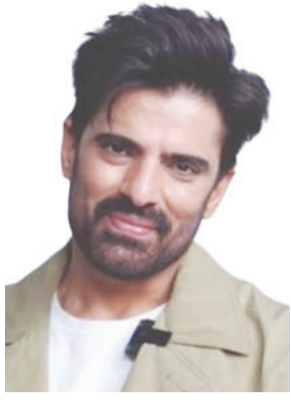


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JAMMU, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2025

Daily Evening Newspaper



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BRIEFLY

Male body found in Shalteng

SRINAGAR, Feb 17 (Agencies): An unidentified male body was found in Srinagar outskirts on Monday.

An official said that the body was discovered by locals at Shalteng this morning.

He said the police have taken the body into its custody. The identification of the deceased is being ascertained.

Meanwhile, more details are awaited, and investigations are underway.

Rain, snow expected in Jammu and Kashmir as Western Disturbance approaches

SRINAGAR, Feb 17 (Agencies): The Meteorological department Srinagar has said that Jammu and Kashmir is set to receive light to heavy rainfall and snowfall as fresh western disturbance is approaching.

The disturbances are expected to cause widespread precipitation across the Union Territory.

The weather is expected to remain mostly dry today with no significant rainfall predicted. However, light rain is anticipated on February 18. By February 19, a more widespread spell of rain is likely, with moderate rainfall forecasted for several districts.

On February 20, the intensity is expected to increase, with light to moderate rainfall over most parts of Jammu and Kashmir, and some areas predicted to receive heavy rain or snow. The forecast indicates that weather conditions will improve on February 21, with dry conditions expected across the region.

In the Kashmir Valley plains, rain is expected initially, though a sharp drop in temperatures could lead to snowfall especially in scattered higher reach areas if heavy precipitation persists. Temperatures are predicted to remain between 15 and 18°C on February 19 before falling further below to 7°C on February 20.

As per the forecast, the Jammu region is expected to record higher rainfall than the Kashmir Valley with Ramban, Kishtwar, and

■ Turn to page 9

India Army fully capable of dealing with any type of situation along borders: JK LG



JAMMU, Feb 17 (Agencies): Jammu Kashmir Lieutenant Governor (LG) Manoj Sinha on Monday said that the Indian Army was giving a befitting reply to the Pakistani troops who violated ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch.

Speaking to the media, Sinha also said that there was good coordination between the Jammu Kashmir Police

and security forces.

"Indian Army is giving a befitting reply. There is good coordination between Jammu Kashmir Police and security forces and they have been instructed that terrorism has to be stopped at any cost and this system has to be ended..." Sinha said.

He further said that action would be taken the top priority would be to maintain peace in the

state.

"Whatever action is being taken in this regard, there will be no break in it, it will continue uninterrupted and I think that the top priority will be to maintain peace in Jammu and Kashmir," the LG further said.

The fire was opened at around 11 a.m. on Sunday prompting an immediate retaliation from the Indian Army. Officials confirmed to

agency.

"Pakistan ke naam mein Pak hai par uski harkatein napak hai... This is their history also... For the past several days, they have been violating the ceasefire... First, they did such an incident in Akhnoor, and now they have repeated it in Poonch today... The country is leading in the world and signing several deals, and therefore, countries like Pakistan, China, and all those that do not agree with us are not happy... We want to tell our government and our Indian Army that we stand with them..." a local told agency.

No casualties were reported on the Indian side, Army sources said.

This incident comes days after the Army reaffirmed that the ceasefire agreement along the LoC remains intact, despite occasional stray firing incidents.

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ED Jammu raids multiple locations in drug diversion case

JAMMU, Feb 17 (Agencies): The Enforcement Directorate (ED), Jammu, conducted search operations under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, at multiple locations in Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh on Thursday.

The raids were part of an investigation into Raees Ahmed Bhat and others for alleged involvement in unauthorized sales and diversion of Codeine-Based Cough Syrup (CBCS).

During the searches, ED recovered various documentary and digital evidence. Officials also seized unexplained cash amounting to Rs. 40.62 lakh and jewellery worth Rs. 1.61 crore.

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Three Soldiers Injured in cross-border sniper fire along LoC in a week

SRINAGAR, Feb 17 (Agencies): At least three Indian soldiers have sustained injuries in sniper fire from across the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir over the past seven days, heightening tensions along the border.

On February 10, a soldier identified as Puran Singh was injured in a sniper attack in the Nowshera sector of Rajouri district. Four days later,

on February 14, another soldier was wounded after being hit by sniper fire in the Akhnoor sector of Jammu.

The latest incident occurred on February 16 in the Poonch sector, where a soldier was injured in sniper fire, prompting a brief exchange of gunfire between Indian and Pakistani troops along the LoC.

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"It is against constitution": BJP on resolution of Article 370, Art. 35A

"Decisions taken by Parliament cannot be reopened in Assembly"

SRINAGAR, Feb 17: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday said that the resolution submitted by Peoples Conference president Sajad Gani Lone on restoration of the Article 370 and Article 35A is against the Constitution.

"It is against the constitution as decisions

taken by the Parliament cannot be reopened in the Assembly," BJP spokesperson Sunil Sethi told Srinagar based news agency.

It is pertinent to mention that Lone has submitted a resolution in the Assembly secretariat, condemning

■ Turn to page 9

Three Mahakumbh devotees from Jammu killed, Two injured in Yamuna Expressway Crash

JAMMU, Feb 17 (Agencies): Three people from Jammu lost their lives, and two others sustained serious injuries in a tragic accident on the Yamuna Expressway near Tappal town of Aligarh District in Uttar Pradesh.

As per reports, the incident occurred around 1:30 PM yesterday when a speeding bus collided with a car traveling towards Noida, causing it to overturn.

The victims were returning home to Jammu from Prayagraj, reports said.

The deceased have



been identified as Padam (67) of Nanak Nagar, Yudhveer (50) of Trikuta Nagar, and Savita (65) of Trikuta Nagar.

The injured, Baldev Raj Sharma (71) and

Ritu Gupta (48), both from Trikuta Nagar, were rushed to Kailash Hospital in Noida for treatment.

The car was registered in the name of Baldev Raj Sharma of Jammu.

Inadequate snow postpones Khelo India Winter games in Gulmarg



SRINAGAR, Feb 17: The 5th edition of the Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG), which was set to be held in Gulmarg from February 22 to 25, has been postponed due to inadequate snowfall, officials said on Monday.

An official said that a fresh assessment will be conducted once snow conditions improve, and

a revised schedule will be announced accordingly.

He said that in consultation with the technical committee, they have decided to postpone the event, as key ski slopes of Affarwat and Bowl lack sufficient snow.

"The required amount of snowfall for competitive games is not there, which is why we have

to postpone the event. Unless there is fresh snowfall, it is not possible to conduct the games", Rauf Trambo, President Winter Games Association of Jammu and Kashmir (WGAKJ) said.

He said that they had a detailed meeting on this, and it was decided that the next decision will be taken after February 19, as the weather office has predicted wet weather conditions, with Gulmarg expected to receive fresh snowfall.

Earlier, government stated that all logistical arrangements, including hotel bookings, event management, and infrastructure readiness, have been meticulously completed.

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International Conference on ETBCT-2025 held at SMVDU

Top News Report

KATRA, Feb 17: A two day International Conference on Emerging Trends in Biosciences and Chemical Technology (ETBCT-2025) commenced with great enthusiasm at the School of Biotechnology, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Katra, J&K.

The prestigious event brought together researchers, academicians, and industry professionals to discuss groundbreaking advancements in biosciences and chemical technology.

The conference was inaugurated by the Chief Guest Shri. Satish Sharma, Minister of Department of Science & Technology, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Information Technology, Youth Services &

Sports, ARI & Training,



Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

Dignitaries present on the occasion included the Chief Patron of the Conference, Prof. Pragati Kumar, Vice Chancellor of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, and Dr. Yashpal Sharma, Executive Director, SMVD Institute of Medical Excellence as the Special Invitee.

In his inaugural address The Chief

Guest emphasized on the significance of biodiversity and its crucial role in maintaining eco-

logical balance.

He highlighted the urgent need for awareness through educational camps and community-driven initiatives, urging researchers and academicians to actively participate in conservation efforts.

The Vice Chancellor of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Prof. Pragati Kumar, highlighted the significance of the conference as a platform to explore innovations in the field of science and technology and urged the young minds to develop technology of

implementation.

Prof. Ratna Chandra, Head School of Biotechnology and Organizing Secretary proposed the vote of thanks. During the inauguration the Proceedings of the Conference was also released as a souvenir. Plenary and Invited lectures by internationally acclaimed eminent experts in different areas shall be presented during the two day conference.

Scientific sessions of the conference have been divided into different themes on Health

Sciences, Enzymology, Molecular Biology, Microbial Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, Chemical Sciences, Environmental Sustainability, Bioinformatics, Genomics /Proteomics and Animal and Plant Sciences. The Inaugural Plenary Lecture was presented by Prof. RD Tyagi, Dongguan University of Technology, Quebec, Canada.

There are 25 invited speakers of various fields from all around the globe and more than 200 participants from all over the country who shall come together during the conference to share their research experience through oral and poster presentations. Along with the conference, a Workshop on Skills in Biosciences is also being conducted at the School of Biotechnology, offering participants hands-on experience in various bioscience applications.

Dr Rajiv Bhagat starts development work worth Rs.20 lakh



BISHNAH, Feb 17: MLA Bishnah Dr Rajiv Kumar Bhagat on Monday start the RBM work on Improvement of road from Ward No.13 along Ditch to Banyan Tree Pusa Bishnah including 150 Mtr Edge Wall amounting to Rs. 50 lakh.

While starting the RBM work Dr Rajeev

said my aim to provide fear weather road to every nook and corner of the constituency, so that people feel relief from the damages road and connectivity also increase the activities of the farmers whose growing vegetables and other allied crops to sell their vegetables.

The MLA stating his

unwavering dedication to transforming it into a Model Constituency and appealed to the people of Bishnah that his office is always open for the residents of Bishnah Constituency and people can meet him daily for their grievances.

In the event Engineering wing of PWD, Satish Bharti BJP Kissan Morcha, Sumit Sharma Mandal Pardhan Bishnah Sukandya Devi Mahila Morcha General Secretary Sunil Kumar Bhagat, Ranjit Singh Naib Sarpanch and other prominent and general public of the Bishnah were present in the occasion.

Embedded Systems and Robotics Laboratory inaugurated at CUJ via e-Yantra Initiative of IIT-Bombay



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: The School of Engineering, Central University of Jammu (CUJ), has collaborated with IIT-Bombay to offer an Embedded Systems and Robotics course.

As part of this collaboration, IIT-Bombay selected and trained B. Tech students of CU Jammu in the field of embedded systems and robotics.

Under the mentorship of Prof. Kavi Arya from IIT-Bombay, six students – Ajitesh Sharma, Ayush Modi, Osho Raj, Samarth Prashar, Shreya Rai, and Sundram Kumar Ray had successfully completed the course. Notably, Sundram Kumar Ray, a B. Tech (CSE) 4th Semester

student, achieved an outstanding grade.

Further strengthening this collaboration, IIT-Bombay inaugurated an Embedded Systems and Robotics Laboratory at CU Jammu under the e-Yantra Lab Setup Initiative (eLSI).

This state-of-the-art laboratory aims to enhance students' practical skills in embedded systems, IoT, and AI, aligning with the evolving Industry 5.0 landscape.

Under the leadership of Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Vice-Chancellor, Central University Jammu, the inauguration ceremony witnessed the presence of Prof. Yashwant Singh (Registrar) along with Prof. Rakesh Jha (HoD Electronics and Communication), and Prof.

Dinesh Kumar (HoD Computer Science and Engineering).

Several faculty members of the School of Engineering actively participated, including Dr. Neerendra Kumar, Dr. Palak Mahajan, Dr. Harmain Kour, Dr. Priyank Sharma, Prof. Palvinder Singh Mann, Dr. Pradeep Kumar Singh, Dr. Sachin Gupta, Dr. Sunil Datt Sharma, Dr. Praveesh Pal, Dr. Sanjeev Yadav, Dr. Arvind Selwal, Dr. Deepti Malhotra, Dr. Misbah Shafi, Dr. Jasvinder Pal Singh, Dr. Rajive Kumar, Dr. Suresh Limkar, and others.

During his address, Prof. Yashwant Singh highlighted the significance of Embedded Systems, IoT, and AI courses in shaping future-ready engineers, emphasizing their crucial role in Industry 5.0.

On behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, CUJ, the Registrar, CUJ, extended heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Shubha Pandit and her team from IIT-Bombay for their invaluable cooperation in setting up the e-Yantra facilities at Central University of Jammu.

Maha Shivratri Shobha Yatra on Feb 26

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: Shri Ranbireswar Mandir Welfare Committee (SRMWC) and Jammu and Kashmir Dharamarth Trust are organizing Shiv Barat (Shobha Yatra) on February 26, 2025 Mahant of the Temple Rishi Ban informed on Monday.

He said that this Shobha Yatra will start from Shri Ranbireswar Temple sharply at 3.30 PM on Feb 2 and this Shobha Yatra (Shiv Barat) will pass through all main bazars of the old city via Indira Chowk, Hari Market, Raghunath Bazar, Old Hospital road, Purani Mandi, Link road, Jain Bazar, Chowk Chabutra, Pacca Danga and will finally culminate at Shri Ranbireswar Temple.

Rishi further informed that on March 2, a free Medical Camp with the active co-operation of Indian System of Medicines (Govt. Ayurvedic Hospital Indira Chowk) will be organized at temple premises in which renowned doctors will examine the patients and will provide them free medicines.

He further appealed all religious minded people to take part of these programmes and get blessings of Lord Shiva.

He also pleaded all trade organizations to be part of this Shobha Yatra and to decorate their markets with gates, buntings, lights to welcome Shiv Barat. He said Bhandra of Maha Shivratri at temple premises is on March 02.

Dr Sajjad conferred with 'Champion of Global/Rural Surgery' award



Top News Report

KARGIL, Feb 17: In a landmark achievement for District Hospital Kargil, Dr Sajjad Hussain, Consultant Surgeon has been conferred with the prestigious award of "Champion of Global/Rural Surgery", in a special convocation of ARSICON 2025, held in the

beautiful city of @JSS-Bilaspur, central state of Chattisgarh, on 14th Feb. 2025.

The award consists of a medal of Gold, a Shawl and a citation. This Champion of Surgery award was conferred to him by the galaxies of Eminent and Stalwarts of Surgery for his outstanding achievements and tremendous work in the field of Surgery.

Seven-day Scientific Beekeeping Training Program concludes with felicitation of beekeepers

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: The concluding ceremony of a seven-day training program on Scientific Beekeeping, organized by the Apiculture Development Scheme, Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Department Jammu, under the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM), took place today at the Conference Hall, Directorate of Agriculture Krishi Bhawan Jammu. The event was attended by 50 farmers and beekeepers from the Jammu Division.

The program, held from February 10 to February 16, 2025, was designed

to raise awareness and enhance the skills of prospective beekeepers. Participants received training in bee hive operations and colony management at the DCTC, Apiculture Development Scheme Jammu, where they gained hands-on experience and practical insights into beekeeping.

The ceremony was presided over by Director Agriculture Jammu, S. Arvinder Singh Reen, who personally felicitated the beekeepers. He presented them with Tool Kits, bee flora saplings, and certificates of participation, acknowledging their commitment to advancing scientific beekeeping practices.

In his address, Director Agriculture Arvinder Singh Reen assured the beekeepers that the department would extend support in the marketing and branding of honey products.

He encouraged beekeepers to work in clusters or form Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) to strengthen the marketing and sales of honey.

He also pledged the department's technical and financial assistance, particularly to support the migration of bee colonies and optimize honey production. Director A.S Reen highlighted the economic potential of various hive products such as royal jelly,

bee venom, propolis, and pollen, which could provide valuable additional sources of income for beekeepers.

Deputy Director (Central) Jammu and Liaison Officer for the Apiculture Development Scheme, Dr. Ashwani Sharma, also addressed the gathering, focusing on the migration challenges faced by beekeepers. He emphasized the need for creating a green corridor to ensure that bees do not suffer during migration.

Dr. Sharma urged Director Agriculture to consider this initiative to facilitate smoother and healthier migration of bee colonies, thereby supporting beekeepers' mobility without

harming their colonies.

The session also included an interactive feedback segment led by Assistant Entomologist Rajesh Verma, during which participants shared their positive experiences and satisfaction with the quality and relevance of the training.

The beekeepers expressed appreciation for the comprehensive lectures and practical training that equipped them with essential skills to improve their beekeeping practices. The proceedings of the program were conducted by the team of the Apiculture Development Scheme Jammu.

Modi Govt schemes have transformed lives of millions across the Country: Sat Sharma

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: Jammu and Kashmir BJP President, Sat Sharma CA, while chairing a meeting of senior activists of the party, highlighted the far-reaching impact of the welfare schemes launched by the Narendra Modi government, emphasizing their role in uplifting all sections of society.

He underscored the union government's commitment to inclusive development through various social and economic initiatives.

"The Modi government's welfare schemes have transformed the lives of millions across the country, ensuring that benefits reach every section of society, from farmers and women to the poor and middle class," Sharma said. He noted that programmes like Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), Ayushman Bharat, PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, and Ujjwala Yojana have provided support to people, enhancing their quality of life.

One of the flagship initiatives, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, has provided affordable housing to millions of urban and rural families. Sharma pointed out that the government's mission of "Housing for All" is being realized through financial assistance and subsidies for home construction.



Discussing the impact of Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), he said that the world's largest health insurance scheme has enabled millions of underprivileged families to access free medical treatment.

"Healthcare expenses push many families into poverty, but Ayushman Bharat has ensured that quality healthcare is now accessible to the needy," he added.

Sat Sharma said that the farmers have greatly benefited from PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, which provides direct income support of rupees 6,000 per year to small and marginal farmers.

Empowering women has been a key priority for the Modi government, Sharma stated, citing the Ujjwala Yojana, which has provided LPG connections to women from poor households. This scheme has transformed

lives by promoting clean energy, improving health conditions, and reducing the burden on women.

Sat Sharma further said that initiatives like PM Gareeb Kalyan Anna Yojana, had ensured free ration to over 80 crore Indians during the COVID-19 pandemic, and Jal Jeevan Mission is providing tap water to every household. Sharma reiterated that these schemes reflect the Modi government's commitment to Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, ensuring that the benefits of growth reach every citizen.

Those who attended this meeting included Priya Sethi, Pawan Sharma, Balbir Ram Rattan, Dr. Abhijeet Jasrotia, Vikram Malhotra, Gourav Gupta, Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, Suresh Sharma, Sanjay Baru, Parmod Kapahi, Sanjit Dogra, Sunil Prajapati, Parduman Singh, Jeet Angral, and others.

EDITORIAL

COMPREHENSIVE
ANALYSIS

Alcohol consumption has long been a topic of debate in societies worldwide. While many consider it a personal choice and an integral part of social and cultural traditions, others argue that its negative consequences far outweigh any perceived benefits. Across different regions and communities, calls for banning alcohol have gained momentum, particularly where social, economic, and health concerns are paramount. This article delves into the various reasons supporting an alcohol ban and examines its potential impacts on society.

One of the strongest arguments for banning alcohol lies in its severe health consequences. Alcohol is a leading cause of numerous diseases and health conditions. Chronic alcohol consumption leads to liver cirrhosis, fatty liver, and hepatitis, which can be fatal. Excessive drinking increases the risk of high blood pressure, heart attacks, and strokes. Alcohol is linked to depression, anxiety, and an increased risk of suicide. Studies have shown that alcohol consumption is a significant risk factor for various cancers, including liver, breast, and throat cancer.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has consistently emphasized the dangers of alcohol consumption, linking it to over 3 million deaths annually. Given its health hazards, banning alcohol can substantially reduce mortality rates and improve public health.

Alcohol consumption does not just affect individuals; it also has profound implications for society at large. Several social ills can be directly linked to alcohol consumption.

Numerous studies have found a strong correlation between alcohol consumption and domestic abuse. Intoxication often leads to aggressive behavior, increasing the risk of violence within families. Many violent crimes, including assaults, sexual offenses, and homicides, are committed under the influence of alcohol. Drunk driving remains one of the leading causes of road fatalities worldwide. A ban on alcohol would significantly reduce traffic accidents and save countless lives. Alcohol addiction contributes to absenteeism, reduced efficiency, and workplace accidents, leading to economic losses for businesses and the overall economy.

While the alcohol industry generates revenue through taxation and employment, the overall economic burden caused by alcohol-related harm far surpasses these benefits. Healthcare Expenses: Governments spend billions on treating alcohol-related illnesses and injuries. Policing alcohol-related crimes, including domestic violence and drunk driving, places a significant financial burden on the state. Alcoholism leads to workplace inefficiencies, contributing to economic stagnation. Families of alcoholics often suffer financially, struggling to cope with medical expenses, rehabilitation costs, and lost wages due to job loss.

Several regions and countries have implemented successful alcohol bans, demonstrating the feasibility and benefits of such measures. The Indian state of Gujarat has maintained a prohibition policy for decades, citing public health and religious sentiments. The Bihar government enforced a complete alcohol ban in 2016, leading to a decline in domestic violence cases and a boost in household savings.

Saudi Arabia and Other Gulf Nations have strict alcohol bans based on religious principles, contributing to lower alcohol-related crime rates. While the U.S. prohibition faced challenges, it led to a decline in alcohol-related diseases and workplace accidents.

A ban could give rise to illegal alcohol production and smuggling, as seen during the U.S. Prohibition era. The alcohol industry employs millions, and a ban could lead to job losses and revenue shortfalls. Opponents argue that individuals should have the right to make their own choices regarding alcohol consumption.

However, these challenges can be addressed through strict law enforcement, alternative employment programs for those affected by the ban, and awareness campaigns highlighting the benefits of sobriety.

For an alcohol ban to be effective, governments must adopt a multi-pronged approach, including strict enforcement-Implementing stringent laws and penalties for illegal alcohol production and sales. Public Awareness Campaigns: Educating citizens about the dangers of alcohol and promoting healthier alternatives. Rehabilitation Programs: Providing support and treatment for individuals struggling with alcohol addiction. Economic Alternatives: Developing industries and employment opportunities to counteract job losses in the alcohol sector.

The case for banning alcohol is strong, backed by compelling evidence of its adverse effects on health, society, and the economy. While challenges exist, strategic planning and robust policies can ensure the successful implementation of prohibition. A well-executed alcohol ban has the potential to create a healthier, safer, and more prosperous society, free from the devastating consequences of alcohol abuse.

By: Shahnaz Hussain

As winter settles in, it brings with it a host of challenges of maintaining healthy, hydrated, and glowing skin. This can be especially a task for those dealing with dry skin.

Cold, harsh weather and low humidity levels can lead to dryness, dullness, and irritation.

During winter, our skin needs extra care to stay hydrated and healthy, eating foods that will nourish and protect your skin in this weather is important. While creams and serums act on the outside, what you eat has a direct impact on what your skin looks like.

Did you know what you eat can make a difference in your skin?

A healthy diet plays a vital role in this process by providing antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals that support skin health. It can help combat dryness, reduce inflammation, and promote collagen production, which is necessary for maintaining skin elasticity and firmness.

Superfoods are nutrient-rich foods that offer numerous health benefits, and including them in your meals can help maintain a glowing complexion throughout the colder months.

Eating lots of antioxidant-rich fruits and vegetables along with heart-healthy fats from fish, seeds, and nuts can keep your skin soft and supple.

Certain nutrient-rich foods like spinach, beetroots and carrots are loaded with vitamins and minerals like antioxidants and vitamin C that help boost collagen production in your body so your skin becomes firmer and more youthful, while also combating dryness, boosting hydration, and giving your skin a healthy winter glow.

1-- Spinach-----If you're someone who's always on the hunt for something natural to achieve healthy skin, we've discovered something for you- Spinach!

Spinach and other leafy greens are packed full of a variety of nutrients that help improve the appearance of your skin. This unassuming green powerhouse is packed with a wealth of skin-nourishing nutrients. Spinach is an excellent source of vitamins A, C, and K, all of which play crucial roles in skin health. Vitamin A promotes cell turnover and collagen production, while vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant that helps to protect the skin from environmental stressors. Vitamin K, on the other hand, can help to reduce the appearance of dark circles and under-eye puffiness.

Drinking spinach juice is a popular way to get a concentrated dose of the health benefits of spinach, which include radiant,

Winter Foods For Glowing Skin

supple and glowing skin. One cup (240 mL) of spinach juice also contains about 38% of the DV for vitamin C, which is an essential water-soluble vitamin that doubles as an antioxidant. Vitamin C protects your skin against oxidative stress, inflammation, and skin damage, all of which can accelerate signs of aging.

Fresh spinach juice made with apple is known for its cleansing abilities as it purifies the blood and eliminates accumulated toxins from the cells. It also helps to regenerate and rebuild the body.

Spinach is a good source of dietary fiber, which can help to promote healthy digestion and, in turn, support clear, radiant skin. Spinach contains lots of iron, an element of the hemoglobin protein that helps deliver oxygen to your cells. When your foods contain the right amount of iron, it can reduce the look of pale, dull skin.

If you're under-hydrated, eating spinach is a creative way to get water into your system. Spinach boasts a high water content, making it a hydrating choice for one's diet. This leafy green is composed of about 91% water by weight, providing a good source of hydration alongside its many nutrients. For each cup of spinach you eat, you'll consume five ounces of water. Spinach can help combat acne when used as a face mask. Just soak spinach in water, then apply it on your face for about 30 minutes and wash with clean, fresh water. By doing this, your skin's dirt, oil, and inflammation will be removed.

2--- Beetroot-----The pinkish root vegetables, Beetroot, also known as beets, are extensively used for beauty properties. Packed with essential vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants is gaining popularity in the skincare spectrum.

Beetroot offers fabulous benefits for your skin by tackling everything from wrinkles and pimples to dark spots and dullness. Rich in hydrating and nourishing properties, beet-roots are the natural solution to achieving the radiant, flawless complexion you've always wanted.

Beetroot and aloe vera gel- Make a beetroot thick paste. Add some aloe vera gel and mix it gently. Apply this paste for 30 minutes and rinse it off with cold water to see the fresh change. It is beneficial for dry skin

If you have oily skin than you may apply beetroot face mask.

Take 2 tablespoons of beetroot powder, 1 tablespoon of Multani mitti, and 2 tablespoons of rose water and make a paste. Apply this paste and leave it until it gets dried up completely and then simply wash it off with fresh cold water.

Beetroot juice is rich in iron, folate, and vitamin C which can give skin a rosy, radi-

ant glow. It helps purify blood and eliminate toxins, resulting in brighter, more even-toned skin with fewer blemishes.

3---Carrot-----

A beauty trend gaining popularity on TikTok, dubbed the "carrot tan", claims eating three carrots a day will give you a natural tan.

India usually sees orange carrots in summer and red carrots in winter.

In addition to their sweet flavor and satisfying crunch, carrots are packed with beta carotene, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

Carrots is the ultimate skincare superhero. Carrots are a powerhouse of nutrients that can benefit your skin in numerous ways.

The vitamins and antioxidants present in carrots promote cell regeneration, which can help to improve your skin's tone and texture.

Additionally, the anti-inflammatory properties of carrots can help to reduce redness and irritation, giving your skin a more balanced and healthy appearance.

The nutrients in carrot juice may be particularly beneficial for skin health. One cup of carrot juice provides over 20% of the DV for vitamin C, a water-soluble nutrient necessary for collagen production. This compound is the most abundant fibrous protein in your body, providing elasticity and strength to your skin

The antioxidants found in carrots, particularly beta-carotene, play a significant role in skin health.

The beta carotene in carrots is converted into vitamin A in your body which promotes firm, elastic and healthy skin.

The beta carotene in carrots brighten your skin texture and make it glow. Regularly consuming carrots leads to a healthier complexion as they hydrate and may reduce the visibility of wrinkles.

The vitamin C present in carrots aids in collagen production, a vital component for maintaining skin elasticity.

The phenolic compounds called umbelliferous found in carrot juice benefits skin by reducing the appearance of hyperpigmentation in the skin and promoting antioxidant activity while providing added UV protection.

Add baby carrots in your salads for improving skin health effectively.

4---Blueberries----- Blueberries are small, sweet, and highly nutritious. These tiny berries contain antioxidants which help in the formation of collagen, promote younger-looking skin and keep the skin moisturised. Blueberries consumption, both internally and externally, can give you better skin, and can help reverse and prevent these signs of aging.

"They are high in natural sugars and are classified as a superfood due to contents such as antioxidants, Vitamin C, Vitamin K,

and dietary fibre.

Vitamin C, which together with the Antioxidants, help to neutralize the free radicals that can cause so much cell damage, and this cell damage leads to saggy skin, wrinkles and early signs of aging.

Blueberries are known for their disease-fighting properties which makes them ideal for consumption as well as topical application in the form of DIY scrubs or face masks.

It can be helpful for the skin and make you glow from the inside out when you eat raw fruits, cooked fruit, their juice or pulp.

The vitamins and antioxidants in blueberries help fight the damage caused by environmental pollution. The pull-down and lifeless skin restores a nourishing natural glow.

Blueberry face mask is a match made in heaven for your skin. It will check premature aging, and keep fine lines, wrinkles at bay. They are super-rich in antioxidants, replenishing your skin with all its vitals. Take 3/4 Strawberries, 5-6 Blueberries, 1/2 Avocado and a few drops of lemon juice. Mash all ingredients together until you get a smooth paste. Apply liberally on the face avoiding your eye area. Leave for up to 30 minutes then rinse off with lukewarm water. This face mask is suited for all types of Skin. The best way to add this fruit is to make a face mask with yoghurt.

Take 3/4 Strawberries, 5-6 Blueberries, 1/2 Avocado and a few drops of lemon juice. Mash all ingredients together until you get a smooth paste. Apply liberally on the face avoiding your eye area. Leave for up to 30 minutes then rinse off with lukewarm water. This face mask is suited for all types of Skin. The best way to add this fruit is to make a face mask with yoghurt. 1 tsp plain yogurt (unsweetened), 1 tsp of Honey and 1 - 2 tsp of Oatmeal flour. Pre-soak the goji berries in a little bit of warm water for a few minutes so they become softer. Blend or mash all ingredients until you get a smooth paste. Apply the mask on a clean face and leave it for 30 minutes. Rinse with lukewarm water. It is best suited for normal skin.

For youthful skin take 6-7 blueberries, 1/2 tsp olive oil, 1 tsp multani mitti and 1 tsp honey. Blend all these ingredients together to form a thick paste. Apply this paste on your face smoothly. Leave it for 20 minutes. Rinse with lukewarm water. Repeat once a week for best results.

(The author is international fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India)

Essential IT skills for 2025: Artificial intelligence, Cybersecurity and Strategic thinking

By: Vijay Garg

As the digital landscape undergoes rapid transformation, IT professionals of 2025 will need to understand a unique overlap of technical expertise and adaptability to maintain relevance. Artificial Intelligence, cybersecurity, and deep tech convergence shape the industry in a way that professionals are expected to create a dynamic skill set to deal with the challenges in an evolving workplace.

HUMAN INGENUITY IN THE AGE OF AI

Director of Global Analytics at Dell Technologies, believes that AI will not replace human ingenuity. "To succeed in this age, professionals need to possess three skills: curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking. Curiosity is the fuel for innovation, creativity drives AI innovation, and critical thinking ensures sound decision-making."

Technical skills will be vital but softer skills the differentiators in an AI world. Being adaptable, visionary, and taking hold of the opportunity that AI affords would define success. "Experts predict AI could contribute up to \$15.7 trillion to the global economy by 2030. Rather than replacing human intelligence, AI serves as an amplifier an opportunity to enhance human potential, not diminish it."

BALANCING TECHNICAL MASTERY WITH STRATEGIC THINKING

Partha Sengupta, Managing Director at Nielsen India, rein-

forces the need for a well-rounded skill set. "The future of IT is not just about mastering tools and technologies but about navigating complex challenges through creativity, collaboration, and ethical responsibility. IT professionals must combine technical depth with adaptability and leadership to thrive in a data-driven world."

Foundational knowledge in cloud computing, cybersecurity, and data analytics continues to be fundamental, but newer trends, including predictive modelling, generative AI, and automation technologies, have come into play. Organisations now can't do without scalable data tools such as Apache Spark, cloud platforms like AWS, and automation frameworks like AutoML. In addition, responsible AI is a prominent theme today with data privacy, bias mitigation, and transparency becoming key themes.

"Agility, creative problem-solving, and strategic leadership are gaining currency for organisations. It is a significant competitive advantage when IT professionals bridge the gap between interpersonal and technical expertise," Sengupta noted.

EMERGING TREND AND COMPETENCIES IN THE DIGITAL ORDER

AI Differentiation-Professionals need to move beyond generic AI applications, such as differentiating themselves in areas like Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG), GraphRAG, and AI-integrated image processing.

Cybersecurity Leadership-IT professionals need to go beyond defensive activities and help

build an enterprise-wide cybersecurity framework to mitigate sophisticated threats, including ransomware and supply chain vulnerabilities.

Convergence of Deep Tech - Mastery of technologies such as IoT, edge computing, and autonomous systems will be critical to drive innovation and maintain a competitive edge.

Frugal Engineering - IT teams must develop impactful, cost-effective solutions using the right mix of technologies and design thinking for better adoption.

Learning Agility - The ability to rapidly acquire and apply new skills will be a critical differentiator in the fast-evolving digital landscape.

FUSION OF HUMAN AND AI POTENTIAL Technology at Publicis Sapient, continuous learning and adaptability are more critical in the AI era. "AI has leveled the knowledge playing field, but the differentiator is how professionals connect to its potential. A blend of skills, experience, and critical thinking transforms AI from a tool into a true catalyst for innovation."

Publicis Sapient emphasises adaptability, emotional intelligence, and a growth mindset. "AI engineers of the future won't be defined by what they know but by how they learn, innovate, and lead with agility. The goal is not just to prepare for the future but to shape it."

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC EVOLUTION: SKILLS BEYOND IT

The impact of technological advancements extends beyond the IT sector. According to Rekha

Alagappan, Country HR Manager at SBM Offshore India, "Carbon capture technologies and digital twin systems are now critical in optimising production and reducing risks. However, technical expertise alone is not enough. Strong communication, leadership, and problem-solving skills are equally essential."

As industries continue to shift toward sustainability and digital innovation, professionals will require skills that are balanced between technical mastery and strategic foresight.

EMBRACING CHANGE FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

The IT landscape in 2025 will demand professionals who can seamlessly integrate AI, cybersecurity, deep tech, and soft skills into their careers. The challenge is no longer about outpacing machines but leveraging their capabilities to drive innovation and create value. By nurturing curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking alongside technical acumen, IT professionals can unlock AI's transformative potential and redefine the future of work.

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

Hundreds of women, men join JKNC in presence of Abdul Gani Telli



Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Feb 17: A program was organized by the NC party in the Kambal Danga Panchayat of Udhampur in which Chairman OBC Cell Abdul Gani Telli joined as the chief guest, along with Din Mohd. vice president Jammu, in which hundreds of women's and men's from the village participated in this program who told their problems and joined the NC party.

While addressing the gathering Abdul Gani Telli said, the National Conference J&K people elected government led by CM Omar Abdullah commitment to improving the quality of life for residents by offering concrete solutions basic amenities of the life and employment for better welfare of the general public.

scathing attack on the Bhartiya Janata Party central government for

its failure to provide basic amenities to the people of Udhampur, he said BJP led government ten years tenure in the country, the residents of Udhampur have been left standard due to persistent shortage of basic amenities of the life.

The meeting witnessed the active participation of several prominent senior leaders members, including Captain Pavitar Singh, Anitullah, Suram Chand, Captain Balbir Singh, Anchal Kumar among others.

The gathering underscored the party's commitment to grassroots engagement, fostering unity, and addressing the concerns of workers and the local community.

He said that National Conference is the only secular party in J&K and deep-rooted across the region right upto the grass roots level that the party has always followed the ideology

that paves the way for equitable welfare and prosperity of every section of the society.

Abdul Gani Telli urged the cadre to further strengthen the party at the grass roots level and works towards consolidating the support base of National Conference's, we must stand united to strengthen the hands of Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in their mission to serve the people of J&K he said.

The Provincial Chairman OBC Cell Abdul Gani Telli further encouraged the party workers to gear up for the upcoming panchayat elections emphasizing that a strong NC presence at the grass roots is crucial to ensuring good governance and equitable development across the union territory,

Those who joined NC in presence of OBC Cell Chairman Sapna Kumari, Sudesh Kumari, Babita Rani, Geeta Devi, Gorgu Devi, Koushalya Devi, Pooja Devi, Neelam Devi, Tara Chand, Darshan Kumar, Bittu Kumar, Ravi Kumar, Atul Dogra, Rakesh Kumar, Jagdev Singh, Anshu Bharti, Sabdar Ali, Ramzan Ali, Ramesh Kumar, Subash Chandra, Krishan Kumar, Ariya Dogra, Nasib Chand.

GDC Sidhra organizes Collage making competition

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: Electoral Literacy Club in collaboration with NSS unit of GDC Sidhra organized Collage making competition as a series of event to celebrate 75th years of adoption of Constitution of India.

The theme of the collage making competition was based on fundamentals rights and fundamentals duties.

Students of BA and B.Com IV and VI Sem took part in the competition and acquainted other students about the significance of Constitution day by preparing collage in relation to

fundamentals right and fundamentals duties".

The competition was adjudged by Prof. Anu Sharma (Hod Botany) and Dr. Pooja Sharma (Hod Dogri) and they declared Asmia Rafiq of B.A IV Sem got first position, second position was bagged to Shajahan of B.A IV Sem and third has given to Ambika Sharma of B.A VI Sem.

The event was organized by Dr. Meesha Bhagat Convener Electoral Literacy Club and Dr. Purvaiya Hans NSS Programme officer with their teams under the able guidance of Dr. GS Rakwal, Principal GDC Sidhra.

Heritage students excel at Jammu Sahodhya Inter School Badminton Championship



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: Heritageans showcased remarkable talent at the Jammu Sahodhya Inter School Badminton Championship, held at IDPS on 7th February and 8th February, 2025.

Competing with skill and determination, they secured top positions across multiple categories and won the Runners-Up position in the overall championship.

Sashwat of Class 7F delivered an impressive performance, earning

the Silver Medal in the U-14 Boys Singles category. In the Mixed Doubles event, he teamed up with Sana of Class 6B, and together, they put up a stellar display of coordination and perseverance, securing another Silver Medal for the school.

Heritage School extended heartfelt congratulations to both players for their achievements and wish them continued success in their future endeavors.

Panchayat/Village Level IEC Campaign begins in Kishtwar to combat Drug Abuse

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Feb 17: In a proactive step towards addressing the menace of drug abuse, the District Administration Kishtwar, under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan (JKAS), has kick-started a Panchayat/Village Level Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) Campaign across all 13 blocks of the district.

The initiative aims to raise awareness about the devastating effects of substance abuse and mobilize community participation in the fight against drug addiction.

As part of this sustained effort, awareness drives will be organized in panchayats every Monday, ensuring continuous engagement with local communities in all 13 Blocks across the District.

The launch event received an enthusiastic response, with active involvement from local residents, students,

and community leaders across all blocks.

At the district headquarters, the campaign was kick-started at Revenue Village Kishtwar (ITI Kishtwar) in the presence of Additional Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Kishtwar, Sh. Idrees Lone (JKAS), who presided over the event.

Addressing the gathering, ACR Kishtwar underscored the importance of fostering a "Nasha Mukta" (drug-free) society and urged the youth to take an active role in spreading awareness about the perils of drug abuse.

Many speakers shared their insights against drug abuse and awareness on NASHA Mukta initiative on the occasion, including Medical Officers from the Health Department, MO ATF Kishtwar, TSWO Kishtwar, teachers from the Education Department, Panchayat Secretaries from RDD, and others.

A pledge regarding Nasha Mukta Abhiyan was also administered

on the occasion of the participants by TSWO Kishtwar Rajesh Kumar Sharma.

He reaffirmed the administration's commitment to tackling this issue through consistent information dissemination and active community engagement.

Similar events were held in all 13 villages of the 13 blocks of the District, involving the participation of SDMs, Tehsildars, BDOs, and other Officers.

Various departments, including Social Welfare, Health, Education, Excise, ICDS, NRLM, RDD, Police, and Revenue, NGOs actively participated in the initiative across the District.

The District Administration Kishtwar calls upon all stakeholders, including educational institutions, civil society organizations, and local governance bodies, to actively participate in this crucial initiative and contribute to building a healthier, drug-free society.

GDC Ramgarh commemorates 75 Years of Adoption of Indian Constitution

Top News Report

RAMGARH, Feb 17: To commemorate the 75 years of the adoption of the Indian Constitution, the Department of Political Science at Government Degree College (GDC) Ramgarh organized a joint recitation of the Preamble to the Constitution.

The event was held under the able guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Geetanjali Andotra, Principal of GDC Ramgarh and coordinated by Dr. Shivali Panjgotra.

Priya Sharma, Head of the Department of Political Science, began the event with a brief introduction, highlighting

India's constitutional journey and the significance of Constitution Day.

She elaborated on the guiding principles and ultimate objectives of the Constitution.

Addressing the audience, she emphasized the key features of the Indian Constitution, describing it as the bedrock of the nation's democracy.

The event saw active participation from faculty members including Dr. Aditi Khajuria, Prof. Sandeep Kumari, Ashok Kumar, Dr. Shivali Panjgotra, Dr. Neeraj, Priya Sharma, Anjali, and Sayema, along with the students and staff of

the institution. Together, they gathered to honor the enduring ideals of the Indian Constitution, celebrating the occasion with enthusiasm and patriotism.

Recital of the Preamble was led by Bhoomika Sharma, with all participants joining in unison to reaffirm their commitment to the principles of justice, equality, and fraternity.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Priya Sharma, expressing heartfelt gratitude to everyone for their contributions, which made the celebration a resounding success.

BADC demands minimum fixed salary for teachers

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: Ahead of financial budget 2025-26 to be announced by the J&K government, Jammu and Kashmir Border Area Development Conference (JK-BADC), a registered organization working for the welfare of the tribals and border residents of J&K, has urged the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to ensure minimum fixed salary for the teachers in J & K.

Dr. Shazad Ahmed Malik, Chairman of JK-BADC and former Vice Chancellor while appreciating the pre-budget feedback meetings held by the Chief Minister said that it is imperative that Omar Abdul-

lah government is listening to the people and it is expected that the budget inputs of stakeholders are practically reflected in the budget document.

The BADC Chairman also put forth demands of his organization related to the budget and urged the Chief Minister to ensure that the teachers are paid a dignified salary.

The former VC said "It is open secret that teachers in private educational institution in J & K are exploited, the most dignified professional is reduced to a mere laborer, struggling to make ends meet due to inadequate pay".

Dr Shazad demanded an end to this exploitation of the

private teachers in private schools and colleges and stated that this injustice with the teachers not only affects their personal lives but also the quality of education they can provide to students.

He said "Teachers, who are meant to be the pillars of society, should not be subjected to financial hardships."

The BADC Chairman requested the J & K government to ensure that in the budget 2025-26 the government ensures dignified salaries for the teaching professionals. He also demanded establishment of more hostels and scholarship schemes for Schedule Tribe (ST) students.

GCW Bhagwati Nagar inaugurates two-day International Conference

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: Government College for Women (GCW), Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu, inaugurated its Two-day International Conference on "Bridging Disciplines: Unlocking Innovations through Multidisciplinary Collaboration and Challenges" in Hybrid mode, marking a significant academic event aimed at fostering innovative thinking and collaborative problem-solving.

The conference brought together eminent academicians, researchers, students, and policymakers from diverse fields to explore the transformative power of interdisciplinary collaboration in addressing contemporary global challenges.

The inaugural day commenced with the traditional lighting of the ceremonial lamp, symbolizing the dispelling of darkness and the pursuit of knowledge. This was accompanied by a soulful recitation of Saraswati Vandana, invoking the blessings of Goddess Saraswati, the deity of wisdom and learning, to inspire and guide the participants throughout the event.

The Chief Guest for the conference was Dr. Sheikh Ajaz Bashir, Director of Colleges, J&K Higher Education Department, graced the event through virtual mode.

In his insightful address, Dr. Bashir expressed his honor to be



part of such a prestigious gathering, stating, "In today's fast-changing world, collaboration between disciplines is not just beneficial but necessary to address global challenges effectively.

This conference provides an excellent opportunity to break barriers, share knowledge, and work towards integrated solutions. I commend the organizers for creating this platform and encourage all participants to actively engage, exchange ideas, and forge meaningful partnerships that will drive innovation and societal progress."

Following this, Prof. (Dr.) Meeru Abrol, Principal of Government College for Women, Bhagwati Nagar, welcomed the attendees with a heartfelt address.

She emphasized the significance of transcending traditional academic boundaries, remarking, "By uniting diverse disciplines, we pave the way for groundbreaking research and real-world impact. The coming together of varied expertise here reflects a shared vision for transformative change."

She encouraged participants to seize this opportunity for deep,

cross-disciplinary dialogue, as such collaborations are the cornerstone of innovative breakthroughs. Dr. Abrol warmly welcomed the distinguished resource persons and participants from around the globe.

Prof. Nisha Bhagat, Convener of the conference, presented an overview and introduction to the two-day event.

The highlight of the day was the keynote session delivered by Jocelyn Rivera Lutap, a distinguished Architect and Educator with a Doctorate in Public Administration from the University of the Philippines

and currently a Senior Architect at Balai Design Construction.

Her keynote address, titled "Bridging Disciplines, Preserving Legacies: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Heritage Conservation," delved into the relevance of heritage in sustainable cities, the challenges of harmonizing heritage and sustainability, and architectural innovations that synergize heritage and tourism.

She illustrated her insights with compelling case studies from the Solina Silk Factory in Rajbagh, Kashmir, Kitakyushu in Japan, and Valenzuela City in the Philippines, providing the audience with a global perspective on cultural conservation.

A significant moment of the day was the formal release of the Compendium of Abstracts, a testament to the academic rigor and intellectual contributions of the conference participants.

The compendium was unveiled by Principal Dr. Meeru Abrol, Convener Prof. Nisha Bhagat, Co-Convenors Prof. Anju Bala and Dr. Pavanjeet Bali, and Organizing Secretary Dr. Rahul Verma.

The first technical session featured offline presentations by faculty members from various degree colleges across the Union Territory of J&K and students from the DYD Programme of GCW Parade,

Jammu. The presentations were thought-provoking and enlightening, addressing a wide range of interdisciplinary topics.

This session was chaired by Jocelyn Rivera Lutap, who commended the participants for their innovative approaches and scholarly depth.

The second technical session, held in hybrid mode, was chaired by Arushi Malhotra, Programme Coordinator and Senior Assistant Professor at the Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Dubai, UAE. An accomplished academican, architect, and urban planner with over nine years of experience in academia and professional practice, Malhotra brought a dynamic perspective to the discussions. The session was meticulously coordinated by Dr. Deepali Bhagat, Head Department of Education.

The day concluded with a formal vote of thanks presented by Neeraj Kumar, Head Department of Economics.

The two-day International Conference at Government College for Women, Bhagwati Nagar, promises to be a catalyst for fostering innovative ideas, encouraging multidisciplinary research, and building collaborative networks that address the complexities of the modern world with creativity and shared wisdom.

Striking gold in second innings

The success of rereleases may be a redemption of sorts for many dejected filmmakers, but the growing audience interest in these films also bares a deeper malaise of creative bankruptcy in Bollywood

Stanley Kubrick, in all likelihood, didn't have rereleases in mind when he asserted that the idea that a movie should be seen only once is "an extension of our traditional conception of film as entertainment rather than art". The acclaimed American director was alluding to the enduring and timeless appeal of movies. That films have a life beyond Friday is a given. 'Kaagaz Ke Phool', 'Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro', 'Swades', 'Luck by Chance' — there is no dearth of films that may have failed at the box office, yet went on to acquire the status of cult classics in the long run. Rereleases working wonders at the box office, though, is not only a new phenomenon, but one which perhaps no one could have envisioned till a few years ago.

As cinema halls witness a renewed interest in rereleases, and one after another rerun creates a stir at the box office, trade pundits are surprised, and pleasantly so. Celebrated director Imtiaz Ali is happy to be one of the early players in the game of rereleases. He not only supports the new shift, but dubs it as "a golden trend in sync with my belief that cinema is permanent". Many others are calling it an eye-opening shift.

Imagine, a new love story — 'Loveyapa', with a fresh pair of star kids, Junaid Khan and Khushi Kapoor — is struggling to find audiences, but a 2016 tragic love story, 'Sanam Teri Kasam', coming out of oblivion with a cast that boasts of no big stars, minted Rs 26 crore in just six days of its rerelease on February 7. Its successful rerun is indeed a case study in itself and tells you as to how viewers are reposing confidence and faith in an earlier film, but are not ready to take a chance

with a new release.

Filmmaker Aditya Sarpotdar rationalises, "In the age of social media, big stars or not, films acquire wings by word-of-mouth publicity. FOMO (fear of missing out) on a new film has been replaced by the comfort zone of previous experience."

When initially released in 2017, 'Tumbbad' was hailed critically yet performed abysmally. Seven years later, in 2024, it earned Rs 38 crore on its rerelease — a vast improvement from its earlier collection of Rs 10 crore. In its second outing, it even outperformed blockbuster rereleases like Ranbir Kapoor's 'Rockstar' (Rs 10.5 crore) and Shah Rukh Khan's massive hit 'Kal Ho Naa Ho', which, at Rs 2.5 crore, incidentally did not do well in its second stint.

In fact, it was somewhere last year that reruns began to gain much attention if not outright traction. If 2024 was hailed as the year of rereleases, the mood is no different in 2025. Even Hollywood's 'Interstellar' is back in Indian cinemas and enjoying a decent run. Till today, scores of Bollywood films — 'Padmaavat', 'Karan Arjun', 'Rehna Hai Terre Dil Mein', 'Hum Aap Ke Hain Koun...!', 'Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani' to 'Satya' — have been rereleased. Not all have worked, but at least one-third have hit home and touched hearts. To say the reruns are trending would not be an overstatement.

So strong is the buzz that according to industry insiders, many honchos are sitting on the drawing board rethinking strategies on how and where to release their earlier films. Producer-actor Rahul Mittra, too, is toying with how best to further monetise his film 'Saheb Biwi aur Gangster'.



What is it about the rerun of these films which is striking a chord with viewers? Memory, nostalgia, recall value and even familiarity factor akin to comfort food are being attributed as the reasons behind their resurrection. "We started the trend," says archivist and film producer Shivendra Singh Dungarpur. The founder of the Film Heritage Foundation is credited with restoring, archiving and rereleasing classics time and again. Instrumental in organising festivals like 'Bachchan: Back to the Beginning' to celebrate Amitabh Bachchan's 80th birthday, he has always been aware of the "hunger for films of past".

Dungarpur attributes this appetite to the simplicity and honesty of storytelling of yore which, unlike contemporary cinema, resonates with viewers. Sarpotdar, however, feels, "Retrospectives and homage films can't be clubbed in the same bracket as rereleases. Tribute or milestone films are in the celebratory space. A retro-

spective, say on Guru Dutt or Raj Kapoor, will always work, for there are fans and cine buffs who will try to catch up with their favourite auteur's work. But rereleases are not only a different ballgame, but also resonating with generic audiences."

Dungarpur admits, "Once the ball gets rolling, it goes in many directions." On the face of it, there is hardly any pattern to rereleases. For different films, different factors are at play. The rerelease of films like 'Laila Majnu', produced by Imtiaz Ali and directed by his younger brother Sajid Ali, could have a lot to do with its lead actress Tripti Dimri's rising popularity. Is it okay to encash upon the new-found stardom of the 'national crush'? "Why not?" feel experts, who argue that undeniably, it was a film that deserved an audience even in 2018.

In fact, films can't be rereleased randomly. According to Sarpotdar, "The vibe has to be right and there has to be some fresh connect." Precisely why 'Tumbbad' worked in 2024 when horror as a genre was generally doing well in the year of 'Munjya', 'Stree 2' and 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3'. Similarly, 'Jab We Met' finds its audiences each time, including this year, in the Valentine's week. In the unexpected success of rereleases, the makers are also drawing comfort from the realisation that theatre-going audiences are very much alive and kicking.

What the viewers are endorsing is, however, a different matter. Mittra opines, "Post-Covid, the ascent of OTT was seen as a final nail in the dwindling magic of cinema halls. But now it has been proven that nothing can replicate the experience of watching movies in theatres. Reruns or fresh releases, anything which brings audiences back to theatres is welcome. For, it implies that at the end of the day, cinema rules." Audiences preferring to watch these films in theatres, even though majority of these are

available on OTT, add further weight to his assertion. As Dungarpur puts it, "Cinema viewing in India has always been a collective community experience. Audiences want to laugh and cry together."

While there is no set formula on what and how to rerelease, Mittra observes, "There has to be a strategy in place. You can't go overboard with publicity and need to be selective about not just which film, but where to release it and with minimal costs." Indeed, for makers, rerelease is a no-brainer and also a low-stakes game, costing them a fraction of producing a new movie.

But before we go gung ho, the growing interest in rereleases bares a deeper malaise which borders on creative bankruptcy. If not too long ago Bollywood was heavily dependent on remakes, today it is trying to find its mojo through rereleases. Sarpotdar admits, "It is an indicator that makers are not adapting with times and are unable to excite the imagination of viewers. Nor are they tapping into the collective consciousness." Ali, too, can sense a lesson in here: "If our earlier films are still being watched, it should make us look back at our core filmmaking."

Trade analyst and film critic Taran Adarsh rejoices in the fact that younger audiences will now have access to movies like 'Andaz Apna Apna', made 31 years ago, when it will rerelease in April. He also reminds how the comedy didn't do well when the Aamir Khan and Salman Khan-starrer came out in 1994. But even he has no hesitation in agreeing on the dismal state of Bollywood. "What to talk of good content, there is not enough new content."

Sarpotdar explains why:

"The talent is being divided across different platforms. The same set of makers, writers, actors are working for OTT films, series and for theatrical releases, thus creating creative paucity." Mittra believes that OTT is responsible for this resurgence of older films since streaming platforms are faltering and unable to deliver what they promised at the very onset: quality content.

Many, however, are looking at the prism differently. Sarpotdar feels, "The OTT has been the biggest disruptor in the entertainment-landscape which has changed audiences' tastes across the spectrum. So, they don't care about superstar-driven tent-pole films which are consistently failing their expectations." Besides, in the new scheme of things, even OTT platforms stand to gain. Never mind the fact that the films are already in the OTT library, their successful run in theatres only implies that more viewers will go back to the streamers to watch the film that is generating excitement in cinema halls.

But are rereleases a passing fad? God forbid, were it to become a permanent trend, it could spell the death of cinema. After all, while films do deserve a second chance, wallowing in past glory is hardly a step forward. Makers certainly need to do better and go beyond what has already been made. So, will 'Tumbbad 2' and 'Sanam Teri Kasam 2' deliver after the profitable rerelease of the originals?

Well, for now, the spate of rereleases has shown that Bollywood is passing through testing times. Until the industry learns to soar again with flying colours, reruns will continue to be more than a stopgap arrangement.

Feel in tune with women's stories: Nicole Kidman

Hollywood star Nicole Kidman has talked about what has motivated her to work with several female directors, including names such as Sofia Coppola, Halina Reijn and Lulu Wang. She said she wanted to work with female directors because she felt 'in tune with women's stories' as a 'mother, daughter, wife, producer and actress'.

Kidman, who will also be appearing in Liz Sarnoff's 'Scarpetta', based on Patricia Cornwell's Kay Scarpetta novels, wants to continue to seek out talented women to work with to share their collective experience. She shared, "I feel in tune with women's stories, obviously, I am a woman, and I can speak as a mother, daughter, wife, producer, actress; in short, I can move in different spaces and use a well of emotions and experiences to express my voice."

"I choose roles and people to collaborate with very carefully. This is why I wanted to work with Susanne Bier or Lulu Wang, I find their points of view remarkable. I just shot a film, 'Holland', with a young director, Mimi Cave, who has her own unique voice, and now, on the 'Scarpetta' series, I am working again with a



magnificent Franco-Swedish woman, Charlotte Brandstrom," she said.

However, Kidman will limit herself to only telling female-led stories. The Oscar winner will not politicise her deci-

sions and will always be led on whether the story affects her on an emotional level.

Kidman has vowed to continue her habit of being courageous about the film and TV work she accepts!

Mohit Malik, who made his Bollywood debut with Azad, says every actor is a student on the set

In the world of television, Mohit Malik is a name that rings out with intensity and grace. Known for his memorable roles in shows like 'Kulfi Kumar Bajewala' and 'Samrat', he has built a name on the small screen. But there's a new chapter unfolding in his career—a big leap into Bollywood with his debut in 'Azad'. As his career evolves, we catch up with Mohit to know more about his decision to venture into films.

Time for the big screen After two decades of shaping his career on television and digital platforms, Mohit felt it was the right time to step into the world of Bollywood. "The decision wasn't just about wanting to do films," he explains. "It was about reaching the right audience—people who could see my work and offer me the kind of roles I was aiming at."

It was in 2016-2017 when he decided to expand his horizons. It wasn't about leaving television behind, but about broadening his scope. During breaks between TV shows, Mohit looked for more opportunities and soon found himself working on 'Chamak' (Sony Liv). Along the way, 'Azad' happened. What makes this transition more remarkable is the

seamless coordination of his schedules, which allowed him to juggle television, film and digital projects simultaneously. "It felt like divine intervention," he says with a smile.

Matter of response

The response to his Bollywood debut was nothing short of overwhelming. "I wasn't expecting this much love," Mohit admits. "While the film didn't perform as expected, the feedback I received, especially from industry veterans, was heartwarming." Working with Abhishek Kapoor, the director of 'Azad', was a milestone for Mohit.

One of the highlights of the experience was working with Ajay Devgn. Despite only sharing two scenes together, Mohit was in awe of the learning opportunity. "He's a legend," Mohit says, reflecting on their brief collaboration. "Just observing him was a lesson in itself." Another exciting aspect of 'Azad' was the debut of Rasha Thadani and Aaman Devgan. Working alongside newcomers was refreshing for Mohit, who believes that every actor, regardless of experience, is a 'student on the set'. "The beauty of acting is that no matter how many years you've spent in the industry, there's always something new to learn,



always room to grow," he says. On his bond with Rasha and Aaman, Mohit says he found joy in helping them navigate the demanding world of cinema.

Films versus television For an actor who's been immersed in television for so long, the switch to Bollywood came with its own set of revelations. So, what was the most notable difference? Time. "In Bollywood, you get time for preparation," Mohit explains. "For 'Azad', I had two-and-a-half months to prepare. You can delve into every detail of your character—understand their psychology, work on your physicality, even horse riding!"

This deep preparation process is a stark contrast to television's typically faster pace. "In TV, you don't always have that luxury. You often

get just a week, or even days, to prepare."

Despite this, Mohit loves the unpredictability of television. "That's the beauty of it. You never know what direction your character will take, and that's thrilling in its own way."

Exploring unconventional roles

One role that truly pushed Mohit's boundaries was his character in 'Chamak'—a complex, emotionally heavy portrayal of a gay man growing up in Punjab. "It was about understanding his internal misery, his struggles, and the conflict he faces. Sexuality was a part of it, but it was his pain, his journey, that drew me in." The emotional toll the character took on him was significant, but it's clear that it resonated with Mohit.

Reality Show Lessons Mohit has dabbled in

reality shows too and his experiences on 'Khatron Ke Khiladi' and 'Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa' were transformative in their own way. Though they were outside his usual acting roles, they pushed him to confront his fears—both physical and emotional. Despite his initial anxiety, Mohit overcame his stage fright, especially during the dance challenges on 'Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa'. "I was terrified of dancing, but it pushed me to overcome that fear. The same with 'Khatron Ke Khiladi'—if something scares me now, I face it head-on." The journey of self-awareness and growth continues for Mohit, and he credits practices like meditation for helping him reset after every role. "It's all about being neutral, being colourless, and then absorbing the new character."

Up next Looking ahead, Mohit remains committed to roles that challenge him. "I want to take on characters that push me—roles that make me nervous. That's when I know I'll be able to grow and deliver an authentic performance," he says. Whether it's a complex character, a genre he hasn't explored, or a project that forces him to confront his own boundaries, Mohit is ready for whatever comes next.

Delhi quake: Government warns of possible aftershocks, PM's 'stay calm' appeal

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday urged the residents of Delhi-NCR region to stay calm and follow safety protocols in case of possible aftershocks following a 4.0 magnitude earthquake in the national capital.

NEW DELHI, Feb 17 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday urged the residents of Delhi-NCR region "to stay calm" and remain "alert for possible aftershocks" barely two hours after a 4.0 magnitude earthquake hit the national capital at 5:36 am. Echoing PM Modi's warning of possible aftershocks, Union Science Minister Jitendra Singh said that officials "are keeping a close watch".

Taking to X, PM Modi said: "Tremors were felt in Delhi and nearby areas. Urging everyone to stay calm and follow safety precautions, staying alert for possible aftershocks. Authorities are keeping a close watch on the situation."

PM Modi further assured the people that the concerned officials are monitoring the situation constantly. Soon after PM Modi's warning of possible aftershocks, Union Science Minister Jitendra Singh took to X and



said: "...it is advised to stay calm and, exercise safety precautions and preparedness for possible aftershocks, if any."

According to the National Centre for Seismology, the nodal agency of the central government for monitoring of earthquake activity and conducts seismological research in the country, an earthquake with a magnitude of 4.0 hit Delhi and NCR region, including Noida, Greater Noida and

Ghaziabad among other places. The epicentre was in New Delhi's Dhaula Kuan and the quake struck at a depth of 5 kilometers, as per the National Centre for Seismology.

An official confirmed that the epicentre was near Durgabai Deshmukh College of Special Education in Dhaula Kuan, adding that a large sound was heard at the time of the earthquake.

The tremors lasted for a few

seconds. However, many in the national capital rushed out of their homes and high-rise buildings as the tremors caused panic among residents. "Tremors were so strong. I have never felt like this ever before. The entire building was shaking," a resident of Ghaziabad told news agency.

Recalling the panic, a vendor at the New Delhi railway station said that his customers started "screaming" as everything started "shaking," reported news agency.

Another passenger waiting at the New Delhi railway station told agency, "We felt as if some train was running underground here... Everything was shaking."

No casualties or damage have been reported so far.

Delhi Police reached out to people on X and said: "We hope you all are safe, Delhi!" It also urged citizens to call on the emergency 112 helpline for emergencies."

Committed to implementing NEP across country, TN opposition political: Pradhan



NEW DELHI, Feb 17 (Agencies): The Centre is committed to implementing the New Education Policy across the country, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said Monday, and dismissed the Tamil Nadu government's opposition to the NEP as "politics".

He said the NEP does not impose Hindi or any other language on students in the DMK-ruled state "but what is wrong if a student in Tamil Nadu learns multilingual aspect in education?" "It can be Tamil, English and

other Indian languages," he told reporters here. "There is no imposition of Hindi or any other language on them. Some friends in Tamil Nadu are doing politics. But the Indian government is committed to implementing NEP and there are certain conditions with NEP." The Centre and the Tamil Nadu government have been at the loggerheads on the implementation of the NEP and three-language formula proposed in the policy.

"Tamil Nadu (government) is not implementing the policy because

of its political interests but to create competition among students, to create a level-playing field, we have to come to a common platform. The NEP is the new aspirational common platform. I respect all languages. This NEP, envisioned by PM Modi, puts emphasis on the mother tongue...Tamil is one of the oldest languages of our civilisation," he told Chief Minister M K Stalin on Sunday accused Pradhan of "blackmail" for allegedly taking a stand that Tamil Nadu would not be provided funds till it accepts the NEP.

Stalin had earlier this month also accused the Centre of resorting to "open blackmail" by snatching away Rs 2,152 crore meant for the state and giving it to other states for refusing to accept the National Education Policy.

'Master of social justice', Adityanath pays tributes to Karpuri Thakur on 37th death anniversary

LUCKNOW, Feb 17 (Agencies): Rich tributes were paid to former Bihar chief minister and Bharat Ratna Karpuri Thakur on his 37th death anniversary on Monday with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath calling him the "master ('purodha') of social justice".

In a post on X in Hindi, Adityanath said, "Former chief minister of Bihar, master of social justice, 'Jananayak' Karpuri Thakur ji remained committed throughout his life for the rights of the exploited and deprived class.

"His struggle for social equality and his dedication to democratic ideals will always be remembered. A humble tribute to him on his death anniversary today." Thakur, who passed away in 1988 at the age of 64, was the first non-Congress socialist leader who became chief minister twice — first for seven months in December 1970 and later for two years in



1977.

In March 2024, Thakur, known affectionately as 'Jan Nayak' (people's leader), was posthumously conferred the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award.

Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya said in a post on X, "Humble tributes to the strong voice of the poor, backward and deprived, symbol of social harmony and a skilled politician, former chief minister of Bihar, Bharat Ratna awardee people's leader Karpuri Thakur ji on his death anniversary." Born on January 24, 1924, in a 'Nai' samaj (barber society),

Thakur is credited in Bihar politics for enforcing total prohibition on alcohol in 1970.

The village where he was born in Samastipur district was renamed after him as Karpuri Gram.

Thakur abandoned college education to join India's freedom struggle and was arrested between 1942 and 1945 for participating in the Quit India Movement. He was inspired by heavyweights like Ram Manohar Lohia who spearheaded the socialist movement in post-Independent India. He was also close to Jayaprakash Narayan.

Places of Worship Act: SC takes exception to filing of fresh petitions by political parties and leaders

NEW DELHI, Feb 17 (Agencies): As various political parties and leaders file fresh petitions in a case related to validity of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991, the Supreme Court on Monday took exception to it, saying there was a limit to it.

"We will not take up the Places of Worship Act matter today. It is a three-judge Bench matter. Too many petitions filed. List sometime in March. There is a limit to interventions being filed," a Bench of CJI Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar said.

The comments from the Bench came after senior advocate Indira Jaising, representing one of the petitioners, mentioned a fresh petition for hearing.

The next hearing will be held in the first week of April.

In an important order, the Supreme Court had on December 12 last year restrained trial

courts across India from registering fresh suits and ordering surveys or passing any effective and final orders with regard to religious character of existing religious structures in already pending suits.

The top court's stay order meant that in pending suits regarding Kashi Vishwanath-Gyanvapi mosque dispute, Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah dispute at Mathura, Sambhal Jama Masjid, Bhojshala and Ajmer Sharif dargah disputes, courts cannot pass any effective or final orders, including those for surveys.

The Bench had, however, refused to stay the proceedings in 18 suits already pending with regard to 10 places of worship/mosques/dargahs. It had clarified that it was examining the validity as well as ambit of the 1991 law.

The Bench had asked the Centre and other respondents to file their

replies in four weeks.

Since the December 12, 2024 stay order, several petitions have been filed, including those by AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, Samajwadi Party leader and Kairana MP Iqra Choudhary and the Congress Party seeking effective implementation of the 1991 Act.

Several politicians, including CPI(M) leader Prakash Karat and RJD MP Manoj Jha, had already moved the Supreme Court in support of the Act and the court had allowed their implementation applications.

NCP (Sharad Pawar) MLA Jitendra Satish Awhad and the Indian Union Muslim League leaders PK Kunhalikutty and ET Muhammed Basheer, too, had moved the top court to hear the party before taking a call on the validity of the Act.

Enacted by Parliament during the PV Narasimha Rao government

in the backdrop of the Ayodhya Ram Mandir agitation, this Act freezes the religious character of a place of worship as it existed on August 15, 1947, except that of the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid.

Following a Supreme Court verdict, a Ram temple has been constructed at Ayodhya. However, with regard to other disputed religious sites, including the Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah at Mathura and Kashi Vishwanath-Gyanvapi Mosque disputes, the Act continues to operate as a bar against any possible change in the character of the religious structures.

There are six petitions, including those filed by Akhil Bhartiya Sant Samiti, advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay and former Rajya Sabha MP Subramanian Swamy, against certain provisions of the 1991 Act. Some of the peti-

tions have been pending since 2020.

The petitioners alleged that it created an "arbitrary and irrational retrospective cut-off date" of August 15, 1947, for maintaining the character of the places of worship or pilgrimage against encroachments done by "fundamentalist-barbaric invaders and law-breakers".

In June 2022, the Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind moved the Supreme Court seeking dismissal of petitions challenging the validity of the Act, saying it would open floodgates of litigation against countless mosques across India.

The Gyanvapi Mosque management committee, too, has moved the top court to oppose petitions against the validity of the Act, saying historical wrongs or perceived injustices of the past should not undermine the principles of secularism and non-retrogression upheld by the Act.

New India Coop Bank looted by BJP members, claims Raut; slams govt for keeping mum

MUMBAI, Feb 17 (Agencies): Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut on Monday alleged that members of the BJP were involved in looting the New India Cooperative Bank, where funds of Rs 122 crore have been misappropriated, and questioned the Maharashtra government's silence on the issue.

Two persons, including Hitesh Mehta, the general manager and head of accounts of the New India Cooperative Bank, have been arrested for allegedly embezzling Rs 122 crore from the safes of the Prabhadevi and Goregaon offices of the bank.

Talking to reporters, Raut alleged that members of the BJP were involved in looting the bank in Mumbai.

"Where is BJP leader

Kirit Somaiya now? Such a big bank has been looted. Is he silent because BJP members looted the bank? This money didn't belong to the rich or common people; it belonged to taxi drivers. The bank was founded by the socialist leader late George Fernandes. Why is Somaiya not supporting the depositors who are affected? Why was the ED not informed?" he said.

The Rajya Sabha MP further slammed the state government for keeping mum about the issue and questioned why it had not held a press conference.

The Sena (UBT) leader criticised BJP MLA Suresh Dhas, accusing him of exploiting the murder case of Beed sarpanch Santosh Deshmukh for political



gains. Dhas had upped the attack against state Minister Dhananjay Munde, whose aide Walmik Karad has been arrested in an extortion case related to the murder of Deshmukh, the sarpanch of Massajog village, in December last

year. The Sena (UBT) leader criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing him of failing to act on reports claiming Indians were shackled while being deported from the US for illegal immigration.

If the prime minister

has stopped Russia-Ukraine, why has he failed to act when the US was sending Indian deportees in shackles, he said.

"Indians are being shackled on our soil. If PM Modi can stop the Ukraine-Russia war, as his followers claim with slogans like 'Modiji ne war rukwa di papa', why has he failed to act when Americans have put Indians in chains? What has he done?" he questioned.

He further claimed that Sikh deportees were forced to remove their turbans by the US authorities.

Raut also questioned the government over the stampedes at the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj and the New Delhi railway station, in which several people lost their lives.

Family of four found dead at apartment in Mysuru



MYSURU, Feb 17 (Agencies): A family of four members were found dead at an apartment here on Monday, police said.

The incident happened in Vishweshwaraiah Nagar in the city. The deceased have been identified as Chetan (45), his wife Rupali (43), and their son Kushal (15) and Chetan's mother Priyamvada (62), they said.

Citing preliminary investigation, a senior police officer said that Chetan may have fed his family members with poison and killed them before hanging himself.

Speaking to reporters here later, Mysuru Police Commissioner Seema Latkar said that at Sankalp apartment

in Vidyaranyaapuram limits here, a family of four has died. They were living in two separate flats. While the mother resided in one, Chetan, his wife and their son were living in another.

According to her, Chetan is from Gorur in Hassan, while his wife is from Mysuru. Chetan had called his brother (Bharath) in the US, who in turn called Rupali's parents to check on them and when they visited the apartment, the incident came to light. Police visited the spot on receiving information.

Chetan was a mechanical engineer and he worked in Dubai before shifting to Mysuru in 2019. He was a labour contractor here and he used to send labourers to Saudi using online process, she said.

When asked about cause of death, she said that the Forensic Science Laboratory and scene of crime officer's (SOCO) team are ascertaining it and she would be able to share the same after getting their opinion.

"Yesterday (Sunday) the family had gone to temple in Gorur and had dinner at Chetan's in-laws place at Kuvempu Nagar in Mysuru," she added.

"The nature of death of all the four are still under investigation," she said.

Trump's plan only plan I think can work to enable different future for people of Gaza: Israel PM Netanyahu

Netanyahu said that he believes the plan presented by the US President Donald Trump is the only plan that can work to enable a different future for the people of Gaza, Israel and the surrounding areas.

TEL AVIV, Feb 17 (Agencies): Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that he believes the plan presented by US President Donald Trump is the only plan that can work to enable a different future for the people of Gaza, Israel and the surrounding areas and termed the plan "right on the dot."

In his address at the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Netanyahu said that he had a "great discussion" with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and discussed on how they can complete the change in the Middle East. He said that Israel's "greatest friend" is in the White House and he and Trump see eye to eye on the main tasks that they want to achieve and are in the position to change the Middle East.

Netanyahu said, "We changed the Middle East. Now, comes President Trump and Secretary Rubio, who's a great friend of Israel as well. I've seen him over the years and we had a great discussion today and we talked about how do we complete the change in the Middle East. We have the greatest friend of Israel in the White House now. We see eye to eye on the main tasks that we have to accomplish, and we're in a position to change the Middle East and give Israel the kind of horizon, the kind of hope, the kind of security, and the kind of peace that would have been unimaginable, and in fact was unimaginable from the day of the founding of the



State of Israel. We've had great victories in the past."

"The most important one was the six-day war. But, the possibilities that loom today before us have never been before us before, have never been available to us as they are now and we intend to pursue them to the full. We see eye to eye with the US administration, President Trump and his administration, first of all, on accomplishing the immediate three goals that we have in Gaza: One is to achieve the release of all our hostages, the second, as I said, is to destroy Hamas, the third is to ensure that Gaza has a different future, that we don't just go back, same old, same old, same old and then I have to say that President Trump has presented a bold new vision, and the only plan that I think can work to enable a different future for the people of Gaza, for the people of Israel, for the surrounding areas. Why not give Gazans a choice? Everybody said this is the largest open-air prison in the world, not because of us, we let people leave," he added.

He stressed that the people who want to leave Gaza should be allowed to do so and mentioned that 150,000 people have left Gaza over the last couple of years. He said that Israel tries to get the people out of the harm's way while the Hamas with rifles and gunfire tried to prevent them from leaving.

Stressing that people should be given choice on whether they want to stay in Gaza or to leave, Netanyahu said, "In fact, if you want to know, over the last couple of years, two years, I think, 150,000 Gazans left. You know how they left? Because they bribed their way out, not to us. They bribed their way out. The rich could leave. But if other people wanted to leave, give them a choice, not forcible eviction, not ethnic cleansing. In a war zone, people leave. We try to get the population to leave, to get them out of harm's way, and Hamas, with rifles, with gunfire, tried to prevent them from leaving. So, we moved them around so that they would get out of harm's way. But if people want to leave, if they want to

emigrate, it's their choice. And I think President Trump's plan is right on the dot. It's the right plan, so that's Gaza."

Netanyahu also spoke about ceasefire established in Lebanon after removing Hezbollah that he said had planned a ground invasion even worse than Hamas. He said that Israel has called on Lebanese to make sure that Hezbollah is dismantled and it does not threaten Israel anymore. He said that Israel welcomes the ceasefire and Lebanon President Joseph Aoun's presidency and expressed hope that the Lebanese army does the job.

On the ceasefire established in Lebanon, he said, "In Lebanon, we've established a ceasefire, as you know, after removing Hezbollah that had planned a ground invasion even worse than Hamas, from terror tunnels and other infrastructure, underground infrastructure that they put right next to our border. We got rid of that. And we said to the Lebanese, now it's your job to make sure that Hezbollah is dismantled and certainly doesn't threaten Israel anymore."

"We welcome the ceasefire. We welcome President Aoun's presidency and I hope that the Lebanese army, reconstituted, does the job. But if it doesn't, we will do the job. We have decided on a policy of continuous enforcement. We will not let those violations take place and we will not let Israel or Israeli targets or Israeli soldiers by attacking us from Lebanon that has ended," he added.

Uyghur, Hong Kong diaspora urges Irish govt to prioritise human rights in talks with Chinese Foreign Minister



DUBLIN, Feb 17 (Agencies): Uyghurs and Hong Kongers living in Ireland issued an open letter to the Irish government on Monday, urging them to adopt a human-rights-based approach during their discussions with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

Irish journalist Finbarr Bermingham shared the letter on social media platform X. The letter highlighted concerns about transnational repression, genocide, and politically-motivated imprisonment by the Chinese government, particularly regarding the Uyghur and Hong Kong diaspora communities in Ireland.

They emphasised the increasing surveillance and harassment by Chinese state actors against individuals critical of the regime, citing the fear that many dissidents felt, even in Ireland.

It said that the fear of retribution affected their ability to openly protest or express dissent without concern for the safety of their families, both in Ireland and abroad. It also underscored the Irish Government's responsibility to protect its citizens and residents from such threats, noting that transnational repression was becoming a growing concern across the EU.

In their letter, the diaspora communities reminded the Irish Government of its historical commitment to human rights. They called on the government to challenge Chinese policies that were leading to the ongoing atrocities in Xinjiang, including the mass detention and forced assimilation of Uyghurs, as well as the suppression of freedoms in Hong Kong. They also demanded

the release of political prisoners such as Jimmy Lai, the publisher of Apple Daily, and Professor Rahile Dawut, an Uyghur academic jailed for their activism. Furthermore, they urged the Irish Government to call for the release of Swedish citizen Gui Minhai, who had been detained in China for nearly a decade.

The letter also expressed concern over Ireland's China policy, especially regarding trade relations. It criticised the prioritisation of economic interests over human rights, urging the government to make clear that diplomatic ties with China should not come at the expense of supporting oppressed communities.

It specifically pointed to Hong Kong's role in facilitating the Chinese regime's transhipment of goods that violated EU sanctions on Russia. The letter concluded by appealing to the Irish Government to stand firm on its commitment to human rights, reminding leaders that Ireland had a proud tradition of advocating for justice on the global stage. It called for the Irish government to demonstrate moral leadership in ensuring that human rights were prioritised over financial gain during Minister Wang Yi's visit.

Baloch human rights body decries killing of school-going student by Pakistani 'military-backed death squads'

BALOCHISTAN, Feb 17 (Agencies): Baloch human rights body Paank on Monday condemned the killing of a school-going student by members of Pakistan's military-backed death squads.

Paank highlighted the incident in a post on X. "Paank strongly condemns the killing of Mehraj, son of Abdul Qadir, a 9th-grade student, who was shot dead by members of Pakistani military-backed death squads in Tump, Gomazi, #Balochistan. Mehraj was in the midst of his exams when his life was brutally cut short."

The human rights body also informed that the teenager's family had been a target of the Pakistani Army for long, with

even their homes being burnt by the military.

"His family has long been a target of Pakistani Army repression, in 2020, their homes were burned by the military, forcing them into displacement. After recently returning to rebuild their lives, they have once again faced violence. This continued persecution of Baloch families must end, and we call for an immediate and independent investigation into this extrajudicial killing. #JusticeForMehrajBaloch"

Earlier, another human rights body, Baloch Yakjehti Committee shared on Monday that Balochistan continues to reel under rising cases of forcible abductions, detentions and disappearances under the

pretext of security.

In a post on X, BYC said that Gwadar saw sixteen cases of disappearances in the last few days at the hands of Frontier Corps.

Balochistan faces numerous issues, including state repression, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial killings of activists, scholars, and civilians. The region suffers from economic neglect, with insufficient development, lack of basic infrastructure, and limited political autonomy.

Previously, highlighting the abduction of Baloch woman Asma Baloch, BYC organizer Mahrang Baloch said that Balochistan remains one of the most dangerous regions in terms of human rights.

Oman: EAM Jaishankar delivers keynote address at 8th Indian Ocean Conference

MUSCAT, Feb 17 (Agencies): External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar participated in the 8th Indian Ocean Conference held in Oman and delivered the keynote address at the inaugural session.

He also launched a logo celebrating 70 years of diplomatic ties between India and Oman and a book on the shared history of the two countries. The EAM also held bilateral meetings with several foreign ministers, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), said on Monday.

In an official statement, the MEA said that the External Affairs Minister's keynote address in the inaugural session underscored India's commitment to strengthening regional coop-



eration and ensuring a stable and prosperous Indian Ocean region.

During his visit, EAM held a bilateral meeting with Sayyid Badr Albusaidi, Foreign Minister of the Sultanate of Oman, in which both leaders reviewed the full spectrum of India-Oman relations. The EAM conveyed his appreciation to the leadership of the Sultanate of Oman for hosting the Indian

Ocean Conference and for their steadfast support in strengthening India-Oman ties. Discussions also focused on avenues for further enhancing collaboration in areas of mutual interest, the MEA noted in its statement.

According to the Ministry, EAM Jaishankar also unveiled the specially designed logo celebrating 70 years of diplomatic rela-

tions between India and Oman, along with Sayyid Badr Albusaidi. As both countries prepare to commemorate this in 2025, the logo symbolizes the long-standing partnership built on history, culture, and strong people-to-people ties.

Notably, EAM Jaishankar also launched the book, Mandvi to Muscat: Indian Community and the Shared History of India and Oman, along with the Foreign Minister of Oman. Brought out by the Embassy of India in Muscat, the book highlights the rich history of the Indian diaspora in Oman and the centuries-old people-to-people ties that continue to shape bilateral relations. On the sidelines of

the conference, EAM held bilateral meetings with Foreign Ministers of Brunei, Bangladesh, Iran, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius and Nepal, discussing key regional and global issues of mutual concern and reinforcing India's commitment to deeper engagement with the Indian Ocean region, the Ministry of External Affairs noted in its statement.

He also shared the highlights of his visit in a post on X.

The EAM's visit to Oman reaffirms the robust and multifaceted relationship between India and Oman and sets the stage for further strengthening bilateral and regional cooperation.

Taiwan records heightened Chinese military activity with 41 aircraft, 9 vessels, 1 ship around its territory

TAIPEI, Feb 17 (Agencies): Taiwan has reported heightened Chinese military activity with 41 aircraft, 9 PLAN vessels and 1 official ship recorded operating around the island on Monday as per the Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence (MND).

In a post on X, the MND noted that these were detected up until 6 AM (UTC+8).

MND said that out of the 41 aircraft, 28 crossed the median line and had entered into Taiwan's Taiwan's northern, central and southwestern ADIZ.

"41 PLA aircraft, 9 PLAN vessels and 1 official ship operating

around Taiwan were detected up until 6 a.m. (UTC+8) today. 28 out of 41 sorties crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's northern, central and southwestern ADIZ. We have monitored the situation and responded."

Meanwhile, following the recent transit of two US ships through the Taiwan Strait, Beijing reiterated its position on Taiwan, emphasised that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory and stated that it "opposes any country challenging or threatening China's sovereignty and security under the pretext of freedom of navigation."

During a regular press confer-



ence on Wednesday, Guo Jiakun, Foreign Ministry spokesperson, said, "Let me stress that Taiwan

is an inalienable part of China's territory. The Taiwan question has nothing to do with freedom of navi-

gation but bears on China's sovereignty and territorial integrity."

He added, "China firmly opposes any country challenging or threatening China's sovereignty and security under the pretext of freedom of navigation."

In recent weeks, China has visibly increased its capacity to conduct amphibious assaults on Taiwan's beaches with new naval equipment.

This includes the formal launch of a unique advanced landing helicopter assault (LHA) vessel and the mass production of floating bridge docks to aid ship unloading during beach landings.

The Taiwan-China conflict remained a longstanding geopolitical issue centred on Taiwan's sovereignty. While Taiwan functioned as a de facto independent state with its own government, military, and economy, Beijing considered it a breakaway province under the "One China" policy.

Since the Chinese Civil War (1945-1949), when the Republic of China government retreated to Taiwan, China had used diplomatic, economic, and military measures to pressure Taiwan, which continued to assert its independence with strong domestic support.

Principal IISM Gulmarg visit Ski Slope Chumikchan Sankoo Kargil, meets local athletes

Top News Report

KARGIL, Feb 17: The visit of Colonel Ishwar Singh Thapa, Principal of the Indian Institute of Skiing and Mountaineering (IISM), to Sankoo, Kargil, is a noteworthy event for the region's winter sports scene on Sunday accompanied by Members skiing and snowboarding Association of Ladakh.

He was warmly welcomed by the Chairman of the Sports and Development Association of Sankoo, highlighting the growing enthusiasm for winter sports in the



area.

The visit included discussions about exploring local snow-covered slopes such as Chumikchan and Bata Khar for skiing and snowboarding, with Colonel Thapa assuring that

snow skiing courses for local youth will start next winter.

This initiative offers a promising opportunity for young athletes to develop their skills and pursue skiing professionally.

Colonel Thapa also emphasized Sankoo's potential as a major winter tourism hub in Ladakh, which could help boost the local economy.

With support from the local government

and the Kargil Administration, Sankoo could attract more visitors, further enhancing the region's profile as a prime adventure tourism destination.

Additionally, plans to introduce a mountaineering program in Sankoo during the spring season will diversify the area's adventure sports offerings.

This visit marks a significant step toward opening up new opportunities for both sports development and tourism in Ladakh, benefiting the local youth and the broader region.

Samsung launches Bespoke AI Refrigerator Series with AI Features Redefining Smart Cooling

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: Samsung India has launched its latest Bespoke AI Refrigerator series in the 330L & 350L capacity range. This new range combines advanced AI-driven features like AI Energy Mode, AI Home Care and Smart Forward with elegant designs and versatile storage options. Aimed at addressing the unique needs of Indian consumers, the series offers a harmonious blend of functionality, style, and innovation at a starting price of Rs

56990.

The new Bespoke AI Refrigerators provide smart energy management, improved freshness retention, and active fresh filter, which eliminates upto 99.9% of harmful bacteria, all of which is wrapped in a sleek and customizable exterior. With its durable and energy-efficient Digital Inverter Compressor, backed by a 20-year warranty, the series is poised to redefine modern refrigeration in India.

"Our Bespoke AI Refrigerator series offer consumers a per-

fect balance of technology, design, and convenience. From AI-driven energy optimization to innovative cooling and hygiene solutions, this series caters to the evolving lifestyles of Indian families. With stylish finishes and advanced features like Smart Forward, AI Home care, Twin Cooling Plus™ and Convertible 5-in-1 Modes, we aim to empower our customers with appliances that redefine everyday living," said Ghufuran Alam, Senior Director, Digital Appliances, Samsung India.

HDFC Bank launches 'unique' campaign targeting young couples

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: HDFC Bank has launched '#FinanciallyEverAfter' - a 'unique' campaign to educate couples about financial matters. The campaign introduces young couples to the idea of managing their money together - a crucial yet often overlooked aspect of modern-day relationships.

It endeavours to

empower Gen Z and young millennial couples with the knowledge and tools to navigate money matters together.

The Bank has created a dedicated microsite - <https://www.money-madeeasy.org/> - that features an interactive 'Financially Ever After' quiz, which enables couples to assess their financial compatibility in a fun and informative way.

The quiz reveals their attitudes towards financial decisions, bringing to the fore areas of agreement as well as differences.

The website also features informative videos and articles, offering practical guidance on managing finances as a couple.

The concepts are explained by FJ Moneysha, the Bank's Financial Jockey, who demystifies financial jargons.

Army immediately responds to fire incident at village Kewal

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Feb 17: At approx 1030H, a fire broke out at the stable (Dhok) where livestock were housed, at the residence of Abraham Maulvi, son of Hassan Mohd Maulvi, a resident of Kewal Top.

Upon receiving the info, a team comprising 10 people along with a water bowser and a few porters, was dispatched to the incident site.

The team of Indian Army,



swiftly reached the location and, with assistance from local residents, immediately commenced firefighting efforts.

All livestock were successfully evacuated from the stable.

In addition, adjacent houses in the neighbourhood were also vacated to ensure minimal damage due to spreading of fire. With concerted efforts of Indian Army Soldiers and civilians fire has been successfully doused with no casualty of human life or livestock.

Army conducts mobile repairing cadre for youth at Thanamandi

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Feb 17: The Indian Army, as part of 'Operation Sadbhavana', conducted a Mobile Repairing Cadre for youth at Thanamandi, Rajouri district.

This skill development program was designed to equip technicians with the necessary skills and knowledge to efficiently and effectively repair mobile devices, covering topics such as mobile device hardware, software, and troubleshooting methodologies. The course, held from 27 January 2025 to 16 February 2025, saw the active participation of fifteen youth from local communities.

The Indian Army has always been a pillar of support in guiding and empowering local youth by providing skill devel-



opment opportunities.

With the promising career prospects of technology in the future, the Mobile Repairing Cadre offers comprehensive training in mobile repairing, including hands-on experience with the latest technologies and tools for the youth of Thanamandi and nearby areas.

The cadre was conducted by a specialized

group of technicians trained to diagnose and repair faults in mobile devices, including smartphones, tablets, and other handheld devices.

The skills and knowledge gained through this course will also help participants build stronger, more effective relationships, both personally and professionally. Each participant's progress is a testament

to their dedication and perseverance. As a token of recognition, certificates of participation and gifts were awarded to all participants and instructors.

This initiative not only empowers the youth of Thanamandi but also strengthens the bond between the Indian Army and the local community.

It serves as a tes-

tament to the Indian Army's unwavering commitment to the service of the nation and its people. Operation Sadbhavana, with its mission to foster goodwill, development, and positive change in the region, continues to be a beacon of hope for the people of Thanamandi and nearby areas. The Mobile Repairing Cadre is yet another remarkable chapter in this ongoing journey.

The Indian Army remains committed to empowering local communities through such initiatives, believing that a stronger, more self-reliant society is key to a brighter and more prosperous future for all. This event also serves as a platform to further strengthen the bond between the Indian Army and the people of the region.

Ex-Servicemen rally organised at Thatri

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Feb 17: In its endeavor to increase outreach and spread awareness amongst the Ex-servicemen, Veer Naris/Veer Matas and Widows to enable them to utilize various Government schemes, Indian Army organized an Ex-Servicemen Rally at Thatri.

The day-long event started with an inaugural address followed by an open house session wherein the Ex-servicemen, Veer Naris/Veer Matas, Widows and their dependents gave out their suggestions.

The Zila Sainik Welfare Officer Wing Commander Teerath Singh delivered a lecture on the issues pertaining to pension disbursement and various benefit/schemes available for Ex-servicemen, Veer

Naris/Veer Matas and Widows. Zila Sainik Welfare Officer also educated them about functioning of Ex-Servicemen Help Line and Pensioner benefits with special emphasis on post retirement schemes.

During the Rally, a medical camp was organised wherein a lady doctor from District Hospital, Doda and Regimental Medical Officer, Indian Army examined the patients and addressed their health issues.

During the rally, various stalls i.e. ICICI Bank, ICICI Life Insurance, HDFC Bank, HDFC Life Insurance, Ex-Servicemen Cell Indian Army were placed for convenience of Ex-Servicemen. Representative of Prahari Param explained various job opportunities

available for the Ex-Servicemen. Furthermore, Unit Run Canteen and Utility Shop facilities by Indian Army were also provided at the Rally site.

Ex-servicemen helpline counters were functional throughout the event wherein the grievances of Ex-Servicemen were noted for redressal. Commander Indian Army interacted with the participants and felicitated the Veer Naris/Veer Matas and widows.

Indian Army also felicitated Kunta Devi w/o Late Kuldeep Kumar and Shaina Begam w/o Nazir Ahmed martyr VDGs of village Ohli, Kuntwara District, Kishtwar.

The rally successfully concluded with assurances of working positively towards alleviating the problems of Ex-servicemen, Veer Naris/Veer Matas and Widows.

The event culminated with lunch for the Ex-servicemen, Veer Naris/Veer Matas, Widows and their dependents. A total str of 298 Ex-Servicemen, 05 Veer Naris/Veer Matas, 01 Widow, 02 widows of VDGs and 66 dependents from Kishtwar/Doda district attended the event.

Army conducts medical patrol at Nigali

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Feb 17: The Indian Army conducted a medical patrol in Nigali, Rajouri District, providing free medical aid and treatment to 55 beneficiaries, including 15 males, 25 females, and 15 children.

The medical patrol, comprising Indian Army medical personnel, was part of the Indian Army's ongoing efforts to reach remote areas and provide essential medi-

cal services to those in need.

The initiative aims to build trust and strengthen the Indian Army's bond with local communities, while also ensuring their health and well-being.

The medical patrol is a testament to the Indian Army's commitment to serving the nation and supporting local communities, particularly in remote and inaccessible areas.

By providing medical aid and support, the



Indian Army demonstrates its dedication to the welfare of the people and its role as a force for good.

From Page No:1

India Army fully capable of dealing with any type of situation along borders: JK LG

Earlier on February 13, the Army dismissed reports of a ceasefire violation along the Line of Control (LoC), stating that the truce

remains intact and is being upheld according to the understanding between the Indian and Pakistani armies.

ED Jammu raids multiple locations in drug diversion case Three Soldiers

Further investigations are underway.

Injured in cross-border sniper fire along LoC in a week

Tensions along the LoC have escalated sporadically despite a ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan.

"It is against constitution": BJP

on resolution of Article 370, Art. 35A

abrogation of Article 370, Art. 35A.

He has also sought restoration of the pre-August 5 constitutional position of J&K.

Inadequate snow postpones Khelo India Winter

games in Gulmarg

Around 700 participants, including 650 technical staff, delegates, and local athletes, were expected to attend the event.

Rain, snow expected in Jammu and Kashmir as Western Disturbance

approaches

Doda districts in the Chenab Valley likely to see moderate to heavy rainfall. The Pir Panjal range is expected to receive heavy snowfall, particularly in popular destinations such as Gulmarg, Sinthan Top, Peer Ki Gali, and areas along the Mughal Road. With relatively higher temperatures, lightning and thunder-showers are likely in the Jammu region. Weather conditions are expected to improve from February 21 onwards after the anticipated wet spell.

Army organizes Friendly Volleyball Match at Jathi



Top News Report

DODA, Feb 17: Sohanda Rashtriya Rifles Battalion of the Delta Force organized a "Friendly Volleyball Match" at Village-Jathi, Dist-Doda (J&K). The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from local youth of nearby villages of Jathi and Jattar.

The initiative aimed to promote mutual trust, teamwork and camaraderie between the security forces and the community. Players displayed their skills and sportsmanship, beyond the game.

The event provided a platform for meaningful interactions, reinforcing a spirit of unity and cooperation.

This gripping contest drew an enthusiastic crowd of 30 spectators, including people of both villages. The event concluded

with a felicitation ceremony wherein the players were recognized for their participation and sportsmanship. The initiative was widely appreciated by the locals with calls for more such engagements in the future.

The event stands as a testament to the positive impact of sports in strengthening community bonds and fostering a sense of togetherness.

Awareness lecture on New Criminal Laws organized by NSS Units of GDC Udhampur

Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Feb 17: The NSS Units of GDC Udhampur under the ablest guidance of worthy Principal Dr. Sanjay Kumar Verma and supervision of District Administration Udhampur organized a mass Awareness programme today to educate the students about India's newly enacted criminal laws-Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, Bhartaya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita 2023 and Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam 2023.

The event was held at Conference hall of the college and was aimed at informing stakeholders about the key provisions and implications of these laws.

The programme was



started by the welcome address by NSS Volunteer Baljeet Singh and the aim to conduct such event was briefed by NSS PO's Dr. Gurpreet Kour and Prof. Sanjeet Singh and further presided over by Dy. Superintendent of Police, DAR DPL Udhampur, Bhattu Chowdhary.

A large gathering including faculty, teaching, non teaching, volunteers and students participated in the aware-

ness session.

Speaking on the event the Deputy Superintendent explained the key reforms introduced in these new laws, emphasizing that they prioritize justice over punishment and are designed to ensure speedy justice, strengthen judicial and court management system and enhance accessibility to justice for all.

He stressed the importance of public aware-

ness in facilitating a smooth transition to the new legal framework.

DSP DAR provided a comprehensive overview of the three new criminal laws, elaborating on their role in protecting citizen and ensuring transparent and expeditious justice and also delivered an insightful presentation, explaining each law in details. He outlined the significant changes in the existing legal

framework and raised awareness about their implication.

The awareness programme was part of a broader initiative by the NSS Units and District Administration Udhampur to familiarize the students with legal reforms and empower them with the knowledge to navigate the new judicial landscape effectively.

Almost 100 volunteers, students, teaching and non teaching faculty viz Prof. Babu Lal, Prof. Suresh Kumar Dogra, Dr. Mohinder Pal, Prof. Kaku Ram and other senior faculty attended the event, the event concluded with the concluding remarks from worthy Principal sir and end up with National Anthem sung by one and all present over there.

GDC Marh organizes two days workshop on 'Campus Bird Count'



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: To monitor the most vibrant and fascinating species on earth that are also one of best barometers of environmental health NSS unit in collaboration with Bird watching club of college organized two day's workshop on 'Campus Bird Count' from February 14 to 15, 2025 at GDC Marh.

The programme was inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Rakesh Kumar Koul along with Dr Pankaj Chandan Chief Guest for the occasion.

The workshop was conducted by Sachin Kumar Bhagat, Asst. Prof. in Political sci-

ence, a famous bird lover of Jammu and Kashmir (643 species of bird identified) under the overall supervision of Prof Rakesh Kumar Koul Principal, GDC Marh who gave a comprehensive explanation of the spiritual role of birds.

He emphasized that birds have profound spiritual significance across various cultures and religions, symbolizing concepts such as freedom, transcendence, and divine connection and highlighted that their presence in art, literature, and religious iconography serves as a reminder of the human connection to the divine and eternal

quest for spiritual elevation.

The guest speaker of the event Dr. Pankaj Chandan, a wildlife biologist and an expert on Himalayan ecology inspired students to pursue higher studies in ornithology and also stressed on the importance of wetlands and birds species.

He focused on the role of birds for conservation of humanity such as pest control, maintaining ecological balance and pollination.

Dr Chandan also shared his magnificent stories of several species of birds like Black-tailed godwit and tallest flying bird Black necked crane.

He discussed the anthropogenic threats to habitat of birds such as deforestation, pesticides, wetland drainage and urbanization.

He also donated posters on species of vultures and Raptors of J and K and reading material to the college for knowledge sharing among the students.

During the programme a PPT and photographic exhibition showcasing birds of J&K along with equipments required for bird watching was also organized by Sachin Kumar Bhagat (HOD Political Science).

To Study the ecological behavior of birds, campus bird count was also organized in the

college by the Bird Club. Anjana Chib (HOD Environmental Sciences) stressed that rich biodiversity of birds around college is the indicator of clean and pollution free environment of the along with the clean water body which is the reason that college has been registered as birding hotspot.

During the one hour birding, students counted around 59 species around the campus including: Black winged stilt Red Naped Ibis.

In the end students shared their feedback and experience about the programme that how such type of programmes inspire, motivate them to connect with nature and choose their career.

Dr. Ram Dayal, Dr. Rahul Sharma, Dr. Sheetal Sharma and Dr. Priya Sharma were also present during the event.

Dr. Balwinder Saini (HOD Chemistry) gave a formal vote of thanks. Technical support was provided by Mohit Kalotra.

Campus Bird Count 2025 at GDC R.S. Pura



Top News Report

RSPURA, Feb 17: The Government Degree College R.S. Pura hosted the Campus Bird Count 2025 as part of the globally recognized Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) from 14-17 February 2025.

This initiative, aimed at documenting and celebrating avian biodiversity, encourages students, faculty, and nature enthusiasts to participate in birdwatching and data collection to contribute to global ornithological research.

Organized by the Department of Environmental sciences in collaboration with Eco-Club of the College, the event provided participants with hands-on experience in bird identification, data recording, and understand-

ing the significance of avian conservation. It was a three day event and more than thirty species of birds were documented from the college campus.

The observations from GDC R.S. Pura was uploaded to the international eBird database, supporting worldwide efforts to track bird populations and migration patterns.

Speaking about the event Prof. (Dr.) Preetpal Kour, Principal stated, The Campus Bird Count not only fosters ecological awareness among students but also helps in scientific data collection that aids in bird conservation. We encourage everyone to be a part of this meaningful endeavor.

The Campus Bird Count is an annual sub-event of the Great

Backyard Bird Count, a citizen science initiative launched by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Count India. The global event runs from 14.02.25 to 17.02.25, inviting bird lovers across the world to observe and report bird sightings.

Sachin Kumar Bhagat, Assistant Professor was the resource person for the event.

He ensured accurate identification and documentation of bird species found within the campus.

The event was organized by the faculty of Environmental sciences, Prof. Priya Darshini Sharma, Dr. Sudesh Kumar, Dr. Akriti Parihar and Eco-club of the college. The faculty members from various disciplines were also present at the event.

Plantation drive held at GMC Doda under National Mission for Green India

Top News Report

DODA, Feb 17: Under the National Mission for a Green India (GIM), a plantation drive was organized in the premises of Government Medical College Doda on 17-02-2025.

The initiative was spearheaded by Prof. Zaheer Abass Hashmi, a renowned environmentalist and Rtd Principal, Higher Education Department, in collaboration with GMC Doda.

The event witnessed the presence of Principal GMC Doda, Prof. Dr. Rakesh Bahl, Deputy Director Planning, Jameel Malik, HOD Anatomy, Dr. K.K. Thakur, HOD Paediatrics Dr Najmus Saqib,



Dr. Hamid Parray, Faizan A Trambo along with faculty members and staff of GMC Doda.

During the drive, Prof. Hashmi donated 35 Chinar saplings, which were planted within the campus in the presence of the GMC authorities. While addressing the

gathering, Prof. Hashmi emphasized the importance of trees in maintaining ecological balance and promoting a healthy environment. He highlighted that the Chinar tree, known for its majestic presence and environmental benefits, would enhance the

campus greenery and contribute to a sustainable future.

Prof. Dr. Rakesh Bahl, Principal GMC Doda, expressed his gratitude to Prof. Hashmi for initiating the plantation drive.

He appreciated the gesture, stating that such efforts would significantly improve the environment of the institution and inspire future initiatives for a greener campus.

The event concluded with a collective commitment to environmental conservation and sustainable development, reinforcing the significance of afforestation in combating climate change.

GDC Mahanpur celebrates 75 years of adoption of Constitution of India



Top News Report

MAHANPUR, Feb 17: NSS Unit of GDC Mahanpur in collaboration with the Department of Physical Education and Department of Hindi celebrated 75 years of adoption of Constitution of India and 150th Birth Anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on Monday.

It was organised by Dr. Rupalee Jasrotia, NSS P.O. in collabora-

tion with Dr. Jogbinder Singh Soodan and Dr. Sapna under the guidance of Dr. Sangeeta Sudan, Principal of the College.

On this day teaching, non teaching staff and students recited Preamble along with the Principal Madam.

The main motto of the programme was to raise awareness about the importance of constitution because it establishes the country's

core values and ideals. It also defines the purpose and direction of the Constitution.

The preamble is often called the "Soul of the Constitution".

Power Point Presentations regarding fundamental rights and duties were also shown to students. Dr. Rupalee Jasrotia NSS P.O. gave a lecture on Fundamental rights and duties.

During her lecture she said that fundamental

rights and duties are important in the Indian constitution because they protect citizens' rights, promote social justice, and establish a balance between rights and responsibilities.

The staff members who were present in the programme were Dr. Mohinder Nath Sharma, Dr. Sudesh Kumar, Nisha, Dr. Jogbinder Singh Soodan, Dr. Babli, Dr. Anju Bala, Dr. Yograj, Dr. Nishu, Namita Trogia, Divya, Dr. Suhail Ahmed Dar, Sameeksha Sharma, Monika Devi, Anuradha, Pooja Sambyal, Shivani Panooch.

More than 60 students participated in the programme. Everyone participated in the Programme with enthusiasm.

Bumrah-less India hope for Shami's wrist magic to reclaim Champions Trophy

In Champions Trophy, Shami is all set to partner with Arshdeep Singh

BENGALURU, Feb 17 (Agencies): Mohammed Shami's right hand has more sleight than a magician. A simple cock of his wrist can outfox the best batters in the world. But can he unlock the sorcery and help India reclaim the ICC Champions Trophy after 12 years?

The fans will certainly expect Shami to hit his strides straightaway in the marquee event because India's primary strike weapon Jasprit Bumrah has been ruled out due to an injury.

But there are multiple concerns as well about Shami's readiness for an event of this magnitude. India start their Champions Trophy campaign on February 20 against Bangladesh in Dubai.

The 34-year-old is coming back from an injury. Even though he has played a few matches at various levels and formats since his re-entry into cricket late last year, delivering in a high-pressure tournament is a different proposition altogether.

Another reason for the trepidation surrounding Shami is the absence of Bumrah, his trusted ally for the last six years or so at the other end.

In the Champions Trophy, Shami is all set to partner with Arshdeep Singh. But for all his skills and promise, Arshdeep is not at Bumrah's level yet.

So, can Shami drag the train forward all by himself?

Former India pacer Laxmipathy Balaji found no reason to believe otherwise.

"Actually, he had out-bowled Bumrah in the 2019 (50-over World Cup) and in the last World Cup (2023). Bumrah is the champion bowler across formats. But Shami has experience and, before Bumrah's arrival, it



was Shami who carried India's attack all through," Balaji, now a reputed pace bowling coach, told agency.

Bumrah's unavailability makes it imperative for Shami to strike upfront consistently. Balaji underlined that factor.

"I think it's very important. If India has to do well, then Shami has to come good with the new ball. The kind of impact he can make in his first six overs with the new ball, it will play a crucial role for India.

"Old ball is anyway...it is a defensive game now. If he can make early inroads regularly that will give a huge booster to India," he added.

But can he find his optimal and ideal running speed? Because Shami's effectiveness totally depends on his rhythm.

Balaji thought it was not a task beyond Shami.

"Since that (ankle) injury has happened, there was a little bit of slowness, maybe. It's natural. But there is nothing you can do about it. It's part of any sportsperson's career."

where pacers found appreciable help in the past.

"He keeps attacking the stumps, a quality that is very critical in a place like Dubai, where batsmen may get a little bit more assistance," said Balaji.

How does Shami manage to be so effective with the new ball?

"Shami has one of the best wrist positions in the game, helping him bring all of his variations. See, conditions in Dubai will more or less be similar to India, so he just needs to follow his methods there," he added.

So, what are those methods? "What Shami does is hit the seam and move the ball off the deck. It is dangerous as batsmen will not be able to guess easily which way the ball is going to move.

"It also brings into the equation the LBWs and clean bowled dismissals. The away movement ensures that slip cordon too will be in the mix," said Balaji.

"And he also bowls closer to the stumps, which allows him to explore those subtle angles. So, he will always be among the wickets," he added.

But Shami will have another reason to go full tilt in the Champions Trophy.

Despite achieving so much in his career, the Bengal man is yet to win a global trophy, the status brag for any cricketer. And already close to the dog days of his career, Shami might not get another chance to do it either.

It might give him that extra dose of motivation to run in hard in the Dubai heat, and snap his wrists, before batsmen walk out with a confused stare at the splayed stumps.

Indian Women's Hockey Team aims to return to winning ways as it gears up to face Spain in FIH Pro League 2024-25



BHUBANESWAR, Feb 17 (Agencies): The Indian Women's Hockey Team is eager to get back to winning ways as they prepare to face Spain in their next set of matches on 18th and 19th February at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium here, as per the Hockey India press release.

After a promising start with a thrilling 3-2 victory over England in their opener, the Salima Tete-led side narrowly missed out on a bonus point in their second game, losing 2-1 in a dramatic shootout after the match ended 2-2 in regulation time. Despite showing resilience, India currently sits in eighth place in the standings with four points from two games and will be looking to climb higher in the points table as they face a confident Spanish side.

India's performance against England offered glimpses of its potential, particularly in penalty corner conversions. In their opening match, they scored twice from three attempts. Howev-

er, they failed to replicate that success in the second game, going 0 for 3 in penalty corners.

Vice-captain Navneet Kaur, the team's top scorer so far, has been in fine form, scoring a goal in each of the two games and providing stability to the Indian forward line. The team is focused on sharpening their skills in key areas like set-piece execution and defensive coordination as they prepare to take on Spain.

Spain, on the other hand, arrives on the back of two consecutive victories against Germany in the India leg of the FIH Pro League. They secured back-to-back 2-1 wins over the Germans, boosting their confidence ahead of their encounters with India.

Despite their strong recent performances, Spain has had a mixed run overall, with just two wins and one shootout victory in the six games they've played so far. Currently placed fourth in the points table with eight points, Spain will be looking to further

consolidate their position. Patricia Alvarez has been their standout player, scoring twice to lead the team's goal tally.

For India, this upcoming doubleheader is not just about reclaiming momentum, but also about gaining crucial points which will set the tone for the rest of their campaign. The hosts will also look to capitalise on the home crowd's support and rectify the mistakes from their previous matches.

Speaking on the team's upcoming matches against Spain, India captain Salima Tete said as quoted by the Hockey India press release, "We're really looking forward to our games against Spain. They're a tricky team, and we know it's going to be a challenging contest. However, our team is ready for the challenge. We've analysed our performances against England and identified the areas where we need to improve, especially in converting penalty corners. We are focused on tightening our defense and making the most of our scoring opportunities."

"These games are crucial for us to gain momentum, and we are determined to return to winning ways. The team is motivated, and we will give our best to secure vital points," she added.

India will take on Spain on February 18 at 5:15 PM IST and on 19th February at 7:30 PM IST.

"Happy that cricket will be an Olympic sport": IOC member Nita Ambani

BOSTON, Feb 17 (Agencies): Nita Ambani, an International Olympic Committee (IOC) member and the founder and chairperson of Reliance Foundation, expressed her feelings on the inclusion of Cricket in the upcoming 2028 Olympics, which are set to take place in Los Angeles, California, US.

In October last year, as an example of Indian cricket and its star batter Virat Kohli's global status as the face of the sport, a mention of the former Indian skipper was made during the International Olympic Committee (IOC) 141st session, during which the decision to include the sport in Olympics was taken.

"India is a sport-loving nation. For the Tokyo Olympics, the maximum viewership for the Olympic channel came from India, so imagine what would happen if we added cricket to it. So that's the time when my mind started ticking as to how do I convince the committee members to have cricket as an Olympic sport. Now, they were still in the belief that cricket is a five-day long cricket match... I informed them and this is going to be a win-win situation if you have cricket as an Olympic spot and you'll have the backing of probably two billion people. So I think that is the plug that I used and I'm so happy that now cricket will be an Olympic sport," Nita Ambani



said during the keynote address at the Harvard India Conference on Indian Business, Policy & Culture.

Cricket will be a part of the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 2028 and will make its return after 128 years to the multi-sport extravaganza, announced the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Monday.

The 2028 event will also include sports like baseball/softball, lacrosse, squash and flag football. The proposal from the Organising Committee of the Olympic Games Los Angeles 2028 to include these games in the programme was accepted at the ongoing 141st IOC session being held in Mumbai.

Cricket made its sole appearance at the 1900 Paris Olympics, in which Great Britain defeated France in the final. However, it is also played in the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games.

Nita Ambani also spoke about India's bid

for the Olympics and how the country plans to make them the greenest and most sustainable Olympics.

Speaking about the Olympics, she said, "I believe that India must have the Olympics. We are going to be the third-largest economy in the world. If you look at the 10 largest economies of the world, nine countries have hosted the Olympics, but only India has not. So I find that really odd. We would wish to see the Olympics being hosted in our country. It will be our pride to host that. So that is the reason, I think the Prime Minister also mentioned that India will bid for the 2036 Olympics...I think we are planning to host a sustainable Olympics where we are planning to refurbish and reuse our existing stadiums and existing campuses. If we bid for it and get it, I assure you that we'll be the greenest Olympics ever...I think India is at the right time now to host the Olympics".

Harbhajan wants India to be wary of Pakistan's Fakhar Zaman in Champions Trophy

NEW DELHI, Feb 17 (Agencies): Former spinner Harbhajan Singh has warned the Indian team to be cautious of Fakhar Zaman in the upcoming fixture against Pakistan in the Champions Trophy.

India and Pakistan will add another chapter to their famed cricketing rivalry in Dubai on February 23. Ahead of the much-anticipated encounter, Harbhajan warned the Rohit Sharma-led side to be wary of Fakhar, who has the experience to take the game away from India.

"Fakhar has that experience, and he can take the game away from India," Harbhajan said on his YouTube channel.

The southpaw boasts an impressive record



against the Men in Blue in the ODIs. With his explosive approach, Fakhar has garnered 234 runs in six matches, averaging 46.80 at a blistering strike rate of 82.39.

In the Champions Trophy, India and Pakistan last battled in the

final of the 2017 edition at The Oval. Fakhar proved the difference between the two sides when the stakes were high.

After being put to bat on a placid surface, Fakhar delivered a swashbuckling 114 from 106 deliveries to

lift Pakistan to a herculean score of 338/4. In reply, India's batters crumbled in pursuit of the mounting target and succumbed to a 180-run defeat.

The defending champions, Pakistan, hold an edge over India in the Champions Trophy, winning three compared to India's two out of their five matches in the tournament.

During the buildup of the Champions Trophy, India will enter the tournament with a scorching form. Days before the Champions Trophy, the Rohit Sharma-led side swept the ODI series away with a 3-0 win over England.

On the other hand, Pakistan has been dwindling for consis-

tency, form and rhythm. On their home turf, the Men in Green lost the ODI Tri-nation series between South Africa and New Zealand.

The hosts comprehensively lost the first game against the Kiwis but found their rhythm by chasing down a record 353-run target against South Africa in Karachi.

In the final, New Zealand edged out the Men in Green without breaking a sweat, establishing their supremacy before playing the tournament opener against Pakistan on Wednesday. Before featuring in the high-profile match against Pakistan, India will begin its campaign against Bangladesh in Dubai on Thursday.

Crispin Chettri names 23-member squad for Pink Ladies Cup in UAE

NEW DELHI, Feb 17 (Agencies): Indian senior women's team coach Crispin Chettri on Monday named a 23-member squad for the Pink Ladies Cup, a friendly tournament to be held in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, from February 20 to 26, during the FIFA International Match Window, as per the AIFF official website.

India will face Jordan (February 20), Russia (February 23) and the Korean Republic (February 26). All matches will take place at the Al Hamriya Sports Club Stadium in Sharjah,

UAE.

The Blue Tigresses had been training in Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh, after the conclusion of Round 6 of the Indian Women's League on February 7.

India are using these friendly matches to prepare for the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers which will take place in May-June, 2025.

Crispin Chettri said, as quoted by the AIFF official website, "I think the Pink Ladies Cup will be an eye-opener for many of our players because they will get to know the stan-

dard. I think the Korean Republic are completely different from Russia. I watched their videos. Russia have a different kind of playing style. But when it comes to Korea, they are quick in transitions. So I think we have to adapt to two different kinds of playing styles. Playing against different sorts of teams like Jordan, Korea Republic and Russia will give us a clearer picture of creating a pool of players for playing against different teams."

India will depart for Sharjah on Tuesday, February 18. They will play their first match of

the competition against Jordan on February 19, followed by their encounters against Russia (February 22) and the Korean Republic (February 25), respectively. All the matches of the Indian team will be played at Al Hamriya Sports Club Stadium in Sharjah.

India's 23-member squad for the Pink Ladies Cup in Sharjah, UAE:

Goalkeepers: Elangbam Panthoi Chanu, Payal Basude, Shreya Hooda.

Defenders: Aruna Bag, Kiran Pisda, Martina Thokchom, Nirmala Devi

Phanjoubam, Purnima Kumari, Sanju, Shilky Devi Hemam, Sweetey Devi Ngangbam.

Midfielders: Babina Devi Lisham, Grace Dangmei, Mousumi Murmu, Priyadarshini Selladurai, Priyanka Devi Naorem, Ratanbala Devi Nongmaithem.

Forwards: Karishma Purushottam Shirvoikar, Lynda Kom Serto, Manisha, Renu, Sandhiya Ranganathan, Soumya Ganganloth.

Head Coach: Crispin Chettri

Assistant Coach: Priya PV

Goalkeeping Coach: Dipankar Choudhury.

Abrogation of Art 370 wiped tears of many marginalized communities: Kavinder

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: Senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta asserted that the abrogation of Article 370 has been a transformative decision, bringing justice to several marginalized communities that had been deprived of their due rights for decades.

He stated this while discussing the present scenario of Jammu and Kashmir post the abrogation of Article 370. Prominent BJP leaders present in the meeting included Munish Sharma, Parmod Kapahi, Rajni Sethi, Rajinder Singh Chib, Veenu Khanna, Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, and Ramesh Katoch.

Speaking at the meeting here at Party Headquarters, the BJP stalwart criticized the role of Kashmir-based politicians, accusing them of exploiting Article 370 to maintain their dominance while keeping many sections of society deprived of fundamen-



tal rights. "For decades, these politicians misled the people in the name of special status, while refugees, Valmiki Samaj, West Pakistani migrants, and several other communities were denied basic rights. The Modi government has not only ended this injustice but has also integrated J&K fully with the rest of India, ensuring equal opportunities for all," he said.

Kavinder highlighted that post-August 5, 2019, Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a new era of development, transparency, and good governance.

"Today, J&K is on the path of progress, witnessing massive infrastructure development, investments, and employment opportunities. The dream of 'One Nation, One Constitution' has been realized, ensuring every citizen in J&K enjoys the same rights as any other Indian," he added.

Lauding Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visionary leadership, Kavinder said that the Central Government has provided due rights to every section of society, ensuring an end to decades of discrimination and favoritism that had

kept many communities marginalized.

He emphasized that the abrogation of Article 370 was a historic step that not only ensured justice for the deprived sections but also integrated Jammu and Kashmir into the mainstream of national development.

He further stated that this bold decision has significantly improved the security scenario, curbed separatist activities, and created a conducive environment for peace, stability, and rapid economic growth in the region.

The former deputy Chief Minister appealed to the people of Jammu and Kashmir to embrace the new era of development and unity, leaving behind the divisive politics of the past.

He urged them to take full advantage of the opportunities created by the Modi government's historic decisions and work collectively towards building a prosperous and peaceful J&K.

Five-day HRD programme on Integrated Pest Management begins at Kisan Kendra



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: A Five-Day Human Resource Development (HRD) Programme on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) was inaugurated today at Kisan Kendra, Talab Tillo, organized by the Central Integrated Pest Management Centre Jammu. The event was inaugurated by Director Agriculture Jammu, S. Arvinder Singh Reen. The occasion was attended by several distinguished officials, including Joint Director (Extension) Agriculture, Satish Sharma; Professor & Head of Plant Pathology, SKUAST-J, Dr. Vishal Gupta; Deputy Director (Training), Alok Pandotra; Plant Protection Officer (PPO) Jammu, Madan Lal; Assistant Director Law Enforcement (ADLE), Kuldeep Singh; and Deputy Director (Plant Protection) CIPMC

Jammu, Dr. Mithilesh Kumar Arya.

This HRD programme is designed to enhance participants' understanding of the safe and judicious use of pesticides, promote the use of CIB&RC-approved pesticides, and highlight the role of botanicals in agriculture for achieving sustainable agricultural practices. Specifically, the programme aims to provide practical insights and technical knowledge to 40 pesticide dealers and progressive farmers from the Jammu Division.

In his inaugural address, Director Agriculture A.S Reen emphasized the importance of adopting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices for environmental sustainability while enhancing crop productivity.

He stressed the need to educate both farmers and pesticide dealers on the correct application of

chemicals and the long-term benefits of using approved and safe pesticides. He elaborated on the role of IPM in maintaining a balanced ecosystem while safeguarding crop health.

He highlighted several IPM techniques, including biological control, cultural practices, and the use of resistant crop varieties. Director Agriculture also underscored the need for farmers to adopt these environmentally friendly practices to ensure long-term agricultural sustainability.

Joint Director (Extension) Satish Sharma also addressed the gathering, underscoring the importance of such training programmes in empowering farmers with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively tackle pest-related challenges.

Prof. Dr. Vishal Gupta from SKUAST-J shared insights into the latest

advancements in plant pathology and their applications in IPM, while Dr. Mithilesh Kumar Arya provided valuable perspectives on plant protection strategies. Both emphasized the significance of training programmes like this one in raising awareness within the pesticide dealers and farming community.

The five-day programme will feature resource persons from the Agriculture Department Jammu, Central Integrated Pest Management Centre Jammu, SKUAST Jammu, and KVK Jammu, all of whom will offer expert knowledge on various aspects of Integrated Pest Management.

The programme promises to equip participants with valuable tools for adopting safe and effective pest management practices, ultimately promoting sustainable agricultural practices in the region.

Ram Paul wins silver medal in fencing at 68th School National Championship

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: Ram Paul, a talented young fencer (Boys Under-19) from Govt. Shri Ranbir Model Higher Secondary School, Jammu, has made his school and state proud by securing the silver medal at the 68th School National Championship, Patna Bihar (Saber Event) from February 10 to 14, 2025.

The prestigious event witnessed top competitors from across the country, and Ram Paul's exceptional performance highlighted his dedication, skill, and sportsmanship.

Competing against some of the finest young fencers, Ram Paul displayed remarkable agility and technique throughout the tournament. His journey to the



finals was marked by intense bouts, strategic play, and unwavering determination, ultimately earning him the second-place position on the national stage.

Expressing his excitement over the achievement, Ram Paul said, "Winning silver at the national level is a dream come true. This medal is the result of my hard work and the immense support from my coaches, teachers, and family. I will continue to strive for excellence and aim

for gold in future competitions."

The achievement has been widely celebrated by Govt. Shri Ranbir Model Higher Secondary School, Jammu, with the Dr. Kishor Sharma (Principal), teachers, and fellow students congratulating Ram Paul for bringing laurels to the institution.

His success is a testament to the school's commitment to promoting sports and nurturing young talent.

The school adminis-

tration and Tony Matto (Fencing Coach) have expressed immense pride in Ram Paul's accomplishment, emphasizing the importance of sports in shaping discipline and character among students.

This silver medal marks a significant milestone in Ram Paul's fencing career, and his victory serves as an inspiration to aspiring athletes across Jammu & Kashmir.

Dimple demands liquor ban in J&K, warns of mass agitation



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 17: Sunil Dimple, president of Mission Statehood, has urged the Jammu and Kashmir government to introduce a bill banning the sale of liquor across the Union Territory. Addressing a press conference, Dimple demanded that Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and the alliance government take immediate action in the upcoming assembly session to prohibit liquor sales, especially in Jammu city, Katra, and other religiously significant areas.

Dimple accused the government of exploiting the people of Jammu by implementing a liquor policy post the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019. He claimed that under this policy, around 300 liquor shops were opened in Jammu city, despite strong protests

from locals, particularly women. He alleged that an outsider liquor mafia, in collusion with BJP leaders, corporators, and local businesses, has taken control of the liquor trade in the region.

"If the government fails to act, we will launch a mass agitation to shut down liquor shops across Jammu and Kashmir," warned Dimple. He urged all 90 MLAs to support the demand for a liquor ban, similar to policies implemented in Gujarat, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh. He further warned that any political party or MLA opposing the ban would be exposed to the public.

Dimple also called upon Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and CM Omar Abdullah to halt the upcoming liquor shop tendering process in March 2025. He insisted that the government should prioritize

the well-being of youth rather than focus on revenue from liquor sales. He claimed that addiction has surged in the last five years, worsening the social and moral fabric of the region.

In addition to the liquor ban, Dimple demanded that the government provide free essential services, including 200 units of electricity where smart meters are installed, free drinking water, 12 LPG cylinders per year, and double ration allocations for the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He also criticized the BJP government for failing to fulfill its commitments regarding the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood.

Senior leaders including Bishan Das, Sudershan Sharma, Mohan Lal, Sanjay Sharma, and Bram Datt were present at the press conference, lending their support to the demands.



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