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e-paper: www.topnewsjk.in

RNI No. JKENG/2010/39369

Regd. No. JK-435

Vol.-16 Issue-48 Pages-12 Rs.-2/-

BRIEFLY

Srinagar man gets 27 years rigorous imprisonment for raping, abducting minor

SRINAGAR, Feb 18 (Agencies): A trial court in Ganderbal district of Jammu and Kashmir has sentenced Srinagar man to 27 years of rigorous imprisonment for raping and abducting a minor.

The court convicted Mohammad Saleem Taploo for offences under section 4 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) and section 363 of the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC), a police spokesperson said.

"The court convicted the accused for both the offences with the quantum of punishment being rigorous imprisonment for a term of seven years and a fine of Rs 25,000 for kidnapping which would run separately with a rigorous imprisonment for a term of 20 years and a fine of Rs 50,000 for the offences against POCSO," the spokesperson said.

In a separate case, police secured a conviction against Aamir Ashraf Zargar for offences under sections 363 of the RPC (abduction) and 376 of the RPC (rape).

"The court sentenced the accused to imprisonment for a term of seven years and a fine of Rs 10,000 for kidnapping and seven years term and a fine of Rs 25,000 for the offence of rape. Both sentences will run concurrently," the spokesperson said.

Kashmiri man found dead in Jammu

SRINAGAR, Feb 18 (Agencies): The body of a Kashmiri man was recovered under mysterious circumstances in Narwal area of Jammu on Tuesday, officials said.

The officials said the body was spotted by locals which was lying in a tourist cab bearing registration number JK05M-2722.

Soon after the incident they reported to police who rushed to the spot and took the body into custody for medico-legal formalities.

The officials identified the deceased as

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Amit Shah reviews status of implementation of New Criminal Laws in J&K

NEW DELHI, Feb 18 (Agencies): Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday reviewed the status of the implementation of the new criminal laws in Jammu and Kashmir in the presence of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. Abdullah attended the meeting though law and order is directly handled by the Central government since the erstwhile state was bifurcated into the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh in 2019.

Besides Abdullah and Sinha, top officials of the Central government and Jammu and Kashmir government attended



the meeting at North Block, officials said.

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam replaced the colonial era

Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act of 1872, respectively.

The new laws came into effect from July 1 last year.

The home minister has already reviewed the status of the implementation of the new criminal laws in several states, including Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat.

J-K's elected govt needs to create more awareness about new criminal laws: CM Omar



NEW DELHI, Feb 18 (Agencies): Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said that implementing three new criminal laws is not the

mandate of the elected government in Jammu and Kashmir, but the dispensation led by him needs to do more to create awareness about

these provisions.

Talking to reporters here after attending a meeting called by Home Minister Amit Shah to review the implementation of the new criminal laws, Omar said, "As far as the elected government is concerned, it is not our responsibility to implement these laws. Since these are new laws, people should be aware of them. For this, the elected government needs to do more," he said.

The CM added that

J&K has done better in implementation but there are few weak

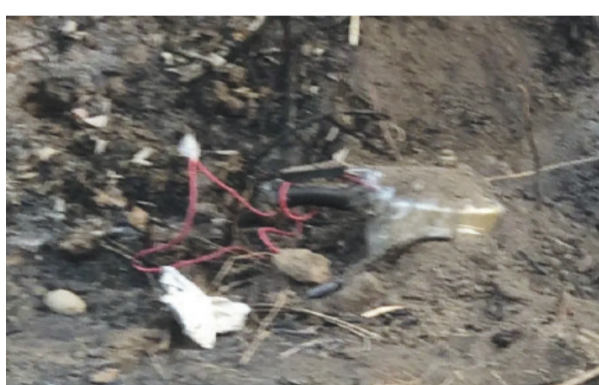
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7-kg IED recovered in Shopian, defused

SHOPIAN, Feb 18 (Agencies): Security forces on Tuesday recovered an improvised explosive device (IED) in Kashwa Chitragam village of south Kashmir's Shopian district, officials said.

A police official stated that a bomb disposal squad (BDS) was immediately rushed to the spot to neutralize the explosive.

"The IED, weighing approximately 6 to 7 kg, was placed inside



a pressure cooker and was successfully defused by the bomb disposal squad," the

official said. Meanwhile, security forces have recovered

■ Turn to page 9

Police recover two kidnapped minor girls from Chhattisgarh

JAMMU, Feb 18 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir police have recovered two kidnapped minor girls from Chhattisgarh.

SHO Janipur along with his team successfully recovered two minor girls who were abducted and safely handed them over to their families.

On 10 February, Janipur police received a complaint from a father that his two minor daughters had been kidnapped by Shiva Dass and Manoj Kumar, both resi-

dents of Chhattisgarh (at present Janipur Colony).

The recovery operation was carried out after extensive investigations, intelligence gathering, and coordinated efforts of Janipur local police under the close supervision of SDPO city west, police said.

The police added that the girls were recovered from Balooda, Chhattisgarh after using human and technical intelligence.

Jammu police have assured that the indi-

viduals responsible for these criminal acts will face the full force of law.

"The J&K police reiterates its commitment to the safety of women and children and highlights the importance of creating a supportive environment where victims can find refuge, assistance, and justice. We are pleased that these girls have been safely recovered and are now back with their loved ones," police added.

Police have been

■ Turn to page 9

Gyanesh Kumar to take over as 26th CEC on Wednesday, Played key role in J&K reorganisation

NEW DELHI, Feb 18 (Agencies): Gyanesh Kumar, who as a senior Union Home Ministry official played a key role in the government's move to abrogate provisions of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir and setting up the Ram temple trust, will assume the office of the chief election commissioner on Wednesday.

Kumar retired as Secretary in the Cooperation ministry in January 2024 and was appointed as an election commissioner in March 2024. He will become the 26th CEC, a day after incumbent Rajiv Kumar demits office on Tuesday evening.

He along with fellow election commissioner Sukhbir Singh Sandhu was appointed on the same day and was part of the Commission when the 2024 Lok Sabha polls were held. Kumar is the first CEC



to be appointed under a new law on the appointment of the members of the Election Commission (EC).

His term will run till January 26, 2029, days before the EC is expected to announce the schedule of the next Lok Sabha election.

According to law, CEC and ECs demit office on attaining the age of 65 years or completing six years in the poll panel, whichever is earlier. Gyanesh Kumar will turn 65 on January 27, 2029.

During his tenure as the CEC, Kumar will oversee the Bihar Assembly polls later this year, and the Kerala and Puducherry Assembly polls in 2026.

Similarly, he will oversee the assembly polls in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, which are also due in 2026. Besides the various assembly polls, he will also oversee the elections for President and Vice-President in 2027.

Kumar played a key

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OBITUARY/10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **Shri Rattan Lal Wali** S/o Late Shri Nand Lal Wali, originally resident of Qutobdin Pura Alikadal Srinagar and presently at F-100, Sector 1, Durga Nagar on 13/02/2025. His **10TH DAY KRIYA** shall be performed at Akhnoor ghat on 22/02/2025. **Mourning Assembly** shall be held at residence at 11am.



Shri Rattan Lal Wali

Grief stricken :
Sunita Wali - (Wife)
Daughters and Sons-in law
1) Deepa Raina and Atish Raina
2) Kanchan Koul and Avinash Koul
Brothers and Bhabis
1) Rajesh Wali and Urmila Wali
Sisters and Brothers in law
1) Tosha Raina and M. K Raina
2) Raj Kumari Saproo and A. K Saproo
Phone nos. 9419383230, 9643731032, 6005665251

UTHALA

With profound grief & sorrow we regret to inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Sanjay Gupta** S/o Late Sh. Nand Lal Gupta. R/o 53A, Sec.4 Channi Himmat Jammu. **Uthala** will be performed on 19.02.2025 (Wednesday) at Sec.2 Panch Mandir, Channi Himmat at 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM



Sh. Sanjay Gupta

GRIEF STRICKEN:-
Smt. Sudesh Gupta - Chachi ji
Smt. Arpana Gupta - Wife
Mr. Sayam Gupta - Son
Mrs. Twinkle & Mr. Sahil Gupta - Daughter & Son in law
BROTHERS & SISTER IN LAWS
Mr. Ravi & Nishi Gupta
Mr. Rocky & Bindu Gupta
Mr. Ashish & Sunni Gupta
Mr. Manav & Sugandha Gupta
Samast Mahajan Parivar
SANJAY KUMAR & CO Kanak Mandi
MUNSHI RAM NAND LAL Ware House
ROCKY BROS. Narwal Mandi

10TH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Late Sh. Ram Krishna Abrol** S/o Late Sh. Parshotam Lal Abrol R/o H. No. 68/1 Ganga Nagar, Bantala b Jammu.



LATE SH. RAM KRISHNA ABROL

10TH DAY will be performed on 17th Feb 2025 (Monday) from 11 AM at our resident.
KRIYA will be performed on 20th Feb 2025 (Thursday) at 10 AM
UTHALA will be performed on 21st Feb 2025 (Friday) at 4 PM at our resident Ganga Nagar Bantala b
GRIEF STRICKEN
Smt. Santosh Abrol- Wife
Sh. Ashish Abrol- Son
Late Sh. Rajesh Abrol & Suman Abrol- Brother & Sister in Law
Sh. Pawan Abrol & Sonia Abrol- Brother & Sister in Law
Sh. Rohit & Reetika Abrol- Daughter & Son in Law
Sh. Vikas & Neha- Daughter & Son in Law
MOBILE NO 8082029831, 9797339828

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform, the sad demise of **Sh. Joginder Kumar Banotra** S/o Late Kaka Ram R/o Mandi Gurgallian Samba, who left for his heavenly abode on 11 Feb, 2025.



Joginder Kumar Banotra

Tenth Day will be performed on 19th Feb, 2025 at Nirankari Satsang Bhawan, Samba
Time 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm (Satsang)
2:00 pm to 4:00 pm (Langar)
GRIEF STRICKEN
Smt. Sudesh Kumari (Wife)
Sons & Daughters in law
Ajay Banotra & Pooja
Amit Banotra & Nidhi
Daughters & Sons in law
Poonam Banotra & Tirth Ram
Anuradha & Amit Kuralal
Contacts: 7006918002, 7054124066

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of **Karamyogi Sh Chooni Lal Kachroo** S/o Lt. Sh. Sham Lal Kachroo original resident of Sangrampora Sopore Kashmir at present H.No. 142, Lane No. 4, Anand Nagar, Bohri Jammu who left for heavenly abode on 16th of February 2025.



Karamyogi Sh Chooni Lal Kachroo

The **Tenth Day** will be performed on 25th of February 2025 at Akhnoor Ghat & **Assembly** will be held at Muthi Ghat Jammu at 10 AM.
Grief Stricken
Kachroo's, Tikoo's, Bhat's, Pandita's & Raina's
M.Nos. 9469376543, 9086003249, 8494041654, 9906175273

UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh. Bhagwan Dass** S/o Lt. Sh. Dheru Mal R/o 18 Patel Nagar Talab Tillo, Jammu on 8-2-2025.



Sh. Bhagwan Dass

Uthala will be performed on Wednesday 19-2-2025 at Shiv Mandir Talab Tillo Chowk from 1.30 to 2.30 pm.
GRIEF STRICKEN
Rajesh Sharma & Sonia Sharma - Son & Daughter-in-law
Brothers & Bhabis
Lt. Sh. Mohan Lal & Sh. Darshana Devi
Sh. Ashok Sharma & Smt. Sangeeta Sharma
Sh. Sukhdev Sharma & Smt. Savita Sharma
Sh. Ranvir Sharma & Smt. Vandana Sharma
Sister & Brother-in-law
Smt. Sudesh Sharma & Sh. Bal Krishan Sharma
Daughters & Sons-in-law
Neelem Sharma & Naval Tiwari
Kiran Sharma & Anil Sharma
Monika & Manoj Sharma
Santosh & Vijay Sharma
Contact: 7006976418

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Sh Maharaj Krishan Tingloo** S/o Lt. Sh Sham Lal Tingloo, R/o Gassiraina Kulgam A/P H No. 63, Lane 5 Ext. Buta Nagar Jammu.



SH MAHARAJ KRISHAN TINGLOO

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed at Akhnoor Ghat on 24-02-2025. Assembly will be held at 11:00 AM at our residence, H No. 63, Lane 5 Buta Nagar Ext. Jammu.
GRIEF STRICKEN:
Smt. Asha Tingloo -Wife
Sh. M.L Tingloo -Brother
Smt Chuni Pandita -Sister
Sh. Sandeep Tingloo and Smt. Kaplana -Son & Daughter-in-law
Smt. Kusum and Sh. D.K Bhat -Daughter & Son-in-law
Smt Kiran -Daughter
Smt Urmila and Sh Manohar Raina -Daughter and Son-in-law
Smt Anshu and Sh. Vinod Raina -Daughter and Son-in-law
Grand Children: Deepshikha, Himani, Sameeksha, Romil, Mansi, Shiv and Pranvi
Ph: 9837620256/ 9596872005/ 9596865849/ 9469161985

TENTH DAY

With profound grief & sorrow we regret to inform the sad & untimely demise of our beloved **Baisahib (Shri Vijay Vashnavi)** S/o Lt Sh Amarnath Vashnavi & Lt Smt Jai Kishori Vashnavi of erstwhile Sheshyar Srinagar now at B30, Shanti Nagar, Gujjar Ki Thadi, Jaipur on 12.02.2025.



Baisahib (Shri Vijay Vashnavi)

TENTH DAY will be held on Friday 21.02.2025 at Jaipur.
GRIEF STRICKEN:
Anita Vashnavi (Wife)
Rajni & Vinod Zutshi (Sister & Brother in Law)
Dalzy & Virender Thusoo (Sister & Brother in Law)
Tushar & Sneha (Son & Daughter in Law)
Lokesh & Priyanka (Son & Daughter in Law)
Aarav & Sheen (Grand Children)
CONTACT: 9314661212, 8072550658, 9871274509, 7891620787, 9650061203

UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform sad demise of the beloved son of Late Sh. Krishan Kumar Vaid and Late Smt. Kiran Vaid.



ANKUR VAID
1 April 1981 - 16 February 2025

UTHALA will be performed at Gurdwara Chhatti Patshahi Tahli Sahib, Near Bee Enn Hospital, Talab Tillo, Jammu
Timing: 4-5 PM - 19 February 2025
GRIEF STRICKEN:
Smt. Rashmi Vaid (Wife)
Prisha Vaid (Daughter)
(Chacha & Chachi)
Sh. Kuldeep Vaid & Smt. Kamala Devi
Mama & Mami :
Late Sh. Rakesh Kr. Gupta & Smt. Vandana Gupta
Sh. Ajay Kumar Gupta & Smt. Saroj Gupta
Uncle & Massi :
Sh. Vinay Gupta & Smt. Nirmal Gupta
Late Sh. Brij Bhushan Mahajan & Smt. Meera Mahajan
Sh. Rakesh Gupta & Smt. Anjana Gupta
MOB: 94191-60090 ; 97967-00000
M/S NEW INDIAN TOUR & TRAVELS, KATRA

OBITUARY/10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt. Asha Bhat** W/o Late Sh. Moti Lal Bhat R/o Murrn Pulwama A/P Lane-4-A, Sub Lane-3, Laxmi Vihar Tomal Bohri on 11th Feb, 2025 (Tuesday).



SMT. ASHA BHAT

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed on 20th Feb, 2025 (Thursday) at Akhnoor Ghat. The **Assembly** will be held at Muthi Ghat at 10.30 AM.
GRIEF STRICKEN
Sons & Daughters-in-law
Anil Bhat & Vishali Bhat - 7780941819
Sunil Bhat & Shreya Bhat - 6005863721
Raj Bhat & Monika Bhat - 7889514534
Avik, Samarath, Shawn & Kiansh - Grand Children
Samasth Bhat Parivar

TENTH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Late Smt Shakuntla Devi** W/o Lt. Sh Ram Lal R/o H No. F-212 Krishna Nagar Jammu.



Smt Shakuntla Devi

TENTH DAY will be performed on 19 February 2025 (Wednesday) at Guru Ravi Dass Temple Krishna Nagar Jammu.
Satsang at 12:00 pm
Langar at 1:00 pm
GRIEF STRICKEN
SONS AND DAUGHTERS IN LAW
Sh Pawan Kumar & Smt Shakuntla Devi
Lt Sh Ravi Kumar & Smt Geeta Devi
Sh Ashwani Kumar & Smt Rajni Bala
DAUGHTER AND SON IN LAW
Smt Lalshmi Devi & Sh Ram Lal
LANGEH FAMILY (9419236704, 7006385584, 6005741883)

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **Sh. Amit Koul (Shanu)** S/o Late Sh. Bedri Nath Koul originally resident of Ranbirpore (Kheriba) Anantnag and presently at H/No 1A Sharda Colony, Patoli Bahmane, Jammu on 12-02-2025.



Sh. Amit Koul (Shanu)

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed on 21-02-2025 (Friday) at Akhnoor Ghat. **Assembly** will be held at Patoli Bahmane Ghat at 11:00 am.
DEEPLY MOURNED BY
Smt. Santosh Koul (Mother)
Smt. Aruna Tufchi Koul (Wife)
Sh. Romi Koul and Smt. Renu Koul (Bhai & Bhabhi)
Sh. Anku Koul (Bhai)
Smt. Dulah Koul (Chachi)
Sh. Krishan Ji Koul (Chacha)
Smt. Shreea Raina (Bua)
Smt. Phooki Raina (Bua)
Sh. Mohan Lal Tikoo & Smt. Suman Ji Tikoo (Phoota & Bua)
Sh. Shubam Ji Kandoo and Smt. Pinkey Ji (Mousa & Massi)
Sh. Shashi Marwaha & Smt. Sweety Ji (Mousa & Massi)
Sh. Ajay Raina & Smt. Anu Raina (Cousin)
Children: Mehu & Shriya
Samast Parivar Jan
9596758156, 7006949835, 9419148430, 8825051278

TENTH DAY KRIYA

Loved ones may leave this world, but never our hearts. They walk beside us in every step, Unseen, yet felt in every moment. Forever loved, forever missed.



SMT. SUSHMA WANCHOO (CHUNNI)

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be held on Feb 20, 2025 at Alandi, Puna at 8:00 am.
DEEPLY MOURNED BY:
Sh. Ramesh Kumar Wanchoo - Loving Husband
Sisters-in-law and Brothers-in-law:
Smt. Ratna W/o Lt. Sh. Avtar Krishan Wanchoo
Smt. Renu and Sh. Sunder Wanchoo
Daughter and Son-in-law:
Nidhi and Sachin Raina,
Nehima and Akh. Wali
Rajesh-Son
Sons and Daughters-in-law
Rahul and Yashika,
Rohit and Shikha
Sisters and Brothers-in-law:
Smt. Ashu Dhar W/o Sh. A.K Dhar,
Smt. Veena Khazanchi W/o Lt. Sh. J.L. Khazanchi
Smt. Ratni W/o Sh. M.L. Gupta
Brothers and Sisters-in-law:
Sh. B.L. Chatta W/o Lt. Smt. Sushila,
Lt. Sh. Somesh Chatta W/o Smt. Suman Chatta,
Sh. P.L. Chatta W/o Smt. Veena Chatta
Nishi, Megha- Nephew and Niece
Grand children: Asharjya, Madhanish, Moyo,
Ajya, Meera, Minnie
Address: F-84, Park Ivory, Park Street, Wakad, Pune
Phone: 9507070709, 9921308999

OBITUARY

With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **Sh. Kuldeep Saraf** S/o Lt. Sh. Brij Nath Saraf originally from Mallapur, Bana mohalla, Srinagar and presently residing at 47A, Lane No 1A, Roop Nagar Enclave, Jammu, left for his heavenly abode on 17-02-2025.



Sh. Kuldeep Saraf

The **10th Day Kriya** will be held at Akhnoor Ghat. Prayers and **Assembly** will be held at residence on 26-02-2025 at 9 am.
Grief Stricken:-
Smt. Sulekha Saraf- Wife
Navneet Mithu Saraf & Priyanka Saraf - Son & Daughter in law
Nidhi Meenu Saraf & Kartik Koul - Daughter & Son in law
And Saraf's, Krandu's, Koul's, Raina's, Munshi's, Wall's, Misri's and Koul's.
Phone No. 9796048545, 7006146776

10TH DAY / KRIYA

WE ARE DEEPLY SADDENED TO SHARE THE NEWS OF THE PASSING OF OUR BELOVED **SMT. SWARNA KHAJURIA**, W/O AR. ASHOK KHAJURIA (KHAJURIA DESIGNERS ARCHITECT), WHO RESIDED IN WARD NO. 9, PADHAGAL HOSPITAL ROAD, UDHAMPUR. THE 10TH-DAY WILL BE PERFORMED ON WEDNESDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY AT 12 NOON AT JAGRUTI OLD AGE HOME, NEAR POST OFFICE DHAR ROAD, UDHAMPUR. **KRIYA** WILL TAKE PLACE ON 20TH FEBRUARY AT 11 AM AT DEVIKA GHAT, UDHAMPUR.



SMT. SWARNA KHAJURIA

GRIEF STRICKEN
BIMLA DEVI (MOTHER-IN-LAW)
AR. ASHOK KHAJURIA (HUSBAND)
(DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND SON)
ADVITA & SIDDHARTH KHAJURIA
(DAUGHTERS & SONS-IN-LAW)
SHIVANI & VIPAN MAGOTRA
BHANU & MOKSH SHARMA
GRAND DAUGHTER & GRAND SON: HARIKA AND AADHAVAN
MOB: 916817677, 9622316781

OBITUARY/TENTH DAY KRIYA

The **Tenth Day Kriya** of our beloved Father **Late Sh Hari Krishan Razdan** originally from Village Pahallan/Pattan Distt. Baramulla (Kashmir) at Present H.No 52: Vippan Garden, Sainik Enclave, Dwarka Mode, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi will be performed at Muradnagar, Chhota Haridwar and **Assembly** at home address as mentioned above around 12:30hrs on 19-02-2025 (Wednesday)



LATE SH HARI KRISHAN RAZDAN

GRIEF STRICKEN:-
Smt. Kishnee Razdan (Wife)
Sons and Daughter-in-laws
Sanjay Razdan & Binla Razdan
Manoj Razdan & Pushpa Razdan
Nanajee Razdan & Soni Razdan
Sunder Razdan & Vineeta Razdan
Grand Children: Rahul and Muskan, Ajay, Sheen, Aryan
And All Razdan family
CONTACT NO.: 9810979376, 9899396344, 9818969508, 9312319164

10TH DAY/OBITUARY

With a heavy heart, we mourn the sad demise of our dear **Asha Ji Gassi**, (Behan Ji) W/o Lt Sh Jagmohan Gassi, breathed her last on 10th February 25.



Asha Ji Gassi

10th Day Kriya will be performed on Wednesday, 19th February, 2025 at Gouri Shankar Mandir at Palm Vihar, New Delhi, Originally from Dadi Kadal, Tankipora, Srinagar Pouni Chak, Jammu at present House No. 290, DDA Flats, Sector 23 Pocket 1, Mahadev Apartments, Dwarka, New Delhi.
GRIEF STRICKEN
Gassi's, Ambaradar's, Peer's, Koul's and Raina's
Contact Nos.: 7889781897, 9999009442, 9312740428, 9622095514

TENTH DAY/KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved son **Mr. Nooraj Singh Manhas** S/o Late Sh. Gopal Singh Manhas R/o House No. 88 Ward No. 60 Dhok Paloura, Jammu on 11 Feb 2025



Mr. Nooraj Singh Manhas (Pinna)

TENTH DAY will be held on Thursday 20-02-2025 at our residence House no. 88 Dhok Paloura from 11:00 am to 12:00 Noon.
KRIYA will be held on Sunday 23-02-2025 at our residence at 12:00 Noon.
GRIEF STRICKEN
Smt. Nisha Rani (Wife)
Smt. Champa Devi (Mother)
Mr. Raghu and Raghav (Son)
Vandana and Rahul (Brother and Bhabhi)
Priya and Sonu Chib (Sister and Brother in law)
Mob:- 7051055145, 7889756988, 9103004571

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Two JCOs killed in accident in Ladakh; Army Pays Tributes

Top News Report

LEH, Feb 18 (Agencies): Two Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs) were killed in an accident in Ladakh, officials said on Tuesday, as the army paid rich tributes to the brave-hearts for laying down their lives in the line of duty.

Subedar Santosh Kumar and Naib-Subedar Sunil Kumar died due to bursting of a water tank at a camp in Nyoma area, 150 km from Leh in southern Ladakh, the official said.

They said a police investigation is underway in the incident



which occurred on Sunday. Northern Army commander Lt Gen Suchindra Kumar saluted the supreme sacrifice of the

fallen soldiers. "Lt Gen Kumar and all ranks of Dhruva Command salute the supreme sacrifice of bravehe-

arts Sub Santosh Kumar and Nb Sub Sunil Kumar who laid down their lives in the line of duty in Ladakh," the northern command wrote on X on Tuesday, sharing a post from Leh-based Fire and Fury Corps.

The Fire and Fury Corps shared the pictures of the two JCOs and wrote: "GOC, Fire and Fury Corps and all ranks salute Subedar Santosh Kumar and Naib Subedar Sunil Kumar, who made supreme sacrifice in the line of duty in Ladakh on February 16 and offer deep condolences to the bereaved families in this hour of grief."

Sunil Verma-led delegation meets Minister Sakina Itoo, raises issues in Education & Health Sectors



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: A delegation led by Sunil Verma, District President J&K National Conference (NC), Udhampur, met Health and Education Minister Sakina Itoo at the Civil Secretariat in Jammu today and submitted a memorandum highlighting critical issues plaguing the education and health sectors in the region.

During the meeting, Sunil Verma apprised the minister of the challenges faced by headmasters, teachers, and students due to administrative inefficiencies and staff shortages. He strongly emphasized the urgent need to fill vacancies for teachers, headmasters, Zonal Education Officers (ZEOs), and principals across various educational institutions, stating that

the lack of faculty was severely hampering the quality of education.

The NC leader further pointed out the disparity in the pupil-teacher ratio, where some schools are grappling with severe teacher shortages despite high student enrollments, whereas others have an excess staff presence without optimal utilization. Additionally, the delegation raised serious concerns over a large number of schools with zero enrollments that have remained operational for over four to five years without justification. They urged the government to either close such institutions or redeploy the teaching staff to areas where their presence is critically needed.

Turning attention to the health sector, Sunil Verma highlighted the dire situation in Panchod Panchayat, Latti,

where a non-functional health center has left the local population struggling for basic medical facilities. He stressed the immediate need to operationalize the center and deploy dedicated healthcare officials to cater to the healthcare needs of the people.

Reiterating the NC's commitment to the welfare of the people, Sunil Verma asserted that the Omar Abdullah-led government remains steadfast in ensuring that the education and healthcare sectors are strengthened for the greater good of the region.

Minister Sakina Itoo gave a patient hearing to the delegation's concerns and assured them that the government would take necessary measures to address the highlighted issues at the earliest.

AJBRCEAK delegation meets MP Khatana, raises demands

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: A delegation from the All Jammu Based Reserved Category Employees Association Kashmir (AJBRCEAK), led by its President, Anil Radha, met with Er. Ghulam Ali Khatana, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), to apprise him of their long-pending demands.

During the meeting, Anil Radha emphasized the urgent need for the early notification of a Comprehensive Transfer Policy, for which an empowered committee has already been constituted. He urged the authorities to expedite the process to ensure



a fair and transparent transfer mechanism for employees.

Deepak Kaith, Cashier of AJBRCEAK, highlighted the issue of pending leave settlements

for employees across various departments, stressing the need for prompt resolution.

Additionally, Mohan Lal, a senior employee from District Kulgam,

along with other association members, underscored the importance of providing safe and secure accommodation at the district level for Jammu-based reserved

category employees. They also demanded their adjustment in safe zones and district headquarters within Kashmir Valley to ensure their security and well-being.

The delegation included Manohar Lal, Bharat Bhushan, Ravi Bhushan, Sanjeet Kumar, and several other members, who collectively urged the MP to take up their concerns with the concerned authorities for swift action.

The meeting concluded with MP Ghulam Ali Khatana assuring the delegation of his support in addressing their grievances and pursuing their demands at the highest level.

Lecturers' Forum calls on Shantmanu, raises key issues



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: All J&K +2 Lecturers' Forum, led by President, Pardeep Singh Rakwal and Chairman, RS Salathia called on Administrative Secretary School Education Department, Shantmanu in his office Chamber. Others who were part of the delegation include Ghar Singh (General Secretary), Showkat Hussain Zarger (Chief Organizer), Ramesh Kumar

Padroo, Gh. Nabi Malik, Bal Krishan Tickoo, Rajnish Raina (All senior leaders of the forum), Shakeel Ahmed (Secretary Kulgam unit) and many others.

Rakwal led delegation of Lecturers' Forum raised many issues the +2 Lecturers were confronted with. The forum delegation expressed serious concern over unnecessary delay in the process of regularisation. The delegation urged Adminis-

trative Secretary, Shantmanu to convene DPC for regularisation of Incharge lecturers at the earliest so that the sufferings of incharge lecturers could be minimised who are in trauma.

The delegation also raised the issues of ACP, Repatriation of lecturers and left-out Principals from other districts and Zone 5, elevation of at least 50 more senior lecturers to the rank of Principals so that pending vacancies of Principals could be filled up to make Higher Secondary Schools functional in the interest of student community to fulfil their academic requirements.

Administrative Secretary was delivered a memorandum highlighting all burning issues of the officers of +2 cadre which was marked by Sakina Masood Itoo, Minister of School Education.

Responding to the issues raised by the Forum, Administrative Secretary SED, Shantmanu immediately directed his office to fix a date for conven-

ing DPC for regularisation of Incharge lecturers.

On other issues, Shantmanu said that the department had all issues in mind and the issues will be resolved in the sequence of priority.

Meanwhile Pardeep Singh Rakwal, President and RS Salathia, Chairman, after coming out of the chamber of Administrative Secretary after the meet said that they had full faith in the commitment of Shantmanu and expressed the hope that soon the department would convene DPC for regularisation of Incharge lecturers.

The delegation later met Gulzar Ahmed Dar, Special Secretary SED in his Office Chamber and had detailed discussion with him with regularisation of incharge lecturers on top agenda. He was kind enough to declare that the work on regularisation was on its last leg and soon the regularisation would see the light of the day.

Dr. Rajiv Bhagat initiates blacktopping work worth Rs 50 lakh in Bishnah



Top News Report

BISHNAH, Feb 18: MLA Bishnah, Dr. Rajiv Kumar Bhagat, on Tuesday initiated the blacktopping, improvement, and upgradation work of the Smailpur Kothey to Dharap Bishnah road under the UT sector, with a sanctioned amount of

Rs 50 lakh.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Bhagat emphasized the dire need for road improvement, highlighting that the existing road had numerous potholes causing inconvenience to commuters.

He assured that the blacktopping work would significantly enhance

travel convenience, ensuring smoother and safer road conditions for the residents. He reiterated his commitment to transforming Bishnah into a model constituency through sustained development initiatives.

The Public Works Department (PWD) is executing the project under the supervision of AEE PWD Rafiq Ahmad.

The event was attended by contractor Parveen Kumari (BJP Mahila Morcha), Ex-Sarpanch Sudesh Kumari, Ex-Panch Yashdev Singh, along with several other prominent citizens and local residents of Smailpur Kothey, Bishnah.

MLA Arvind releases devotional song 'Tera Darbar Bholenath'

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: Senior BJP leader and MLA Jammu West, Arvind Gupta today released the devotional video song 'Tera Darbar Bholenath' in a special event organized by Nirbhay Bharat Foundation (NBF). The bhajan, melodiously sung by Bharat Raj Sharma, pays tribute to Lord Shiva and is now available for devotees on Bharat Raj Sharma Music's YouTube channel.

The launch event witnessed the presence of prominent personalities, including Tarun Uppal (Chairperson, NBF), Manik Uppal (Chairperson, SWH), Tarsem Sharma, Divyansh Baba, and Danish Sharma, who graced the occasion as special guests. The gathering was filled with spiritual fervor, with attendees appreciating the devo-



tional depth and soul-stirring composition of the bhajan.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Arvind Gupta lauded the efforts of the artists and the production team including Sharma, N B Naresh, RJ Rajput, Kranti Rajput, Mulkh Raj Sharma, Sunil Sharma, Raju Sharma, and K P Singh, for their efforts in creating the album and encouraged them to continue their good work. He emphasized that devotional music has a unique power to connect individuals with their faith and cultural heritage. "This bhajan

beautifully captures the essence of devotion to Lord Shiva and will undoubtedly touch the hearts of listeners," he remarked.

Arvind also highlighted the immense talent present in Jammu and Kashmir and urged the Union Territory administration to create more platforms and opportunities for emerging artists. "Our youth possess extraordinary artistic abilities, and it is imperative that we nurture and encourage them. Initiatives like these play a crucial role in preserving and promoting our rich cultural traditions," he added.

Tarun Uppal, Chairperson of NBF, expressed his gratitude to MLA Arvind Gupta for supporting the initiative and underscored the foundation's commitment to promoting spiritual and cultural endeavors. He encouraged the audience to support and appreciate local talent by engaging with such devotional offerings.

With the release of 'Tera Darbar Bholenath', devotees now have another soul-soothing bhajan to enhance their spiritual experiences, reaffirming the significance of divine music in everyday life.

Department of Wildlife Protection J&K Government
OFFICE OF THE WILDLIFE WARDEN KATHUA
Tel/Fax No. 01922-234622, Email: -wildlife.kathua1@gmail.com

E-TENDERING

Short term e-Tender Notice: e-NIT No.: - 26/WLW/K of 2024-25 Dated: 15-02-2025

For and on behalf of the Hon'ble Lt. Governor of UT of Jammu & Kashmir, e-tenders are invited from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K State Govt. /Central Govt. Organizations for the following works:

Name of work	Adv. Cost (₹. in lacs)	Earnest Money (3% of the total estimated cost)	Class of Contractor	Cost of Tender Document/Tender Fee(In Rs)	Time of completion	Receiving /Opening Authority
Repair and Renovation of guard Hut Near Sanctuary Gate Jasrota in Wildlife Division Kathua Under CAMPA 2024-25.	1.00 lacs	Rs. 3000.00/- @ 3% of the tendered amount in shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Wildlife Warden Kathua	All Classes	600.00 (Non-Refundable) Deposited in Govt. treasury through challan under the receipt head 0406 in favour of the Wildlife Warden Kathua payable at Kathua mentioning name of work	20 days	Tender Opening Committee

The e-NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities, (B.O.Q), set of Terms & Conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental Website: - <http://jktenders.gov.in>

Position of AA/TS: Accorded.
Position of Funds: Approved

Publishing Date	15-02-2025
Download Start Date	15-02-2025
Bid Submission Start Date	15-02-2025
Bid submission End Date (online)	21-02-2025 up to 03:00 PM
Date of opening of Technical Bid	22-02-2025 at 10:30 AM (In the Office of Regional Wildlife Warden Jammu, Manda Hills Jammu)
Date of opening of Financial Bid (online)	22-02-2025 at 11:00 AM (In the Office of Regional Wildlife Warden Jammu, Manda Hills Jammu)

Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website: - <https://jktenders.gov.in>. Bid documents contain qualifying criteria for bidder, specifications, bill of quantities, conditions and other details.

DIP/J-10230/24

Sd/-
Wildlife Warden
Kathua
Date: 15-02-2025.

NO.: WLW/K/Tender/2024-25/767-71

EDITORIAL

Production Linked Incentive Scheme

The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme is a strategic government initiative aimed at boosting India's manufacturing sector, enhancing production capabilities, and positioning the country as a global manufacturing hub. Introduced in 2020 by the Government of India, the scheme is a part of the larger vision to make India self-reliant (Atmanirbhar Bharat) and to attract investments in critical sectors, thereby improving the overall competitiveness of Indian businesses on the global stage.

The PLI scheme is designed to provide financial incentives to businesses based on their incremental production and sales. The scheme covers various sectors, ranging from electronics, pharmaceuticals, textiles, and automobile components to food processing, among others. The core idea behind the PLI is to encourage both local and foreign manufacturers to enhance their production capabilities and meet the rising domestic and global demand, which will eventually lead to economic growth, job creation, and innovation.

As the name suggests, the PLI scheme offers incentives that are directly tied to the incremental production of goods. These incentives are provided over a defined period, typically 5 to 7 years, to eligible companies that meet specific production and sales targets. The higher the increase in production, the greater the incentive a company can receive.

The PLI scheme is designed to target specific sectors that are crucial for India's economic development. For instance, the scheme includes sectors like AImed at increasing domestic production and reducing dependency on imports; To enhance the production of critical medicines and medical products; To boost domestic manufacturing of electric vehicles (EVs) and automobile components; To increase the capacity of processing perishable goods, ensuring better food security and reducing wastage; To increase textile and garment production and promote exports.

Eligibility Criteria: Each sector has specific eligibility criteria and a targeted production value. Companies must demonstrate a capacity for substantial growth, typically in terms of sales and production, to qualify for the incentives. The government also prioritizes companies that are aligned with its goals of enhancing exports, reducing imports, and creating employment opportunities.

The financial incentives provided under the scheme vary based on the sector and the company's growth. Generally, the incentives range from 4% to 6% of incremental sales over a base year. The incentive percentage tends to decrease over the years, encouraging companies to continuously improve their production levels.

Unlike traditional subsidy schemes, the PLI scheme is focused on long-term results. Companies are required to meet progressively higher targets, with the incentive structure being front-loaded, ensuring early-stage growth and incentivizing firms to commit to long-term investment and expansion.

Promoting Domestic Manufacturing: One of the primary goals of the PLI scheme is to promote domestic manufacturing by incentivizing companies to scale up production and improve competitiveness. This, in turn, will help in reducing the reliance on imports, particularly in critical sectors such as electronics and pharmaceuticals.

By offering financial incentives, the PLI scheme aims to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) in key sectors. This will not only boost the manufacturing capacity of these sectors but also improve technology transfer, enhance managerial expertise, and create a more robust supply chain.

The scheme is designed to help India become a global manufacturing hub. By promoting sectors that are export-oriented, the PLI scheme aims to boost India's export potential, increase foreign exchange earnings, and strengthen the nation's trade balance.

A significant objective of the PLI scheme is to create job opportunities across various sectors. As companies expand their manufacturing units to meet production targets, they will require more labor, both skilled and unskilled, leading to employment generation. Additionally, increased manufacturing capacity also leads to the growth of ancillary industries.

The scheme encourages companies to invest in research and development (R&D) and innovation. By offering financial support, the government hopes to foster a competitive environment where firms focus on technological advancements and the development of new products to meet both domestic and international demand.

Sarthal a paradise in Jammu but needs attention

By: Mudasar Ali

Sarthal, located in the Tehsil Bani of District Kathua, is a beautiful tourist destination, situated near Bhaderwah, Basohli, and Pathankot. It is approximately 50 kilometers away from Bhaderwah and is one of the most charming places in Jammu and Kashmir, often referred to as "Mini Kashmir." The area is blessed with abundant natural beauty, with lush greenery, dense forests, towering mountains, and clear air. Sarthal's scenery rivals popular destinations like Gulmarg, Pahalgam, and Sonamarg. The beauty of the region has been further enhanced by snowfall, attracting visitors year-round.

Mudasar Ali, a prominent social activist from Bani, has dedicated extensive efforts to the development of the Sarthal tourist destination. His deep passion for the region and its potential has led him to conceptualize several visionary plans to enhance its appeal and infrastructure. With a clear understanding of the area's rich natural beauty and untapped potential, Mudasar Ali is not only a driving force in local activism but also a key figure whose insights could play a pivotal role in transforming Sarthal into a nationally recognized tourist hub.

It is now essential for the government to recognize his invaluable contribution and actively seek his guidance in advancing the region's development. His visionary plans and profound knowledge of the area's needs could provide the necessary momentum to catapult Sarthal to the national stage, ensuring it receives the attention and resources it deserves. Through collaboration with forward-thinking leaders like Mudasar Ali, the government can help realize the full potential of this beautiful destination and make it a must-visit spot for tourists from across the country.

The region is enriched in natural beauty and offers an enchanting atmosphere that draws both local



and international tourists. Each year, thousands of tourists from Bhaderwah, Jammu, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Delhi, and other states come to enjoy the serene landscape of Sarthal. Particularly, during the summer, tourists flock here because the weather remains neither too hot nor too cold, providing a comfortable environment for them to enjoy the lush greenery and scenic beauty.

In the winter, the area is covered in snow, and visitors enjoy playing with snowballs, making the experience even more delightful. In addition to being a popular tourist spot, Sarthal is also a location for film shootings, with several songs having been recorded here. The region also hosts various events like cricket tournaments and the annual ChinjMela/Dangal (wrestling competition) held every year from June 25th to 27th. This mela has been celebrated for over a hundred years and attracts people from Bhaderwah, Kathua, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, and beyond.

Sarthal's attractiveness is not only due to its beauty but also because it serves as a picnic destination for schools and colleges. As the summer season begins, the Gujjars and Bakarwals bring their livestock to the area, adding to the charm of this picturesque place. The locals are always happy to see tourists enjoying the beauty of the area, as it brings life and prosperity to the region.

Traditional attire in Sarthal includes churidar pajamas, phadi woolen coats in winter, and pherans (long, loose-fitting garments) for both men and women. Men also wear a dastar (turban), while women wear ghagras. The region's cuisine includes local delicacies like rajmachawal, kasrodkisabzi (fiddlehead), and sarsonkasaag. Dairy products such as kadhi or karhi (a yogurt-based dish), kalari cheese, desilassi (yogurt drink), and makhan (butter) are also staples. Local sweets like barfi and jalebi are favorites, while fruits such as apples, pears, peaches, plums, apricots, and cherries, along with dry fruits like almonds and walnuts, are commonly found here.

The languages spoken in Sarthal include Pahari, Dogri, Hindi, Kashmiri, and Urdu. Local music and dance styles include Dogri and Pahari songs, along with the Kud and Gaddi dances.

Despite its natural beauty, Sarthal, and the Bani Tehsil, in general, has been often overlooked by both tourists and authorities. The region faces several challenges, including a lack of basic infrastructure that could make it a more viable tourist destination. Sarthal suffers from power issues, and although a mobile tower has been installed, it has yet to be activated. Public toilet complexes and health facilities are also lacking. Tourists often face difficulties in finding accommodation or food, as the area lacks hotels or restaurants to cater to the growing number of visitors. Further-

more, cleanliness is a concern, with a shortage of dustbins and proper waste management.

The people of Sarthal want the government to improve infrastructure, build parks, install fountains, and create better facilities for visitors. They also urge for the development of the Chattergala Tunnel, which has been awaited for over five years, as it would help connect Bani to Bhaderwah more efficiently, opening up opportunities for locals, especially the educated youth, who are currently struggling with unemployment. This project could be a game-changer for the region, providing employment opportunities and boosting tourism.

Additionally, the locals hope that the government will consider installing a Gondola lift in Sarthal to attract more tourists and improve the overall infrastructure. A better road network, including the year-round opening of the Bhaderwah, Basohli, Pathankot highway, would make the region more accessible, encouraging tourism and benefiting the economy.

The locals also believe that promoting Sarthal and Bani as a tourism hub will help curb the growing issues of unemployment and drug abuse among the youth. The tourism industry could provide a stable source of income for families, allowing them to lead better lives.

In conclusion, Sarthal is a hidden gem that deserves more attention and promotion. With its natural beauty, rich culture, and potential for growth, the area could become a major tourist destination if the government takes the necessary steps to improve its infrastructure. By focusing on Sarthal, the government can provide employment opportunities, enhance the local economy, and create a better future for the residents. Local authorities, such as Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, and the Director of Tourism Jammu, are urged to visit the area and help elevate its status on the tourism map of Jammu and Kashmir.

Jammu has degenerated into Crime Capital of UT

By: Omkar Dattatray

It is very unfortunate and disturbing that the city of temples which Jammu has the distinction of being is degenerating into a hub and capital of crimes. It is matter of grave and grave concern that crime graph in Jammu is rising and Jammu has become infamous for crime, mafia, drugs, rowdy elements, goons and other anti social activities. In recent days many instances of crime, theft, dacoits, ransom collection and kidnapping have raised its ugly head and all these negative things has become the order of the day and the common public suffers great as it is engrossed in this unfavorable environment and the people want some relief from day to day thefts, dacoits, robberies, abductions, chain snatching etc. People are feeling suffocation and heat of the crimes day in and day out. Increasing crime has become a big headache and concern to the common man as he is caught in the cobweb of crimes perpetrated by the criminals of various kinds. People feel frightened and want a zero crime atmosphere. There is a sense of insecurity among the people as thefts and robberies are taking place in various parts of Jammu and its peripheries in broad daylight. It seems that there is no fear of police and law enforcing agencies in the criminals, gangsters, goons and rowdy elements and they are committing crimes without any fear and remorse. In recent days dacoits have looted a jewelry shop in Greater Kalish area at gun point and the dacoits snatched gold weighing 1.500 kg. Few days after this daredevil crime the robbers struck a medical shop in Jammu city and looted Rs 45000 from the shop that too during day time. A

murder occurred in the busy Jewel chock in which was members of a gang / gun wielding goons stopped a Red Thar and pumped bullets on the person driving the vehicle and the gangsters fled on a grey colored scooty at gun point. The injured man was identified as Sumit Jandyal of Vijaypur and he was taken to GMC hospital where doctors declared him dead. It has become clear that this unfortunate murder was the result of some old rivalry among the two groups of gangsters. But thank God that Jammu police acted swiftly and apprehended 11 accused in the murder. Few days ago thieves took the benefit of darkness as the power went off in Janipur and the thieves took away some garlands of Rupees and went away. However the police of Janipur acted very swift and caught the thieves. Few months ago an auto Riksha driver who was ferrying a couple of Monarama Vihar Patta Bohri and was known to the couple, murdered the couple that too in the day time without any fear. This gruesome murder shook the people of Bhoori/Talab Tiloo area and the incident sent shock waves in whole Jammu. The auto riksha driver was also apprehended within few days of the double murder. The pall of gloom descended Talab Tiloo, Bohri areas on hearing this unfortunate double murder of a retired principal and his wife by a person known to the couple. There was good relations between the couple and the auto driver and they could have never thought even in their wildest dream that such unfortunate thing will be done to them that too by the person known to them for many years. The fact that thefts, murders, group clashes, gang war resulting into deaths is frequently taking place in and around Jammu and such crimes

are giving sleepless nights to Jammuites. People feel much insecure in their homes, while going to do daily chorus and even going outside for a walk and while going for purchasing the daily items from the market. Chain snatching is also on rise. Few days before shooting took place at Pallan Mandal on a vehicle and the shooter fled away. Jammu has seen a rise in crime in recent days including gang violence and extortions. As pointed above in February 2025, a gangster was shot and killed in a daylight shooting in Jewel Chowk. Yes police have increased their efforts to crack down on crime syndicates, including extortion rackets. Ramgarh, Vijaypur, Bishna, Bari Brahmana, and RS pura have become hotspots of highway robberies. Drug smuggling is also a problem in these areas. Drug addiction is on rise in Jammu and many people especially youth and even women are taking drugs and have become drug addicts. It seems that police in and around Jammu should have to take certain concrete steps to tighten noose around the thieves, goons, gangsters, extortionists, dacoits who have lately become proactive as the city and its periphery have been witnessing cases of theft, robberies and gang wars in the recent days. There is insecurity and unease among the residents of Jammu as never before as the region is witness to increase in crime that people fear to leave their shops and houses during the day as well as night because the cases of burglary and robberies have taken place in various parts of the city. The people have now raised their voice and showed their concern over the crimes with certain political parties demanding strong action against the criminals including thieves. The crime has become

uncontrollable and people have never seen such surge in crimes. Thieves have struck a grocery shop in Shalimar Chowk area and have snatched Rs 50,000. Few days ago thieves struck two shops in Patoli area and decamped with different items worth Rs 3-4 lakh. There is urgent need to take these cases of thefts, robbery and gang wars very seriously because if police show leniency and complacency, the thieves, robbers and goons will be emboldened and it will give steep rise to crime and ultimately people will become sufferers. It is no exaggeration to point out that thieves, dacoits and gangsters and goons have become hyper active and if all this is not dealt with an iron hand, the situation will become uncontrollable and the brunt will be borne by the general populace. It is worth appreciation that Jammu police is working with honesty and determination and has solved cases of theft and gang war recently. Jammu police is tirelessly and selflessly working to unearth the thefts and murderers in Jammu and around it. Still there is need to proactively tighten the noose against the thieves, robbers, goons and gangsters so that people will have a sigh of relief. People of Jammu have high expectations on police and it is hoped that law enforcing agencies will leave no stone unturned to crack on thieves, goons and all unscrupulous elements who are becoming threat to peaceful life in Jammu city.

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

PSAJK mourns passing of Qulsum Ali, Chairperson of HPHS Srinagar

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Feb 18: The Private Schools Association of Jammu and Kashmir (PSAJK) expresses its deepest condolences on the sad demise of Qulsum Ali (Badi Mam), Chairperson of Hussaini Public High School (HPHS), HMT Srinagar. The association stands in solidarity with her bereaved family, especially her husband, Mr. Farooq Ahmad Hajna, and daughter, Sabena Farooq, who also serves as the Principal of Hussaini Public High School. A delegation of PSAJK, led by State President Dr. G.N. Var, along with Majid Bhat (Central Kashmir Head), Bilal Ahmad (District

President Srinagar), Tahir Wagay (General Secretary PSAJK District Srinagar), and other members, visited the bereaved family to offer their condolences. They also participated in her Nimaz-e-Janazah, paying their final respects.

Badi Mam was a brave, educated, and visionary woman who dedicated her life to the upliftment of education in Kashmir. Her contributions to the private education sector are immeasurable and will always be remembered. Her relentless efforts helped shape the future of many students, and she was an inspiration for many educators.

Dr. G.N. Var, President PSAJK, said "The pass



ing of Qulsum Ali Ji is a huge loss for the education sector of Kashmir. She was a pioneer who devoted her life to educating generations with sincerity and dedication. Her contributions will continue to inspire us all. May Allah grant her the highest place in Jannah and give her family the strength to bear this irreparable loss."

Majid Bhat, PSAJK Central Kashmir Head,

stated "Education in Kashmir has lost a guiding light today. Badi Mam was a mentor, edu leader and a strong pillar of the private education sector. Her legacy will always remain in the hearts of those she educated and guided."

Bilal Ahmad, PSAJK District President Srinagar, expressed his grief "Her passion for education and her tireless service to the students of Kashmir will never be forgotten. She was a role model for educators and a beacon of hope for students. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family during this difficult time."

Tahir Wagay, General Secretary PSAJK

District Srinagar, said "Badi Mam's contributions to the private education sector will be remembered for generations. She was a skilled school administrator who shaped the future of many through her dedication and hard work. We stand with her family in this moment of sorrow."

The PSAJK executive body and general members deeply mourned her loss and paid their respects to a distinguished educationist who dedicated her life to shaping young minds.

We pray to Almighty Allah to grant her the highest place in Jannah and give her family the patience and strength to bear this loss. Ameen.

Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers honoured as Most Trusted Jewellery Brand of J&K



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: In a moment of pride and recognition, Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers Pvt. Ltd., a renowned name in the jewellery industry of Jammu & Kashmir, has been honoured as the Most Trusted Jewellery Brand of the region, during the third edition of the BIG Impact Awards. The prestigious award was conferred by the Chief Minister of J&K, Omar Abdullah Ji, acknowledging the brand's unwavering commitment to quality, craftsmanship, and customer trust.

The award was received by Shivam Suri, Managing Director of Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers, in a grand ceremony attended by prominent dignitaries, business leaders, and esteemed guests. This recognition solidifies the brand's legacy, built over decades of excellence and customer satisfaction.

Speaking on the occasion, Ankur Suri, who is also the Managing

Director of Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers, expressed his gratitude and reaffirmed the brand's commitment to delivering the finest jewellery to its patrons. "This award is a testament to the trust and love our customers have placed in us. At Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers, we have always believed in upholding the highest standards of purity, innovation, and craftsmanship. We will continue to serve our customers with exquisite jewellery designs that celebrate their cherished moments."

Carrying a legacy of three generations, Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers has established itself as a premier jewellery house, offering an extensive range of exquisite gold, diamond, and precious gemstone collections. The brand is synonymous with quality, authenticity, and timeless designs that cater to traditional and contemporary tastes alike.

Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers, a renowned family-based

jeweler in Jammu and Kashmir, has been serving the people with trust and quality for over six decades. Founded in 1958 by Lala Mukh Raj Saraf in Lakhdatta Bazaar, the esteemed and heritage jeweler continues to carry forward its legacy of excellence through three generations: Lala Mukh Raj Saraf, his son Ashok Kumar Suri, and presently Ankur Suri.

The store, known as J&K's Finest Wedding Jewellery Store, is the first choice for customers seeking high-quality bridal and heritage jewellery. Their master artisans blend traditional craftsmanship with modern aesthetics, creating unique masterpieces that resonate with elegance and grace.

Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers extends heartfelt gratitude to its loyal customers for their unwavering support and trust. As they continue their journey, the brand remains committed to excellence, innovation, and customer satisfaction, further strengthening its reputation as the Most Trusted Jewellery Brand of Jammu & Kashmir.

With four strategically located outlets in Jammu, including two in Lakhdatta Bazaar, one in Channi Himmat, and another in Gandhi Nagar, Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers is synonymous with offering high-quality, certified jewelry.

Yoga Session on Exam Stress Management held at GMS Channi Himmat



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: In an effort to support students during exam season, a registered non-governmental organization THE - SARA under Mission Mental Health Support successfully conducted a Yoga Session focused on Exam Stress Management. The event, which took place at Government Middle School Channi Himmat Jammu, brought together students and teachers to learn techniques for reducing stress and promoting mental well-being during the high-pressure exam period.

The yoga session, led by field volunteer at 'THE - SARA' Anita Solanki, a certified Yoga teacher and evaluator, mental health wellness instructor from the Ministry of Ayush, who emphasized the importance of mindfulness, deep breathing, and yoga as effective tools for managing stress.

The participants were guided through various poses and relaxation techniques designed to calm the mind, release physical tension, and improve focus, helping students navigate the emotional and mental challenges that come with exams.

Headmistress of GMS Channi Himmat Neeru Rajput expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to learn stress-reducing techniques that will help students stay focused and calm throughout their exams.

It is pertinent to mention that THE - SARA remains committed to promoting mental health awareness and providing resources that empower individuals, particularly students, to live balanced and healthy lives. This event marks just one of many initiatives by the organization to address the growing concerns around mental well-being in education.

TNWS delegation meets PHE officials over water shortage issue

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: A delegation from Trikuta Nagar Welfare Society (TNWS), led by its President, Rajinder Kakar, met with Chief Engineer Vikas Sharma, Superintendent Engineer Sunil Gandotra, and Executive Engineer Ashish Sharma of the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Department to discuss the pressing issue of water shortage in Ward 54, Trikuta Nagar.

During the meeting, Rajinder Kakar emphasized the urgent need to increase water supply hours to meet the demands of residents in Sector 9, 8, 7, 6, and 5



of Trikuta Nagar.

A detailed discussion was held with the concerned officials regarding the persistent water shortage in the locality. Additionally, he requested the installation of a new tube well to supplement the existing water supply and ensure adequate distribution.

In response, Chief Engineer Vikas Sharma directed the concerned engineers to take immediate

and necessary steps to resolve the issue at the earliest.

Among others present in the meeting were R.K. Kokroo, Kewal Sheer, and Amarjeet Singh, who also expressed concerns regarding the water crisis and urged for swift action.

The Trikuta Nagar Welfare Society remained hopeful that the authorities will address the issue promptly for the welfare of the residents.

GDC Khour launches 7-day NSS Winter Special Camp



Top News Report

KHOUR, Feb 18: The NSS unit of Government Degree College Khour commenced its 7 day winter special camp from February 18 to 25, 2025, with a fervent inauguration ceremony led by the College Principal, Prof. (Dr.) T.K Sharma.

The event started with the traditional lighting of the ceremonial lamp, symbolizing the enlightenment and unity of purpose. Prof. Himanshu Khajuria, NSS Program Officer, outlined the comprehensive schedule of activities planned for the camp, setting the stage for an enriching experience ahead.

An orientation program was conducted by Diljit Singh for the newly registered NSS volunteers, providing them with insights into the organization's ethos and objectives.

Senior volunteers shared their experiences and enthusiasm, underscoring the spirit of community service embodied by NSS.

Addressing the gathering, the College Principal emphasized the NSS motto "Not Me But You" urging students to embrace leadership and responsibility in serving the community selflessly.

He further commended the efforts of the NSS Program Officer and

volunteers, highlighting their dedication to community welfare.

The launch of the winter special camp underscores GDC Khour's commitment to fostering a spirit of Social responsibility and collective action among its students, preparing them to be proactive agents of positive change in society.

The program concluded with a formal vote of thanks extended by Prof. Hlmanshu Khajuria, expressing gratitude to all participants for their dedication and commitment.

Prof. Khalid Sajad Bohra, Prof. Shivani Sharma & Prof. Pooja Kumari also graced the event with their presence.

NSS unit of GDC Jourian conducts valedictory ceremony for Winter Camp 2025

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: The National Service Scheme (NSS) unit of Government Degree College Jourian successfully conducted the valedictory ceremony for its Winter Camp 2025 i.e today.

The winter camp was started on February 10 which aimed at promoting community service and social responsibility among the students. The programme concluded with a celebration of the participants' hard work and dedica



tion. The valedictory event was organised by NSS PO Dr Vandana Rajput under the patronage of worthy Principal Dr. Anuradha Pandoh. A small cultural program was presented by the students followed by

presentation of 7 days report.

A large number of students participated in the programme. All the staff members were present on the occasion. Refreshments were also served at the valedictory function of the winter camp.

Arijit Singh mesmerises audience, Aryans Group of Collegess' education partner of event

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: In a Live concert, Bollywood Singh Arijit Singh captivated his around fifteen thousand fans. The show was organized in Panchkula by Tarish Entertainment & Tarun Chaudhary. Aryans Group of Colleges, Rajpura, Near Chandigarh was Education Partner of this event.

Arijit Singh made everyone spellbound with his hit songs such as "Tum Hi Ho", "Channa Mereya", "Tera Yaar Hu Mai", "Sajni", "Galti se

Mistake", "Dhago se Bandha", "Kesariya" etc. during his live concert at the Shalimar Ground. Thousands of his fans gathered at the venue to see their favorite singer perform live.

Fans sang along and cheered through the evening, making for a charged atmosphere. Some struggled with long queues at the entrances and parking woes. However, the energy inside the venue remained high as the singer's voice echoed through the jam-packed ground.

Delegation from Sical meets MLA Bhadarwah, raises development issues

Top News Report

BHADARWAH, Feb 18: A delegation from village Sical, Tehsil Kahara, District Doda, led by Ex-Sarpanch of Panchayat Halaran, Om Raj Bhatt, met MLA Bhadarwah, Daleep Singh Parihar, at his residence in Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, to discuss urgent developmental issues in the region.

The delegation highlighted the need for road construction from Halaran to Upper Sical and the completion of

the Halaran-Khatassu road project, along with the extension of a three-kilometer road from Khatassu to Badano. They emphasized that linking the Halaran-Khatassu road with Badano through a mere 3 km stretch would complete the road circuit, significantly boost tourism and create employment opportunities for thousands in the area.

In addition to road infrastructure, the delegation also urged the MLA to initiate a water supply uplift project

from Nag Point to Sonaray to ensure adequate water distribution for the entire Upper Sical village. Furthermore, they requested sanctioning a sewerage pipeline from the house of Isser Lal, passing through the residence of Manoj Kumar and other affected households, to improve sanitation and hygiene in the locality.

The MLA assured the delegation that their demands would be taken up with the concerned authorities for speedy implementation.

Ranveer Allahbadia's comment was highly disrespectful, just an apology isn't enough, say celebrities

The India's Got Latent row refuses to die. The YouTuber and podcaster Ranveer Allahbadia, also known as 'Beer Biceps,' has now alleged that individuals posing as patients attempted to intrude into his mother's clinic amid a wave of death threats against him and his family.

The threats follow his controversial remarks on the now-deleted comedy show India's Got Latent.

Taking to his X handle, Allahbadia said, "My remark about my parents was insensitive and disrespectful. It is my moral responsibility to do better and I am genuinely sorry. People have invaded my mother's clinic posing as patients. I'm feeling scared and I don't know what to do. But I'm not running away. I have full faith in the police and the judicial system of India." Allahbadia said.

Meanwhile, Ranveer Allahbadia's comment was highly disrespectful, crosses the line, say the celebrities. They speak about the need for self-censor and how it mustn't go unpunished.

Show must be banned

Ranveer's statement under India's got Latent was extremely shameful and disgusting. It clearly shows that the image he had built on his podcast until now was completely one-sided and



fake. His real personality came out in through just one statement, he revealed a lot about his upbringing, the values he was taught, and what his parents must have gone through at home. Shows like these, which promote vulgarity in the name of stand-up comedy, should be banned immediately. Social media is used by everyone today—people of all genders, from children to adults. Because of such individuals, society is being negatively impacted in the worst way possible. This is affecting people's mindsets and raising unnecessary questions and discussions. Therefore, banning such shows is extremely necessary.

Harsha Richharia, influencer. Please think before you speak

I do not support such behaviour, neither in public nor even in private conversations with

friends. First of all, I do not support foul language, hurtful words, or disrespect in any way. So, of course, this is the worst thing, and I completely disagree with it. People these days speak without thinking. Podcasts are about discussing the guest and their life, not about the host. How a host behaves in real life is completely different from what happens on the podcast.

Nehal Vadoliya, actress.

Adhere to standard norms of behaviour

It's so controversial, and there are so many sides to the matter. However, as far as the comments are concerned, I did find them going a bit too far. I sometimes feel that these things escalate really, really quickly, especially in how they affect teenagers and children. It's just not nice. I don't know how we can control it. It's not

just about this country or any other specific country—it's about the way social media and podcasts are evolving and their widespread availability to a much younger generation. I think we all need to exercise self-control and adhere to certain norms of behaviour. If there's anything I would say, it's that humanity should be our guiding principle. People should listen to their good senses and their hearts and consider the impact they're having on others. If the effect isn't positive, then don't do it. It's just not right.

Namita Lal, actress. Just an apology isn't enough

Vinashkaal vipreet buddhi (when destruction is near, judgment fails). This particular podcast seems somewhat X-rated based on its content. As per the host, it was meant for a selected audience

through subscriptions. However, it went viral, likely because even the subscribers disapproved of it. Clearly, the content was low-class and inappropriate. It reflects a person's mindset, and unfortunately, our society has a very problematic attitude when it comes to topics like sex and intimacy. Even if some argue about freedom of speech and democracy, this kind of content cannot be justified. There should be a punishment. A simple apology is not enough.

Hansa Singh, actress. Be honest, but also kind and respectful

I believe in freedom of expression, but comedy should be respectful. It shouldn't hurt or offend people. Stand-up comedy often pushes limits, but we need to think about how our words affect others. Unfiltered conversations, especially among youngsters, can normalise abusive language and other bad habits. Being honest is great, but we also need to be kind and respectful. These days, people care more about getting attention than having real, meaningful discussions. This can make us insensitive to important issues.

Aadesh Chaudhary, actor.

Ranbir Kapoor launches his lifestyle brand



Ranbir Kapoor has launched his lifestyle brand named ARKS. He stepped out in the city to celebrate the opening of the brand's first store in Mumbai. At the launch, he met and interacted with several of his fans. From giving autographs to taking pictures with

them, Ranbir looked extremely happy. He attended the launch donning a white T-shirt and beige pants teamed with white sneakers.

For men, the collection encompasses a refined assortment of cotton jersey t-shirts, plush embossed French

terry sweatshirts, knitted hoodies, double pique polo shirts, flat knit t-shirts and linen shirts. It further includes optic wash sweatshirts, versatile cotton twill and denim shackets, stylish denim biker jackets, and ultra-limited edition uber leather reversible bomber jackets.

In bottom-wear, the collection offers a selection of well-tailored denims in regular and straight fits, versatile cargo pants, comfortable chino shorts, and embossed French terry joggers.

For women, ARKS offers a curated selection of contemporary top-wear, including crop tops, cotton jersey t-shirts, flat knit polo shirts and kaftan tops, along with modal jersey halter neck tops, cotton twill shackets, French terry hoodies and Twill biker jackets. The collection also boasts a versatile range of bottom-wear options, including denim jeans, denim shorts, cargo pants, French terry joggers and linen drawstring pants.

Ranbir shared, "At ARKS, we believe in creating products that aren't loud but still make a statement. It's about finding confidence in the simplicity of design and feeling good in what you wear, what you use, and how you live."

Kanika Kapoor calls Gori Hai Kalaiyan 2.0 a vibrant reinterpretation of a beloved number

Her peppy voice and infectious energy are hard to miss. Little wonder then, whenever singer Kanika Kapoor croons a number, it becomes an instant hit with the audience. Having sung chartbusters like Baby Doll, Chittiyaan Kalaiyaan and more, Kanika is back with Gori Hai Kalaiyan, an effervescent number from the film Mere Husband Ki Biwi.

The film, starring Bhumi Pednekar, Rakul Preet Singh and Arjun Kapoor, will be releasing on February 21, and the song, featuring Badshah, Sharvi Yadav and IP Singh, has been creating a buzz for its vibrant reinterpretation of a beloved classic. Kanika believes Gori Hai Kalaiyan is special because it blends nostalgia with the modern times. "The original track was sung by the legendary Lata ji and it's an absolute honour to have my voice featured in the same song. The excitement of bringing a fresh touch to such an iconic melody is truly overwhelming and I feel privileged to be part of this musical journey," she beams.

The track has the charm of classic melodies, but with an energetic vibe. "The moment I heard the composition, I knew it had that uplifting, playful, feel, and bringing it to life was an exciting process for me. Seeing the love it's getting is truly amazing." The film too has an entertaining plot and Kanika was instantly drawn to the project. "I felt it did justice to my voice. The song was a perfect fit for my style—playful, catchy and full of energy. Everything about it just clicked in the very first go. The shooting process was fantastic too and I enjoyed it to the hilt."

Sometimes, it's just the beat that draws a singer to a particular song, as happened with Kanika. "As soon as I heard the beat, I knew it was going to be a hit. We experimented with different vocal styles to capture the perfect tone and energy. The rhythm was so infectious that I was literally dancing in the studio while recording." So, what sets this number aside from the others she has sung so far? "Gori Hai Kalaiyan brings the best of both worlds. It has an old-school Bollywood essence with a fresh, high-energy twist. The combination of both is reflected in the final product and how!"

Traditional, yet contemporary



Balancing traditional and contemporary styles is not easy, but Kanika has done that with aplomb and she loves experimenting with different genres too. "Growing up with classical Indian music, while being influenced by global pop and electronic sounds has shaped my style. I always try to maintain my roots while bringing in fresh, modern elements. Moving forward, I want to explore more genres—Afro, R&B, and even collaborations with other talented artists."

With every song's success, the pressure to keep raising the bar follows and Kanika agrees to the same. "Of course, every hit raises expectations, but I see it as a motivation rather than pressure. I focus on enjoying the creative process and giving my best to every song. Some tracks become instant hits, while others take time to grow on people. The key is to stay true to my music and let everything else fall into place."

As for the coming times, Kanika has some amazing projects lined up, both in India and internationally. "There are collaborations across different genres. There's a lot of exciting music on the way—can't wait to share it with everyone." Sounds good!

Podium finish: Conclave named best film at BAFTAs, The Brutalist wins big too

PapaL selection thriller Conclave and period drama The Brutalist were the big winners at the BAFTA Film Awards in London, winning four prizes each.

Conclave, which had led nominations with 12 nods, won the night's most coveted award, Best Film, as well as outstanding British film, best adapted screenplay and best editing.

"We live in a time of a crisis of democracy and institutions that are usually used to bring us together are used to pull us apart," Conclave director Edward Berger said in his acceptance speech for the outstanding British Film Award. "And sometimes it's hard to keep the faith in that situation, but that's why we make movies and that's why we made this movie."

The Brutalist, a three-and-a-half hour tale about a Hungarian immigrant architect trying to rebuild his life in the United States post-World War II, had also been considered a frontrunner for best film. It won Best Director for Brady Corbet and Best Actor for its star, Adrien Brody.

"This film is really about this pursuit of leaving something meaningful and I think that is something we can all relate to," Brody said in his acceptance speech. The Brutalist also won the awards for original score and cinematography.

In one of the big surprises of the night, Mikey Madison won the leading actress category for portraying an exotic dancer who gets involved with a Russian oligarch's son in Anora.

Many had considered the frontrunners to be Demi Moore, who has received multiple hon-

ours for her performance in body horror The Substance, and Briton Marianne Jean-Baptiste, for her critically acclaimed portrayal of a woman struggling with depression in Hard Truths.

"I really wasn't expecting this," Madison said. "I want to take a moment to recognise the sex worker community ... you deserve respect and human decency. I will always be your friend."

Anora, considered a strong awards season contender after it and director Sean Baker triumphed at the Critics Choice Awards, as well as the Producers and Directors Guild of America Awards ahead of next month's Academy Awards, was also up for Best Film, as was Bob Dylan biopic A Complete Unknown.

Saldana, Culkin win Fellow Best Film nominee Emilia Perez, which mixes the diverse genres of musical and crime, triumphed in the 'Film Not in the English Language Category'.

"This is too nice, you shouldn't have done that," director Jacques Audiard said, accepting his award. "This award is not just for me but everyone who worked tirelessly on this film." He thanked the film's cast members, including an absent Karla Sofia Gascon, who had been nominated for leading actress.

Zoe Saldana won the Best Supporting Actress Award for her portrayal of a lawyer who helps a Mexican cartel leader, played by Gascon, fake his death and transition from a man to a woman.

Emilia Perez had been an early awards frontrunner, but its campaign lost steam following controversy surrounding Gascon, who has apologised for

past social media posts denigrating Muslims and other groups and said she would go silent to help the movie ahead of the Oscars.

In the Best Supporting Actor category, Kieran Culkin won for the dramedy A Real Pain.

The movie also picked up Best Original Screenplay Award for writer-director Jesse Eisenberg.

Piano tribute

The 78th edition of BAFTA saw Jeff Goldblum giving a moving piano tribute to renowned dignitaries such as David Lynch and Maggie Smith. The Wicked star, an accomplished jazz pianist with three albums to his name, played As Time Goes By in a tribute to the late stars. Blue Velvet director Lynch and Smith, star of Harry Potter and Downton Abbey, were left until last on the tribute reel in memoriam section.

All We Imagine As Light loses to Emilia Perez

Payal Kapadia's critically acclaimed movie All We Imagine As Light lost out the BAFTA in the Best Film Not in the English Language category to French title Emilia Perez, also starring singer-actor Selena Gomez. Hours after the ceremony, the official Instagram page of Kapadia's film shared a picture of the director mingling with fellow artists. "Win or lose, good year for Indian films internationally @allweimagineaslight-film," read the caption of the Instagram Story.

Super/Man: The Christopher Reeve Story wins Best Documentary

There's great news for fans of Super/Man: The Christopher Reeve Story as it won Best Documentary award at the 78th

British Academy Film Awards. The documentary traces Reeve's rise from an aspiring actor to a global star, beginning with his ground-breaking portrayal of Superman in the 1978 film. Reeve's performance in four Superman films set a benchmark for the character and solidified his place in cinematic history.

Ariana Grande sizzles in pink gown

Singer-actress Ariana Grande rocked the ongoing edition of the BAFTA red carpet on Sunday with another enchanting look. The Wicked star, who's been recognised throughout this year's awards season for her role as Glinda, continued her streak of high-fashion looks at the 2025 BAFTA Awards. She arrived in a pretty pink and black gown that brought all the drama. Her plunging dress featured a black bodice and voluminous peachy-pink skirt with a gathered waistline. The sides of the bodice also dipped low enough to show off plenty of Grande's tattoos. The actress accessorised it with dazzling jewellery, including a diamond necklace and pearl earrings. She kept her glam peachy pink to match her dress and slicked her hair back off her face with a little black bow.

Chalamet makes a statement

Hollywood royalty Timothee Chalamet, and his love interest Kylie Jenner were a sight to behold at the BAFTA Awards. The actor, who was nominated in the category of Leading Actor for A Complete Unknown, touched down on the red carpet in London in style, wearing a classic black Bottega Veneta suit with a black T-shirt

underneath. He accessorised with Cartier jewellery. Though Jenner didn't walk the carpet with him, she dazzled in her own right, wearing a slinky black gown with some sparkle, much like the other gowns she's been wearing recently to accompany her boyfriend for his events.

Timothee Chalamet, 29, and Jenner, 27, were just in Berlin days ago at the Berlin Film Festival, where they spent part of their Valentine's Day at a screening for Chalamet's film, A Complete Unknown.

Colman owns the red carpet

Even if Colman Domingo didn't win Best Actor for Sing Sing, he sure won the 2025 BAFTAs red carpet! Giving the traditional tuxedo a toss, the one of the most stylish Hollywood stars went for an over the top ensemble. He paired a bold, long, flared, empaneled leather Versace coat with an open shirt, black trousers and black gloves. Accessorising it with reportedly a Tiffany Bird on a Rock brooch, a Tiffany T1 pendant and Tiffany earrings, he stood out in a sea of staple suits. Can't wait for his Oscars look, or even better Met Gala! —Agencies

Winning note

BEST FILM: Conclave
OUTSTANDING BRITISH FILM: Conclave.

DIRECTOR: Brady Corbet, The Brutalist
LEADING ACTOR: Adrien Brody,

The Brutalist
LEADING ACTRESS: Mikey Madison, Anora

S U P P O R T I N G ACTOR: Kieran Culkin, A Real Pain

S U P P O R T I N G ACTRESS: Zoe Saldana, Emilia Perez.

FILM NOT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE: Emilia Perez.

PM Modi welcomes Amir of Qatar at Hyderabad House

Earlier in the day, the Amir of Qatar was accorded a ceremonial guard of honour at the Rashtrapati Bhavan

NEW DELHI, Feb 18 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday met Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani for talks at the Hyderabad House here, with the MEA saying that a "new milestone" is on the cards for this "special" bilateral partnership.

Earlier in the day, the Amir of Qatar was accorded a ceremonial guard of honour at the Rashtrapati Bhavan as President Droupadi Murmu welcomed the visiting leader.

Prime Minister Modi was also present on the occasion.

"PM @narendramodi warmly welcomed HH Sheikh @TamimbinHamad Al-Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar at



Hyderabad House.

A new milestone in the cards of this special India-Qatar partnership," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) posted on X.

Extending a rare gesture of hospitality, Modi received the Amir of Qatar at the airport on Monday evening.

"Went to the airport to welcome my brother, Amir of Qatar H H Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani. Wishing him a fruitful stay in India and looking forward to our meeting tomorrow," the prime minister said in a post on X on Monday.

The Amir of Qatar's visit will provide "further momentum to our growing multifaceted partnership", the MEA had said.

'Accusations or unparliamentary conduct cannot solve problems': UP CM Adityanath



LUCKNOW, Feb 18 (Agencies): Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday expressed hope that the opposition, frustrated by electoral defeat, would not disrupt the Budget Session but rather contribute positively to the smooth conduct of legislative proceedings.

Speaking to reporters ahead of the start of the Budget Session (2025-26), Adityanath said the governor's address and the presentation of the budget are crucial events where every member, including the opposition, can put forth their views effectively.

"Accusations or unparliamentary conduct cannot solve problems," he added.

The chief minister assured that the government is fully prepared to respond factually to any issue the opposition raises.

He said that the assembly should serve as a platform for meaningful discussions rather than being marred by baseless accusations or unruly conduct.

Adityanath expressed confidence that the governor's address

would mark the beginning of a disciplined and constructive approach from the opposition.

"We hope to see the opposition and all members conduct themselves in a manner that strengthens public faith in democratic values," he said.

The chief minister stated that the session would commence with the governor's address followed by discussions on it.

The Uttar Pradesh Budget for 2025-26 will be presented on February 20.

He said that the session, scheduled from February 18 to March 5, would cover key legislative business, including the passage of the state budget, deliberations on grants, and discussions on public welfare and development issues.

Adityanath highlighted that rarely in Uttar Pradesh's history has the assembly been convened for such an extended duration.

He stressed that ensuring the smooth conduct of proceedings is not just the ruling party's responsibility but also that of

the opposition.

"The House should be a platform for discussion and debate," he asserted.

The chief minister also pointed out the significant transformation in Uttar Pradesh's perception on a national and global scale under the BJP-led double-engine government over the past eight years.

"These achievements will be reflected in the governor's address and assembly discussions," he added.

The chief minister said while Uttar Pradesh is emerging as a center of attraction globally, a despondent opposition often tries to avoid discussions on such developments.

He urged the opposition to engage in constructive debates, stating that the budget session could be highly productive if they contribute positively.

The session, scheduled until March 5, will provide a platform for members to discuss the governor's address, raise key issues, deliberate on general and grant demands, and facilitate the passage of important legislative proposals.

Deputy chief ministers Keshav Prasad Maurya and Brajesh Pathak were also present during the interaction along with cabinet ministers Suresh Khanna and Dharampal Singh and Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh.

Kharge slams 'visionless' Modi govt, blames it for economic downturn

NEW DELHI, Feb 18 (Agencies): Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday termed as ironical the claim of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman that the Indian economy is giving good returns, and said a "visionless" Modi government has tanked the economy and ruined the lives of Indians.

"Nothing can be more ironical than Modi Sarkar's FM saying that our Economy is delivering 'Good Returns', he said in a post on X.

Kharge said Rs 45 lakh crore has been wiped out from the Indian stock markets so far in 2025 and Nifty 50 firms have shown the worst quarterly profit growth in five years.

"Foreign Investors have sold over Rs 1.56 lakh crore of stocks since October last year, including nearly Rs 1 lakh crore in 2025 itself, which has led to wiping out wealth of small and medium investors," the Congress chief said.

"Rupee at 87, means Trade Deficit is sky-high. Imports have risen by 62.21 percent in the last 5 years. The Modi Government's Trade policy is disastrous for India," he said.

Drawing a comparison, Kharge said export growth during the 10 years of UPA government from 2004 to 2014 grew by 549.36 percent while during the 10 years of Modi

government from 2014 to 2024 exports grew by 24.72 percent (Till April-Nov 2024).

"The Modi Government has forgone a Corporate Tax revenue of Rs 10 Lakh Crore in past 10 years, in anticipation that they will create jobs, but 8 out of 9 companies that have benefitted from the cut in Corporate taxes have REDUCED Jobs," he said.

The Congress chief also said India is starting at a global Tariff war, "Our Manufacturing Sector is drowning, Make in India and PLI Schemes have failed, youth unemployment has NO solution, Price Rise is extinguishing savings, Consumption is falling and there is no respite from Budget, Rural wages have seen ZERO growth, the Rupee has depreciated by 43% in the past 10 years and forced oil-gas buy would burden our import bills," he said.

"A visionless, rudderless and policyless Modi Sarkar has tanked the Indian Economy, ruining the lives of Indians," Kharge charged.

Seeking to assuage concerns over foreign institutional investors (FII) selling Indian equities lately, Sitharaman on Monday attributed the action to profit booking.

She said the Indian economy is one where the investors are bagging better returns



which leads to profit booking.

"FIIs also go out when they are able to or in a position to book profits. Indian market today, Indian economy today, has an environment in which investments are also yielding good returns and profit booking is also happening," she said.

It can be noted that FIIs have sold over Rs 1.56 lakh crore of stocks since October last year, including nearly Rs 1 lakh crore in 2025 itself, which has led to a sharp correction on the indices and wiping out investor wealth.

5 killed, 20 injured as dumper truck hits van in MP's Bhind

BHIND, Feb 18 (Agencies): Five persons, including three women, were killed and 20 others injured after a dumper truck hit a van in Bhind district of Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday morning, officials said.

The incident took place at around 5 am near Jawaharpura village when a group of persons was returning from a marriage function, Bhind district Superintendent of Police (SP) Asit Yadav said.

Some of the persons were sitting in the van and others standing on a road when suddenly a speeding dumper truck hit them and their vehicle. Three persons died on the spot, while two others succumbed later,



he said.

Five persons, including three women, were killed and 20 others suffered injuries.

The dumper truck hit the van probably while trying to avoid hitting a motorcycle, Bhind Collector Sanjeev Shrivastava told agency.

Among the injured, 12 were referred to Gwalior for treatment, while the

others were undergoing treatment at the Bhind district hospital, he said.

Angry locals staged a 'chakka jam' (blockade) on the road after the incident, eyewitnesses said.

The SP and the sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) went to the spot and were trying to pacify the agitated villagers, the collector said.

Disrespectful for PM, HM to have made midnight decision to appoint new CEC: Rahul Gandhi

NEW DELHI, Feb 18 (Agencies): Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said it is "disrespectful" and "discourteous" for the Prime Minister and Home Minister to have made a midnight decision to select the new Chief Election Commissioner when the process of selection is being challenged in the Supreme Court.

The government late on Monday night appointed Gyanesh Kumar as the new Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), hours after the meeting of the PM-led selection committee.

Gandhi, who is in the three-member committee, had asked the government to defer the meeting in view of the Supreme Court hearing in the matter.

Gandhi also presented a dissent note to the panel, of which Home Minister Amit Shah is also a member.

He wrote that the Congress would like the process of choosing the next CEC be deferred until the Supreme Court hearing and meeting called for initiating the process of choosing CEC be postponed.

"It will be both disrespectful and discourteous to the institutions as well as to the founding leaders of our nation for this committee to continue with its process of choosing the next CEC when the very composition of this com-



mittee and the process is being challenged and soon to be heard by the Supreme Court", Gandhi wrote in the dissent note.

In a judgement on March 2, 2023, the Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court ordered that the appointment of the CEC and election commissioners should be undertaken by a committee comprising of the PM, LoP and Chief Justice of India (CJI), Gandhi wrote.

He added that the judgement reflected the larger concern of the voters regarding the

integrity of electoral process.

Gandhi wrote in his dissent note that "this is also reflected in public surveys that show a continuing decline in trust of voters in India's election process and its institutions".

The Congress leader said that despite the Supreme Court order, the Central Government notified a legislation on August 2023 that bypassed the spirit and the letter of the top court's order.

The legislation reconstituted the committee to appoint the CEC and Election Commissioners to include the PM, the LoP and a Union cabinet minister and removing the CJI from the committee, Gandhi noted.

The Congress leader wrote that this government order was subsequently challenged by a public interest litigant. The Supreme Court has indicated its intention to take up the matter on February 19, 2025.

Gandhi noted that Constitution framer B R Ambedkar, while speaking in the Constituent Assembly in June 1949, warned about executive interference in India's democracy and the affairs of the Election Commission.

"The most fundamental aspect of the independent Election Commission free from executive interference is the process of choosing the Election Commissioners and the CEC", Gandhi wrote in the dissent note.

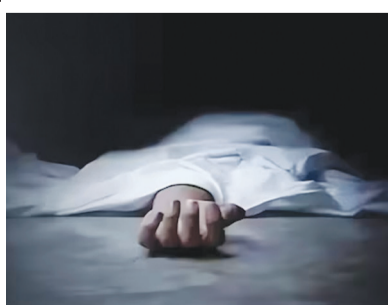
Andhra student dies by suicide over fee harassment, family stages protests

ANANTAPUR, Feb 18 (Agencies): A first-year intermediate student was found dead by suicide near SR Junior College in Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh. The student's lifeless body was discovered hanging from a tree.

Family members of the deceased have claimed that the student was driven to take this drastic step due to harassment over college fees. As the exams drew near, the college allegedly subjected the family to immense pressure regarding the payment of fees, which they argue may have contributed to the student's distress.

In a protest, the student's relatives placed his body at the gate of SR College, demanding justice. They voiced their anger over the college's actions, which they claim are not isolated incidents. The family members questioned why authorities had failed to take action against SR College despite previous allegations of student harassment.

The police, upon learning of the incident, arrived at the scene and are now investigating the circumstances surrounding the death. Meanwhile, student groups have rallied in protest, accusing SR Col-



lege of extorting fees from students and calling for immediate action against the institution. The protests have intensified, with demands for a thorough investigation into the allegations of harassment and exploitation at the college.

Audi hits scooter in Delhi's Lodhi Road injuring two, CCTV under review

NEW DELHI, Feb 18 (Agencies): A speeding Audi car struck a scooter in Delhi's Lodhi Road area, critically injuring one person and leaving another wounded, police said on Tuesday.

The victims, identified as Naitik and Abhishek, were rushed to the hospital by the car's occupants.

Naitik's condition is stable, whereas the condition of Abhishek is critical, said Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Achin Garg.

The accident occurred near the Jorbagh Post Office when the red Audi, being driven recklessly



at high speed, crashed into the scooter before ramming into a tree, police said.

"A police control room (PCR) call was received at 11:45 am, alerting police about the crash," said Garg.

According to the police, two young men -- aged 19 and 21 -- were inside the luxury car at the time of the incident. Both are students.

Naitik and Abhishek were returning home after visiting their grandmother when the accident occurred, police said.

"We have registered an FIR against the accused. We have formed multiple teams to nab the accused. We are also checking CCTV footage to know about the sequence of events," Garg said, adding further investigation is underway.

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu orders immediate enforcement of UNRWA law

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday instructed the immediate enforcement of the UNRWA law, which was passed by the Knesset with broad support.

TEL AVIV, Feb 18 (Agencies): Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday instructed the immediate enforcement of the UNRWA law, which was passed by the Knesset with broad support.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is a relief and human development agency.

Sharing a post on X, Israel PMO said, "Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has directed that the UNRWA law, which was passed by the Knesset with broad support, be enforced immediately."

"There are no restrictions on the implementation of the Prime Minister's directive," the post added.

Notably, earlier in October 2024, the Israeli parliament, known as the Knesset, passed two laws that called for ending UNRWA's operations in its territory and prohibiting Israeli



authorities from having any contact with the agency.

Israel had ordered UNRWA to vacate all premises in occupied East Jerusalem and cease operations in them by January 30 this year.

Earlier this month, US President Donald Trump signed executive orders to cut funding for the UNRWA.

According to the United Nations, UNRWA was estab-

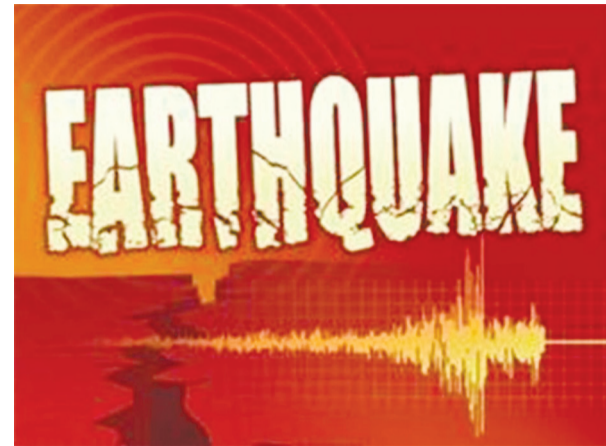
lished shortly after the creation of the United Nations itself by General Assembly resolution 302 (IV) in the wake of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war to provide "direct relief and works programmes" for registered Palestinian refugees, defined as "persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948 and who lost both home and means of livelihood

as a result of the 1948 war."

For decades, the agency has provided essential humanitarian services to Palestine refugees in areas controlled by Israel, notably in Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. These include health facilities, schools and vocational training centres.

Following the approval of the bill in the Israeli Parliament, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, stressed the central role that UNRWA plays in the delivery of aid and said that the effective ban would have "devastating consequences." The acting head of the UN aid coordination office, Joyce Msuya, had called the decision "dangerous and outrageous" whilst Commissioner-General of UNRWA Philippe Lazzarini had said that the bills will "increase the suffering of the Palestinians and are nothing less than collective punishment."

Earthquake of magnitude 4.3 hits Afghanistan



BADAKHSHAN, Feb 18 (Agencies): An earthquake of magnitude 4.3 on the Richter Scale jolted Afghanistan in the early hours of Tuesday.

As per the National Centre for Seismology (NCS), the earthquake occurred at a depth of 180 kilometres and was recorded at Latitude 36.52 N, Longitude 71.10 E.

The earthquake took place at 03:37 AM Indian Standard Time

(IST).

The earthquake which struck on Tuesday was recorded in the Badakhshan region of Afghanistan a mountainous region prone to natural calamities.

In the last thirty days, 17 earthquakes have taken place in Afghanistan.

As per the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), Afghanistan remains highly vulner-

able to natural disasters, including seasonal flooding, landslides and earthquakes.

These frequent earthquakes in Afghanistan cause damage to vulnerable communities, which are already grappling with decades of conflict and under-development and have left them with little resilience to cope with multiple simultaneous shocks, UNOCHA noted.

Afghanistan has a history of powerful earthquakes, with the Hindu Kush Mountain range being a geologically active area where quakes occur every year, as per the Red Cross.

Afghanistan sits on numerous fault lines between the Indian and the Eurasian tectonic plates, with a fault line also running directly through Herat.

Australian central bank cuts benchmark interest rate for the first time since October 2020

MELBOURNE, Feb 18 (Agencies): Australia's central bank on Tuesday reduced its benchmark interest rate for the first time since October 2020 as the nation's inflation cools.

The Reserve Bank of Australia reduced the cash rate by a quarter percentage point from 4.35% to 4.1% at its first board meeting for the year.

The cut was widely anticipated after inflation rose only 0.2% in the December quarter and 2.4% for calendar 2024. Annual inflation peaked at 7.8% two years earlier.

The bank manipulates interest rates to keep inflation within a target band of between 2% and 3%.

"Inflation has fallen substantially since the peak in 2022, as higher interest rates have been working to bring aggregate demand and supply closer towards balance," the board said in a statement.

Bank Governor Michele Bullock later advised against believing economic forecasts that several more rate cuts were expected this year. The board will next consider changing interest rates at its meeting on April 1. "Some other central banks have cut interest rates quite sharply over the past year, but we have taken a different strategy to most," Bullock told reporters. "Our policy rate was not raised as much as many countries overseas. We judged that while inflation expectations remained anchored, we could take a bit longer to bring inflation back to the target band, but we could keep unemployment lower," she added.

Unemployment in Australia remained

at near-record low levels of 4% in December, up from 3.9% in November.

Bullock said U.S. plans to increase tariffs on trading partners had the potential to be bad for economic activity around the world. "The tariff threats and what's going on overseas is very uncertain and probably even worse, it's unpredictable," Bullock said.

The rate shift is a welcome development for Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's center-left Labor Party government which will seek reelection at elections due by May 17.

Treasurer Jim Chalmers welcomed the independent board's decision.

"This is the rate relief Australians need and deserve," Chalmers said in a statement. "It won't solve every problem in our economy or in household budgets but it will help." Chalmers said his government had curbed inflation without the negative consequences experienced in other countries including high unemployment, a shrinking economy and recession. Twelve of the last 13 rate increases have taken place since the government was elected for its first three-year term on May 21, 2022. The cycle began in the final days of the previous government's tenure when the rate rose from a record low 0.1% to 0.35% on May 4, 2022.

The high cost of living and a shortage of housing around Australia are expected to be major issues in the upcoming election campaign.

The central bank had held the cash rate at 4.35% since November 2023. That was the highest rate since it fell from 4.5% to 4.25% in December 2011.

North Korea slams U.S. and Asian rivals for 'absurd' denuclearization plans

SEOUL, Feb 18 (Agencies): North Korea on Tuesday criticized the United States and Asian neighbors for pursuing the "absurd" goal of denuclearizing the North and said it will push to expand its nuclear forces under the direction of its authoritarian leader Kim Jong Un.

The statement by Pyongyang's Foreign Ministry came after the top diplomats of the U.S., South Korea and Japan met at a security conference in Germany and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening military cooperation and reinforcing an international sanctions regime to counter Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions.

The North Korean ministry accused the U.S. of trying to realize an "outdated and absurd plan" of denuclearizing the North and warned of "overwhelming and decisive counteraction" against its rivals if it perceives its security is under threat. It said the North will "consistently



adhere to the new line of bolstering the nuclear force" established by Kim and "thoroughly deter the U.S. and its vassal forces" from threats and blackmail against the North's sovereignty.

It was the latest North Korean statement accusing the U.S. of maintaining hostile policies against Pyongyang, though state media has so far avoided directly naming U.S. President Donald Trump, who, during his first term, engaged in unprecedented summits with the North Korean leader.

U.S. Secretary of State Mark Rubio held a three-way meeting with the

South Korean and Japanese foreign ministers in Munich, Germany, on Saturday and reaffirmed their commitment to the North's "complete denuclearization" and maintaining an effective sanctions regime targeting the country's weapons program. The countries also agreed to bolster defense and deterrence, including by expanding three-way military exercises and strengthening Japan and South Korea's military capabilities, according to a joint statement released after the meeting.

Trump and Kim met three times in 2018 and 2019 during Trump's first term, but their diplomacy quickly collapsed over disagreements about exchanging the release of U.S.-led sanctions for North Korean steps to wind down its nuclear and missile programs. North Korea has since suspended any meaningful talks with Washington and Seoul as Kim ramped up his testing activity and military demonstrations to counter what he portrayed as "gangster-like U.S. threats."

Kim's foreign policy priority is now Russia, which he has supplied with weapons and troops to help prolong Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine. Seoul fears that Kim may receive economic assistance and advanced technology to develop his arsenal in exchange for its military supporting Russia.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency said a diplomatic delegation led by Kim Ik Song, director of the Bureau for Affairs with Diplomatic Corps, departed for Russia on

Monday in the latest diplomatic activity between the countries. The agency didn't specify what will be discussed during the meetings.

Trump's election win has touched off speculation about a possible resumption of summit-driven diplomacy with Kim, but analysts say a quick return to 2018 is unlikely, given the significant changes in the regional security situation and broader geopolitics since then.

North Korea's nuclear program is no longer an independent issue but connected with broader challenges created by Russia's war on Ukraine and further complicated by weakened sanctions enforcement against Pyongyang.

Kim's efforts to boost North Korea's presence in a united front against Washington could also gain strength if Trump's efforts to increase tariffs and reset global trade rekindles a trade war with China, the North's main ally and economic lifeline, according to some experts.

Deadline for withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon expires

BEIRUT, Feb 18 (Agencies): A deadline expired Tuesday for all Israeli troops to leave south Lebanon under a ceasefire deal with Hezbollah, hours after Israel said it planned to remain in five strategic locations. Israeli troops had started withdrawing Monday from some border villages, according to a Lebanese security official, but they seemed poised to stay in key areas.

"Israeli forces are beginning to withdraw from border villages, including Mais al-Jabal and Blida, as the Lebanese army advances," the official told AFP, requesting anonymity to discuss sensitive matters.

Hezbollah strongholds in south and east Lebanon and south Beirut saw heavy destruction during two months of all-out war and a year of cross-border hostilities initiated by Hezbollah over the Gaza conflict.

Authorities estimate reconstruction costs could reach more than \$10 billion, while more than 100,000 remain internally displaced, according to United Nations figures.

Despite the devastation, thousands have been waiting eagerly since the November 27 ceasefire to return home, inspect their properties and in some cases search for the dead under the rubble.

"I miss sitting in front of my house, near my roses and having a morning cup of coffee," said Fatima Shukeir, in her sixties, who plans to return to her border village after more than a year and a half of displacement.

"I miss everything in Mais al-Jabal, I miss my neighbours. We were separated and I don't know where they went," Shukeir said.

Several border towns and villages, including Mais al-Jabal's municipality, have called on displaced residents to wait for the Lebanese army to deploy there before coming back, so as to guarantee their "safe" return.

'Homes destroyed'

Under the ceasefire, brokered by Washington and Paris, Lebanon's military was to deploy alongside United Nations peacekeepers as the Israeli army withdrew over a 60-day period that was extended to

February 18.

Hezbollah was to pull back north of the Litani River, about 30 kilometres (20 miles) from the border, and dismantle remaining military infrastructure there.

Hours before the deadline, Israel's military said Monday it would remain temporarily "in five strategic points" dotted along the length of the shared border in order to "continue to defend our residents and to make sure there's no immediate threat".

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday that Israel would do what it has in order to "enforce" the ceasefire.

"Hezbollah must be disarmed," he added.

Lebanese authorities have rejected any extension of the withdrawal period, urging sponsors of the deal to pressure Israel to pull out.

Israeli troops are still present in a handful of villages and towns in southeast Lebanon.

"We'll go to our town and be happy (again), despite the fact that our homes have been destroyed and we lost young people," Shukeir said.

On Monday, Ramzi Kaiss from Human Rights Watch said "Israel's deliberate demolition of civilian homes and infrastructure" was making it "impossible for many residents to return".

Since the cross-border hostilities began in October 2023, more than 4,000 people have been killed in Lebanon, according to the health ministry.

On the Israeli side of the border, 78 people including soldiers have been killed, according to an AFP tally based on official figures, with an additional 56 troops dead in southern Lebanon during the ground offensive.

Around 60 people have reportedly been killed since the truce began, two dozen of them on January 26 as residents tried to return to border towns on the initial withdrawal deadline.

On Monday evening, Lebanon's government said the state should be the sole bearer of arms, in a thinly veiled message on Hezbollah's arsenal.

Calls for the Iran-backed group's disarmament have multiplied since the end of the war that has weakened the group.

4 paramilitary personnel killed in Pak's Kurram; aid convoy attack toll rises to 2



PESHAWAR, Feb 18 (Agencies): Four paramilitary personnel were killed and five others injured when unknown militants attacked their squad in Pakistan's violence-hit Kurram, where an aid convoy was also targeted.

According to security officials, the militants ambushed the paramilitary Kurram Militia squad in Lower Kurram's Ochit area late on Monday, where an aid convoy carrying essential supplies was ambushed earlier in the day.

The injured and dead were shifted to a hospital, where the condition of one injured was stated to be critical. The military, which typically issues statements in such situations, has yet to comment.

The attack on the aid convoy in sectarian violence-hit Kurram district in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province killed a truck driver and injured 15 others. Late last night, another injured succumbed to injuries, taking the toll to two, according to officials.

The convoy, which was travelling from Thall to Kurram, was attacked at multiple locations along the route, prompting officials to turn the convoy of 64 vehicles back to Hangu as a precautionary measure.

It is the latest in a series of violent incidents in Kurram, which has been a hotbed of violence for decades, with deep-seated tribal and sectarian conflicts often resulting in bloodshed and prolonged blockades.

The latest wave of violence erupted in November 2023, when two police-escorted convoys were ambushed, killing at least 40 people. Since then, over 150 people have lost their lives in recurring clashes.

A ceasefire deal was reached between the warring Sunni and Shia tribes on January 4 after sectarian clashes resulted in the killing of 133 people in the district between November 21 and December 2.

Kavinder strongly reacts to Pakistan's name on Champions Trophy 2025 Special Jersey

Seeks firm stand against Pakistan's attempts to politicize Sports

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: Senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta has strongly reacted to the inclusion of Pakistan's name on the special jersey unveiled for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025. Expressing his strong disapproval, he termed it as a calculated move of Pakistan to humiliate India and a reminder of Pakistan's continued hostility towards India.

In a press release issued here today, Kavinder Gupta stated, "It is shocking and unacceptable that a sporting event's branding is being used to glorify a country that has consistently harbored terrorism and worked against India's sovereignty. The inclusion of Pakistan's name in such a manner not only hurts national pride but also raises

questions about the ICC's intent."

He further said it's not the first time; in the past also, several times, Pakistan has engaged in such acts to undermine India's sovereignty.

He mentioned that in 2015, India had boycotted the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) in Islamabad for not inviting him when he was the Speaker of the J&K Legislative Assembly. He said Pakistan did it under a well-calculated move. The then Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan decided that India would boycott the Commonwealth Speakers' Conference held in Islamabad in protest against Pakistan's decision not to invite the Speaker of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, calling it a disputed territory.

Kavinder called upon the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the Union Gov-



ernment to take up the matter with the International Cricket Council (ICC) and ensure that India's concerns are addressed. He emphasized that the sentiments of millions of Indian cricket fans must not be ignored, and any such moves that attempt to downplay Pakistan's role in cross-border terrorism should be opposed.

"Sports should promote peace

and camaraderie, not be used as a tool to normalize relations with a country that continues to support anti-India activities. The government must take a firm stand, and if necessary, reconsider India's participation in the event," he added.

The former Deputy Chief Minister reaffirmed BJP's unwavering commitment to safeguarding India's dignity on every platform and ensuring that no compromise is made on matters concerning national pride. He reiterated that India's stance on Pakistan's mischiefs has always been firm and unwavering.

He urged authorities to remain vigilant against any attempts to undermine India's sovereignty, emphasizing that strong diplomatic and strategic measures should be taken to counter such calculated provocations.

MLA Jasrotia inaugurates J&K Bank branch at Industrial Estate Ghatti



Top News Report

JASROTA, Feb 18: MLA Jasrotia, Rajiv Jasrotia on Tuesday inaugurated J&K Bank branch at Industrial Estate Ghatti in presence of J&K Bank DGM Sanjeev Kumar, J&K Bank Branch Industrial Estate Ghatti Manager Anil Sharma, Sarpach Nikku, Kumar Manglam, Sukhdev Singh, Shivdev Singh. Speaking on the occasion, Jasrotia highlighting significance of a bank branch, especially in an industrial estate like Ghatti will ensure easy access to banking services for businesses and employees, save time and increases productivity and will reduce the need to travel to distant bank branches.

Jasrotia further said that J&K Bank branch will provide banking services to underserved or unbanked populations, encourage financial literacy and inclusion and will support the growth of small and medium-sized enter-

prises (SMEs). He said that branch will facilitate business transactions and commerce, support the growth of industries and entrepreneurship and will contribute to the overall economic development of the region. The branch will create employment opportunities in the banking sector, supports job creation in industries and businesses and reduce unemployment in the region.

The presence of a bank branch in an industrial estate like Ghatti can have a positive impact on the local economy, businesses, and residents, making it an essential component of the region's infrastructure, added Jasrotia.

Jasrotia said he has been vocal about his commitment to community welfare and development initiatives. Our efforts to strengthen the industrial sector align with the BJP's vision for economic growth and development in Jammu

and Kashmir.

New branch aims to foster a conducive business environment, attract investments, and stimulate economic activity in the region. This initiative is part of the broader development agenda for Jammu and Kashmir, which focuses on improving infrastructure, enhancing industrial competitiveness, and promoting sustainable growth. With this new branch, entrepreneurs, industrialists, and workers will have easier access to banking services, enabling them to manage their finances more efficiently, added Jasrotia.

Jasrotia emphasized the importance of having a J&K Bank branch located near business establishments in Industrial Estate Ghatti. This strategic location will greatly facilitate the banking needs of businesses and their employees, making it easier for them to manage their financial transactions. Similarly, employees working in the industrial estate will benefit from the convenience of having a bank branch nearby, making it easier for them to manage their personal finances. Jasrotia's emphasis on the significance of the J&K Bank branch highlights his commitment to supporting the business community and promoting economic growth in the region.

'Discrepancies in recommendations of JPDCL Board regarding age relaxation for PDL/TDL workers'

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: A major error has come to light in the recommendations placed before the Board of Jammu Power Development Corporation Limited (JPDCL) concerning the regularization of PDL/TDL workers. The delegation of workers has raised concerns regarding discrepancies in the age relaxation criteria and eligibility for regularization.

A delegation of PDL/TDL workers, who have been serving in various corporations of the unbundled Power Development Department for over 25 years, met with relevant authorities to discuss these issues. The workers, who had been part of the regularization process since the 2021 struggle, pointed out that, under the Regularization Rules-2022, the age at the time of engagement as a daily wager should be considered as the



eligibility date for regularization. As per these rules, anyone outside the 18-40 age bracket at the time of engagement is eligible for age relaxation. However, the recent recommendation by the Divisional Level Committee (DLC) erroneously included 409 out of 423 eligible candidates as requiring age or qualification relaxation. The workers highlighted that this misapplication of

relaxation criteria has led to candidates, who should not require any relaxation, being wrongfully grouped with others requiring it.

The regularization process, which began in February 2024, has been delayed due to this error in the recommendation process. If the error is corrected, around 350 workers would have been eligible for regularization without

needing age relaxation. The workers argue that this mistake should not result in undue delays and that candidates who do not need relaxation should not be penalized or forced to wait longer for regularization.

Additionally, the workers brought attention to another issue – the minimum wages of daily rated workers in Jammu and Kashmir, which remains at Rs 311, far below the

600 stipulated under the Minimum Wages Act of India. This discrepancy is viewed as a violation of Article 14 of the Constitution, and the workers have requested that the matter be addressed by the concerned authorities. The workers have requested the Principal Secretary of PDD and Chairman of the Board to review the recommendations, withhold the current agenda for regularization, and ensure that the DLC recommendations are corrected in line with the existing Regularization Rules-2022. They also urged the authorities to address the wage disparity and ensure fair treatment for all workers under the Minimum Wages Act.

The workers await prompt action from the Government of Jammu and Kashmir to resolve these issues and offer a fair and transparent regularization process for all eligible PDL/TDL workers.

BJP's Dr. Tahir Choudhary alleges Cover-Up in Rajouri's Mysterious Deaths Case

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Feb 18: Senior BJP leader and party spokesperson Dr. Tahir Choudhary has raised serious concerns over the ongoing probe into the mysterious deaths in Badhaal village of Rajouri, alleging that the matter is being "put under the carpet" as the investigation remains inconclusive.

Dr. Choudhary stated that despite multiple teams of experts from top health institutions and forensic agencies being roped in, authorities have failed to provide a clear answer regarding the cause of the 17 deaths in the village, most of whom were children.

He accused the J&K government led by CM Omar Abdullah lacking transparency and urged



to expedite the probe to reveal the truth.

"The people of Rajouri deserve to know the truth. The victims' families are still in distress, and the entire village is living in fear. How can such a large-scale tragedy take place, and yet, even after weeks of investigations, there is no conclusive finding?" he questioned.

While reports indicate that toxicological analysis detected neurotoxins in biological specimens, Dr. Choudhary argued that the administration has not been forthcoming about the exact

nature of the toxins or how they entered the food chain.

He also criticized the authorities for shutting down pesticide shops in the district without a clear explanation.

"The SIT must work with complete transparency, and its findings should be made public at the earliest. Any attempt to suppress facts will only deepen the public's mistrust in the system," he asserted.

Dr. Choudhary urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to personally intervene and ensure that the investigation is carried out with urgency and fairness.

He reiterated BJP's commitment to standing with the people of Rajouri and demanding justice for the affected families.

Union Ministry of Home Affairs re-designates post of Advisor to Lieutenant Governor as Chief Secretary Ladakh

Top News Report

LEH, Feb 18: The General Administration Department of the Union Territory of Ladakh has issued an Office Memorandum announcing the re-designation of the post of Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor as Chief Secretary, UT of Ladakh. This decision follows the notification dated January 3, 2025, issued by the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT), Government of India and has been approved by the Competent Authority in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

An IAS officer of the 1994 batch (AGMUT cadre), Dr. Pawan Kotwal currently serves as the Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh and will now assume the designa-

tion of Chief Secretary, UT of Ladakh, with no change in his duties and responsibilities. Consequently, all official communications previously addressed to the "Advisor to Lieutenant Governor" shall now be directed to the "Chief Secretary of Ladakh." This decision marks a significant milestone in Ladakh's administrative evolution, making Dr. Pawan Kotwal the first Chief Secretary of the Union Territory. A highly respected civil servant, Dr. Kotwal was born in Jammu & Kashmir in 1965 and holds a degree in Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS). Over the course of his career, Dr. Kotwal has held various key positions across Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh including Divisional Commissioner of Jammu, Deputy Commissioner in multiple Districts of J&K and Principal Secretary in Departments

such as Health & Medical Education, Revenue, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Planning Development & Monitoring Department as well as Commissioner/Secretary and Administrative Secretary in various other Departments. He has also served as Financial Commissioner in the Revenue Department, as Inspector General of Registration and as Secretary to the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir.

The re-designation of the post of Advisor as Chief Secretary aligns Ladakh's governance structure with established administrative norms across other Union Territories, ensuring greater efficiency, streamlined operations and improved public service delivery. The Administration of the Union Territory of Ladakh remains committed to strengthening governance and enhancing administrative effectiveness.

From Page No:1

Gyanesh Kumar to take over as 26th CEC on Wednesday, Played key role in J&K reorganisation

role in implementing decisions following the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution in Jammu and Kashmir during his stint in the Union home ministry.

During his tenure in the ministry, he had also played a key role in setting up the Ram Temple trust post the Supreme Court verdict. He is also learnt to have closely monitored the SC hearings on Ram temple on a regular basis.

His appointment on Monday had come hours after the Congress asked the government to defer its

decision on the new CEC and EC till the Supreme Court concludes its hearing on a petition challenging the composition of the selection panel.

Kumar is a 1988-batch Kerala-cadre IAS officer.

After completing his B.Tech in Civil Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur, he studied Business Finance in ICFAI, India and Environmental Economics in HIID, Harvard University, US.

He has worked in the government of Kerala as the assistant collector of Ernakulam, sub-collector of Adoor, managing director of the Kerala State Development Corporation for SC/ST, municipal commissioner of the Corporation of Cochin, besides holding other posts.

As a secretary to the government

of Kerala, Kumar handled diverse departments, such as finance resources, fast-track projects and the public works department.

In the government of India, he has rich experience of working as the joint secretary in the Ministry of Defence, joint secretary and additional secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, secretary in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and secretary in the Ministry of Cooperation. He superannuated on January 31, 2024.

J-K's elected govt needs to create more awareness about new criminal laws: CM Omar

areas which need to be fixed.

Omar said there was no discussion on security situation in Jammu & Kashmir during today's meeting.

"I had discussed security matters relating to J&K during my recent meeting with HM (Amit Shah) on Parliament premises," Omar said.

Omar expresses inability to comment on his exclusion from security reviews relating to the Union Territory.

"There is a difference between this meeting and those meetings. This meeting was about new laws and their implementation. If the decision has been made to exclude representatives elected by the people from security issues, what more can I say?" he said.

On the reaction of Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi over the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner, Omar said, "The

LoP has the right to dissent in the selection meeting. Opposition does not need to always agree with the government. The matter (relating to the constitution of the selection committee for picking the CEC and election commissioners) is sub-judice in the Supreme Court."

7-kg IED recovered in Shopian, defused

another suspicious object, believed to be an IED, in Pinglish area of Tral. "A bomb disposal squad has reached the spot to defuse the suspected IED", said an official.

Police recover two kidnapped minor

girls from Chhattisgarh

conducting an awareness programme regularly under the banner "Chai with Cop" to educate people about their children's security from criminals and drug peddlers.

Kashmiri man found dead in Jammu

Mudasir, a resident of Baramulla Kashmir.

They added the deceased had come to Jammu for painting his vehicle.

Police have taken cognizance of the incident and launched investigation.

Army conducts lecture on Joining Rashtriya Indian Military College and Sainik School at Pir Topa

Top News Report

POONCH, Feb 18: Keeping in view the Indian Army's core objective of maintaining cordial relations with local citizens through AWAM, Indian Army organised a "Lecture on Joining Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC) and Sainik School" for spreading awareness amongst the school students for choosing the right education pathway that can shape their future at village Pir Topa on Tuesday.

The aim of the event was to create awareness amongst students about the importance and significance of literacy and various initiatives by the Government for education and to understand the various degree options available to make informed



decisions.

During this event, a representative of Indian Army gave a lecture on the subject matter for school students at village Pir Topa.

He also conveyed to the locals that tremendous potential in terms of talented and academically bright students is

available in the region, however, due to lack of proper guidance, they fail to harness their full potential.

Keeping same in perspective, the interaction was carried out to tap the raw potential from these students and to urge them to join Armed Forces through

Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC) and Sainik School, other Educational Institutions and through Pre Commissioning Training Academies.

Modalities on guidance, coaching and assistance for the students and awareness for joining Armed Forces

were also discussed during the interaction. A total strength of 95 including (47 Childrens, 33 Gents and 15 Ladies) attended the event.

The attendees appreciated the initiatives taken by the Army for awareness amongst the school students.

This endeavour by Indian Army to reach out to the population residing in remote areas, where civil administration has limited accessibility, will go a long way in developing and strengthening trust between Jawan and Awam.

The event also served as a platform to strengthen the bond between the Army and the people of this region. It showcased Army's commitment towards service to the nation.

Army organizes motivational lecture by Gallantry Awardees at Sial Sui



Top News Report

RAJOURI, Feb 18: The Indian Army organized a Motivational lecture at Government Middle School, Sial Sui. This initiative aimed to inspire and empower the youth and local residents by showcasing real-life examples of courage, resilience, and leadership qualities.

The awardee shared first-hand experiences of sacrifices and the spirit of valour that Indian Army exhibited

during war and operations, which motivated and reminded the youth and locals of the accounts of dedication and courage.

Indian Army encouraged all locals to hoist the national flag in every household symbolizing unity and patriotism.

A sense of patriotism was felt in the environment while the lecture was being delivered by the Veteran.

Such lectures by the War Heroes have posi-

tive impact on young generation and motivated them to join Indian Army and become responsible citizens of our country.

The program was very well received, appreciated and attended by 45 students and 05 teachers of Government Middle School, Sial Sui. The event fostered a sense of unity and patriotism, with all sections of society committed to supporting security forces.

Army conducts Lecture on Road Safety at Targain

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Feb 18: In order to strengthen the bond between Army and AWAM and to generate awareness about Road Safety and prevention of road accidents among students, an awareness programme on Road Safety and Preventive measures was organised by Indian Army at Government High School, Targain on Tuesday.

A total number of around 40 locals (including 16 men, 08 women and 16 children) witnessed the said awareness programme. The aim of the lecture was to urge citizens to follow traffic rules.

The lecture aimed to educate citizens on the importance of following traffic rules and encourage safe driving habits.



Students were sensitised about the dangers of reckless driving, overloading, riding without helmets and ignoring traffic rules, which often lead to serious injuries and fatalities. Emphasis was laid on basic road safety measures, such as the significance of wearing seat belts and helmets, avoiding distractions while driving and obeying speed limits. Real life example and interactive discussions

helped students understand the risks associated with negligence on the road, making the session both engaging and informative.

The interactive session received a positive response with students showing great enthusiasm and eagerness to learn. Many expressed their interest in having more such awareness sessions in the future, reinforcing the importance of road safety in daily life.

Army conducts Stitching and Tailoring Course, distribution of sewing machine at Marha

Top News Report

POONCH, Feb 18: Army conducted Stitching and Tailoring Course and Distribution of Sewing Machines at Marha with effect from February 17 to 18, 2025 under Operation Sadbhavana, with an aim to enhance the socio-economic fabric of the region by equipping local women with valuable skills and opportunities.

In a continuous and inspiring effort to promote skill development and empower the women of Marha and nearby areas, Indian Army is currently conducting a Stitching and Tailoring Course and Distribution of Sewing Machines as part of Operation Sadbhavana. Eighteen enthusiastic and determined ladies



from the local community are currently participating in this transformative course.

They are embarking on a journey of creativity and self-reliance, guided by an expert instructor who is imparting valuable knowledge and techniques in the art of stitching and tailoring.

Each participant's

progress is a testament to the dedication and perseverance of these remarkable women. As a token of recognition, certificates for participation and Sewing Machines will be awarded to all participants on closing day.

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 Marha and nearby areas.

Indian Army remains committed to empowering local communities through such initiatives, believing that a stronger, more self-reliant society is a testament to a brighter and more prosperous future for all.

The event also serves as a platform to strengthen the bond between the Army and the people of this region. It showcases Indian Army's commitment towards service to the nation. This gesture and effort by the Army was highly appreciated by Awam.

This endeavour by Army to reach out to the population residing in remote areas, where civil administration has limited accessibility, will go a long way in developing and strengthening trust between Jawan and Awam.

The event also served as a platform to strengthen the bond between Army and the people of this region. It showcased Army's commitment towards service to the nation.

Shree Vishwakarma Library felicitates Arjun Awardee Rakesh Kumar

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: Shree Vishwakarma Library, New Plot, Jammu, felicitated Rakesh Kumar, the first Arjun Award winner from Jammu and Kashmir in archery, at his residence in village Kun Dorian, Tehsil Katra. He was honored with a certificate of appreciation and a memento in recognition of his remarkable achievement.

The felicitation team included Raj Kumar, Balwant Kataria, Joginder Angotra, Om Kataria, and Giridhari Lal. While appreciating Rakesh Kumar's journey, Balwant Kataria highlighted his resilience, stating that despite becoming handicapped in a road accident at Nagrota in 2010, he overcame adversity to excel in archery. Once a plumber, Rakesh lost mobility in both legs but refused to succumb to challenges.

Expressing gratitude, Rakesh Kumar credited the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) for his success, stating that without their coaching and support, he might have struggled to make ends meet. He also acknowledged his first coach, who played a pivotal role in identifying his talent and nurturing his skills.

The event was a celebration of determination, hard work, and the power of perseverance, inspiring many to strive for excellence despite hardships.



Panun Kashmir urges action against Terrorism, genocide recognition in J&K



Top News Report

JAMMU Feb 18: Panun Kashmir made it clear that the support structures of Islamic terrorism and separatism in Jammu and Kashmir cannot be dismantled unless the Government of India revises its approach to the elements of its policy that have, according to Panun Kashmir, trivialized, secularized, and normalized Islamic terrorism and separatism in the region.

While acknowledging that the support structures for terrorism and separatism receive patronage from across the border in Pakistan and other countries supporting Pan-Islamic movements, the organization also highlighted the ideological subversion within India, particularly in the Government's policy-making and vision.

Panun Kashmir stressed that the denial of the genocide of Hindus in Kashmir has been the most subversive victory for Pan-Islamic terrorism and separatism in Jammu and Kashmir. They argue that this denial has allowed terrorist groups to continue their activities unchecked by failing to address the religious ideology motivating the violence.

Furthermore, Panun Kashmir expressed its approval of recent operations targeting support structures of terrorist separatism within political and administrative circles.

However, they emphasized that long-term results can only be achieved if the top echelons of the political class, administration, academia, and business are held accountable.

They raised pointed questions: How can top political leaders who facilitated land grab in Bhatindi, Jammu, be spared from action? Who was responsible for the settlement of Rohingya foreigners in Jammu after they crossed four states of India? Who within the Government of India has been defining internally displaced Hindu refugees as migrants? Who in the Government of India and UT government is driving the ruthless consolidation of the genocide of Hindus of Kashmir?

Panun Kashmir further warned that the malaise within the Indian political structure has allowed terrorist separatism to evolve into a self-reliant operation, one that will continue unimpeded even if foreign support to terrorists is stopped. The organization reiterated that unless the genocide of Hindus in Kashmir is recognized and its perpetrators are punished, the threat of Pan-Islamic Jihad will continue. They stated unequivocally that the division of Kashmir is now a national necessity in order to defeat the ongoing Jihadi invasion in the region. The creation of a separate Union Territory (UT) for the permanent rehabilitation of Hindus of Kashmir is seen as not only a means of providing justice to the displaced Hindu population but also as a crucial step in defeating the Jihadi war.

The organization has expressed no hesitation in calling for decisive action to address the genocidal violence and ensure that justice is brought to the Hindus of Kashmir, marking the creation of a safe and secure environment for the community.

Army conducts closing ceremony of Welding Course at Malikpura



Top News Report

DODA, Feb 18: The Indian Army has consistently undertaken a variety of programs for the locals of the region, with a special focus on employment generation. In keeping with this spirit, the Indian Army conducted a one-month Welding Course at Malikpura, District Doda, under the Operation Sadbhavana Project from 18th January 2025 to 17th February 2025.

This training program was inaugurated on 18th January 2025 and was attended by 20 candidates from far-flung

areas of the Malikpura region, coming from varied backgrounds.

The course was conducted by competent instructors and was designed to equip the candidates with the necessary knowledge, technical skills, and attitude required in this field.

The aim of the course was to generate employment/self-employment opportunities for the locals. All beneficiaries showed keen interest in learning and displayed great potential for self-employment in the future.

Moreover, this program is expected to pro-

vide significant employment opportunities for the youth of this region.

During the closing ceremony, the trained youth expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the Indian Army for the noble initiative and for providing them with a life-changing opportunity to acquire a valuable skill that will help them earn a decent livelihood.

They believe that this skill will not only secure their livelihoods but also contribute to the economic prosperity of the region.

The Indian Army's commitment to community empowerment and skill development remains resolute, as exemplified by the successful completion of the welding course at Malikpura, District Doda.

This initiative is expected to have a far-reaching impact on the unemployed youth of the area, enabling them to pursue gainful self-employment and embrace the spirit of entrepreneurship.

Champions Trophy set to start amid debate on relevance of 50-over cricket

Blue riband match of tournament will be on February 23 when India take on Pakistan

DUBAI, Feb 18 (Agencies): Intrigue, uncertainty, backstage drama. The ICC Champions Trophy has seen it all even before the curtains go up on the tournament and it would only get more stirring over the next three weeks, starting with the opening clash between Pakistan and New Zealand in Karachi.

Eight teams will vie for a trophy, often talked up as tougher to win than the World Cup, and also to script a new chapter in their own cricketing story. While India will fight it out in Dubai, others will be primarily based in Pakistan, which would get to host its first ICC event since the 1996 World Cup.

Several barriers had to be hurdled over to cobble this tournament together after eight years. The tournament is also crucial amid the raging debate on the relevance of ODI cricket, which is struggling to find its space amid the rage for T20 cricket and the devotion for Test format.

Perhaps, no other cricketing event in the recent past has been harried so much by long-standing geopolitical tensions, stubbornness by administrative boards of two important participants, and the nail-biting anxiety over the readiness of venues in the main hosting nation.

The chaos has been an endearing throwback to the 90s when cricket in the sub-continent resembled a hastily organised party.

But all these pre-tournament jitters will be forgotten once the teams enter the field, and the first of them will be Pakistan and New Zealand.

If anyone needs a reminder, then Pakistan had won the last edition of the Champions Trophy in 2017.

The opening match in itself is a curious clash—a talented-yet-volatile Pakistan unsure of its own destiny against a team for which order is everything.

But the blue riband match of



the tournament will be on February 23 when India take on Pakistan, ushering in customary waves of nostalgia, emotions, political grand-standing, and the social media battle.

That marquee showdown will be in Dubai as India remained steadfast in its refusal to set foot on Pakistani soil owing to security concerns.

Last dance of Kohli, Rohit? But beyond such team equations, certain individual players would want this tournament to be a memorable one.

On top of the list are India's batting talismans Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma. They have been magnificent servants of the game over the last decade and half.

Few in the modern era were able to match their achievements and aura. But now, these two titans have reached the last lap of a long race, and would want to bow out in a blaze of glory.

It's tough to imagine Kohli and Rohit being part of India's ODI set-up after the Champions Trophy irrespective of the outcome.

It might even impact their future in Test cricket, as a lukewarm outing here might force the selectors to mull over their role ahead of India's tour to England in June.

Similarly, a failure to win the

Champions Trophy will bring the role of head coach Gautam Gambhir under scrutiny.

Gambhir might have received a temporary relief after India's domination over England in the recent home series, but it wouldn't be enough to brush under the carpet India's recent travails against New Zealand and Australia.

But a global trophy will certainly give him a much better ground to stand.

From a team perspective, India will be eager to wrest their first ICC trophy in the 50-over format after their triumph in the 2013 Champions Trophy under the enigmatic Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

It will be a perfect parting gift to Kohli and Rohit and a welcome carpet to some young names such as Shubman Gill who are set to take India into the future.

The challengers India are playing a brand of ODI cricket that makes them instant favourites to win the tournament. They have adopted an aggressive approach and have a varied line-up, brimming with talent.

But such calculations can go wrong because of a bad moment or session, as it happened in the 2023 World Cup final when India succumbed to Australia after a middling batting effort.

The Aussies themselves are without their premier pacers

Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood. But the two-time champions still pack a punch as they have a batting unit to meet the demands of ODI format.

Once a feared white-ball team, England have slipped a few rungs as age and form have caught up with some of their leading performers.

But do the likes of Jos Buttler, Joe Root and Liam Livingstone have one last roar left in them? Or will some of their new stars such as Harry Brook or Ben Duckett cut open a new path?

New Zealand are also travelling on fresh avenue following the retirement of Trent Boult and Tim Southee. Kane Williamson is their trump card and the Kiwis would hope that he fires for them to earn their maiden white ball ICC trophy.

South Africa too will have a similar goal. They had won the ICC Knockouts Trophy in 1998, but not bagged anything in recent times and the Temba Bavuma-led side will be hoping for a reversal of fortune.

But for that to happen, the Proteas should coat their minds with steel in crunch situations.

It's applicable to Pakistan as well. If they can stop obsessing over the match against India and not treat it as the 'final frontier', then the home side is a dangerous opposition.

Their pace attack is top-notch and they have some batters like Fakhar Zaman and Salman Ali Agha who can turn on the heat on the rivals.

Afghanistan, who have transformed into a formidable white-ball outfit, also can put other teams under immense pressure through a squad that has Rashid Khan and Rahmanullah Gurbaz. Bangladesh now has receded to the periphery of cricketing consciousness, but can they pull off a stunner as they had done in the 2007 50-over World Cup?

It would be a fitting tribute to a tournament that has already gone through several disruptions. So, let the play begin.

From Shubman Gill to Klaasen: 5 batters to watch out for in Champions Trophy

In the bowling department though, there could be some pacers, who could make the difference



DUBAI, Feb 18 (Agencies): The eight outfits of the Champions Trophy do not feature too many greenhorns and it is highly unlikely that among the potential game-changers, at least in batting, any new face will be emerging.

In the bowling department though, there could be some pacers, who could make the difference.

The agency takes a look at five batters, who could be instrumental in their respective team's success.

Batters

Shubman Gill (India) Seven hundreds and 15 half-centuries at an eye-popping average of 60 and a fabulous strike-rate of 101 plus tells us that Gill has aced this format in the 50 ODIs that he has played. This is the format where he is possibly going to be the man, who would take over the baton from the peerless Virat Kohli.

With Kohli and skipper Rohit Sharma, the two legends still around to guide him, this tournament could catapult Gill, transforming him from a superstar to a megastar. Travis Head (Australia) The last couple of years have been like a dream for the South Australian and ideally he would never like that to end. He has been India's nemesis for sometime now in the knock-outs and the highway like tracks in Pakistan will be the kind of surfaces where he can murder the bowling at his own will. The Indian fans know that November 19, 2023 still hurts and Head has the ability to make the opposition's heart bleed.

Salman Ali Agha (Pakistan) An average of 45 plus is good without being exceptional but all those who have seen Salman Ali Agha bat recently will vouch that the 31-year-old Lahori is finally coming into his own. If the short tri-series was a trailer, then there are bigger things to come

from his willow. He is a clean hitter and has a lot of time to play the pacers. The manner in which he controlled the proceedings in a 350-plus chase against South Africa was exceptional.

Devon Conway (New Zealand) Conway's ODI career has been a short one with only 33 matches but in a short time, he has shown that he can take the game away in a flash with his ability to find the gaps at will. He is a superb batter against spinners and whether Pakistan or Dubai, the frequency of tours be it playing T20 league cricket or international games, makes him a good reader of the Asian conditions. If Conway gets going, half of New Zealand's job is done.

Heinrich Klaasen (South Africa) Whether it is T20 or ODI format, when one speaks about game-changers, it is very difficult to leave out Heinrich Klaasen, who can send the ball soaring into orbit without much ado. He played one match in the tri-series but scored 87 off 56 balls, punishing a top-class Pakistan attack with minimum fuss. An impressive average of 44 plus and a strike-rate of 117.44 in 58 games signify solidity. He is another player, who understands how to attack on sub-continental tracks. Klaasen's battle against Adil Rashid and Adam Zampa would be worth watching.

Kyle Jamieson approved as replacement for Lockie Ferguson in New Zealand squad

DUBAI, Feb 18 (Agencies): The Event Technical Committee of the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 has approved Kyle Jamieson as a replacement for Lockie Ferguson in the New Zealand squad, according to International Cricket Council (ICC).

Thirty-year-old Jamieson, who has played 13 ODIs, was named as a replacement after Ferguson was ruled out due to an injury to his right foot, the ICC said.

The replacement of a player requires the approval of the Event Technical Committee before the player can be officially added to the squad.

The Event Technical Committee of the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 consists of Wasim Khan (ICC General Manager - Cricket), Sarah Edgar (ICC Senior Manager - Events), Usman Wahla (PCB Director - International Cricket Operations), Shaun Pollock (Independent Representative).

New Zealand will kickstart their campaign against Pakistan in Karachi on February 19. It will be followed by matches against Bangladesh (February 24 at Rawalpindi) and

against India (March 2 at Dubai). This time around, Kiwis are heading into the tournament with a healthy mix of youth and experience, under the leadership of new white-ball skipper, Mitchell Santner.

Heading into the tournament, Kiwis have participated in four bilateral/tri-nation events, winning three of them. A 2-0 loss to Sri Lanka in Sri Lanka is the only blot on their resume. Otherwise, Kiwis have played some impressive cricket to place themselves in good stead ahead of the tournament.

In a total of 11 ODIs since the end of the 2023 World Cup, NZ has won seven and lost four.

Kiwis have plenty of winning momentum heading into the tournament, having won seven of their 11 ODIs and having lost only four. They also secured a competitive tri-nation series in host nation Pakistan just days back, which will keep them motivated and confident about their brand of cricket.

Just days before the tournament, New Zealand have gained plenty of experience of playing in Pakistan, having played three ODIs in the tri-series and winning them all. This has

given them a head start over other teams in their group, Pakistan (tri-series finalists), India and Bangladesh.

The ex-New Zealand captain is in form of his life as far as ODIs are concerned. Since the 2019 World Cup, Kane Williamson has missed plenty of ODIs but has made his presence count. In 19 ODIs after the 2019 WC, Williamson has scored 903 runs in 18 matches at an average of 64.50, with a strike rate of 80.26, a century and seven fifties in 18 innings. His best score is 133*.

Kiwis are extremely lucky to have plenty of young talent which can change the game within no time. Be it the left-handed batting prodigy Rachin Ravindra, who has enjoyed a fine run in ODIs following the 2023 World Cup, the 'complete package' Glenn Phillips who can bat, bowl useful spin, keep wickets and turn around matches with his Superman-like catches and run-outs or the young 23-year-old pacer Will O'Rourke, Kiwis have youngsters who can become household names in years to come and drastically affect outcomes in the Champions Trophy.

For Kiwis, this will be

the first ICC tournament in a long while without their veteran pacers Trent Boult and Tim Southee. While the former has chosen the T20 league money and family time after years of excellent service, Southee has retired from international cricket. In their absence, the pace attack will be spearheaded by Matt Henry (155 wickets in 87 ODIs), but he will miss having experienced campaigners on his side as O'Rourke (14 wickets in nine ODIs), Jacob Duffy (19 wickets in 11 ODIs), Nathan Smith (six wickets in six ODIs) have very little experience.

Also, pacer Ben Sears is out of the competition due to a hamstring tear. Their absence has weakened the Kiwi pace attack. Lockie's experience and ability to deliver express pace will be missed as he is ruled out.

New Zealand squad: Mitchell Santner (c), Michael Bracewell, Mark Chapman, Devon Conway, Kyle Jamieson, Matt Henry, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell, Will O'Rourke, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Nathan Smith, Kane Williamson, Will Young, Jacob Duffy.

“Loss of key wickets hindered DC’s momentum”: Stacy-Ann King on their performance

VADODARA, Feb 18 (Agencies): Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) produced a commanding performance to secure an eight-wicket victory over Delhi Capitals (DC) in their Women's Premier League (WPL) match at Vadodara. Fiery bowling spells from Renuka Singh and Georgia Wareham, combined with an explosive half-century by skipper Smriti Mandhana, propelled RCB to a comfortable win.

Stacy-Ann King, analyzing DC's performance, pointed out where they fell short.

"I think they couldn't post the total they aimed for, primarily due to losing wickets at crucial junctures. While they had a few big overs, they weren't able to maximize their scoring opportunities. The loss of key wickets at critical moments hindered their momentum, affecting both their run rate and their ability to build strong partnerships. Moving forward, they will need to focus on constructing solid partnerships to achieve better results," King said on JioHotstar.

RCB's bowlers made an immediate impact, with Renuka Singh and Georgia Wareham dismantling DC's batting lineup. Their disciplined and aggressive bowling restricted Delhi to a below-par total, leaving the batters with a manageable chase.

Leading from the front, Smriti Mandhana displayed her class with a blistering half-century, ensuring RCB reached the target with ease.

With this win, RCB has two wins in two matches and is at the top of the table. DC is in the third spot, with a win and loss each.

After RCB won the toss and elected to bowl first, they were off a fine start as dangerous Shafali Varma gave a simple catch to Smriti Mandhana at mid-off on a

Renuka Singh delivery on the very first ball of the innings.

Following this early setback, Jemimah Rodrigues joined her skipper Meg Lanning for a rebuild. Rodrigues pressed the acceleration in the button against Ekta Bisht and Joshitha, collecting some fours and sixes.

DC reached the 50-run mark in 5.4 overs, thanks to a six by Rodrigues.

The 60-run stand between the duo broke as Georgia Wareham got Jemimah stumped by Richa Ghosh for 34 in 22 balls, with four boundaries and two sixes. DC was 60/2 in 6.5 overs. Kim Garth also removed Lanning for 17 in 19 balls, with three fours. DC was 62/3 in 7.3 overs.

Annabel Sutherland and Marizanne Kapp took DC to 83/3 in 10 overs, with Sutherland (19*) and Kapp (4*) unbeaten. However, after the fall of Sutherland for 19 in 13 balls to Renuka thanks to a sharp catch by Smriti at extra cover, it was all downhill for DC. DC were restricted to 84/4 in 10.2 overs.

After that, DC had no big partnerships, though Sarah Bryce (23 in 19 balls, with two fours) and Shikha Pandey (14 in 15 balls, with a four) tried to put up a fight.

Wareham, Garth Renuka and Ekta Bisht tore apart the DC batting line-up, cleaning it up for 141 runs in 19.3 overs.

Renuka (3/23) and Wareham (3/25) were the pick of the bowlers for RCB, dismantling DC with their deadly mix of pace and spin. Garth (2/19) and Bisht (2/35) played a good supporting cast as well.

During the run-chase of 142 runs, openers skipper Smriti Mandhana and Danni Wyatt Hodge gave a fine start to their team.

Mandhana set the tone for the innings with two boundaries

against Kapp in the opening over, followed by Minnu Mani in the third over.

Hodge picked up as the powerplay's end came closer, hitting Shikha Pandey for two fours. RCB reached the 50-run mark in 5.1 overs, thanks to a four by Danni over short third man.

At the end of powerplay, RCB was 57/0, with Mandhana (32*) and Danni (22*) unbeaten.

Mandhana had her foot on the accelerator, finding boundaries against Jess Jonassen, Sutherland.

The left-hander reached her half-century in 27 balls, with eight fours and a six.

With the help of a fine boundary by Danni through deep cover, RCB reached the 100-run mark in 10 overs.

The 107-run opening stand between Mandhana and Hodge was ended by Arundhati Reddy, removing Wyatt for 42 in 33 balls, with seven fours. Rodrigues took a fine catch at deep cover. RCB was 107/1 in 10.5 overs.

Mandhana's bat kept delivering blows after the partnership broke, taking RCB to a brink of a victory. Jonassen and Sutherland were getting pummeled. Shikha ended Mandhana's stay at 81 in 47 balls (with 10 fours and three sixes) thanks to a catch by Arundhati. RCB was 133/2 in 15.1 overs.

Richa finished off things in style with a six, with score of 146/2 in 16.1 overs, with Richa (11*) and Ellyse Perry (7*) unbeaten.

Arundhati and Shikha took a wicket each for DC.

With this emphatic victory, RCB gained crucial points, while Delhi Capitals will need to regroup and address their batting inconsistencies to bounce back stronger in the tournament.

Shiv Sena demands removal of Pakistan's name from Indian cricket team's jersey

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: The Jammu & Kashmir unit of Shiv Sena (UBT) has strongly protested against the inclusion of Pakistan's name on the jersey of the Indian cricket team for the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy.

Addressing journalists at the party's state central office, Shiv Sena (UBT) president Manish Sahni criticized the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the Indian government for allowing such a move. He emphasized that instead of opposing Pakistan's alleged refus-



al to hoist the Indian flag in a stadium video released by the tournament hosts, BCCI has printed Pakistan's name on the team jersey, which is unacceptable.

Sahni pointed out that Pakistan has been engaging in cross-border

terrorism for years, targeting innocent civilians and security forces in Jammu & Kashmir while continuously violating the ceasefire agreement. He questioned why, despite Union Home Minister Amit Shah's ongoing

security meetings to tackle Pakistan-backed terrorism, BCCI is showing leniency towards Pakistan, hurting the national sentiments of millions of Indians.

Shiv Sena (UBT) has demanded immediate action from the Modi government, urging them to remove Pakistan's name from the Indian cricket team's uniform without delay.

On this occasion, General Secretary Vikas Bakshi was also present, supporting the demand for a firm stance against Pakistan in all aspects, including sports.

Water accumulation causes hardships for residents of Laxmipuram Sector B-2



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: The residents of Laxmipuram Sector B-2, JMC Ward No. 62, are grappling with severe inconvenience due to water accumulation in the area, as highlighted by social and political activist Kuldeep Kumar Rao in a press statement.

According to Rao, a significant amount of water has stagnated near the Chowk between the residence of Om Parkash Kotwal and Modern Secular Institute of Education, causing distress to the local public.

The situation has worsened due to improper drainage infrastructure, making daily movement difficult for residents.

In light of the ongoing issue, Rao has urged Deputy Chief Minister Sh. Surinder Kumar Chaudhary and MLA Jammu North Sham Lal Sharma to personally intervene. He requested them to direct the concerned authorities to visit the site, assess the situation, and take immediate remedial measures to alleviate the sufferings of the local populace.

Additionally, residents have demanded the construction of proper lanes and drains from the Chowk near Om Parkash Kotwal's residence and Modern Secular Institute of Education to the Ashram.

Rao expressed concern over the half-completed drainage work undertaken by the Department of R&B, stating that the project was left unfinished for unknown reasons, further exacerbating the issue.

Furthermore, Rao also called for the urgent repair of the road stretching from Om Parkash Kotwal's residence to Chinore-Patian road via the residence of Joginder Pal Thapa, stressing the need for swift action to ensure better connectivity and relief for commuters.

Residents now await immediate intervention from the authorities to resolve the issue before it escalates further.

Dimple leads protest rally demanding liquor ban in J&K



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: Sunil Dimple, president of Mission Statehood Jammu Kashmir, led a massive protest rally along Janipur High Court Road along with hundreds of traders and local residents, demanding a complete ban on the sale of liquor and wine in Jammu & Kashmir, particularly in Jammu and Katra—cities revered as religious hubs.

Addressing the protesters, Dimple called upon Home Minister Amit Shah, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, and former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to take an immediate decision in the ongoing criminal law reforms meeting chaired by the Home Minister in Delhi to impose a strict ban on liquor sales in the region.

He urged all 90 members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) to introduce and pass a bill in the upcoming assembly session to prohibit liquor sales in Jammu,

Katra, and Kashmir. Further, he demanded the immediate arrest of drug peddlers and traffickers, emphasizing the need to protect youth from addiction.

Dimple warned of launching a statewide agitation if the liquor ban was not enforced. He also stated that Mission Statehood would expose those political parties and MLAs who oppose the liquor ban bill in the assembly.

Accusing an outsider liquor mafia of influencing BJP leaders, corporators, and mayors, he claimed that they had captured Jammu & Kashmir's liquor industry for financial gain. Dimple further alleged that since August 5, 2019, the sale of liquor licenses had been manipulated multiple times, leading to an increase in alcoholism and drug addiction among the youth.

Dimple demanded that former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah instruct the Excise Department to halt the upcoming liquor shop

tenders and bidding process scheduled for March 2025. He vowed that new liquor shops would not be allowed to operate if the government proceeded with the tender process.

Instead of expanding liquor sales, Dimple urged the government to provide 200 units of free electricity in areas with smart meters, 12 free LPG cylinders per year, and double ration supply starting March 2025.

Additionally, he demanded that the Home Minister provide a clear timeline for the restoration of Jammu & Kashmir's statehood.

The protest was also attended by several leaders, including Dev Raj, Vipin, Vicky, Rakesh Sharma, Sanjay Sethi, Amit Raina, Kala Kumar, Bramu Sharma, Sunil, Akbar Khan, Mohd Shafi, Nazier Ahmad, and many others, who echoed Dimple's demands and voiced strong opposition to the expansion of liquor sales in Jammu & Kashmir.

GCoE celebrates 150th Birth Anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel with Role-Playing Competition

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 18: In a heartfelt tribute to the 'Iron Man of India,' Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Government College of Education (GCoE), Canal Road, commemorated his 150th birth anniversary with a spirited Role-Playing Competition on Patriotic Heroes. The event aimed to inspire students by immersing them in the lives and values of India's freedom fighters.

The occasion was graced by Principal Dr. Jyoti Parihar, who highlighted Sardar Patel's unparalleled contribution to India's unity and integrity. She encouraged students to draw inspiration from such iconic leaders to build a stronger and more united nation.

The competition was meticulously organized under the guidance of NSS Programme Officers, Professor Sarita Dogra and Dr. Shubhra Jamwal, with valuable support from Professor Sunanda Rani and Professor Kiran Thapa. Their collective efforts ensured a well-struc-



tured and engaging event.

Participants captivated the audience with their stirring portrayals of historical figures, breathing life into the legacy of India's freedom struggle. Their performances radiated the courage, sacrifice, and patriotism that defined the nation's fight for independence.

A distinguished panel of judges, Prof Roopa Kumari and Dr. Sonam Gandotra, assessed the performances and lauded the students for their remarkable dedication and deep understanding of the characters they embodied.

After an intense competition, the winners were announced. First position was secured by Shabnam Kumari

while second and third positions were bagged by Manpreet Singh and Damini respectively.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Saiyushi (B.Ed Sem II), who expressed heartfelt gratitude to the organizers, judges, participants, and audience for their enthusiastic involvement.

The celebration proved to be a resounding success, instilling a deep sense of patriotism among students and reinforcing the invaluable legacy of India's freedom fighters. This memorable tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel not only honored his contributions but also inspired the youth to carry forward his vision of a unified and strong India.

BJP supporters hail PM Modi's US visit

Top News Report


JAMMU, Feb 18: BJP activists and supporters from Jammu region at a meeting held in Channi Nanak, welcomed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's meeting with US President Donald Trump.

Prime Minister Modi is the fourth world leader that President Trump

met in his first month in office, which showcases the importance and heft of the bilateral relationship," said BJP activist R.L.Kaith and the supporters.

The camaraderie between Prime Minister Modi and President Trump grew strong during President Trump's first term as

evidenced by their joint appearances at major public gatherings in Houston and Ahmedabad. And what we witnessed in Washington was just an extension of their personal chemistry despite dealing with challenging topics such as trade, tariffs, and immigration policies, they further added.



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