Bucha Family

Contact No.: 9682611669, 9619758314



SH. MANOHAR LAL
GUPTA
(Retired Chief Manager
J&K Bank)

TENTH DAY

We profound grief & sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **Sh. Karan Singh Langeh** S/o Lt. Sh. Jagan Nath R/o Village Batehra, Jammu who left for heavenly abode on 24-01-2025.

10th Day will be performed on 02-02-2025 (Sunday) at our residence Batehra, Akhnoor Road at 10 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-

Smt. Seema Devi -Wife

Udhayveer Singh -Son

Daughter & Son-in-Law

Smt. Anuradha & Love Jamwal

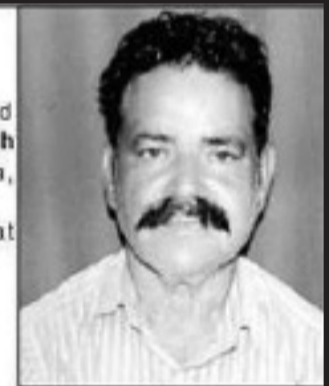
Smt. Sanjana & Gourav Bhai

Brother & Sister-in-Law

Sh. Ghansham Singh Langeh & Smt. Sharda Devi

Sister & Brother-in-Law

Smt. Madhu Kiran & Dr. Karan Singh Bhai



Sh. Karan Singh Langeh

TENTH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Lt. Rtd. Col Tara Mani** S/o Late Shri Beli Ram Mansotra R/o Lane No 3, Greater Kailash, Jammu.

The **10th Day** will be performed at Shiv Mandir, Lane No. 9 (Up-side) Greater Kailash on 29/01/25 at 10 am and **Kriya** will take place on 30/01/25 at our residence Lane No. 3, Greater Kailash.

The **Uthala** will be performed at Shiv Mandir Lane 9 (Up-side) Greater Kailash on 07/02/25 at 4 to 5 PM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt. Kanta Devi - Bhabhi

Daughter in law & Son

Smt. Raman & Sh. Ratan Sharma

Smt. Roma & Sh. Deepak Sharma

Daughters and Son in Law

Smt. Shobha & Sh. Ashok Sharma

Smt. Pamila & Sh. Shiv Nandan Kumar

Smt. Sheela & Sh. Anil Sharma

Grand Children : Resham, Ameesha, Aakriti, Kamyia, Snigdha, Shantanu and Tarush

Great Grand Children : Kartavya

Contact Number: 8192902842 & 9419727856



Lt. Rtd. Col Tara Mani

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Lakshmeshori (Babi)** W/o Late Sh. Bhagwan Das Ganjoo of Ranipora Anantnag on 28th of January, 2025.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed on 5th February 2025 at Ranipora Yarbali (Anantnag) at 09:30 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN:-

Ashok Kumar Ganjoo -Son

Smt. Shashi Ji -Daughter-in-Law

Vijay Ganjoo -Son

Smt. Sumita Ji -Daughter-in-Law

Daughters and Son in Law

Phoolaji W/o Kanya Lal Thapoo

Sudasha Ji W/o Late Shyam Lal Pandita

Giya Ji W/o Ashok Ji Pandita

Reeta Ji W/o Bal Krishan Pandita

Grand Children:- Sheeta, Komal,

Aashish & Archana, Smile, Satyam,

CONTACT NO:- 9906916945, 9971614273, 7051501737



Lakshmeshori (Babi)

TENTH DAY

With profound grief & sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt Kamla Sahib** W/o Late Sh. Mohan Krishan Sahib R/o H.No. 144, Sec 3, L.No. 7, Durga Nagar, Jammu who left for her heavenly abode on 27th of January 2025 (Wednesday).

Tenth Day will be performed on 6-2-2025 (Thursday) at Mata Bhaderkali Asthapan Thalwal Phallian Mandal, Jammu at 8.30 AM and **Assembly** will be held at Muthi Ghat at 11.30 am.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Sons & Daughters-in-law

Shri Kaka Ji Sahib

Sh. Jai Kishan Sahib & Smt. Girja Sahib

Sh. Ashok Sahib & Smt. Veena Sahib

Daughters & Son-in-law

Smt. Bimla Mattoo & Sh. B. K. Mattoo

Smt. Namita Raina

Contact No. 9796608333, 9419105331, 9103038508



Smt Kamla Sahib

KRIYA / RASAM PAGRI & UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our dearest **Smt. Ved Kumari Gupta** (Retd. ZEO) W/o Late Sh. Yash Pal Gupta left for her heavenly abode on 21st Jan 2025.

Kriya will be performed on February 2nd 2025 at 12 Noon at our residence 197-A, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu.

Rasam Pagri & Uthala will be performed on February 3rd 2025 from 4.30 pm - 5.30 pm. at Shiv Mandir Gandhi Nagar Opp Church.

In Grief

Children / Daughter-in-law & Son-in-law

Mr. Anil Gupta & Vandana Gupta

Mr. Mantoo Gupta & Sakshi Gupta

Dr. Pranay Sinha & Dr. Neena Sinha

Grand Children

Amav Gupta & Aneesha Gupta

Aaditya Gupta

Prateek Sinha & Dr. Preksha Sinha



Ved Kumari Gupta
(Retd. ZEO)
14 Jan 1935 - 21 Jan 2025

OBITUARY/TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our mother **Smt. Mohini Kaul** W/o Late Rattan Lal Kaul originally resident of Budgam (Kmir), presently at Karan Nagar (Ward No.6), Udhampur on 26-01-2025.

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed at Devka Ghat Udhampur on 04 Feb, 2025 and **Assembly** will be held at same place (Devka Ghat) at 10.30 AM.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Daughters-in-law & Sons

Smt. Neeta Kaul & Sh. Raj Kumar Kaul

Smt. Laxmi Kaul & Sh. Kewal Krishan Kaul

Smt. Banty Kaul & Sh. Kulbushan Kaul

Daughters & Sons-in-law

Smt. Saroj Sapru & Sh. Subash Sapru

Smt. Indoo Raina & Sh. Satish Raina

All Kaul, Sapru & Raina Parivar



SMT. MOHINI KAUL

SRI AKHAND PATH SAHIB

It is with deep reverence and love that we remember **S. Prem Singh Ishar, IFS, Chief Conservator of Forests (Retd.)**, on the first anniversary of his passing. To honour his memory and seek eternal peace for his noble soul, **Akhand Path Sahib** will be held as follows:

At our residence 22/7, Channi Himmat, Jammu.

Arambh Akhand Path : Saturday, 01 Feb 2025 at 10 AM.

Bhog Akhand Path: Monday, 03 Feb 2025 at 10 AM, at Gurudwara Guru Ka Bagh, Channi Himmat, Jammu.

Kirtan and Ardas: 11 AM to 12:30 PM followed by Guru Ka Langar.

DEEPLY REMEMBERED BY:-

Ujjal Kaur

Dr. Gurmeet Singh Roan & Mrs. Harpreet Kaur

Major General Jagdeep Singh Ishar (Retd.) & Mrs. Harmeet Kaur

Commodore Harmeet Singh Ishar (Retd.) & Mrs. Avleen Kaur

DFSS celebrates historic Union Budget 2025-26

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: The workers of Dogra Front & Shiv Sena (DFSS), under the leadership of President Ashok Gupta, took out a massive celebration rally in Jammu city, hailing the Union Budget 2025-26 as a major relief for the middle class. The rally was organized to express gratitude towards Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who announced a significant income tax exemption for salaried individuals up to Rs 12.75 lakh.

The jubilant party workers distributed sweets among the public, terming the budget as one of the finest since India's independence. Speaking at the event, Ashok Gupta emphasized that the proposed tax exemption will greatly



enhance the financial well-being of the middle class, which has long felt ignored. He congratulated all the beneficiaries, stating that this decision will not only encourage economic development but also bring positive changes in people's lifestyles.

The budget has been

praised for its comprehensive provisions across all sectors of the economy, presenting a balanced roadmap for development. Special emphasis has been laid on increasing the growth rate and ensuring inclusive progress, making this budget a milestone in India's journey toward

becoming a developed economy by 2047.

One of the major highlights of the budget was the increase in the basic income tax exemption limit from Rs 2.5 lakh to Rs 4 lakh, a move welcomed by the working class.

Additionally, the government has taken con-

crete steps to address inflation, particularly food inflation, which has been a pressing concern for the common man.

Among the key measures, targeted initiatives like the National Mission on Pulses aim to boost production, ensure better supply, and stabilize prices. Recognizing the rising costs of vegetables and fruits, the budget also includes a comprehensive program to increase yields, enhance supply chains, and reduce price volatility, ensuring greater affordability for consumers.

The rally witnessed enthusiastic participation from numerous party members, including Prem, Bantu, Ganesh, Neelam, Rajni, Paro, Santosh, Suman, Renu, Geeta, Garo, Mamta, Sharda, Beena, and many others.

Dimple leads protest against disappointing Union Budget 2025-26



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: Sunil Dimple, President of Mission Statehood Jammu & Kashmir, led a protest against the 2025-26 Union Budget, calling it deeply disappointing for the people of Jammu & Kashmir, especially the youth. As a sign of strong opposition, Dimple and his supporters burnt copies of the budget, condemning it as an anti-poor, anti-youth, and anti-farmer policy document.

Addressing the protesters, Dimple accused Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman of presenting a misleading and ineffective budget, which fails to address the real concerns of the people. He criticized the government for neglecting Jammu & Kashmir's economic and social needs and demanded the immediate restoration of J&K's statehood, asserting that the people of the region can manage their own affairs without depending on the Centre.

Dimple strongly criticized the budget for

failing to address rising unemployment, inflation, and poverty. He alleged that no concrete steps have been taken to create job opportunities, despite earlier promises of providing two crore jobs per year. The budget, he argued, does not offer any relief to the common people, who continue to struggle with skyrocketing prices of essential commodities.

He further pointed out that 85 crore people in the country still depend on 5 kg free ration, questioning what measures the government has actually taken for their upliftment. Additionally, he slammed the budget for offering no relief on toll taxes, failing to return power projects to J&K, and ignoring the need for electricity bill waivers, which he said are crucial for easing the burden on the common people.

Dimple also criticized the lack of reforms in fuel pricing, stating that no steps were taken to bring petrol, diesel, and LPG under GST, despite repeated demands

from the middle-class families. The so-called income tax relief in the budget, he said, is nothing more than a hoax, misleading people into believing they will benefit while offering no real financial relief.

Highlighting the neglect of Jammu & Kashmir in the budget, he stated that there is no commitment to return power projects, restart the Darbar Move, or introduce railway and metro projects in the region. He also expressed disappointment over the lack of provisions for the recruitment and regularization of daily wagers, NYC, REK, Janglat, and Sehat workers, who continue to suffer without stable employment.

According to Dimple, traders, transporters, unemployed youths, and middle-class families have received nothing from this budget except disappointment. He accused the government of failing to control inflation and provide support to small businesses, which are already struggling due to high GST rates and lack of incentives.

JMC organizes Public Samvaad to address public issues and ensure grievance redressal



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: The Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) organized a Public Samvaad, an outreach initiative designed to address the concerns of the general public, ensure active participation, and provide solutions to their grievances. The event was held at Bharat Mata Patoli Park in Ward No. 35, Janipur, Jammu, and was led by JMC Commissioner Dr. Devansh Yadav.

The event saw active participation from ex-councillors, prominent

citizens, Swachhata Champions, Swachhata Ambassadors, NGOs, members of Mohalla Welfare Committees, and the general public. A range of JMC officers, including the Joint Commissioner (A), Joint Commissioner (W), Secretary JMC, Deputy Director (Planning), and others, also attended the program.

During the event, various speakers highlighted concerns related to streetlight maintenance, road and park upkeep, water supply, and other essential amenities. Public demands included the beautifica-

tion of Janipur's main road market, repair of streetlights, improved water supply, resolution of sewerage blockages, development of smart mohallas, installation of road dividers with reflectors, gym equipment at parks, additional sanitation workers, upgrading of footpaths, the opening of a public toilet on High Court Road, and the establishment of a public dispensary in Ward No. 34.

In response, Commissioner Dr. Yadav assured the public that all concerns and grievances would be promptly noted and addressed.

He emphasized that the primary aim of this initiative was to understand the genuine demands of the public to ensure budgetary provisions were prepared accordingly in a decentralized manner for the wards.

Dr. Yadav committed to installing mast lights and gym equipment in parks in Ward No. 35 and surrounding areas. He also assured that issues related to water supply, sewerage, lanes, drains, and streetlights would be prioritized. Further

Devotees pay obeisance to Kuldevta Kaliveer

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: Devotees in large number paid obeisance to Kuldevta Kaliveer at his temple at Trikuta Nagar here today.

Priest Mela Ram said, we must worship our ancestral spirits as they are believed to be our protectors and save us from several dangers.

R.L.Kaith urged for making the society peaceful saying that Jammu is known for communal harmony and efforts should be made to maintain it at all cost.

more, the Commissioner urged residents to actively participate in shaping the future of the city, highlighting JMC's commitment to enhancing civic amenities and creating a more responsible, citizen-centric governance.

The Public Samvaad initiative seeks to strengthen the relationship between the municipal administration and the residents, fostering direct engagement to ensure timely resolution of concerns and better overall service delivery.

SKUAST-J conducts training on 'Recent Advances in Management of Parasitic Diseases'

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: With the objective to update the knowledge of Veterinary Officers of Department of Sheep Husbandry, Government of Jammu and Kashmir by enriching concepts, skills and tools of management of parasitic diseases in small ruminants, a two days training on the topic "Recent Advances in the Management of Parasitic Diseases of Sheep and Goats" was organized under the esteemed guidance of Professor B.N Tripathi, Vice Chancellor of SKUAST-Jammu, in collaboration with State Agricultural Management and Extension Training Institute (SAMETI)-Jammu.

The training was organized by Division of Veterinary Parasitology, Faculty of Veterinary Sciences and Animal Husbandry, SKUAST-J, at R.S. Pura Campus.

In the valedictory function, Prof. Rajesh Katoch, Dean Faculty of Veterinary Sciences and Animal Husbandry, was Chief Guest. In his address Prof. Katoch highlighted the role of advanced techniques in early and reliable diagnosis of animal diseases particularly during outbreaks at the field level.

He added that the solution of all the chal-



lenges in management of parasitic diseases lies with molecular biological approaches that are aimed towards improving animal health by developing newer vaccines and diagnostics, production of bio-pharmaceuticals through transgenesis and animal products and use of genetic and biological methods for sustainable parasite control and management.

Further he enlightened that the current scenario where climate change and trans-boundary diseases contribute to an upsurge in causing parasitic diseases in livestock and human, forms the core reason for us to work and move forward under One Health.

Prof. (Retd.) J.K. Khajuria, Ex HOD, Veterinary Parasitology, Khalsa Veterinary College, Amritsar was Guest of Honour and in his address stressed that threats of anthelmintic and acaricide

resistance against major parasiticidals have challenged us to look forward for smart ecofriendly, cost effective and efficient control strategies against the parasites.

Prof. Anish Yadav, Head Division of Veterinary Parasitology cum Course Coordinator welcomed the dignitaries and august gathering. Prof. Yadav, made a presentation and discussed in length the activities conducted during the training attended by the 15 participants.

He informed that experts of different fields having correlation with parasitic diseases viz. Animal Nutrition, Ethno-Veterinary Practices, Pathology, etc. were invited to deliver the talks.

Moreover, the main focus was kept on performing different conventional and advanced techniques by the participants themselves.

In addition, a special session "Lab to Land and

Ignite Young Minds" was also conducted amongst Veterinary Officers, Scientist and Young budding 3rd Year Professionals students of B.V.Sc & A.H. to highlight the economic significance of parasitic diseases and challenges for future generation veterinarians in tackling diseases at field level so as to improve the income of the livestock farmer by increasing productivity.

During the valedictory session of the training program a training manual was released by the dignitaries and distributed among the participants.

Dr. Ashok Kumar, Prof. and Head, Veterinary Clinical Complex, Dr. Rajesh Godara, Associate Professor, non teaching staff and project staff of the division were also present during the valedictory.

The participant namely Dr. Amitha Baddamwar presented her opinion regarding conductance of the workshop. Certificates were distributed by the Chief Guest.

Prof. Sanku Borkataki extended the vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to Director SAMETI-J, Director Sheep Husbandry, Jammu, all participants and contributors for their valuable insights and active participation in making the training a resounding success.

EXTENSION OF VISTA DOME TRAIN SERVICE
For the convenience of rail passengers, Northern Railway has decided to extend the periodicity of run of following Vista Dome Train Service as per details given below:-

Train No.	Train Name	Frequency	Earlier Notified Upto	Extended Upto
04688	Budgum-Banihal	Except-Friday	31.01.2025	01.02.25 to 28.02.25 =24 Trips
04687	Banihal-Budgum	Except-Friday	31.01.2025	01.02.25 to 28.02.25 =24 Trips

For any kind of information and detailed time-table etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

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OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL & HOSPITAL DIVISION JAMMU

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (Short Term)

MHDJ/e-NIT 194 of 2024-25 **Dated: 30.01.2025**
Due : 05.02.2025

On behalf of the President of India, e-tenders in two cover system on turnkey basis are invited from registered/reputed firms having sufficient relevant experience for the work mentioned below:

S. No	Description of work	Project Authority	Estt	Earnest Money Deposit	Cost of tender document	Time of completion	Eligibility Criterion of Bidder
1	REPAIR OF LEAKING AIR HANDING UNITS INSTALLED IN CENTRAL LIBRARY OF GMC JAMMU.	Principal GMC & Associated Hospital Jammu	2.30 LACS	Rs. 5000.00 in the shape of DR/ FDR/ TDR valid for 12 months pledged to the Executive Engineer MH Division Jammu	Rs 200.00 in the shape of Challan through J&K Govt. Treasury indicating Treasury Voucher No. & date and also indicating the name of work duly credited to 0059-PWD (Revenue) and uploading a copy of treasury challan / receipt on e-tendering portal. OR The bidder may deposit tender fee in the shape of e-Challan through Account no. 0097010100002163 in the name of Executive Engineer Mechanical & Hospital Division Jammu Name of Bank: J&K Bank Town Hall Jammu Branch Code:0097 IFSC code: JAKA0TNHALL MICR CODE: 180051025	07 days	Registered & Reputed firms having sufficient experience as per Annexure "C" Similar nature of work

THE NIT CONSISTING OF Qualifying INFORMATION, ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA, BILL OF QUANTITIES (BOQ) SETS OF TERMS & CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT & OTHER DETAILS CAN BE VIEWED / DOWNLOADED FROM THE WEBSITE www.jktenders.gov.in.

DIP/J-9702/24

SD/-
(Er. Vishal Mahajan)
Executive Engineer
Mechanical & Hospital Division
Jammu

EDITORIAL

Union Budget 2025:
Blueprint for Growth

The Union Budget 2025, presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, has been widely hailed as a visionary financial roadmap that focuses on economic growth, tax relief, employment generation, and social welfare. The budget aims to strengthen India's economic foundations while addressing the concerns of the middle class, farmers, businesses, and youth. With a strong emphasis on fiscal discipline and long-term growth, the budget has introduced several key reforms that will significantly impact various sectors.

One of the most welcomed aspects of this year's budget is the increase in income tax exemption limits, bringing much-needed relief to the middle class. The basic exemption limit has been raised from Rs 2.5 lakh to Rs 4 lakh, while the overall tax exemption under the new regime has been increased to Rs 12.75 lakh. This move is expected to boost consumer spending, increase savings, and provide greater financial security to salaried individuals. Additionally, the rationalization of tax slabs and deductions will further enhance the disposable income of millions of taxpayers.

Inflation has been a major concern for households across the country. The government has introduced targeted measures to control price hikes, especially in essential commodities like food, fuel, and housing. A National Mission on Pulses has been launched to boost production and stabilize prices, while a comprehensive program for vegetable and fruit production aims to improve supply chains and reduce price volatility. These steps will help ensure affordable food prices and a stable economic environment.

Addressing unemployment remains a top priority, and the budget includes multiple provisions to create more job opportunities.

A significant portion of the budget has been allocated to infrastructure projects, which will not only improve connectivity and trade but also create millions of jobs. The key infrastructure initiatives include Expansion of the national highway network to enhance road connectivity; Strengthening railway infrastructure with new high-speed rail corridors; Investing in urban renewal projects and smart cities; Developing aviation and port sectors for improved logistics and trade.

These projects will contribute to long-term economic growth, while also ensuring better public transportation and connectivity across India.

Recognizing the importance of the agricultural sector, the budget has introduced several farmer-friendly measures. These include Increasing the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for major crops; Expanding crop insurance schemes to protect farmers from losses; Providing subsidies on fertilizers and seeds to encourage sustainable farming; Strengthening irrigation and rural credit facilities to enhance productivity; The rural economy is also set to benefit from improved infrastructure, employment programs, and enhanced agricultural exports. These measures aim to uplift farmers and boost rural livelihoods.

The Union Budget 2025 strongly focuses on digital transformation, emphasizing Artificial Intelligence (AI), fintech, and automation.

Some of the key announcements include Expansion of 5G networks and broadband connectivity across the country; Special funding for AI-based research and development projects; Promotion of digital payments and fintech innovations to create a cashless economy.

By investing in technology and digital infrastructure, the government aims to position India as a global leader in digital innovation and IT development.

Healthcare and education have been given significant attention in this budget, with major announcements aimed at improving public health facilities and quality education. The key reforms include Expansion of Ayushman Bharat health coverage to include more beneficiaries; Increased investment in public hospitals and medical research; Strengthening online education platforms and digital learning resources; Establishment of new IITs, IIMs, and AIIMS institutions to promote higher education and research.

These steps will enhance human capital development, ensuring a healthier and more skilled workforce for the future.

The budget has reaffirmed the government's commitment to sustainable development by promoting clean energy initiatives. The key measures include Increasing investments in solar and wind energy projects; Encouraging the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) through subsidies and incentives; Strengthening climate change mitigation programs and afforestation projects.

These efforts will help India achieve its environmental goals, while also creating new economic opportunities in the renewable energy sector.

Laparoscopic Day: Honoring Advances in Modern Surgery

By: Prof (Dr.) Vikas Sharma
& Dr. Abeeda Mushtaq

Laparoscopic Day, celebrated every year on the last Sunday of January, is an event dedicated to recognizing and honoring the importance of advancements in surgical techniques, particularly the development and use of non-invasive, minimally invasive procedures. The day focuses on promoting awareness and education about the evolution of laparoscopic surgery, the benefits it brings to patients and how it has transformed the field of medicine. Laparoscopy, which involves using a small camera to perform surgery through tiny incisions, was first introduced in the 1960s and quickly gained recognition for its ability to reduce recovery time, minimize scarring and lower the risk of complications. However, as its use became more widespread, concerns arose regarding the risks and long-term effects, particularly in complex surgeries or in patients with certain conditions. These concerns spurred the creation of Laparoscopic Day, which aims to foster discussions around alternatives to traditional laparoscopy, such as robotic-assisted surgery and natural orifice transluminal endoscopic surgery (NOTES).

Laparoscopy is a diagnostic and therapeutic procedure widely used in medicine. It involves the insertion of a laparoscope through small incisions, allowing surgeons to view the internal organs on a screen. This method is commonly employed for diagnostic purposes, such as identifying the cause of abdominal pain, infertility, or unexplained bleeding, as well as for therapeutic purposes, like removing the gallbladder, treating endometriosis, or performing bariatric surgeries. This approach reduces post-surgical complications such as infections, shortens hospital stays and leads to quicker recovery periods for patients.

The history of laparoscopy dates back over a century. Its origins can be traced to the early 1900s when German physician Georg Kelling performed the first experimental laparoscopic procedure on a dog. However, it wasn't until the 1960s and 1970s that the technique gained traction for human surgeries, thanks to advancements in medical technology and the development of more



sophisticated laparoscopic equipment. The introduction of video cameras in the 1980s revolutionized the field, allowing surgeons to view detailed images on monitors and perform more complex procedures with precision. Today, laparoscopy is a cornerstone of minimally invasive surgery, widely used across various medical disciplines.

Treatment through laparoscopy extends beyond diagnostics. The procedure allows surgeons to perform various operations, including removing cysts, tumors, or diseased organs, repairing damaged tissues and treating conditions like ectopic pregnancies. Robotic-assisted laparoscopy, a more recent innovation, enhances surgical precision, offering improved outcomes for patients. The recovery process is generally swift, with most patients returning to normal activities within a few days to weeks, depending on the complexity of the procedure. Postoperative care typically includes managing minor discomfort, monitoring for signs of infection and following dietary and activity guidelines.

Certain groups of patients are more likely to require laparoscopic treatment due to the nature of their medical conditions. Women suffering from gynecological issues, such as endometriosis, ovarian cysts, fibroids, or infertility, are common candidates for laparoscopy. It allows doctors to diagnose these conditions and, in many cases, treat them during the same procedure. Patients with abdominal or pelvic pain of unknown origin may also benefit from laparoscopic exploration to determine the cause of their symptoms. Additionally, those with gastrointestinal problems, such as appendicitis, gallstones or hernias, may need laparoscopic surgery for diagnosis or treatment. Laparoscopy is also a valuable tool in oncology for

staging cancers, removing tumors, or obtaining biopsies to guide further treatment.

Another group that often requires laparoscopic intervention includes individuals with obesity or metabolic syndrome opt for weight-loss surgeries, such as laparoscopic gastric bypass or sleeve gastrectomy. These procedures are minimally invasive and have been shown to significantly improve health outcomes for people struggling with obesity-related complications like diabetes, hypertension and sleep apnea. Similarly, patients with chronic diseases, such as inflammatory bowel disease or liver cirrhosis, may require laparoscopic procedures to assess the severity of their conditions or manage complications.

Despite its benefits, laparoscopy has been surrounded by taboos and misconceptions, particularly in the early days. Some skeptics doubted its efficacy, believing that small incisions might compromise surgical outcomes. Others feared that the technique was too complex or risky compared to traditional open surgery. In certain cultures, taboos about medical interventions, particularly those involving internal organs, have further complicated the acceptance of laparoscopy. Over time, education, awareness campaigns and success stories have dispelled many of these myths, leading to its widespread acceptance as a safe and effective surgical method.

Laparoscopic Day, celebrated on the last Sunday of January each year, plays a pivotal role in addressing these challenges and promoting awareness. This day is not about opposing laparoscopy; rather, it celebrates the evolution of surgical techniques that have surpassed or complemented traditional laparoscopic methods. The day highlights the importance of continuous innovation

in the medical field, fostering discussions about the limitations of laparoscopy and the potential of newer, non-invasive procedures. It is also an opportunity to educate patients and healthcare providers about the importance of choosing the right surgical approach based on individual needs and conditions.

The celebration of Laparoscopic Day is significant for several reasons. First, it recognizes the transformative impact of minimally invasive surgery on modern medicine. By reducing the physical and emotional burden of traditional surgery, laparoscopy has improved the quality of life for countless patients. The day also emphasizes the need for ongoing research and development to overcome existing challenges, such as the steep learning curve for surgeons and the high cost of advanced equipment. Furthermore, it serves as a platform to dispel lingering taboos and misconceptions, ensuring that patients make informed decisions about their healthcare.

In conclusion, laparoscopy represents a remarkable advancement in medical science, offering a safer, less invasive alternative to traditional surgery. Its ability to diagnose and treat a wide range of conditions with minimal disruption to patients' lives underscores its importance. However, like any medical procedure, it has its limitations and risks, which necessitate careful evaluation and patient education. Laparoscopic Day serves as a reminder of the progress made in surgical techniques and the importance of continuing innovation in the field. By celebrating this day, we acknowledge the milestones achieved and inspire future advancements that will further revolutionize patient care.

(The authors are from the Division of Biochemistry, SKUAST-Jammu)

Digital transformation of Maha Kumbh

By: Omkar Dattatray

The digital transformation of Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 has revolutionized the way pilgrims experience this religio-cultural event. Yogi government and its tech-partners have introduced multiple digital innovations to enhance security, convenience and accessibility. Kumbh, Ardh Kumb and Maha Kumb has a special significance in Sanatan Dharma. It has been going on since centuries and the Maha Kumb 2025 has been clean and green. The Maha Kumb this year has gone digital and it is the novel initiative of the UT government of Yogi Adityanath. Prayagraj is hosting Maha Kumb Mela which is expected to be participated by about 40 crore people. 2025 Prayagraj Maha Kumb has begun on January 13 and will last till February 26. It is the world's largest gathering as people from India and other parts of the globe visit Prayagraj for participation in Maha Kumb to take holy dip at the confluence of Rivers Ganga, Yamuna and mystical Saraswati. The Uttar Pradesh government has rolled out a digitalization plan. AI technology, mobile apps, Chatbots, a digital lost and found centre and even Google navigation is guiding the millions gathered for the Maha Kumb. UP government laid out 'Digital Kumbh' experience for the visitors. Initiative involve AI-Powered cameras, Google-assisted navigation & a chatbot, digital lost and found centre which are operating for security, convenience and ease of crores of devotees. To tackle a concern among people that has been long associated with the Kumbh Mela -that of getting lost during one of the largest religious gatherings, expected to be attended by around 40 crore people in January 2025 in Prayagraj. The primary goal of digitizing is to help the largest number of the people participating in this year's Maha Kumbh Mela so that they feel ease at the Prayagraj for the first time. The Rigveda speaks of a divine event called the "Sagar Manthan" or churning of cosmic ocean, which is considered the genesis of the Kumbh / Maha Kumbh Mela. Legend has it that during this cosmic churning a pot-Kumbh containing the elixir {Amrita} appeared. The Maha Kumbh Mela is a timeless tapestry of faith and fervor, unfolds like a sacred epic, weaving together the threads of history, spirituality and cultural heritage. This grand pilgrimage held cyclically at four

sacred riverbanks of the Ganges, Yamuna, and Saraswati, Haridwar along the Ganges, Nashik on Godavari, and Ujjain on the Shipra-is not merely a contemporary spectacle but a tradition steeped in profound historical significance. As we embark on a journey through time, we unravel the layers of history that have shaped the sanctity and prominence of the Kumbh Mela. The roots of the Maha Kumbh Mela can be traced back to ancient Hindu scriptures and mythological narratives. The ancient references to a similar pilgrimage are found in the Rigveda, one of the oldest sacred texts of Hinduism. The Rigveda speaks of a divine event called the "Sagar Manthan" or churning of the cosmic ocean, which is considered as the genesis of the Maha Kumbh. Legend has it that during the cosmic churning a pot-kumbh emerged. The celestial struggle for possession of this divine nectar ensued, leading to a celestial battle that spanned twelve divine days, equivalent to twelve human years. Drops of nectar fell on four locations on earth, marking the sites where the Kumbh Mela is celebrated today. The Kumbh mela finds its first historical references during the Maurya and Gupta periods, approximately from the 4th century BCE to 6th century CE. During this period, the great Indian emperor Ashoka is said to have played a pivotal role in the establishment & promotion of Buddhism. Historical records suggest that the Maha Kumbh Mela in its nascent form attracted pilgrims from various corners of the Indian sub-continent. In the contemporary era, the Kumbh Mela has transformed into a global phenomenon, drawing not only millions of domestic pilgrims but also attracting international attention. The UNESCO recognition of the Kumbh Mela as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity in 2017 further underscored its historical and cultural significance. The Kumbh Mela today is a manifestation of India's rich cultural and religious heritage. It serves as a testament to the resilience of ancient traditions in the face of modernity. The historical evolution of the Maha Kumbh Mela from ancient scriptures to the present day, reflects its ability to adapt and thrive, preserving its sanctity and spiritual essence. The main objectives of digitalization of Maha Kumbh are to improve security, increase visibility, monitor activities and ensure efficient service delivery. The UP government has introduced a digital plan to help people navigate the Kumbh Mela 2025 with ease. This initiative, supported by Prime Minister Nar-

endra Modi and chief minister UP Yogi Adityanath, aims to provide a modern digital experience for both attendees and those unable to visit in person. The chief minister has also launched a new website and app, offering detailed information on key areas such as ghats, akharas, religious sites, and travel options to enhance the overall experience. In an interview with the Times of India, Kumbh Mela Adhikari Vijay Kiran Anand stated, "Work is being done for the chatbot through this, devotees will easily reach the camp where they want to go. They will not have to wander anywhere." For the first time, advanced technologies like artificial intelligence has been implemented during the Maha Kumbh. The Prayagraj Mela authority will also be able to track services provided at the event, including the Ganga Aarti Puja, through online platforms. For added convenience, 3D images of all camps are being uploaded to the official website, offering visitors a clear view of facilities and accommodation. To ensure security and cleanliness during the Maha Kumbh 2025, 100 AI cameras have also been installed at the Mela. These cameras are monitoring activities and alert the police to any issue. Scanners have also been installed in all toilets to track their cleanliness and maintenance in real time. During chief minister Yogi Adityanath's visit to Prayagraj, an agreement was signed between the UP government and Google. This partnership has enabled Google to offer an online view of the entire tent city. Visitors are also able to access detailed information about attractions such as laser shows, water sports, and more through the official website. For the first time, cutting-edge technologies, including chatbots, Google navigation, and artificial intelligence AI, are used during the Maha Kumbh. Through internet platforms, the Prayagraj Mela authorities are also able to monitor services offered throughout the event, such as the Ganga Aarti Puja. All camps have 3D photo posted to the official website for visitors convenience, providing a clear glimpse of the amenities and lodging. One hundred artificial intelligence cameras have been set up in the Mela to guarantee cleanliness and security during the Maha Kumbh 2025. These cameras are monitoring the situation and notify the police of any problems. Additionally, scanners have been fitted in every toilet to monitor upkeep and cleanliness in real time. Maha Kumbh 2025 will give UP chance to showcase its tourism potential. The state tourism department has

set up a Digital Kumbh Museum to showcase the cultural heritage of India and offer insight into the mythological and historical significance of the Kumbh. To leverage its religious and spiritual tourism potential, the UP government is pitching for global branding of Maha Kumbh Mela 2025, one of the world's largest congregations of pilgrims. "Maha Kumbh 2025 will represent India and UP before domestic and international tourists. It is therefore imperative that visitors carry back a bouquet of pleasant memories of their stay. Therefore we are going all out in our preparations." Although Kumbh is essentially the religious event, it has a major socioeconomic footprint and the state is on the job to promote Maha Kumbh to harness its religious, spiritual, and cultural tourism potential for job creation, socioeconomic growth and cultivating a positive image for UP, which is aspiring to become India's first one trillion dollar economy. To host an enormous congregation of devotees, a gargantuan 4,000-hectare tent city has been set up in Prayagraj. It will have been illuminated with 67,000 streetlights, and comprise 2,000 tents and 25,000 public accommodations for different categories of tourists. About 23,000 CCTV cameras and AI-based surveillance will complement the security paraphernalia of the tent city at the bank of Sangam, the confluence of Ganga, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati in Prayagraj. The state budget for Kumbh has jumped 78% from Rs 4,200 crore in Kumbh Mela 2019 to Rs 7,500 crore for Maha Kumbh 2025. Main religious ritual is a holy dip in the waters at the Sangam -the confluence of the three sacred rivers. Prayagraj is considered as the holiest of the holy pilgrimages in Hinduism and a holy dip there is believed to give salvation to devotees. In short the Maha Kumbh Mela has been digitized and let us pass on our cultural, spiritual and religious legacy to the future generations and keep ourselves aware of our rich cultural and religious roots. Kumbh Mela in fact symbolizes the spiritual, cultural and religious legacy of India.

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

SVMHC Hospital Management Committee calls on Health Minister to discuss affordable healthcare initiatives

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: In a significant move towards enhancing healthcare services for the people of Jammu & Kashmir, the Management Committee of Swami Vivekananda Medical Mission Charitable Hospital, Ambphalla, Jammu, on Saturday met with the Health Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, Sakina Itoo.

The meeting was held to discuss the ongoing healthcare initiatives at the hospital and to highlight the future plans aimed at providing quality healthcare at affordable rates.

The delegation from the hospital, led by Amar Chand Gupta, Senior Vice President; B.B. Gupta, Gen Secretary; B.S. Jamwal, Secretary; Administrator Dr. Romesh Gupta; and Manager Iqbal Deep Singh, presented a memento to the Health Minister as a token of apprecia-



tion for her continued support of healthcare initiatives in the region.

During the meeting, the hospital management highlighted the commendable services currently being offered to the community.

Notably, the hospital provides MRI and CT scan services at government-approved rates, at

par with those at the Government Medical College.

This ensures that patients in need of diagnostic services can access them at affordable prices, without the financial burden that often comes with advanced medical procedures.

Delegation shared that all surgeries performed at Hospital are offered at rates that are 50%

lower than the rates charged by other private hospitals in the province.

In addition, the consultation fee at the hospital has been set at an incredibly affordable rate of just Rs. 10, ensuring that individuals from all walks of life can benefit from professional medical advice and treatment.

The management committee also discussed with the Health Minister about the future health services that are set to be introduced at the hospital.

Health Minister Sakina Itoo expressed her appreciation for the efforts of the hospital and acknowledged the important role the hospital plays in the region's healthcare system.

She praised the hospital's approach in providing healthcare services at affordable rates and assured the hospital's management for all possible government support.

J&K kho kho athletes shine on international stage

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a moment of immense pride as its athletes excelled in the Kho Kho World Cup 2025 and other international events.

Under the leadership of Dr. Baljinder Kour, President of the Jammu and Kashmir Kho Kho Association, the sport continues to flourish, with players from the region making their mark on the global stage.

In a grand felicitation ceremony, Nazia, the Gold Medalist of Kho Kho World Cup 2025,

was honored for her outstanding achievement. Mr. Damanpreet Singh, who was part of the World Cup camp, and Ms. Seema, an international Kho Kho player who represented India in Nepal, were also recognized for their contributions to the sport. These achievements underscore the growing excellence of Kho Kho players from J&K and the region's potential to become a powerhouse in the sport.

Ranjit Global School and Ranjit College of Education played a crucial role in providing a platform for recognizing these talented athletes, reaffirming their com-

mitment to promoting sports and nurturing young talent. Their support has been instrumental in encouraging players to strive for excellence.

Dr. Baljinder Kour, in her address, assured continuous support for the athletes, inspiring them to aim for even greater heights at national and international levels. Her dedication to the development of Kho Kho in Jammu and Kashmir has significantly contributed to the rising success of players from the region.

Kudos to the entire team, and best wishes for future competitions!

Little stars shine bright in 'Digital Maze' event

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: The Maple Bears (LKG) of Heritage School hosted a captivating event titled 'Digital Maze,' highlighting the effects of social media usage, on Saturday, 1st February 2025, in the school auditorium.

The programme commenced with bouquet presentation, followed by welcome address by the Coordinator of Kindergarten wing, Kusum Abrol and welcome note by Mohd Adyan, a student of Maple Bears-B.

The young students of LKG took to the stage to showcase their talents through a skit and dance, conveying the importance of relationships, values and culture in this fast digital life.

The event aimed to educate everyone about the potential risks associated with excessive



social media usage, such as online addiction and decreased attention span.

The highlight of the event was the energetic performance by the LKG students, who effortlessly conveyed the message of being connected to our loved ones.

The audience was impressed by the confidence and creativity displayed by the young performers.

The event was well-attended by parents, grandparents, coordinators and teachers,

who appreciated the efforts of the students in highlighting this critical issue.

Sanya Gupta, a student of Maple Bears-B, presented the thank you note.

In the vote of thanks, the Principal of the School, Akash Pradhan, expressed his gratitude to the invited guests for sparing their precious time and being a part of the day's event.

The Chairman of the School, Sunil Gupta addressed the gathering with his kind words of appreciation and encouragement.

GDC Bishnah hosts its Alumni Meet 2025

Top News Report

BISHNAH, Feb 1: Government Degree College Bishnah successfully hosted its Alumni Meet 2025 which served as remarkable reunion of all batches. The event started with the lighting of the lamp as invocation of Goddess Saraswati on the auspicious occasion of Basant Panchmi.

The meet kicked off with the welcome address of convener followed by an insightful speech from the Principal in which she encapsulated the journey of college over the years.



prompted the Alumni to reflect on their personal and professional growth.

As a part of Alumni Meet, a colourful cultural bonanza was presented for the Alumni's which created a nostalgic ambience among them.

They expressed their joy and gratitude by sharing their experiences during the program. The program was concluded with the vote of thanks and a group photograph followed by Lunch. The principal applauded the effort of Alumni Committee.

Lochan urges mass participation in Guru Ravi Dass Sabha's 648th Parkash Diwas, Shobha Yatra



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell JKNC and Former President of all J&K Guru Ravi Dass Sabha, Jammu, Vijay Lochan, has appealed to the community members to participate in the upcoming 648th Parkash Diwas and Shobha Yatra with great enthusiasm and devotion.

Addressing media persons here today, Vijay Lochan emphasized the significance of the event in preserving the teachings and legacy of Guru Ravi Dass Ji Maharaj.

Vijay Lochan clarified that while he has been legally restrained from interfering in the Sabha's affairs, his commitment to serving

the community remains unwavering. "Despite the court's directive, I stand ready to contribute towards the Sabha's progress and unity in every possible manner," he asserted.

Acknowledging the existing differences among community members, Lochan expressed confidence that all disputes will be resolved amicably after the Shobha Yatra.

He urged everyone to prioritize harmony and collective participation in the event, ensuring a grand and peaceful celebration.

He further called upon devotees to uphold the values of Guru Ravi Dass Maharaj and strengthen communal unity through this sacred occasion.

Rich Harvest School bids adieu to outgoing Class XII students



Charak reminded the students that "as they spread their wings and take flight, they should never forget their roots and the values that have shaped them."

His words of wisdom resonated deeply with the students, who were on the threshold of a new chapter in their lives.

The ceremony featured cultural performances showcasing the students' talents and memories. The highlight of the program was the crowning of Akhileshwar Singh Charak as Mr. RHS and Jahanvi as Ms. RHS.

NEET Qualifiers Manshika and Janvi along with former Student Risheek--for his groundbreaking work in Cyber Security--were felicitated by the Management.

As the ceremony drew to a close, the Chairman of the school offered heartfelt best wishes to the outgoing Class 12 students, reminding them that "though they may be leaving the school, they will always carry its spirit and values with them."

and Ruchi Charak, Director of the school.

In her address, Ruchi Charak urged the students to "hold on to the memories, cherish the moments, and never forget the values and lessons learned within these walls." Her words struck a chord with the students, who were visibly moved as they recalled their journey through the school.

The farewell ceremony was a nostalgic and emotional event, marking the culmination of the students' school life. The outgoing students were felicitated with gifts and titles acknowledging their achievements and contributions to the school.

Gambhir Dev Singh

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: RHS bid a heartfelt farewell to its outgoing Class 12 students at a ceremony held in the school's Amphitheater. The event was attended by the school management, faculty members, and students, all of whom were visibly emotional as they gathered to bid adieu to their dear Students.

Anita Bhatia, Head of the Institute, extended a warm welcome to the Chief Guest, Gulchain Singh Charak, former Minister of R&B and Higher Education. He was accompanied by Gambhir Dev Singh Charak, Managing Director of the school,

K.K. Gandhi to attend 'Luminance' an exhibition of Indian Art in Goa



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: Sneha D Art Foundation, a dedicated non-profit organization championing visual art across India and beyond, is set to present "Luminance", a groundbreaking exhibition that unites the masters of modern Indian art with the bold new voices of the future. Hosted at Art Chamber, Goa, from 4th to 12th February 2025, this remarkable event will bridge generations, celebrating India's artistic evolution.

"Luminance" will feature an extraordinary collection of works by legendary artists who have shaped Indian modern art, including M.F. Hussain, Sunil Das, Ram Kumar, Jatin Das, and more.

Their timeless masterpieces, which have left an indelible mark on the art world, will be showcased alongside emerging talents, offering a compelling dialogue between tradition and innovation.

Among the distinguished invitees is K.K. Gandhi, a celebrated artist from Northern India, whose masterful paintings will be displayed alongside these iconic figures. His work, deeply rooted in cultural and historical narratives, adds a unique dimension to this artistic confluence.

Curated by Dr. Snehalata Prasad & Shiv Nandini Prasad, "Luminance" promises to be a visual symphony of heritage and contemporary creativity, offering art enthusiasts a rare opportunity to witness the past, present, and future of Indian art in one immersive experience.

Guru Randhawa becomes the only Indian artiste to cross 14 billion YouTube views globally

Global music sensation Guru Randhawa has achieved a historic milestone by becoming the first and only Indian artiste to surpass 14 billion views on YouTube. This remarkable accomplishment has firmly established him as a trailblazer in the Indian music scene, taking YouTube's growth in India to unparalleled heights.

This remarkable feat places him ahead of global music icons like Drake, Travis Scott, DJ Khaled, Billie Eilish and Dua Lipa, cementing his status as a global music powerhouse.

When YouTube was still gaining traction in India, Guru played a pivotal role in making the plat-



form a household name. His early hits like Lahore, High Rated Gabru, Suit Suit, Ban Ja Rani and Ishq Tera showcased

his ability to create music that resonated deeply with listeners. These songs quickly became viral sensations, laying the foundation for Indian artistes to thrive on YouTube and contributing significantly to the platform's popularity in the country.

His music's universal appeal, blending Punjabi beats with contemporary sounds, captivated audiences worldwide and positioned India prominently in the global music industry. By crossing the 14-billion-view milestone, Guru has not only redefined success for Indian artistes but also proven the immense potential of Indian music to connect with audiences across borders.

Taylor Swift to present award at the 67th Grammy Awards



Pop singer Taylor Swift has been confirmed as a presenter at the upcoming 67th Grammy Awards on February 2, the Record Academy announced. The category of the award that she would be

presenting has not been confirmed yet. Notably, Taylor's eleventh album *The Tortured Poets Department* has also been nominated in six categories this year.

Taylor is up for album of the year and could

make history if she wins the top honour for the fifth time, breaking her record, which she set with last year's win for her tenth album *Midnights*. The singer has also been nominated in the categories of Best Pop Vocal Album, Record of the Year, Song of the Year, Best Music Video and Best Pop Duo/Group Performance (with Gracie Abrams) at the 67th Grammy Award.

Taylor, who is currently considered as one of the top singers in the world, has won Album of the Year four times at Grammy's. The wins came for her albums *Midnights*, *Folklore*, 1989, and *Fearless*. She is tied with Frank Sinatra, Stevie Wonder and Paul Simon at three Grammys, but holds the record for the most AOTY trophies won.

This year, the All Too Well singer will compete with Beyoncé's *Cowboy Carter*, Sabrina Carpenter's *Short and Sweet*, and Billie Eilish's *Hit Me Hard and Soft* in the Album of the Year category. Swift, Carpenter, and Eilish will also vie for the Song and Record of the Year gramophone trophies.

Sukriti and Prakriti Kakar release their single Aa Zara

Sukriti and Prakriti Kakar, the popular twin sisters known for Bollywood hits like *Jhoomo Jo Pathaan*, *Pehli Baar* and *Kar Gayi Chull*, as well as their independently released singles like *Maafiyan*, *Kehndi Haan Kehndi Naa*, *Kya Say?*, among others, have now unveiled their latest pop single titled *Aa Zara*—an upbeat track that perfectly blends pop melodies with Afrobeat rhythms.

Performed by Sukriti and Prakriti Kakar, the new single

dives into themes of desire, love and passion, combined with irresistible energy and a pulsating beats that showcases the powerful attraction between two souls. With its Afrobeat influence, the song has an electrifying, rhythmic vibe that amplifies the energy, making it a dance anthem that will appeal to listeners worldwide. *Aa Zara* is now available for listening across leading streaming platforms along with a stunning music video.



Sanya Malhotra-starrer Mrs to premiere on Feb 7

ZEE5 recently announced the launch of *Mrs*, directed by Arati Kadav.

It is a powerful and thought-provoking film that delves into the everyday struggles of women while tackling critical issues, such as gender inequality, societal expectations and personal growth, all without compromising on entertainment.

Starring the talented Sanya Malhotra in the lead role, *Mrs* follows the journey of a young bride who finds herself drowning in an ocean of household chores, all while her aspirations of becoming a dancer slowly fade into the background. Produced by Jio Studios in association with Baweja Studios, this compelling film sheds light on the patriarchal mindset and a woman's silent struggle to preserve her sense of self. *Mrs* premieres on ZEE5 on February 7.

Sanya said, "When I read the script of *Mrs*., I was excited to bring



this powerful story to life—it's a reflection of the everyday struggles many women face and it's about time we start talking about them. It has been a rewarding challenge to play someone who dares to break free from the routine and find her voice, and I hope the audience feels inspired by her transfor-

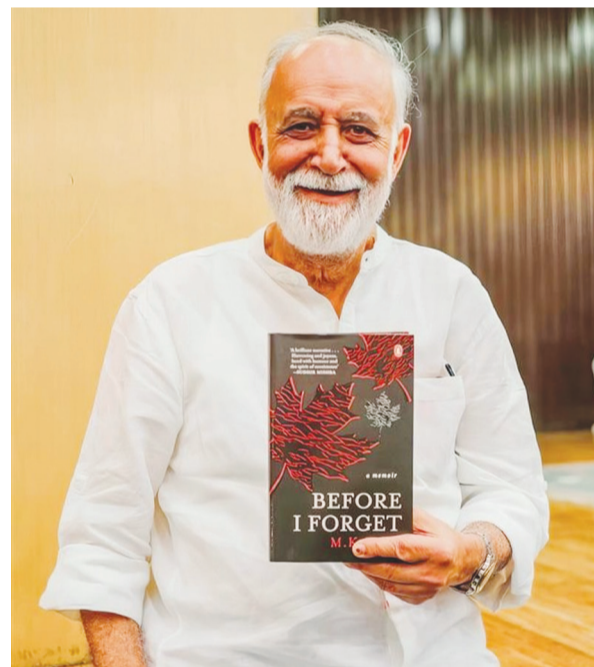
ation." Nishant Dahiya added, "Playing Richa's husband in *Mrs* was both challenging and eye-opening. Working with Sanya Malhotra and Arati Kadav was an absolute joy, and I truly believe audiences will connect with the film's honest and engaging narrative."

Veteran theatre director MK Raina walks out of Jaipur Literature Festival session

Veteran theatre director and actor MK Raina on Friday walked out of a session with singer and fellow actor Ila Arun on day two of Jaipur Literature Festival.

The two colleagues were promoting their memoirs — Raina has written "Before I Forget" and Arun has recently come out with "Parde Ke Peechhey" — at the session "Memories from the Screen and Stage".

At one point during the conversation, Arun was discussing her latest play "Peer Ghani", which is adapted from legendary playwright Henrik Ibsen's "Peer Gynt" and



is set in Kashmir.

Raina, who has grown up in Kashmir, then said he has been seeing less and less of the Valley in Indian theatres.

"I'm sorry, I see bad films of Kashmir, accusing Kashmir of all kinds of things, lousy films... Kashmir is not being represented at all because they don't know that state, is my assertion," he added.

A while later, he walked out of the session as Arun was performing a scene from her play "Peer Ghani".

It caused a flutter with people wondering what had happened.

Someone then told Arun about Raina's departure from the session. "Albert Pinto ko gussa kyu aya?" Arun responded, a recall of Saeed Mirza's 1980 film "Albert Pinto Ko Gussa Kyoon Aata Hai".

The session was moderated by curator Asad Lalljee.

Raina's memoir "Before I Forget" chronicles the highs and lows of his life and his experience of growing up in Kashmir.

Arun's book "Parde Ke Peechhey" documents her extraordinary life, both onstage and behind the scenes.

Actor Eijaz Khan goes down memory lane

Eijaz Khan, known for his roles in *Jawan*, *Tanu Weds Manu*, and the web series *City of Dreams*, recently opened up about his childhood while preparing for his upcoming Netflix release, *Dhoom Dhaam*, alongside Pratik Gandhi and Yami Gautam.

Reflecting on his formative years, Khan shared, "My childhood, in hindsight, was beautiful. It forced us to be very independent."



Born in Hyderabad in 1975, Khan spent his childhood in Chimur, a small town where simplicity and discipline defined life.

He fondly recalled walking to school and participating in hockey matches, "Those were some of the most beautiful parts of my childhood. Everything was close by—school, tuition classes, friends—all within walking distance." Khan's father played a pivotal role in shaping his values and outlook.

Why Shahid Kapoor was scared of Randeep Hooda?

Actor Shahid Kapoor recently opened up about his early experiences with Randeep Hooda, revealing that he was initially intimidated by him during their workshops at the National School of Drama (NSD) with Naseeruddin Shah.

In a recent live session, the 'Jab We Met' actor shared that Randeep, being a senior at the workshops, had an intense presence that made him a little scared at the time. However, over the years, their relationship has evolved into a strong friendship, and now, Shahid is excited to work alongside Randeep in their upcoming project *Ustara*.

During the session, Shahid said, "Randeep

Hooda is also there. How can I forget? He's my buddy from his NSD days when I also visited. I'm very excited. This is my first time working with Randeep. We've never worked together. Hum logo ne actually bohot saari acting workshops Naseer uncle ke saath saath main ki thi. Voh mera bohot senior tha aur main bohot darta tha usse. ("We actually did a lot of acting workshops together with Naseer uncle. He was very senior to me, and I used to be very scared of him.")

Shahid and Randeep are now collaborating together for the first time in Vishal Bhardwaj's upcoming film, "Ustara." The action



thriller, backed by Sajid Nadiadwala, boasts a stellar ensemble cast, including veteran actor Nana Patekar, Vikrant Massey, and Tripti Dimri. Last month, the makers announced

the release date of the highly anticipated film. The post read, "#Sajid-Nadiadwala presents a @vishalbhardwaj film A spectacular cinematic journey begins on 6th Jan 2025 Film releasing

on 5th December 2025." Shahid Kapoor had earlier shared a glimpse of his "prep time" on Instagram Stories with a post-workout black and white selfie. Going by his post, it seems like as he is all set to play an "edgy nasty gangster" from the 1990s.

He captioned the post, "Prep time...Naya saal naya maal (New year, new stuff)... Next character, next film what can I do that I haven't before... Lost in the woods... But you can't be original if you aren't ready to be lost..."

Reportedly, "Ustara" will be set in Mumbai during a past era, focusing on events in the post-independence underworld.

The lead cast of Jagriti-Ek Nayi Subah is enamoured with young Asmi Deo



Titiksha Shrivastava of Zee TV's show *Jagriti-Ek Nayi Subah* is enjoying the company of the youngest member on the sets. "Asmi, being

the youngest member of our *Jagriti-Ek Nayi Subah* family, is adored by everyone on sets. At just seven years old, she amazes us with her

talent and eagerness to learn something new from each one of us. Not only is she incredibly gifted, but also exceptionally bright and intelligent for her age. During our breaks, Yash and I make it a point to support her with homework, even if it's just by keeping her company. She's such a hardworking and dedicated girl, and we genuinely enjoy spending time with her, both on screen and off. I'm so proud of how beautifully she's balancing her studies and work at such a tender age."

PM Modi hails 'people's budget', says will make citizens partners in development

Says budget presented by Sitharaman seeks to put more money in pockets of people

NEW DELHI, Feb 1 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday lauded the Union Budget, presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, as a "people's budget" that puts more money in the hands of people and said it is a force-multiplier that will increase investments and lead to growth.

In televised remarks on the Budget, Modi said the government has opened up many sectors for the youth, who will drive the mission of 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India).

"This Budget is a force multiplier. This Budget will increase savings, investment, consumption and growth," the prime minister said, congratulating the finance minister and her team for presenting a "people's budget".



He said a budget usually focuses on increasing the income of the government, but the budget presented by Sitharaman seeks to put more money in the pockets of people, increase savings

and make citizens partners in the development journey.

"The Budget lays a strong foundation to increase savings and make citizens partners in development," he said.

Modi said welfare measures for gig workers underscore the government's commitment to the dignity of labour.

He said the measures presented in the Budget for the manufacturing sector will allow Indian products to shine globally.

The tax relief will provide big benefits to the middle class and salaried employees.

The announcements in the Budget for farmers will revolutionise the agriculture sector and rural economy.

"In terms of reforms, many important steps have been taken in this Budget. Encouraging the private sector in nuclear energy is historic. It will ensure a big contribution of civil nuclear energy in the development of the country," the prime minister said.

CM Yogi Adityanath inspects Mahakumbh stampede site, warns of conspiracies against Sanatan



LUCKNOW, Feb 1 (Agencies): Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited Prayagraj on Saturday, marking his first visit since the tragic stampede at the Mahakumbh during Mauni Amavasya, which claimed at least 30 lives.

CM Yogi inspected the site of the mishap at the Mauni Amavasya ghat and questioned officials about the circumstances leading to the tragedy. He also conducted an aerial survey of the roads approaching the Mahakumbh mela premises.

Speaking at the spot, the Chief Minister said, "Some forces are misleading people contin-

uously and conspiring against Sanatan. But they will never be able to damage Sanatan in any way."

Following his inspection, CM Yogi visited the Sangam Nose, Satua Baba Ashram in Sector 21, and Bharat Seva Shram Camp in Sector 5. He later met 118 representatives of Heads of Mission from 77 countries at the Mela Circuit House. The delegation, comprising diplomats, their spouses, and other officials, also took a holy dip at the Sangam.

Meanwhile, in preparation for the third Amrit Snan on Basant Panchami (3 February), the Mela administration has

declared the entire Mela area a no-vehicle zone until 4 February.

All VIP passes have been cancelled, and pontoon bridges have been opened for free movement to manage the anticipated rush of devotees. Additionally, vehicles are being stopped at the border of Sangam city to control crowd influx.

Since the Mahakumbh's inauguration on 13 January, approximately 33 crore devotees have bathed in the Sangam, with 1.20 crore taking a dip by 12 noon on Saturday alone.

A three-member judicial commission, formed to investigate the stampede, visited Swaroop Rani Nehru Hospital in Prayagraj, where many of the injured are being treated. The panel will examine the causes and circumstances of the tragedy and submit its report within a month.

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar is also expected to visit the Mahakumbh later on Saturday.

Elderly couple killed in Kerala house fire, son arrested for suspected arson

ALAPPUZHA, Feb 1 (Agencies): An elderly couple died in a fire that broke out at their house in Alappuzha district, Kerala, in the early hours of Saturday.

The deceased, identified as Raghavan (96) and his wife Bharathi (86), lived in Chennithala village.

Police have taken their son, Vijayan, into

custody on suspicion of setting the house on fire. According to sources, Vijayan had ongoing disputes with his parents over property matters.

The fire was first spotted by an autorickshaw driver around 3.30 am, prompting villagers to alert the police and Fire and Rescue Services. The authorities managed to extinguish the

blaze, but by then, the house was completely gutted, and the charred bodies of the couple were recovered.

The Mannar police apprehended Vijayan from a nearby plot and are investigating the cause of the fire. A senior police officer confirmed that further details would be released after the investigation.



7 dead after cruiser car plunges into canal due to dense fog in Haryana

FATEHABAD, Feb 1 (Agencies): At least seven people died, two were injured, and several remain missing after a cruiser car carrying 14 passengers plunged into the Bhakra canal amid dense fog in Haryana's Fatehabad on Friday night. Rescue operations continued late into the night, with officials managing to save a 10-year-old boy and recover the body of a 55-year-old man. Most of the missing passengers are believed to be women.

The passengers were returning after attending a wedding in Punjab. Around 10 pm, while crossing a bridge near Sardarwala village, the driver reportedly lost control due to poor visibility due to the thick fog. As a result, the vehicle veered off the bridge and fell into the canal.

"We rescued 3 people at night. One of them succumbed at night itself and the rest of the two are alive...we have recovered 5 more bodies...our team is still on it and the operation



is still underway. A few more people are still missing," Sub-Divisional Magistrate Jagdish Chandra said.

The driver of the vehicle, identified as Jarnail Singh, jumped out of the vehicle just before it

plunged into the water, escaping unhurt.

However, other passengers were still inside the vehicle when it fell into the canal. Rescue teams managed to save a 10-year-old, while the body of Balbir Singh, 55,

was recovered from the canal.

While speaking after the accident, the 10-year-old said that the driver mistakenly assumed the canal was a road due to poor visibility and drove straight into the water.

After getting the information about the accident, local residents, along with police, rushed to the site to assist in the rescue efforts. Divers and rescue personnel continued their search throughout the night.

FM starts with agriculture but completely silent on farmers' demands: Congress

NEW DELHI, Feb 1 (Agencies): The Congress on Saturday attacked the Union government over its announcements in the Budget pertaining to the agriculture sector, saying Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was "completely silent" on the demands of farmers, including MSP as a legal guarantee and farm loan waiver.

Sitharaman on Saturday said the Union Budget 2025-26 will initiate reforms in six areas of taxation, urban development, mining, financial sector, power, and regulatory framework.

In her Budget speech, she announced the PM Dhan Dhyani Yojana, covering 100 districts with low yields,



modern crop intensity and below average credit parameters.

Hitting out at the government, Congress general secretary and in-charge of communications, Jairam Ramesh, said in a post on X, "The FM starts with agriculture but is completely silent on the demands of farmers and the recommendations

of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture — MSP as a legal guarantee, farm loan waiver, inflation indexation of PM Kisan payouts and reforms to PM Fasal Bima Yojana."

In another post, Ramesh said, "Make in India that had become Fake in India now has a new name: National Manufacturing Mission."

Three killed in head-on car collision on Ahmedpur-Ahmednagar highway in Maharashtra's Beed district

MUMBAI, Feb 1 (Agencies): Three persons were killed in a collision between two cars on a highway in Maharashtra's Beed district, police said on Saturday.

The accident occurred on the Ahmedpur-Ahmednagar Highway in Kej taluka around 11 pm on Friday, an official said. He said both cars were severely damaged in the collision at Chandan Savargaon, and efforts were underway



to identify the victims, all male. Two men were killed on

the spot, while the third victim was declared dead at a hospital, the

official said.

People in the vicinity tried to help the victims and informed the police, he said, adding that a team from Yusuf Wadgaon police station reached the spot, and a probe was underway.

The official said the accident caused traffic congestion on the highway for some time, and the cause of the collision is being investigated.

Over 60 LPG cylinders loaded in truck explode in UP's Ghaziabad

GHAZIABAD, Feb 1 (Agencies): More than 60 cooking gas cylinders loaded in a truck en route to Ghaziabad blew up in an explosion early Saturday, the fire department said.

The explosion was caused by a fire around 4 am, likely due to friction in the cylinders, officials said. At least four furniture shops in

the vicinity turned into ashes and some vehicles parked nearby also burned, they said.

Chief Fire Officer Rahul Pal told agency that it took more than eight fire tenders around 90 minutes to douse the flames. No casualties were reported.

The sound of the explosion and the consequent mayhem sent

people nearby scampering to safety.

According to officials, when the driver noticed the fire, he parked it near a petrol pump. Soon after, the blasts happened, and the staff deserted the pump.

Eyewitnesses said a few cylinders fell into the petrol pump premises but did not explode.

Budget is an attempt to 'dupe' people: Kharge

NEW DELHI, Feb 1 (Agencies): Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday said the government is busy garnering praises for the Union Budget when the entire country is struggling with problems of inflation and unemployment, and asserted that the Budget is an attempt to "dupe" the people.

He said the Budget is aptly described by the Hindi proverb 'Nau sau choohe khake billi hajji ko chali' (roughly translated to seeking to be pious after committing a number of sins).

In a post on X in Hindi, Kharge said that in the last 10 years, the Narendra Modi government has collected Rs 54.18 lakh crore of income tax from the middle class, and now the exemption is being given to those earning up to Rs 12 lakh.

The finance minister has himself stated that there will be a saving of Rs 80,000 per year,



Kharge said and pointed out that is only Rs 6,666 per month.

"The whole country is struggling with the problem of inflation and unemployment, but the Modi government is bent on garnering false praises," he said.

In this 'announcement-making' budget, Make in India has been changed to National Manufacturing Mission to hide its flaws, Kharge said.

"All other announcements are almost like this. There is nothing for the youth. Modi ji had

promised yesterday that he would take a big step for the empowerment of women in this budget, but nothing like that happened in the budget," he said.

No roadmap to double farmers' income and no concession in GST rates on agricultural inputs, Kharge said.

"There is no plan for health, education or scholarship for Dalit, tribal, backward class, poor and minority children. There are no reform measures to increase private invest-

ment. Their failures have been hidden by saying a few superficial things on export and tariff," he said.

Kharge said that nothing has been done to increase the income of the poor and not a single step has been taken to address the continuously falling consumption.

"Despite skyrocketing inflation, the budget of MGNREGA remains the same. Nothing has been done to increase the income of workers. There is no mention of any reform in the Multiple Rates of GST. To reduce unemployment, there was no talk of creating jobs," he said.

Startup India, Standup India and Skill India, all the schemes, have turned out to be mere announcements, he said.

"Overall this Budget 2025 is an attempt by the Modi Government to dupe the people," the Congress chief said.

Israeli hostages Kalderon, Bibas freed by Hamas reunite with families

Hamas handed over Three Israeli hostages handed over by Hamas which held them in captivity for 484 days, as per The Press Service of Israel (TPS-IL).

TEL AVIV, Feb 1 (Agencies): Hamas handed over three Israeli hostages held by Hamas which held them in captivity for 484 days, as per The Press Service of Israel (TPS-IL).

On Saturday morning, local time, 54-year-old Ofer Kalderon and 35-year-old Yarden Bibas were presented to the Red Cross in Khan Younis, in the strip's south.

Earlier, on Saturday, IDF confirmed, three kidnapped Israelis Yarden Bibas, Ofer Kalderon and Keith Siegel are back in Israel after 484 days in captivity, according to TPS.

Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Spokesperson was cited by TPS as saying: "Ofer Kalderon and Jordan Bibas arrived at the initial absorption point in the Gaza Strip."

IDF personnel and medical personnel are accompanying the returning civilians, and they will undergo an initial medical assessment. As per TPS, IDF representatives are also accompanying family members waiting at the hospital and providing them with regular updates.

Bibas, 35, was abducted from Kibbutz Nir Oz along with wife Shiri, and their two sons, Ariel and



Kfir, who at nine months old was the youngest hostage. A video of the terrified Shiri protectively wrapping her children in a blanket while being taken to Gaza became an iconic image of the war. The last sign of life from Yarden was in a Hamas propaganda video in November showing Yarden being taken to Gaza.

Bibas, 35, was abducted from Kibbutz Nir Oz along with wife Shiri, and their two sons, Ariel and Kfir, who at nine months old was the youngest hostage. A video of the terrified Shiri protectively wrapping her children in a blanket while being taken to Gaza became an iconic image of the war. The last sign of life from Yarden was in a Hamas propaganda video in November

showing Yarden being told that his wife and children were killed in an Israeli airstrike - though Hamas never provided evidence of their deaths.

Kalderon, 53, was abducted from his home in Kibbutz Nir Oz along with his daughters, Sahar and Erez, 16 and 12 respectively. The daughters were freed during a temporary ceasefire in November 2023. Sahar said she met him in a tunnels and that his physical and mental condition was very poor. Ex-wife, Hadas Kalderon was leading the campaign for Ofer's release.

Siegel, 65, originally from North Carolina, was abducted with his wife, Aviva, from their home in Kibbutz Kfar Aza, where they have lived for 42 years. An occupational therapist, his last sign of life was in a Hamas propaganda video in April 2024.

Aviva was released during the November 2023 ceasefire.

Saturday's handover to the Red Cross was executed swiftly during the morning hours, following mediators' stern reprimand to Hamas over Thursday's chaos. On Thursday, Israeli authorities briefly suspended the release of 110 Palestinian terrorists imprisoned in Israel after Hamas forced hostages Gadi Moses and Arbel Yehud to walk by foot through a mob of Palestinians in Khan Younis to waiting Red Cross vehicles.

The terrorists were released after Qatari and Egyptian mediators provided assurances that the scenes would not be repeated.

Meanwhile, the Israel Prison Service was preparing to release 183 Palestinian terrorists, including several serving life sentences

for murder. They have been brought to the main reception centers in the 'Ofar' and 'Ktziot' prisons where Red Cross representatives will identify each one. Once the hostages are freed, the Red Cross will take the prisoners to release points in Judea and Samaria and eastern Jerusalem. Others being deported to the Gaza Strip or to third countries via Gaza will be taken to the Kerem Shalom border crossing.

The first phase of the ceasefire is supposed to see a total of 33 Israeli hostages freed over six weeks in exchange for hundreds of Palestinian terrorists imprisoned in Israel. The exact number will depend on how many are alive.

The fate of the remaining 65 hostages will be determined by negotiations to begin on the 16th day of the ceasefire. Critics say the phased approach condemns hostages not freed in the beginning to open-ended captivity and undermines Israel's war gains.

At least 1,200 people were killed, and 252 Israelis and foreigners were taken hostage in Hamas's attacks on Israeli communities near the Gaza border on October 7. Of the 79 remaining hostages, 35 have been declared dead.

President Lai warns against China's escalating "United Front" tactics

Taiwanese President William Lai Ching-te urged the public to stay alert to China's growing 'united front' strategies, which have intensified recently, as the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) continues its relentless pursuit of Taiwan's annexation



TAIPEI, Feb 1 (Agencies): Taiwanese President William Lai Ching-te urged the public to remain alert to China's growing "united front" strategies, which have intensified recently as the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) continues its relentless pursuit of Taiwan's annexation, as reported by the Taipei Times. Lai made these remarks during his visit to Lecheng Temple in Taichung, where he distributed limited-edition red envelopes and greeted the public in celebration of the Lunar New Year, Taipei Times reported.

The red envelope, containing a Central Mint (Taiwan) NT\$1 coin, features illustrations of dogs and cats created by Lai and Vice President Hsiao Bi-khim. The designs symbolize Taiwan's

welcoming nature, warmth, and affection for animals.

While addressing the gathering, Lai stated that the CCP's tactics of military and economic pressure to annex Taiwan remain unchanged. He warned, "No matter how nice their [CCP] words sound, the threats against Taiwan remain."

The president pointed to the rising number of espionage cases resulting in indictments and convictions over the past year or two as evidence of China's increasingly aggressive "united front" operations, Taipei Times reported.

"Taiwan is our democratic homeland," Lai said, urging the public to protect the country, uphold its democratic and free way of life,

and resist China's "united front" efforts.

According to the Taipei Times, Lai stressed that, as president, he is committed to ensuring the public's well-being by safeguarding national security, fostering economic growth, and supporting the disadvantaged. He also called on citizens to actively contribute to protecting the country, maintaining social stability, and preventing fraud.

Financial scams remain a major issue, with over 500 fraud cases reported daily, resulting in losses averaging between NT\$400 million and NT\$500 million (USD 12.2 million to USD 15.3 million), he said.

According to the Taipei Times, 70 per cent of these cases involve investment fraud. These scams cause significant financial losses and personal hardships, Lai noted, urging the public to remain vigilant.

Lai also visited other temples in central Taiwan, including Fongyuan Cihji Temple in Taichung, Lugang Tianhou Temple in Changhua County, and Fusing Temple in Yunlin County's Siluo Township.

Russian drone and missile attacks kill 4 in Ukraine

KYIV, Feb 1 (Agencies): At least four people died overnight as Russian drone and missile strikes continued to pound Ukraine's towns and cities, local officials said Saturday. Meanwhile, Moscow's troops continued their grinding advance through the country's east. A Russian missile strike on an apartment block in the Ukrainian city of Poltava killed at least three people and injured 10 more, Ukraine's emergency services reported.

Some 21 people were rescued from the five-story building, which partially collapsed following the attack, said the Poltava region's acting governor, Volodymyr Kohut. Rescue teams remain at the site.

Elsewhere, a 60-year-old woman was killed by falling debris from a downed drone in the Kharkiv region, local Gov. Oleh Syniehubov wrote on social media.

The bombardment comes as Russian forces continue their monthslong campaign to capture the key Donetsk strongholds of Pokrovsk and nearby Chasiv Yar, fighting their way across farm fields and woodland and engulfing small rural settlements. "Last night, Russia launched an attack on our cities using various types of weapons: missiles, attack drones, and aerial bombs,"

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy wrote on social media Saturday.

"Every such act of terror proves that we need greater support in defending against Russian terror. Every air defense system, every interceptor missile, means a life saved." The full-scale war between Russia and Ukraine, which began nearly three years ago and shows no signs of ending, has killed more than 10,000 Ukrainian civilians, according to the United Nations.

Many have been evacuated from areas along the roughly 1,000-kilometer (600-mile) front line where Ukrainian defenses are straining to hold the bigger Russian army at bay.

Civilians have also endured hardship caused by Russian attacks on the power grid that have denied them heating and running water.

Saturday's missile attack prompted emergency power grid shutdowns in seven Ukrainian regions, including Poltava, state energy company Ukrenergo said.

Ukrainian strikes also hit Russia, with air defenses intercepting nine drones across the country's Bryansk, Belgorod and Saratov regions, Russia's Defense Ministry said in a statement Saturday morning.

Moscow court arrests Rusnano top manager Kasenkova on charges of abuse of power

MOSCOW, Feb 1 (Agencies): The Meshchansky District Court of Moscow has arrested Russian state nanotech company Rusnano's top manager Marina Kasenkova on charges of abuse of power, the court told Sputnik on Saturday.

"The court has ruled in favor of the request from the preliminary investigation authorities to impose a preventive measure of detention on Marina Anatolyevna Kasenkova accused of committing a crime

under Part 3 of Article 285 of the Criminal Code of Russia (abuse of power)," the court said.

The term of arrest has been set at 1 month and 28 days.

According to the investigation, in order to hide the company's poor economic performance in 2017, three Rusnano employees reclassified financial liabilities. Using distorted data, they provided false information about the supposedly satisfac-

tory financial position of the company, which made it possible to avoid the withdrawal of previously issued state guarantees, as well as raise additional funding - "as a result, the state had to allocate over 43 billion rubles [\$437 million] to the corporation in 2022-2024."

The Russian authorities are currently investigating all instances of illegal activity, including its circumstances, witnesses, and accomplices.

Former German President Horst Köhler dies at 81

Horst Köhler, a onetime head of the International Monetary Fund who became a popular German president before stunning the country by resigning abruptly in a flap over comments about the country's military, has died

BERLIN, Feb 1 (Agencies): Horst Köhler, a onetime head of the International Monetary Fund who became a popular German president before stunning the country by resigning abruptly in a flap over comments about the country's military, has died. He was 81.

Köhler, who was head of state from 2004 to 2010, died Saturday morning in Berlin after a short illness, surrounded by his family, the office of current German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said in a statement.

Köhler was little known to most Germans and a stranger to front-line politics before he won the presidency. His nomination was greeted by the mass-circulation daily Bild with the headline "Horst Who?"

However, he built up high popularity ratings once in the job, something that he achieved in part by positioning himself as an outsider to the country's political elite.

He occasionally refused to sign bills into law due to constitutional concerns and didn't always make himself popular with the government of Chancellor Angela Merkel, whose choice he was for the presidency - a largely ceremonial job but often seen as a source of moral authority.

Köhler was elected before Merkel came to power, at a time when Germany was struggling to come to terms with



labor market reforms and welfare state cuts. He said Germans must not rest on past achievements, and said he was "deeply convinced Germany has the strength for change."

In July 2005, Köhler agreed to dissolve parliament and grant struggling then-Chancellor Gerhard Schröder an unusual early election. He declared that Germany faced "giant challenges" and that "our future and the future of our children is at stake."

Merkel won power, but nearly blew a huge poll lead after her talk of deeper reform turned off voters. Köhler also talked less of economic change in later years and was strongly critical of financial markets during the banking and economic crisis - describing them as a "monster" that hadn't yet been tamed.

Amid criticism that he appeared to have little to say after winning a second term, Köhler resigned in dramatically abrupt fashion on May 31, 2010. He cited criticism over a radio interview he gave following a

the Holocaust.

Köhler also paid attention to relations with eastern neighbor Poland, making it the first foreign destination of both of his two terms and saying he would like the country to become as important a partner for Germany as France.

Köhler, the son of ethnic German farmers from Romania, was born on Feb. 22, 1943, in Skierbieszow, in Nazi-occupied Poland. His family fled to Germany after the war - first to Leipzig in what became communist East Germany, then to West Germany in 1954.

Before rising to the presidency, Köhler had a long record as an efficient behind-the-scenes official.

Starting in the early 1980s, he worked for more than a decade in the Finance Ministry under Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who once called him "a treasure" and relied on him in economic diplomacy.

He helped draft the legal framework for Europe's single currency, the euro, and played a role in negotiating German reunification in 1990.

He later served as president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

In 2000, Köhler emerged as Schröder's backup choice for the IMF leadership. He won American support after Berlin's first candidate, Deputy Finance Minister Caio Koch-Weser, was

rejected by the United States as too lightweight.

U.S. Treasury Secretary John Snow later praised Köhler's tenure, saying that "he transformed the institution in terms of its transparency ... and worked to develop better crisis prevention tools and more effective crisis management."

Merkel, then Germany's opposition leader, brought him back to Germany as her surprise choice for the presidency four years later, securing his election by a parliamentary assembly.

In a letter of condolence to Köhler's wife, Eva Louise, President Steinmeier wrote Saturday that "many people in our country will mourn with you. For in Horst Köhler we have lost a highly esteemed and extremely popular person who achieved great things - for our country and in the world."

"It was above all his approachability, his infectious laughter and his optimism, his belief in the strength of our country and in the energy and creativity of its people that won him so many hearts. But it was also his often clear and by no means always comfortable admonitions and speeches that won him recognition," Steinmeier wrote.

Köhler is survived by his wife, daughter Ulrike and son Jochen.

SSP Jammu felicitates Class 12 students on Citation Ceremony at BOMIS



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: In a heartwarming celebration of academic achievements and bittersweet farewells, Birla Open Minds International School (BOMIS), Jammu celebrated Class 12 Citation Ceremony Cum Farewell, on Saturday in the school auditorium.

The chief guest for the Citation ceremony was Joginder Singh Sambyal, JKPS 99 batch presently posted as SSP Jammu.

He was graced with a bouquet of presentation by the Principal. He addressed the gathering with his inspiring words and thanked the school authorities for giving him the opportunity to meet

the out going batch of the school.

This event marked the culmination of the students' journey through the hallowed halls of education, showcasing not only their academic prowess but also the indelible mark they have left on the school community.

The day commenced with a dignified citation ceremony, where outstanding students were acknowledged for their academic excellence, leadership, and exemplary contributions to various facets of school life.

Principal, Chief guest Joginder Singh, Coordinators and faculty joined hands in applauding the hard work and dedication displayed by these bright individuals. All

the students were felicitated with Certificate of Appreciation wearing smart graduation robes and caps.

Following the citation ceremony, the atmosphere shifted to a poignant farewell, as the school bid adieu to the graduating class of 2025.

A series of heartfelt speeches, musical performances, and nostalgic reflections unfolded, creating an emotional tapestry that encapsulates the memories and bonds forged during the students' formative years.

The Chief guest in his speech said to the students, "as you step forward today, remember that this is not just a milestone but a stepping stone towards greater

accomplishments. The world needs leaders, thinkers, and change makers—and I have no doubt that you will rise to the occasion. Congratulations to each one of you!"

School's Principal, Aparana Kohli, expressed her sentiments, saying, "As we honour the achievements of our Class 12 students, we also bid them farewell with a mixture of pride and fondness. Their impact on our school will be a lasting legacy, and we wish them success and fulfillment in all their future endeavors."

The Class 12 Citation Ceremony Cum Farewell promised to be a memorable event, symbolizing the transition

from one chapter of life to the next.

The school community eagerly awaited this occasion to celebrate the accomplishments of its students and send them off with warm wishes for a bright and promising future.

Mr. and Ms. Medical titles were given to Rehan Malik and Ayesha Kainaat, Mr. and Ms. Non-Medical were Krish Pratap Singh and Janvi, Mr. and Ms. Commerce were Madiq and Riya and Mr. and Ms. Humanities were given to Paramveer and Diksha respectively. Mr. and Ms. BOMIS were given to Vardaan and Arunima. All of them were congratulated by the school management.

JMC organizes Public Samvaad to address public issues and ensure grievance redressal

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: The Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) organized a Public Samvaad, an outreach initiative designed to address the concerns of the general public, ensure active participation, and provide solutions to their grievances. The event was held at Bharat Mata Patoli Park in Ward No. 35, Janipur, Jammu, and was led by JMC Commissioner Dr. Devansh Yadav.

The event saw active participation from ex-councillors, prominent citizens, Swachhata Champions, Swachhata Ambassadors, NGOs, members of Mohalla Welfare Committees, and the general public. A range of JMC officers, including the Joint Commissioner (A), Joint Commissioner (W), Secretary JMC, Deputy Director (Planning), and others, also attended the program.

During the event, various speakers highlighted concerns related to streetlight maintenance, road and park upkeep, water supply, and other essential amenities. Public demands



included the beautification of Janipur's main road market, repair of streetlights, improved water supply, resolution of sewerage blockages, development of smart mohallas, installation of road dividers with reflectors, gym equipment at parks, additional sanitation workers, upgrading of footpaths, the opening of a public toilet on High Court Road, and the establishment of a public dispensary in Ward No. 34.

In response, Commissioner Dr. Yadav assured the public that all concerns and grievances would be promptly noted and addressed. He emphasized that the primary aim of this initiative was to understand the genuine demands of the public to ensure budgetary provisions were prepared accordingly in a decentralized

manner for the wards.

Dr. Yadav committed to installing mast lights and gym equipment in parks in Ward No. 35 and surrounding areas. He also assured that issues related to water supply, sewerage, lanes, drains, and streetlights would be prioritized. Furthermore, the Commissioner urged residents to actively participate in shaping the future of the city, highlighting JMC's commitment to enhancing civic amenities and creating a more responsive, citizen-centric governance. The Public Samvaad initiative seeks to strengthen the relationship between the municipal administration and the residents, fostering direct engagement to ensure timely resolution of concerns and better overall service delivery.

Yudhvir emphasizes modern horticultural practices for enhanced farmer productivity



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: Yudhvir Sethi, BJP leader and MLA Jammu East Constituency today underscored the commitment of Modi government in empowering the farming community by providing them with comprehensive awareness about various central and UT-level schemes. He emphasized that farmers should fully utilize the benefits of these farmer-friendly initiatives to improve their productivity and economic well-being. He was speaking while addressing the farmers during the Mega awareness camp / Kissan Mela organized by the Department of Horticulture Jammu at Bajalta, block Dansal under the scheme ATMA at Bajalta.

Sethi urged the farming community to adopt modern and scientific agricultural techniques, which would significantly enhance horticulture production and allied sectors. Stressing the importance of sustainable agricultural practices, he assured that all central government schemes, including the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), are being effectively implemented to revolutionize the sector and uplift the rural economy.

Yudhvir Sethi reaffirmed his unwavering support for the welfare of farmers and reiterated that the BJP-led government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi remains dedicated to their prog-

ress and prosperity.

He lauded the Department of Horticulture for its efforts in spreading awareness and facilitating access to resources that would help farmers achieve higher productivity and profitability.

Earlier, Director Horticulture Jammu, C. L Sharma welcomed MLA Yudhvir Sethi and other dignitaries and informed them about the progress in respect of various components of departmental schemes being implemented in the area. He briefed the farming community in detail about the central and UT sponsored schemes of the department especially Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) with a motive to enhance the farmer's income.

Joint Director Horticulture Jammu Vikas Anand, Chief Horticulture Jammu Rakesh Kotwal, CCI Jammu Gul Sayeed & DL SMS Sandeep Gupta also spoke on the occasion. HDO Dansal, Sandeep Sharma carried out the proceedings of the programme. The farmers from all six Panchayats of Jammu East attended which includes Kana Chargal Lower, Kana Chargal Upper, Bain Bajlata, Pargalta, Aithem and Jagti.

Among those who were present included Dr. Uttam Singh, Daksh Kumar, Ashu Mandal, Naseeb Singh, Mohan, Kailsho and Rohit Gupta.

Workshop on Research Methodology, Science Communication & IPR organized at IIIM

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: A workshop on Research Methodology, Science Communication & Intellectual Property Right (IPR) - A Futuristic Perspective was successfully organized by CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), Jammu, in which around 100 participants, including researchers, students and professionals drawn from J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab have got the opportunity to learn and enhance the knowledge.

On this occasion, Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director, CSIR-IIIM, Jammu, underscored the vital importance of integrating rigorous research practices with effective communication strategies to significantly enhance the impact of scientific endeavours.

Further, Dr. Ahmed highlighted how CSIR-IIIM, Jammu is taking on a leadership role in creating synergy among scientific institutions in



the region.

By establishing collaborative networks, IIIM Jammu aims to facilitate knowledge sharing and innovation, ultimately contributing to the advancement of science and technology in Jammu & Kashmir and beyond.

Additionally, he elaborated on the importance of aligning research initiatives with sustainable development goals (SDGs), advocating for a 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed India) through strategic research and innovation.

He emphasized that this alignment not only

addresses pressing societal challenges but also propels the nation toward sustainable growth.

Furthermore, Dr. Ahmed brought attention to the critical issue of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) protection. He articulated that safeguarding intellectual property is essential for fostering innovation and ensuring that researchers reap the benefits of their work.

By doing so, IIIM Jammu is committed to promoting an ecosystem that encourages creativity and protects the rights of inventors

and researchers.

During the workshop, lectures on patent filing & prosecution, significance of communication science, introduction to intellectual Property Rights its Application & Commercialization, and Basic of Science Communication and Writing were delivered by Dr. Lipika Patnaik, Senior Principal Scientist, CSIR-IPU, New Delhi; Dr. Manish Mohan Gore, Senior Scientist, CSUR-NIScPR, New Delhi; Dr. Kancharla Prasad, Senior Scientist; & Dr. Love Sharma, Scientist of IIIM.

In his remarks, Er.

Abdul Rahim, Head of the RMBD & IST Division, provided a comprehensive overview of the CSIR Integrated Skill Initiatives and the various skill development programs being offered by CSIR-IIIM, Jammu.

He emphasized the critical need for skill enhancement in today's rapidly evolving scientific landscape, where advancing technology and research methodologies demand a highly skilled workforce.

The workshop attracted a wide range of participants from diverse academic and research backgrounds, reflecting the collaborative spirit of the scientific community in the region. Representatives from several prominent institutions were present, contributing to an enriching exchange of ideas and experiences.

Dr. Mir M. Asrar, Scientist, conducted the proceedings of the event while Dr. Nasir-Ul-Rashid, Senior Scientist, delivered the formal vote of thanks.

From Page No:1

Union Budget 2025 | J&K to get Rs 410000 Crore Central assistance for Next Fiscal

grants towards contribution to the Union Territory Disaster Response Fund and Rs 101.77 crore to meet resource gap funding for infrastructure projects.

As per these documents, the financial assistance for Jammu & Kashmir for ongoing fiscal has been revised to Rs 41000.07 crore from Rs 42277.74 crore.

J&K Police gets 9325 crore

mentioned at entries 1 and 2, namely 'Public Order' and 'Police' respectively, or the Concurrent

List in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India in so far as any such matter is applicable in relation to the Union territories," section 28 of the law bifurcating J&K into two UTs states.

Ladakh gets Rs 4692.15 crore for 2025-26

revenue expenditure for the newly carved Union Territory and Rs 2242.15 crore as capital expenditure.

Shiv Sena, Sant Samaj demand free treatment for Hindus in Shri Mata Vaishnodevi Hos-

pital

lost their lives during the stampede on the day of Moni Amavasya at the Sangam bank of Maha Kumbh and for the speedy recovery of the injured.

On this occasion, Paramadhyaksha Swami Rajeshwaranand Ji Maharaj of Rajmata Jhandewala Temple Group and Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu-Kashmir unit chief Manish Sahni jointly addressed the media and raised their voice in favor of formation of Sanatan Board as soon as possible.

Along with this, there was a demand to give priority to Hindus for admission in Shri Mata Vaishnodevi University and to provide a free treatment facility in Narayana Superspecialty Hospital.

Swami Shri Rajeshwaranand Ji Maharaj advocated freeing the temples and monasteries of Sanatan Dharma from government control and working towards operating

them through the Sanatan Board. Manish Sahni said that if the Sanatan Board is not formed in a country with a Hindu majority population, will it be formed in Islamic or Western countries? Along with making the offerings to the Vaishno Devi Darbar public, a special budget should be made for the Kanyadan Mahadaan on Beti Basao (girls' marriage).

Sahni further said that both the institutions, Vaishno Devi Hospital and University, are run by the offerings to Shri Mata Vaishnodevi, which should not be commercialized at all.

Along with this, Hindus should be given priority in admission in universities, colleges and schools run by the donations of Hindus. Sahni also raised the demand for appointment of only Hindu employees in the Shrine Board.

Sadguru Rajdarbar manager Ram Vohra, Pooja Kalra, Balwant Singh, Mahesh Singh, Rohit

Kaushik and Rahul Sharma of Ek Rahat Foundation were also present.

Snow higher up, rain in plains end dry spell in Kashmir

couple to degrees while the minimum temperature settled above freezing point in the city last night, the Met said.

Srinagar city recorded a low of 0.8 degrees Celsius last night, which was 1.4 degrees above the normal for this time of the year, the Met said.

Most places in Kashmir recorded higher than usual minimum temperatures last night except for Gulmarg skiing resort in North Kashmir, where the mercury settled at minus 7.2 degrees Celsius.

Punjab once again ignored in Union Budget: CM Mann

the farmers and youngsters of Punjab," he said in a post on X.

The chief minister criticised the Centre for not announcing a minimum support price (MSP) for crops or any package for the state's industry.

"The Centre has neither given an MSP to farmers on their crops nor has the state been given any package for any industry. Punjab has not been given anything that can improve its economy and future," he said.

"This budget is only an election budget, in which there are announcements only for the state of Bihar," Mann added.

Once again, the Centre has meted out stepmotherly treatment to Punjab and Punjabis in the budget, he said, adding, "But we will make Punjab stand on its own feet."

Labour, Industries Department conduct awareness, registration camp at Sanasar

Top News Report

RAMBAN, Feb 1: In line with the directives of the Deputy Chief Minister during his visit to Sana Panchayat, the Labour Department, under the leadership of Assistant Labour Commissioner Ramban, Amit Kumar, organized an awareness and registration camp at GHSS Sanasar. The camp covered labourers from Panchayats Sana, Upper Sanasar, and Lower Sanasar, with around 150 workers participating.

To streamline the registration process on the JKBOCWBB portal, the Labour Department is working closely with Common Service Centres (CSCs) across the district.

During the camp, ALC Amit Kumar briefed workers on key labour laws, including the Payment of Wages Act, Workmen Compensation Act, Child Labour Act, Maternity Benefit Act, Contract Labour Act, and Payment of Gratuity Act. He also highlighted the welfare



schemes of the J&K Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (JKBOCWBB). The workers were encouraged to register on the JK Samadhan App, a dedicated grievance redressal portal, and spread awareness about PM-Surya Ghar Muft Biji Yojana, being implemented by JPDCL under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Baseer-UI-Haq Chaudhary. A helpline number (9419192398) was shared for further assistance. The ALC also informed the workers about E-Shram, Mission Youth schemes like Mumkin and Tejaswini, the ESI

scheme, and the Mission YUVA Survey.

Project Manager Kuldeep Singh from the District Industries & Commerce Department provided details on PMEGP and PM Vishwakarma Schemes, and a PM Vishwakarma Training Completion Certificate was distributed.

During the camp, 30 on-the-spot registrations were done on the JK Samadhan App, facilitated by CSC VLE deputed by District Manager CSC, Nawaz. Additionally, 15 labour card renewals and 5 new registrations were approved, with new labour cards distributed. Information brochures on various Labour, Employment, and Industries Department schemes were also distributed.

The Labour Inspector elaborated on JKBOCWBB schemes and stressed the importance of digital literacy, as all Labour Department services are now provided online. On-spot grievance redressal was carried out, addressing worker queries.

Massive crackdown against drug mafia in Anantnag continues



Top News Report

ANANTNAG, Feb 1: Anantnag Police continuing its war against Drug menace arrested two drug peddlers and recovered narcotic substance from their possession.

Police Station Mattan received a specific information through reliable sources that one Hilal Ahmad Wani, son of Farooq Ahmad Wani resident of Kralgund Brah Mattan has indulged in peddling of narcotic substances and accordingly has

hoarded a large quantity of narcotic substance in his residential house. Accordingly a case under relevant sections of NDPS Act got registered in Police station Mattan and investigation taken up.

On receipt of this information, a team comprising of Anantnag Police and Executive Magistrate concerned was constituted, who carried out the search of the said house. During search about 04 Kgs of Charas powder was recovered from the said house. The owner of the

said house was arrested and contraband seized. Further investigation in the instant case continues.

Additionally, Police Party from Police post Sangam during naka checking near Tulkhan crossing apprehended Saber Ahmad Sheikh, son of Roni Sheikh, resident of Delhi.

A personal search revealed 14 grams of brown sugar from his possession. In this regard a case was registered at Police station Bijbehara, accused was arrested and contraband seized.

Anantnag Police remains committed to eradicating the drug menace and ensuring the safety and well-being of the community. The public is urged to continue supporting the efforts by reporting any suspicious activities to the authorities.

GDC Thannamandi celebrates World Wetlands Day

Top News Report

THANNAMANDI, Feb 1: The Department of Botany of GDC Thannamandi celebrated World Wetlands Day as part of Viksit Bharat@2047 Abhiyan here on Saturday.

On this occasion an intra-college symposium on the theme "Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future." organized under the patronage of Prof. (Dr.) Farooq Ahmed, Principal of the college. Dr. Abdul Haque Naimi, Head, Department of Urdu was Chief Guest on the occasion.

Prof. Farooq Ahmed emphasized upon the need of conservation of Wetlands which are critically important ecosystems that contribute to biodiversity, climate mitigation and adaptation, freshwater availability as well as world economies. He appreciated the Department of Botany for this initiative to raise awareness about the importance of wetlands and their preservation. Dr. Abdul Haque Naimi and Prof. Supriya Gupta, Head Department of Comput-



er Science also deliberated upon the need for reversing the rapid loss of wetlands and encouraging actions to conserve them by integrated efforts - innovative actions and wider awareness.

In the intra-college symposium, Razak Mirza spoke on the importance of wetlands whereas Mehtab Khan gave an overview of about 2500 Ramsar wetlands across the globe. Nosheen Qureshi briefed Indian Wetlands including 89 Ramsar sites and Jabran Khan deliberated upon the wetlands of Jammu and Kashmir with special reference to 7 Ramsar sites. The young speakers raise the concern about the conservation of seven lakes in Pirpanjal and declaring them as

UNESCO heritage sites under Ramsar Convention.

Earlier, Dr. Ashaq Malik, IQAC Coordinator and Head, Department of Botany welcomed the audience about the Day which is celebrated each year on 2 February to raise awareness about wetlands. This day also marks the anniversary of the Convention on Wetlands, which was adopted as an international treaty in 1971.

Razak Mirza conducted the proceedings of the programme whereas Dr. Showkat Ahmed presented the formal vote of thanks. Prominent among others present on the occasion were Dr. Mudassir Gori, Dr. Mohd Zabir, Dr. Arshaq and Sarfraz Ahmed.

GDC Marh organizes dental health checkup camp

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: As a part of fulfilling college mission for enhancing overall personality development of students and social health concern, IQAC, NSS and cultural committee of GDC Marh organized a Maiden Dental Checkup camp, collectively for the students and staff of college, Government Middle school Dhateryal and staff of ZEO Marh.

The initiative for the camp was taken by the principal of the college Dr. Rakesh Kumar Koul who always take steps for the benefit of students, staff and society.

The resource person for the camp was Dr. Aakash Bhatt who is a prominent dental doctor serving at Orzu Multi Speciality Dental and Implant Center Talab Tillo and Ghandi Nagar Jammu.

In the keynote address the principal of the college emphasized upon relation of tooth care with heart attacks and vision. He stressed upon the myths related to the oral health which need to be eradicated from the society and causes of bacterial infection of teeth.

During the awareness session the resource person Dr. Aakash Bhatt aware about the right way of brushing, ways to avoid cavity and importance of right choice of brush for oral health maintenance for avoiding brain strokes.



During the dental checkup session Dr. Aakash Bhatt did oral check up of 56 persons comprising of college students, adopted school students, faculty of college/school.

He also guided all the participants to take good care of teeth for good health.

During the session resource person distributed free of cost sample of healthy paste, mouthwash, pain killer, antibiotics and

gum paints for the oral health care to faculty of college, students of adopted Govt. middle school Dhateryal.

He suggested to take early and annual care of teeth so that complexity is avoided which otherwise makes dental treatment costly.

The accompanying paramedical staff namely Naveen Ganjoo and Manik Sharma provided their selfless services during

the camp.

The welcome address was presented by Dr. Ram Dayal (HOD Mathematics) and the vote of thanks was presented by Dr. Ashu Jolly Convenor Cultural committee.

The faculty member from the college who graced the occasion with their presence were Dr. Madhvi Prashar (HOD Botany), Dr. Imritaz (IQAC Convenor), Dr. Balwinder Saini (HOD Chemistry), Prof. Sachin Bhagat (NSS Programme officer), Dr. Rahul Gupta (HOD Computer), Prof. Asha Kumara (HOD Geography), Dr. Sheetal Devi (HOD Dogri), Ravi kumar (Physical Director) and Rachhpal Lal.

The camp was organized with the help of college student presidium namely Atinder (Media Secretary), Sandeep (General Secretary), Rahul (Joint Secretary), Ketan (Rover Scout leader), Sneha (Joint Secretary), Rohit (Treasure), Riya (Head Girl), Kashish (Vice-president), Khushi (Discipline Secretary), Navpreet (Joint secretary), Richa (Head girl), Abhishek Bhat (NSS).

Refreshment was served to the resource person and all the students through college canteen RR traders.

Dr. Akash Bhat expressed his satisfaction that 80% of the students had good oral hygiene.

Mementos were presented to the resource person and his team to express gratitude.

Kanchoth festival celebration at Bhaderwah

Top News Report

DODA, Feb 1: The Kanchoth festival is a one-day celebration that takes place in the Bhaderwah valley of Jammu and Kashmir. It is also known as Gauri Tritiya. The festival is a celebration of the ancient Nag culture and commemorates the marriage of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati.

The Kanchoth festival though is of one day yet the festivity remains for three days. During these three days, ladies

go in the neighborhood to offer 'Thel' (respect) to one and all irrespective of creed and caste; and get in return their blessing 'Suhagan Bho' (Live long your husband).

Kanchoth and Gauri - Tritiya a local festival of Women is celebrated with enthusiasm and religious fervour in erstwhile hilly Doda every year during the Shukla Paksha of Magh month in January and February.

Karwa Chouth is celebrated mostly in wider geographical area in



plains, Kanchoth and Gauri - Tritiya is celebrated in three hilly districts of Bhaderwah, and Doda Ramban. Kishtwar districts of Jammu Province Both festivals are celebrated by

women to pray for long life of their husbands. Style is almost same. The only difference is the timing.

On the festival day women clad in crisp new elegant suit, don-

ning matching jewelry, with henna painted hands pray for the long lives of their spouses.

The occasion has great significance in the life of every married woman. The day is considered pious for women when they can pray to Goddess Gauri for the long and healthy lives of their husbands. Bangles, suit, bindis, sindur and mehndi are considered sanctimonious to be offered to the Goddess as well as to be worn by the women observing fast.

Kishtwar residents burdened by high electricity bills despite region's power boom: Ajeet Bhagat



Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Feb 1: Senior National Conference leader and spokesperson for the Chenab Valley Zone, Ajeet Bhagat, has raised concerns over the exorbitant electricity bills burdening residents of Kishtwar district. Despite the region's emergence as a major power hub in North India, generating nearly 6,000 megawatts (MW) of electricity upon

completion of ongoing projects, locals continue to face financial hardship due to high power costs.

Bhagat highlighted that the surplus electricity generated in the Chenab Valley Zone will not only serve other parts of Jammu and Kashmir but also be supplied to other states. However, he called it "extremely unfortunate" that Kishtwar's residents, despite living in a power-rich region, are

struggling with soaring electricity charges.

He pointed out that several major hydroelectric projects are under construction in the region:

The Pakal Dul hydroelectric power project, with a capacity of 1,000 MW, is actively under construction, with river diversion already completed. Expected to generate 3,230 MW annually, it is projected for completion by July 2026. Bhagat strongly criticized the disparity, emphasizing that while Kishtwar is at the heart of a power revolution, its people continue to suffer due to unjustly high electricity bills. He urged the government to reduce electricity tariffs for local residents, ensuring they benefit from the abundant energy resources of their own region.

Premature to comment on Budget, expecting special package for J&K: Salman Sagar

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Feb 1: National Conference (NC) leader Salman Ali Sagar said on Saturday that it is premature to comment on the budget, adding that his party will thoroughly assess its provisions. Speaking to reporters, Salman Sagar said, "We will review the entire

budget and assess its impact accordingly. There will be no immediate conclusions. The budget has just been presented, and we will carefully evaluate it." However, the NC leader emphasized that the budget should have given greater attention to employment. "There should have been a specific focus on employment, which is a critical issue. Unfortunately, this has

not been adequately addressed," he remarked. Sagar expressed hope that the commitments made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, especially those concerning Jammu and Kashmir, will be honored. He added, "The Prime Minister understands the importance of his promises, and we are expecting a special package for Jammu and Kashmir."

Dominant India eye 2nd consecutive Women's U19 T20 World Cup title

India have won all their six matches in the tournament so far

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 1 (Agencies): Unbeaten so far in the tournament, a dominant India will start as overwhelming favourites to win their second consecutive title when they take on South Africa in the final of the Women's U19 T20 World Cup here on Sunday.

India have had a flawless campaign so far, winning all their six matches in the tournament.

The Niki Prasad-led side has been in red-hot form across departments. India registered dominating wins over the West Indies (9 wickets), Malaysia (10 wickets), Sri Lanka (60 runs), Bangladesh (8 wickets), Scotland (150 runs) and England (9 wickets in the semifinal).

In-from opener Gongadi Trisha has been in ominous form with the bat, and is the highest run-getter in the tournament with 265 runs in six innings at an average of 66.25. She is followed by her left-handed opening partner G Kamalini, who is



third in the list with 135 runs in six innings at an average of 45.

But the worrying factor for India would be the lack of time and opportunity at the crease for the middle-order, as most of the runs have been scored by the openers.

On the bowling front too, the Indians are ruling the roost, with the slow left-arm orthodox duo

of Vaishnavi Sharma and Aayushi Shukla occupying the top spots on the wicket-takers' list.

While Vaishnavi is leading with 15 scalps at an average of 3.40, her team-mate Aayushi has picked up 12 wickets in the competition so far at an average of 5.91.

The duo is expected to play a crucial role in the final as well on

the slow, turning wickets here. South Africa, on the other hand, qualified for their first-ever ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup final following an impressive five-wicket win over Australia in the semifinal and will be looking to upset the Indians en route to the title.

Squads:

India: Niki Prasad ©, Sanika Chalke, G Trisha, Kamalini G, Bhavika Ahire, Ishwari Awasare, Mithila Vinod, Joshitha VJ, Sonam Yadav, Parunika Sisodiya, Kesari Drithi, Aayushi Shukla, Anandita Kishor, MD Shabnam, Vaishnavi S.

South Africa: Simone Lourens, Karabo Meso, Kayla Reyneke ©, Jemma Botha, Seshnie Naidu, Diara Ramlakan, Monalisa Legodi, Nthabiseng Nini, Fay Cowling, Jae-Leigh Filander, Luyanda Nzuzu, D van Rensburg, Mieke van Voorst, Ashleigh van Wyk, Chanel Venter.

Match starts at 12:00 pm IST.

Yuvraj Singh to represent India Masters in International Masters League



MUMBAI, Feb 1 (Agencies): Yuvraj Singh, one of cricket's greatest southpaws, will represent India Masters in season one of the International Masters League (IML), which will be played from February 22 to March 16.

A name synonymous with glory and game-changing moments, Yuvraj was one of the chief architects of India's victory in the inaugural ICC T20 World Cup in 2007, during which he famously smashed Stuart Broad for six sixes in an over. He also played a pivotal role in the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011, where he was crowned Player of the Tournament for his outstanding all-

round performance.

Speaking on his return to cricket as part of the India Masters team, Yuvraj Singh said, "Taking the field with Sachin and my other teammates feels like reliving the glory days. Playing alongside all of them brings back so many memories. For me, the IML is a tribute to the era that defined Indian cricket, and I can't wait to create some more unforgettable memories for all the fans who have supported us over the years," as quoted from a release by IML.

Joining him in the IML's family of cricketing masters are South Africa's JP Duminy and Sri Lanka's Upul Tharanga, who will represent their respective nations.

JP Duminy was known for his classy stroke-play, composure under pressure, and handy off-spin bowling. With over 9,000 international runs and leadership experience as South Africa's T20 captain, Duminy was often the stabilizing force in crucial moments.

JP Duminy said, "Representing South Africa Masters in season one of the International Masters League is a huge honour. I am looking forward to playing in a tournament that will feature the greats of the game. Cricket fans can rest assured that the cricket they will witness, will be riveting and exhilarating."

A stylish and consistent opening batter, Upul Tharanga scored over 9,000 international runs for Sri Lanka. He took on the new ball with panache to lay solid foundations for his team, often playing the anchor role and accelerating when required.

Speaking on his inclusion in the Sri Lanka Masters squad, Tharanga stated, "I look forward to representing Sri Lanka Masters in the inaugural season of the International Masters League. The IML will be a great tournament, in which old friends and rivals will take the field and produce memorable cricket."

"Have always been someone who has played for fans...": Hardik Pandya following match-winning 53 in Pune

PUNE, Feb 1 (Agencies): Following India's win over England in the fourth T20I, star all-rounder Hardik Pandya, who scored a match-winning half-century, opened up about his special bond with fans and how he loves entertaining them and making sure that their money is well spent after every fine knock from his willow.

Pandya added one more knock to his increasing catalogue of stylish, clutch knocks under pressure as he had a 87-run stand with Shivam Dube, that lifted India from 12/3 to a match-winning total of 181/9. He also became the fifth-highest run-getter in T20Is for India.

Speaking in a video by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), Pandya said that the fans cheering give him additional motivation.

"I have always been someone who has played for the fans. When they are there, when they are chanting,

it gives me that added motivation. I want to do really well for them," he said.

Pandya also talked about his love for cricket, which he calls his "life, priority and first love".

"This sport does not wait much. Your first love always gives the kiss back. The sport has given me so much love and so much things back, I feel I have always have to turn up and be very honest and loyal to the sport," he added.

The all-rounder said that batting has always been close to his heart and playing a good knock gives him a "wonderful feeling" before he goes to sleep.

"I think today, the sport said, you deserve that. A lot of things have changed post the World Cup (T20 WC win last year. I really love to entertain the crowd and make sure every penny that they have spent is worth it," he signed off.

Now in 113 T20Is and 89 innings, Pandya has scored 1,803 runs at an

average of 28.17 and a strike rate of 141.63. He has scored five half-centuries, with best score of 71*.

On the other hand, in 68 matches, Dhawan scored 1,759 runs at an average of 27.92 and a strike rate of 126.36, with best score of 92 and 11 fifties in 66 innings.

The highest run-getter for India in T20Is is former T20 World Cup winning captain Rohit Sharma, with 4,231 runs in 159 matches and 151 innings at an average of 32.05 and a strike rate of 140.89. He scored five centuries and 32 fifties, with best score of 121*. He is followed by Virat Kohli (4,188 runs in 125 matches at an average of 48.69, with a century and 38 fifties) and Suryakumar Yadav (2,596 runs in 82 matches and 78 innings at an average of 38.74, with four centuries and 21 fifties).

Coming to the match, England won the toss and elected to field first. India was reduced to



12/3 by pacer Saqib Mahmood (3/35) after he got Sanju Samson, Tilak Varma and skipper Suryakumar Yadav in one over. Abhishek Sharma (29 in 19 balls, with four boundaries and a six) and Rinku Singh (30 in 26 balls, with four boundaries and a six) played crucial knocks, but India still reeled at 79/5. An 87-run partnership between Hardik Pandya (53 in 34 balls, with seven fours and two sixes) and Dube (53 in 30 balls, with four boundaries and four sixes) helped India reach 181/9 in their 20 overs. Overton (4/32) and Adil Rashid (1/35) also bowled fine spells.

In the run-chase, Phil Salt (23 in 21 balls, with four boundaries) and Ben Duckett (39 in 19 balls, with seven fours) put England to a fine start, adding 62 runs for the first wicket. However, Indian spinners helped the hosts bounce back and left England at 95/4. Harry Brook (51 in 26 balls, with five fours and two sixes) did score a half-century, but wickets fell quickly on the other end, with Harshit (3/33) and spinner Ravi Bishnoi (3/28) taking the spotlight. England was restricted at 166 and lost by 15 runs.

Dube got the 'Player of the Match' award. India has won the series 3-1.

Ranji Trophy: Shardul's dream run continues, mixed bag return for Riyan Parag

Shardul secured the 'Player of the Match' award for his four-wicket hauls in both innings and a knock of 84 in the first innings

NEW DELHI, Feb 1 (Agencies): Bowling all-rounder Shardul Thakur continued his dream run in the ongoing Ranji Trophy, helping Mumbai secure a massive win by an innings and 456 runs against Meghalaya at home on Saturday.

Shardul secured the 'Player of the Match' award for his four-wicket hauls in both innings and a knock of 84 in the first innings. So far in seven matches, he has taken 24 wickets at an average of 23.95, with best figures of 4/43. In eight innings with the bat, Thakur has scored 381 runs at an average of 47.62, striking at an incredible strike rate of 101.87 with a century and three fifties. His best score is 119.

Mumbai won the toss and elected to field first, skittling out Meghalaya for 86, with Thakur taking 4/43, which included a hat-trick. Mohit Avasthi also took 3/27 and left a great impact.

In their first innings, Mumbai piled up heavy runs as Siddhesh Lad (145 in 250 balls, with 17 fours and a six), Akash Anand (103 in 151 balls, with 15 fours) and Shams Mulani (100 in 86 balls, with 16 fours) scored centuries. Half-centuries came from skipper Ajinkya Rahane (96 in 177 balls, with 11 fours and a six), Thakur (84 in 42 balls, with nine fours and five sixes) and Suryansh Shedge



(61 in 71 balls, with four boundaries and a six), taking Mumbai to 671/7 declared and a lead of a massive 585 runs.

In their second innings, Meghalaya was cleaned up for barely 129 runs, with Shardul taking 4/48 and Tanush Kotian getting 4/15.

Assam skipper Riyan Parag had a mixed return to Ranji Trophy after an injury, as his side lost to Saurashtra in their Group D match at Rajkot. On his return, he scored 51 and 0 in both innings and took two wickets for 117 runs.

Saurashtra won the toss and elected to bat first, piling up 474 runs in their first innings thanks to their top-three coming good. Harvik Desai (130 in 181 balls, with 17 fours and a six) scored a century while Chirag Jani (80 in 78 balls, with 14 fours) and Cheteshwar Pujara (99 in 167 balls, with 10 fours) were unlucky to miss out on three fig-

ures.

Sammar Gajjar (60* in 75 balls, with nine fours) unbeaten came down the order pushed the team to a massive score, with Mukhtar Hussain (3/50) and Rahul Singh (3/125) being key bowlers.

In their first innings, Assam could barely make 164 runs, with Dharmendrasinh Jadeja (4/61) getting crucial scalp of Riyan for 51 in 67 balls, with seven fours and two sixes. Mukhtar also made an unbeaten 47 in 46 balls, with six fours and a six. They trailed by 310 runs.

Assam failed to wipe out the deficit in the second innings too, skittling out for 166 runs while Dharmendrasinh (5/50) took a five-wicket haul and earned a 'Player of the Match' honour. Sumit Ghadigaonkar (40 in 43 balls, with five fours and a six) was top-scorer for Assam.

Women's Ashes: Mooney makes history at MCG, becomes first women's Australian player with tons in all formats

Mooney achieved this feat during the one-off Women's Ashes Test against England at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

MELBOURNE, Feb 1 (Agencies): Australian wicketkeeper-batter Beth Mooney made history on Saturday, slamming her maiden Test century and becoming the first-ever women's player from her country to have centuries across all formats.

Mooney achieved this feat during the one-off Women's Ashes Test against England at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

In the first innings in reply to 170 scored by England who were put to field first, Australia's Mooney more than half the deficit herself, making 106 in 173 balls, with seven fours. Her runs came at a strike rate of over 61.

In eight Tests, Mooney has made 559 runs in 13 innings at an average of 43.00, with a century and four fifties.

Having played 82 ODIs, Mooney has also scored 2,553 runs at an average of 47.27 at a strike rate of over 85, with three centuries and 18 fifties in 75 innings. Her best score is 133.

In 109 T20Is, Mooney has scored 3,215 runs at an average of 41.21 and a strike rate of over 124, with two centuries and 25 fifties. Her best score is 117*.

She has a total of six centuries in international cricket.

Mooney's ton sees her join an elite company of women's players with all format tons, England's Heather Knight and Tammy Beaumont, and South Africa's Laura Wolvaardt. Overall, she has also become fourth Australian to become an all-format centurion after Shane Watson, Glenn Maxwell and David Warner, as per cricket.



com.au Mooney also joined Annabel Sutherland as the only women on the MCG Test century honour board, with the duo stitching a massive 154 run stand.

Coming to the match, Australia won the toss and opted to field first. A four-wicket haul by spinner Alana King (4/45) and two wickets each from Kim Garth

and Darcie Brown came helped Australia bundle out visitors for just 170 runs. Other than a half-century from Nat Sciver-Brunt (51 in 129 balls, with four boundaries), there was little for England to cheer.

In Australia's first innings, they got off to a steady start and had made 170/3, thanks to steady knocks from Phoebe Litchfield (45

in 127 balls, with five fours) and skipper Alyssa Healy (34 in 68 balls, with two fours). However, a 154 run stand for the fourth wicket between Annabel Sutherland (163 in 258 balls, with 21 fours and a six) and Mooney gave Australia a massive lead. Sutherland and Mooney tons, plus a valuable 44 in 81 balls (with six fours) from Ash Gardner took Australia to 440 runs, giving them a 270 run lead.

Sophie Ecclestone (5/143) bowled well for England, while Lauren Bell and Lauren Filer also got two wickets. But with a massive deficit to overcome in second innings, England sits on verge of a rare series whitewash, having lost all ODIs and T20Is of the multi-format women's Ashes so far.

Shri Bawa Bhair Devsthan Trust releases annual calendar 2025

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: Shri Bawa Bhair Devsthan Trust on Saturday organized a function at Dogra Brahman Pratinidhi Sabha, Chanakya Chowk, Parade Jammu in which the annual calendar (Panchang) for the year 2025 was released by DIG Jammu Samba Kathua range Shiv Kumar Sharma, Rakesh Khajuria, Retired Brigadier, in the presence of senior BJP leader and chief of Tawi Andolan, Chander Mohan Sharma president, Dogra Brahman Pratinidhi Sabha, Ved Parkash Sharma, Subash Shastri presi-



dent, NMC, B.S. Jamwal Ex. DC, Gurdas Sharma. DBPS chairman, P.C. Sharma senior advocate presided over the function which started with the chanting of Mantras

and Sholakas. The function which was attended by various representatives and prominent citizens and pilgrims drawn from various parts of Jammu city

especially from village Aitham, Soura, Kattal Battal apart from village Bhair among all the trustees and associated members of Baba Bhair Devsthan Trust namely

Balwant Singh Chair-man, Ramesh Sharma, general secretary, Ritiz Khajuria, Rajesh Bargarota, Raman Sharma, Shiv Ram Sharma, Jagan Nath Sharma, Om Parkash Sharma, Ex. Sarpanch Kirpal Singh, Girdhari Lal, Subash Chander, Dina Nath, Ex. Panch Pritam Singh, Rohit Sharma, Abhinash Sharma, Mohinder Sharma, Kishor Kumar Sharma Ex. Sarpanch Nagrota, M.L. Padha, Birta Ram, K.L. Sharma, Devinder Baboo, Anchit Sharma Advo, Kanav Sharma Adv. and others were also present. The speakers, while

throwing the light on the history of Baba Bhair Devi the Kul Devta of many Bradaries urged the J&K Government to bring shrine on the map of J&K Tourism circuit apart from raising and upgrading the facilities to lakhs of pilgrims from Punjab, Himachal, Haryana & Delhi who visit shrine annually.

It was pointed out that drinking water, power and medical aid centre be opened and the road under PMGSY Scheme be constructed for which the Trust members have already pursued the case the Tourism Department and PWD.

Shiv Sena praises decision to fix quota for elderly

Top News Report

KATRA, Feb 1: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu-Kashmir unit chief Manish Sahni has welcomed the priority and quota set for the elderly and handicapped in the helicopter booking for Shri Mata Vaishnodaya Yatra and the special facility of Darshan to the people of Katra sub division.

Sahni said that Shrine Board CEO Anshul Garg and his team are making every possible effort to make Shri Mata Vaishnodaya Yatra smooth and provide every possible facility to the devotees.

Digilooks Health Care conducts medical camp at Shiksha Niketan

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: A team of doctors from Digilooks Health Care conducted the annual medical screening camp for students of Grades 8 to 10 at Shiksha Niketan Hr. Sec. School, Jeevan Nagar. The medical camp aimed at early diagnosis and intervention, preventing long-term health issues by conducting routine checkups, including height, weight, blood pressure, BMI, eye screening, dental, and ENT examinations.

Recognizing that "Great minds reside in a healthy body," the school extended this initiative to not only students but also staff and community members. The event commenced under the supervision of Headmaster Harish Sharma.

A team of medical professionals provided their expertise during the camp. Dr. Shivani (ENT Specialist), Dr. Fozia (Dental Specialist), Dr. Anisha (General Physician), Ms. Neha and Pooja (Vitals Assessment), and Vishal (IT Executive) were actively involved in conducting health screenings.

Their combined efforts ensured a thorough check-up, focusing on full-body examinations, with special

attention to eye and throat health.

Apart from medical assessments, the team also conducted awareness sessions to educate students on hygiene and sanitation, the importance of safe drinking water, modern lifestyle diseases, and preventive health measures. Additionally, guidance on diet, exercise, and weight control was provided to encourage a healthy lifestyle.

The students received health assessment reports, and medical recommendations were referred for further advice where necessary.

The Principal, Rameshwar Mengi, and Headmaster, Harish Sharma, expressed their gratitude to the medical team for their valuable contribution.

Sharma emphasized, "Wellness encompasses a healthy body, a sound mind, and a tranquil spirit." Keeping this in mind, the school organized the medical camp for the welfare of students and the community.

The event was a great success, reinforcing the importance of health awareness and preventive care among students and staff.

Tanvir calls for inclusion of J&K in new tourism destinations, seeks special package

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Feb 1: National Conference (NC) leader Tanvir Sadiq Saturday urged the central government to ensure that Jammu and Kashmir is included among the 50 new tourism destinations announced recently.

Highlighting the region's potential, he emphasized the need to promote medical tourism in J&K, given its status as a popular tourist hub.

"We expect Jammu and Kashmir to be a part of

these new tourism destinations. There should also be a focus on medical tourism, and we hope a dedicated package will be announced for J&K," Sadiq said, while reacting to the budget.

Speaking about employment and economic development, he called for a comprehensive financial package to support stakeholders, including traders, houseboat owners, and those associated with the tourism industry.

Sadiq also commented

on the state budget, stating that the focus should be on community halls, roads, healthcare augmentation, and overall infrastructure development. He emphasized the need for people-friendly policies, particularly in the financial sector.

Additionally, he reassured the people of J&K that there would be no charges for water usage, as previously announced, and that meters would not be installed for domestic use.

Shiksha Niketan School celebrates Basant Panchami



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 1: Shiksha Niketan Senior Secondary School celebrated Basant Panchami organized by Middle Wing. The school was beautifully decorated with yellow color theme.

The students made colorful handmade kites, bunting, flowers. The main guest

of the event was Banu Mahajan (Ex-Corporator Gandhi Nagar). The function started with the attachment of batches and bouquet ceremony.

After this, the function proceed with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp. Students of Middle wing threw the light on the day. The day is significant for students as it is believed that goddess

Saraswati blesses them with success in their careers and education.

The festival also indicates a change of weather. According to Hindu mythology, Rituraj the king of spring season, is said to be welcomed during the Basant Panchami festival. It is believed that people feel ecstatic in the spring because of their good health and affluence.

On this occasion, Students of Middle Wing performed cultural programme.

Rameshwar Mengi, Principal of the School, appreciated one and all and also wished everyone a happy Basant Panchami.

DDC inaugurates Didi Ki Rasoi Canteen at GDC Boys Udhampur



Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Feb 1: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Saloni Rai, formally inaugurated the "Didi Ki Rasoi" canteen at Government Degree College (Boys) Udhampur in the presence of Jaffar Abass Batt, Project Officer DUDA, Udhampur/Reasi, Dr. Sanjay Verma, Principal GDC Boys Udhampur GDC staff members; government officials; college students; DUDA officials; and self-help group members inaugurated the Didi Ki Rasoi canteen at Government Degree College Boys Udhampur.

The canteen provides an assortment of home-cooked meals at reasonable prices and is managed by women Self-Help Groups constituted under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM).

This initiative serves two key objectives: providing a steady source of income for women Self-Help Groups and offering affordable, nutritious meals to college staff, students, visitors, and the general public, thereby promoting health and well-being in the district.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Dr. Sanjay Verma, Principal

of Government Degree College Boys Udhampur; DDC Saloni Rai commended the initiative, emphasizing its pivotal role in women's empowerment in the region. She praised Project Officer

Jaffar Abass Bhatt's leadership in launching the canteen, which provides a sustainable source of income and support to Self-Help Group members.

Saloni Rai, the Deputy Commissioner of Udhampur, has been a strong advocate for women's empowerment and community development initiatives. Her recognition of the canteen's impact underscores the importance of such initiatives in promoting economic independence and social growth among women.

The canteen, established under DAY-NULM, serves as a platform for Self-Help Group members to showcase their culinary skills and entrepreneurial spirit. By providing a sustainable income stream, the canteen empowers women to take charge of their financial lives, contributing to the district's overall development.

Jaffar Abass Bhatt stated that this marks the latest installment of the Didi Ki Rasoi Canteen

initiative launched under DAY-NULM in Udhampur district, with this being the newest addition to the existing two canteens. Previously, canteens had been established at DC Office Complex Udhampur and Government College for women Udhampur, with plans underway to open additional canteens. He expressed his gratitude to Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai for her unwavering support and highlighted the canteen's potential to provide sustainable income for self-help group members. He also thanked Principal Government Degree College Boys Udhampur for providing space to the Self Help Group members in the college premises.


Notably, he pioneered the establishment of Self-Help Group Canteens at DC Office Poonch during his tenure as Project Officer at District Urban Development Agency Poonch. Upon assuming charge as Project Officer, District Urban Development Agency Udhampur/Reasi, he initiated the establishment of canteens at Udhampur, including the Didi Ki Rasoi Canteen at Government College of Women and the DC Office Complex.

The initiative empowers women by providing a livelihood platform, aligning with DAY-NULM's objectives to uplift urban poor communities through sustainable livelihood opportunities.

This "Didi Ki Rasoi" canteen marks a significant milestone toward women's empowerment and self-sufficiency in Udhampur.

To mark the occasion, Silver Oak and Sukh Chain trees were planted during the 'Didi Ki Rasoi' Canteen event, symbolizing harmony, prosperity, and community well-being.

This eco-friendly initiative promotes environmental sustainability, while also highlighting the importance of social responsibility and community service.



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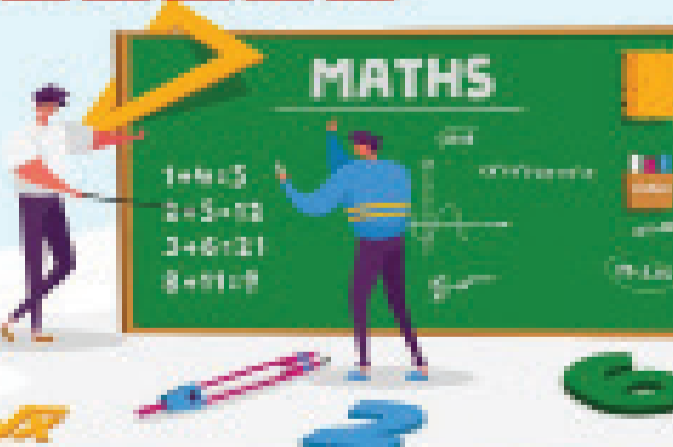
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