# TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, SUNDAY, MARCH 23, 2025

**ENTERTAINMENT** 

16

**Akshay Kumar's 'Kesari 2' to release in** theatres on April 18



**NATIONAL** 

**INDIA** must appear to be a 'bloc and not un-bloc' itself in **public domain: Sibal** 

Daily Evening Newspaper

**INTERNATIONAL** 

**MOM leader Altaf Hussain slams Pakistani** authorities over arrest of human rights activist Mahrang Baloch



e-paper: www.topnewsjk.in

RNI No. JKENG/2010/39369

Regd. No. JK-435

Vol.-12 Issue-80 Pages-12 Rs.-2/-

### BRIEFLY

#### LG, CM express grief over loss of lives in accident in Ganderbal

JAMMU, Mar 23 (Agencies): Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abbdullah have expressed their grief over the deaths of four people in a road accident in Jammu and Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Sunday.Jammu travel packages

Seventeen people were also injured in the accident involving a bus and a taxi on the Srinagar-Sonamarg road.

"I am deeply saddened to learn about the loss of precious lives in a tragic road accident in Ganderbal today," the LG said in his condolence mes-

"My sincere condolences to the bereaved families in this hour of grief. Praying for the early recovery of the injured,"

he added. The chief minister took to X to condole the deaths in the accident and said the authorities concerned are providing all possible assistance to those injured.

"Deeply saddened by the tragic road accident on highway near Gund, Kangan, which has claimed several lives and left many others injured. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. Praying for the swift recovery of the injured. Authorities are providing all possible assistance," Abdullah

#### Kashmiri **Pandits pay** tributes to 2003 LeT attack victims in **Nadimarg** Village

SRINAGAR, Mar 23 (Agencies): A group of Kashmiri Pandits on Sunday paid tributes to their brethren killed by Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists at Nadimarg village in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district in 2003.

While Kashmiri Pandits have been paying tributes to the 24 victims in Jammu every year, this was the first time that the community held the programme at the scene of the incident.

LeT terrorists, dressed in combat uniforms, cordoned off the Nadimarg village on the intervening night of March 22 and 23. They rounded off all men and shot them dead after lining them up in the open. Bhushan Lal Bhat,

Turn to page 9

# **Religion-Based reservation violates Constitution: RSS**

BENGALURU. Mar 23 (Agencies): Amid the ongoing debate over the Karnataka government's decision to provide a 4 per cent reservation for Muslims in government contracts, RSS General Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale on Sunday asserted that the Constitution does not allow religion-based quota.

He also said such reservations go against the architect of our Constitution, B R Ambedkar.

Addressing reporters here on the concluding day of Akhil Bharatiya



Pratinidhi Sabha, the highest decision making body of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Hosabale said,

"Religion-based reservation is not accepted in the Constitution authored by Babasaheb Ambedkar. Anybody

Constitution." He also pointed out that previous attempts by United Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra to introduce religion-based reservations for Muslims were set aside by the High Courts and Supreme Court. Hosabale emphasised

doing it is going against

the architect of our

that the courts have rejected provisions for such quota.

Responding to a query about the controversy over 17th

Turn to page 9

## Four tourists killed in road accident in central Kangan tourists, suffered severe



SRINAGAR, Mar 23 (Agencies): Four people, including three members of a family from Mumbai, lost their lives, and 21 others sustained injuries in a road accident in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Sunday

morning, officials said. The accident occurred near a CRPF camp at Gund when a passenger bus and an Etios vehicle collided head-on, leaving at least two dozen people injured. The Etios car, which was carrying

damage, resulting in the death of four occupants, including the driver. Officials identified

the deceased as Hetal Ashish Pari, Nikki Ashish, and Leisha Ashish, all residents of Satya Nagar, Borivali West, Mumbai. The fourth victim was the driver of the vehicle. Faheem Ahmad Bady-

ari of Soiteng, Srinagar. Following the accident. locals and rescue teams rushed to the spot, shifting the injured to Sub-District Hospital (SDH)

Turn to page 9

# Tourism-related infrastructure being developed along Mughal Road in J&K

JAMMU, Mar 23 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir government plans to develop tourism-related infrastructure at several scenic locations along the Mughal road, which connects Poonch and Rajouri with south Kashmir's Shopian, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has said.Jammu travel packages

Dubjan, Mughal Sarai, Peer-ki-Gali and Shakroo Keller located on the Mughal Road are known for their natural beauty and scenic landscapes, making them promising destinations for tourism development, Abdullah, who is also minister incharge Tourism, said.

The chief minister gave the information in a written reply to an unstarred question by independent MLA Shabir Ahmad Kullay in the Assembly on Saturday.

Kullay represents Shopian constituency and has sought information about the steps proposed to be taken for providing tourism related infrastructure along the Mughal road to attract more tourists there.

Abdullah said the tour-

ism department has undertaken various initiatives to develop tourism-related infrastructure in the area.

The department has already developed various tourism-related infrastructure in Shopian at sanctioned cost of Rs 6.32 crore under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme, he said, adding

under the **Turn to page 9** 

# **Punjab Police says Narco-Terror module**

23 (Agencies): The Punjab Police Sunday said it has busted a narco-terror module with the arrest of four people and recovered 4 kg of



operation, Counter-Intelligence, Amritsar, busts a narco-terror module and apprehends four

Turn to page 9

# Terrorist hideout unearthed in Doda

JAMMU, Mar 23 (Agencies): A terrorist hideout was unearthed in a remote forest area in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir, leading to recovery of a pistol and some ammunition, officials said on Sunday.

The hideout was unearthed during a joint search operation by the Special Operations Group (SOG) of local police and Army in Bhalra forest area of

Bhaderwah on Saturday, the officials said.

A pistol, its three magazines and six rounds and 25 rounds of AK assault rifle were recovered from the hideout. they said, adding no one was arrested during the operation which was conducted on a specific intelligence input following reports of suspicious movement.

Meanwhile, the officials said a joint search oper-

ation by police, army and CRPF is also underway in Gurinal, Thathri and Chatroo forest in adjoining Kishtwar district.Jammu and Kashmir travel guide

The operation was launched on Thursday after some villagers shared information about the presence of suspected terrorists in the higher reaches, they

■Turn to page 9

#### busted, 4 men held with 4 Kg heroin CHANDIGARH, Mar

heroin from them.

Punjab police chief Gaurav Yadav said an FIR has been registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act at the State Special Operations Cell (SSOC), Amritsar.



# Rs 22 crore spent, 15 years gone: Check dam project remains incomplete in Kathua



Mar 23 JAMMU, (Agencies): Fifteen years after its inception and with Rs 22 crore already spent, a check dam project aimed at conserving water and supporting irrigation remains incomplete in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir.

The issue was raised by BJP's Bharat Bhushan in the assembly through an unstarred question on Saturday, seeking information about the present status of the project and the government's response to complete the 30 percent balance work.

Responding to the query, minister in-charge Jal Shakti department Javed Ahmed Rana said the check dam at village Khokhyal was taken up in 2009 at a total cost of Rs 25.85 crore and after completion of 70 percent work of weir part of the project, the inhabitants of the area forced the department to stop work till settlement of their land compensation cases.

Various components of the project, including main check dam, left and right side guide bunds except damaged portion, diversion channel, Barmori canal RD 0-4960 metre (presently damaged at several

■Turn to page 9



TENTH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the

sad demise of our beloved Sh. Suresh Gupta

S/o Lt. Sh. Kewal Krishan Gupta R/o H.No. 16.

# TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved Son Namely Sahil Koul S/o Sh. Jawahir Lal Koul R/o Wagoora Baramulla Kashmir who left for heavenly abode on 17-03-2025 at Barazulia Bagat Srinagar at 10 AM.

The TENTH DAY KRIYA shall be performed on 26-03-2025 at Wagoora Baramulla Kashmir at 11 AM and Assembly will be held at our residence Wagoora Baramulla 12:30 PM.

**GRIEF STRICKEN** 

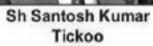
SAMAST KOUL, PANDITA, BHAT, CHANDAIL. FRIENDS RELATIVES AND WELL WISHERS

CONTACT: 8803832153, 7006887629, 9797632272, 7780849390



demise of Sh Santosh Kumar Tickoo, S/o Late Janki Nath Tickoo and Sonibatni Tickoo of Batiyar Alikadal Srinagar, at present H.No. 126, Dina Nagar, Bamai, Jammu.

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed on 29th of march at Akhnoor Ghat and Assembly will be held at Muthi (Near Directorate of School Education) at 11



SAHIL KOUL

**GRIEF STRICKEN** 

Smt Savitry Tickoo (Wife)

(Son and Daughter in law)

Sahil and Prajikta Tickoo

Smt Vijay and Late Maharaj K Tickoo (Bro & Babi) Smt Babli and Late Ravinder Tickoo (Bro and Babi)

Smt Vijay and Ramesh Kumar Fotedar (Sister & Brother in Law)

# I10TH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALAI

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of Mohit Sadotra (PHE Deptt.) S/o Surinder Kumar R/o House No.94, Sector-1, Laxmi Nagar, Muthi.

Tenth Day will be performed on 22nd March (Saturday) at 11.00 AM at our residence.

Kriya will be performed on 23rd March, (Sunday) at 12.00 Noon at our residence.

Uthala will be performed on 24th March (Monday) at 2.00 PM at our residence.

DEEPLY MISSED & REMEMBERED BY:-

All Family Members & Friends

Mobile No: 9149496587, 9469258514, 9149876452



MOHIT SADOTRA (PHE DEPTT.)

Smt. Shakuntla Devi

Smt Vijay Dhar

(Nich/Didh)

# TENTH DAY/KRIYA/UTHALA

our beloved Smt Shakuntla Devi W/o Late Shri Chuni Lal Abrol, R/o Ward No. 13, House No. 14, Lambi Gali,

10TH DAY will be performed on Thursday, 20th March from 11 AM to 12 Noon at Shiv Shakti Temple, Near Government quarter, Janipur Housing Colony, Jammu.

13TH DAY KRIYA will be performed on Sunday, 23rd March at HNo. 141-A, Sector 3, Colonel Colony, Near Saraswati Mata Mandir, Bohri, Talab Tillo, Jammu.

UTHALA will be performed on Monday, 24th March 2025 from 3 PM to 4 PM at Shiv Shakti Temple Near Govt Quarter, Janipur Housing Colony, Jammu.

GRIEF STRICKEN: RAVI ABROL & SUSHAM ABROL (Son & Daughter in law)

PAWAN ABROL & MAYURI ABROL (Son & Daughter in law) PURUSHOTTAM SARAF (Son in law)

RAM PRAKASH SURI (Son in law) ADITYA, AARYE, ADITI, ATULYA, ARUN, VARUN, SAURABH, BHARTI, DEEKSHA, RIDDHIMA

URVASHI (Grand Children) Contact- 9419157025, 9958008846, 9797388215

#### TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and deep sorrow, we inform the untimely demise of our beloved Smt Vijay Dhar (Nich/Didh) W/o Lt Sh Satish Kumar Dhar, originally resident of Y K PORA, QAZIGUND (ANANTNAG) A/p BLOCK 102, FLAT 15, LANE 19 Jagti Nagrota expired on

TENTH DAY will be performed on 28-03-2025, Friday at 9.00 AM Trt Gath Nagrota DEEPLY MISSED & REMEMBERED BY Sons & Daughter

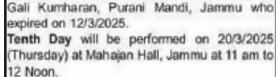
Akash Dhar, Ankit Dhar, Anisha Dhar Brothers & Bhabhi

Sh B.K Dhar & Smt Reeta Dhar Sh Manoj Dhar & Smt Seema Dhar

Smt Tosha ji Bhat W/o Lt Sh Moti Lal Bhat Smt Meena Tickoo W/o Sh Vinod ji Tickoo Smt Shyama ji Raina W/o Lt Sh B.L Raina

Smt Bunty Dhar W/o Sh Sanjay Dhar ALL NEAR AND DEARS MOB NO . 9906386781, 8492901029, 9018518998

Sister and Brother-in-law



(Thursday) at Mahajan Hall, Jammu at 11 am to

Kriya will be performed at our residence on 23/3/2025 (Sunday).

Uthala will be performed at Mahajan Hall on 24/3/2025 (Monday) 4 pm - 5 pm.

**GRIEF STRICKEN** Smt. Swarna Devi (Mother)

Smt. Sujata Gupta (Wife)

Mr. Paras & Mr. Prajwal Gupta (Son)

Anita Gupta & Pawan Gupta - Sister & Brother-in-law Poonam Gupta & Kavi Gupta - Sister & Brother-in-law Sourabh & Sakshi Gupta - Brother & Sister-in-law

Lt. Smt. Krishna & Dwarka Nath - Bua & Fufa Ji Smt. Darshna & Pawan Chowdhary - Bua & Fufa Ji

Smt. Santosh & Lt. Sh. Subash Gupta - Chachi & Chachu Ji

Smt. Shashi Balla & Lt. Sh. Surinder Gupta - Chachi & Chachu Ji Mob.:9018783930, 9149491413

YOUR DEPARTURE IS EXTREMELY PAINFUL BECAUSE YOU WERE SO SPECIAL FOR US SO YOU CAN NEVER BE FORGOTTEN."

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad and ultimate demise of our beloved Smt. UPASNA (Jyoti Pandita), Wife of Shri Puranmashi Pandita (King Ji) of Kulgam, Kashmir, presently at H.No. 2732/B, Kongposh Colony, Jain Nagar, Sec.38, Rohini, Delhi on 20.03.2025.

TENTH DAY KRIYA will be performed at DTC Depot Ghat, Sector-18, Rohin, Delhi,

at 10.00 am on 28.03.2025 (Friday). GRIEF STRICKEN:

Puranmashi Pandita (King Ji) - Husband (7896896488) Vanshika, Ayushi, Angel - Daughters (6355507923, 9315039801)

Brothers-in-law & Sisters-in-law Smt. Sudesh Pandita Wife of Late Girdhari Lal Pandita (7889627527) Smt. Sunita (Jyoti) - Wife of Late Bal Ji Pandita (7006130814)

Shri Manohar Pandita (Gasha Ji) & Smt. Dulari Pandita, Srinagar (7006379090) Shri Vinod Ji Pandita (Sahab Ji) & Smt. Sunita Pandita, Delhi (9999203478)

#### TENTH DAY KRIYA

We informed the sad and untimely demise of our beloved mother Rani Pandita W/o Late Kanaya Lal Pandita R/o Hardu Chanam Rafiabad Baramulla Kashmir A/p Lane No. 1 Swarn Colony Trilokpura, who left for heavenly abode on 18/03/2025 at 03:35 pm.

Tenth Day Kriya shall be performed on 27th March 2025 at Akhnoor Ghats and assembly

will be held at our Residence at 11:00 am. DEEPLY REMEMBERED BY

ji) W/O Sh. Anil Koul (Pupu Ji) on 16-03-2025.

Sh. Jawahar Lai Koul and Smt. Meena Koul

Ashram, Haridwar on 25th March 2025.

Brother-in-Law and Sister-in-law

Sh. RajaJi Koul and Smt. Usha Koul Sh. Vinod Koul and Smt. Rajni Koul

**GRIEF STRICKEN** 

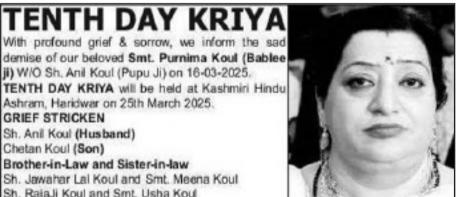
Chetan Koul (Son)

Sh. Anil Koul (Husband)

Smt. Shoki & Sh. Sunil Kumar Pandita - Daughter in Law & Son Smt. Sunita & Sh. Raj Kumar Pandita - Daughter & Son in Law Smt. Sushma & Sh. Vicky Bhat - Daughter & Son in Law

Bhawani, Gautam, Yashika, Vidhya, Prabhat & Pratik

7006134919. 9622176438 Pandita & Bhat Parivaar



SMT. PURNIMA KOUL

Sh. Babu Ram Gupta

Sister-in-law and Brother-in-law (BABLEE JI) Smt. Phoola Tiku and Sh. Rattan Lal Tiku Smt. Sarla Razdan and Sh. Maharaj Krishan Razdan. Smt. Veena Kaul and Sh. Ramesh Kumar Kaul.

## TENTH DAY/UTHALA

Contact Number: 6396023286, 9419010525, 9419139482

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved Sh. Babu Ram Gupta S/o Late Sh. Munshi Ram Gupta R/o Vikram Nagar Sarwal Near Govt Hospital Jammu who expired on Wednesday March 12, 2025,

10TH DAY will be performed on Friday March 21, 2025 from 10,00 to 11,00AM at Kotli Bhawan Rehari Colony Jammu.

UTHALA will be performed on Monday 24th March, 2025 from 4.00 to 5.00 PM at Shree Gita Mandir Simrili Bhawan Bakshi Nagar (Behind Karan Hotel)

GRIEF STRICKEN:-Smt Sushma Gupta (Wife)

Nidhi and Akhii Gupta (Daughter in law & Son) Shikha and Nikhil Gupta (Daughter in law & Son) Bhabhi & Brothers

Neelam & Durga Datt Jandial Ashu & Naresh Kumar Gupta Nidhi & Ashwani Gupta

SEHAJ ENTERPRISES Transport Nagar Narwal Jammu DURGA DATT JANDIAL & SONS Ware House Jammu SHIV LAL & BROTHERS Bankey Bihari Market Jammu

NIDHI TEXTILES City Chowk Jammu 9419186901, 7780909193



With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved Mr. Rajiv Sharma S/o Late Sh. Pardeep Sharma R/o H.No 155-A Gandhi Nagar Jammu who left fo heavenly abode on 13 March 2025. 10th day will be performed on 22nd March, Saturday at 12.00 pm at our residence. Kriya will be held on 23rd March, Sunday a



Uthala will be performed on 24th March, Monday from 3.00 pm-4.00 pm at Laxmi Narayan Temple, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu. GRIEF STRICKEN:

Praanya Puri (Pihu) (Niece) Sharma & Dogra Family Phone No 9419135530 / 9419131158

Deepali Puri & Devam Puri (Sister & Brother in law)

#### 10TH DAY KRIYA

12.00 pm at our residence.

Surishta Sharma (Mother)

Sh. Suresh Gupta

Smt. UPASNA (Jyoti

Pandita)

armayogi, Great orator, Guide & humanitaria Sh. Autar Krishan Dhar (S/o Sh. K.N. Dhar R/o KK Sokhta Safakadal, Srinagar Kmr) left for his eavenly abode on 18-3-2025 at Greater Noida. 10th Day Kriya will be performed at Murad Naga Shat on 27-3-2025 at 8 A.M. Obituary & Shan Path will be held at our residence J-357, Beta I GRIEF STRICKEN



Mr. Nitin & Mrs. Archana Dhar Mrs. Sonu & Mr. Adesh Dhar - Daughter & Son-In-law

Sh. M.K. Dhar & Smt. Sanlosh Dhar - Brother & Bhabhi dr. Rahul & Mrs. Sonia Dhar, Mr. Anil & Bimla Dhar, Mr. Sunil & Mrs. Girja Dhar Grand Children: Himanshu, Anmol, Ankur, Kartikeya, Abhimanyu, Sheetu, Sonu,

Panditas (Murran), Panditas (Chittragul), Kouls, Bhats, Razdans Mob.: 8447002674, 9873805081, 9818881988, 9968215127

### KRIYA /UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother Smt. Sanjog Rallian W/o Late Sh. Surinder Kumar Rallian R/o 164 Ram Mandir Lane, Shestri Nagar, Jammu left for her

heavenly abode on 13th Mar 2025.
KRIYA will be performed at our residence at 12 Noor on 23rd Mar 2025 (Sunday).
UTHALAIRASAM PAGRI will be performed at Ran Mandir, Shastri Nagar, Jammu from 4.00 PM to 5.0 PM on 24th Mar 2025(Monday)

GRIEF-STRICKEN
Sons & Daughters-in-law
Ravinder & Neelam Rallan
Rahul & Mehak Rallan
Daughters & Sons-in-law

Vohra, Handa, Tandon, Gupta & Salaria



Smt. Sanjog Rallan

9682562534, 8803502164,

#### OBITUARY/TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Karmayogni Smt. Shobawati Pandita** W/o Lt. Sh. Jialal Pandita (Bhan) originally from Sagam Dist. Ananthag A/p Lane No. 24, Block -152, Flat No. 09, Jagti Nagrota who left heave

Tenth Day Kriya wil be held at Devika Ghat Udhampur on 25-03-2025. Mourning Assembly will he held at Community Hall back side Block -152, Lane No. 24 at 11.30 am.

Ka mayogni Smt. Shobawati Pandita

Grief Stricken

Sh. Maharaj Krishan Pandita and Smt. Indu Pandita- Son & Daughter-in-Law
Sh. Bushan Lal Pandita & Smt. Girja Pandit- Son & Daughter-in-Law
Smt. Shame Pandita Wyo Lt. Sh. Brij Lal Pandita- Daughter & Son-in-Law
Smt. Napan Pandita Wyo Lt. Sh. Brij Lal Pandita- Daughter & Son-in-Law
Smt. Vijay Koul Wyo Sh. Omkar Nath Koul- Daughter & Son-in-Law
Smt. Vijay Roul Wyo Sh. Triloki Nath Koul- Daughter & Son-in-Law
Smt. Neba Pandita & Sh. Sandeen Karilpoton, Grand Daughter & Son-in-Law Smt. Neha Pandita & Sh. Sandeep Kariholoo- Grand Daughter & Son-in-Law Grand Children: Vicky, Mohit, Shrawan Kumar, Bal Krishan, Reena, Anil, Amit, Sunita,

Contact No.: 9796649762, 7006859846

**OBITUARY & TENTH DAY KRIYA** With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved Sm Santosh Koul (Dida Ji) W/o Shri Soom Nath Koul of Goshbugh, Pattan, Baramulla, Kashmir, presently a H No. 464/A Sector 2nd Vinayak Nagar, Muth Jammu on 15/03/2025.

Tenth Day will be performed on Monday the 24/03/2025 at Akhnoor Ghat and Assembly will be

held at Muthi Ghat (near Directorate of School Education) Muthi Jammu at 11 AM. Deeply Loved and Missed by Sh Soom Nath Koul- Husband (9622317416) Sh Akshay Koul and Harpreet Koul (Son & Daughter in law)

Puja and Sandeep Bhat (Daughter & Son In law) Kanchan and Rohit Raina (Daughter & Son in law) Sisters in law & Brothers in law Smt & Sh Raj Nath Koul Smt & Sh Vinod Koul Grand Children:

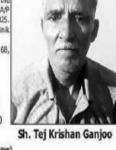
(Tanishqa, Reeva, Abhiraj)

#### & ALL KOUL, BHAT AND RAINA PARIVAR Ph, (9149488674, 6006223766, 8493035502) TENTH DAY KRIYA

ad demise of Sh. Tej Krishan Ganjoo R/o Sirnoo Pulwama A/o Lane No. 12, Block 68, Flat No. 06, Jagti, Jammu on 19-03-2025. The **TENTH DAY KRIYA** will be held on 28-03-2025 at Sainik

School Nagrota at 7:30 AM. ASSEMBLY will be held at 10:30 AM at Lane No. 12 Block 68 Smt. Nimni Ganjoo (Wife)
Mr Ash'an Ganjoo (Son)
Smt Ruchi Bhat & Deepak Bhat (Daughter & Son-in-law)
Smt Baby W/o Ajeet Kumar (Niece & Son in Law)

Smt Sheela Koul W/o Late Omkar Nath Koul (Sister in law) Smt. Phoola W/o Late Krishan Lal Koul (Sister) Smt Girja & Tej Krishan (Sister & Brother-in-law) Smt. Noetu W/o Shubham Lal Ganjoo (Brother & Sister-in-law) Smt Sangeeta Koul W/O Ashok Kumar Koul (Sister & Brother in Law) Smt Isha Koul W/o Rakesh Koul (Nephew & Daughter in Law) Sahii Ganjoo (Nephew) Contact: 8082547044 / 7889959608



Smt Santosh Koul

(Dida Ji)

TENTH DAY/KRIYA With profound grief & sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved father Karamyogi Late Sh. Chand Jee S/o Dina Nath Original resident of Sheetal Nath Sathu Barbarshah, Srinagar presently at H No. A-1619,

abode on 16-March-2025. The 10TH DAY KRIYA will be held at Chota Haridwar, Muradnagar on 25- KARAMYOGI LATE

Green field Colony Faridabad

Haryana who left for his heavenly

March-2025 around 9 am followed by ASSEMBLY at our Faridabad residence at 1 PM. **GRIEF STRICKEN** 

Smt. Susheela Raina - Wife Sh. Arvind Raina & Smt.Deepshikha Ganju (Son & Daughter-In-law) Sh. Anupam Raina & Smt.Rachna Kaul (Son & Daughter-In-law) Anaya Raina, Aarav Raina & Asmee Raina - Grandchildren (BabaJittu : U will be always in our heart & will be missed) 8588828109.8800867156

# **DISCLAIMER**

"Top News of J&K" does not take responsibility for the contents of the advertisements (Display/ Classified) carried in this newspaper. The paper does not endorse the same. Readers are requested to verify the contents on their own before acting there upon."

# Lieutenant Governor inaugurates Tawi Filmotsva, a short film festival dedicated to promote local talents

# Top News Report JAMMU, Mar 23:

JAMMU, Mar 23: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today inaugurated the 'Tawi Filmotsva', organised by J&K Cine Association, at Abhinav Theatre Jammu.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor extended his felicitations to the organizers, participating Film-makers, and everyone associated with the short film festival dedicated to promote local talents.

"Cinema is an effective medium of education and a powerful agent of social change. I want our local talent to maintain a balance between entertainment and social concern and use this powerful medium for the benefit of society and social transformation," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor spoke on the progressive Film policy and other key interventions made by the government to create a vibrant



film ecosystem in J&K.
"Today I am proud that
Jammu Kashmir has
found its place in filmmaking. Our efforts of
peace and development

in the past five years have made Jammu Kashmir more attractive destination for Hindi, Regional and Foreign film shooting," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He highlighted that the Technological advance-

ment has helped the

The Lieutenant Gov

local budding film-makers, actors and professionals in different fields of Cinema to showcase our rich and varied cultural heritage.

tural heritage.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon the film-makers and artists of Jammu Kashmir to raise awareness about social issues and promote positive change through their creative endeavours.

I want our youth to nurture this creativity to eliminate social evils

ernor said, "Creativity

is not only be a source

of fulfilling your dream,

but it is also a vehicle

for social change. I have

seen the deep impact

of different creative

genres on society but

the impact of Cinema

is unparalleled and they

have helped in raising

awareness on many

social evils.

like drug addiction from society and use the creative talents for good deeds that will change the lives of others. I want our youth to help the government in reaching out to the disadvantaged and ensure their life of dignity".

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor released a brochure of 'Tawi Filmotsva'. He also commended the J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) for its constant efforts to promote artistic and cultural heritage of Jammu Kashmir.

Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu; Sh Nitish Rajora, Director Information; Ms Harvinder Kour, Secretary JKAACL; Sh Dharminder Kohli, President, J&K Cine Association; senior officials, renowned artists, film-makers, members of J&K Cine Association and prominent citizens from different walks of life were present.

of Jammu & Kashmir to

furthering its agenda of

growth, peace and pros-

perity, ensuring a bright-

er future for its citizens.

The Diamond States

Summit 2025 witnessed

participation of eminent

policymakers, industry

leaders, and experts,

highlighting the achieve-

ments of states and UTs

in governance, social

welfare, and economic

progress. Jammu &

Kashmir's recognition at

this prestigious platform

reaffirms its commit-

ment to transformative

governance and devel-

opment.

# FFMA pays tributes to Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukh-



#### **Top News Report**

JAMMU, Mar 23: Freedom Fighters Memorial Association (FFMA) organized a programme to remember freedom fighters Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev at Maheshpura Chownk, Jammu.

The programme was presided over by the Association Chairman, Rajiv Mahajan while Patron-in-chief, Ved Gandotra was also present

Speaking on the occasion, Rajiv Mahajan said

that India today needs the principles of the late freedom fighters like never before.

Rajiv Mahajan, while paying glorious tributes to Bhagat Singh who laid down his life for the sacred cause of freedom at a young age, said that the ideals and principles of Bhagat Singh must act as a torch bearer for the youth in today's society in which people are playing good and fragmenting humankind based on caste, creed,

and religion.

He added that the

young generation of India will always continue to draw inspiration from these great revolutionaries who sacrificed their lives with smiles on their faces for the freedom of the country.

Saluting their martyrdom, Rajiv Mahajan observed that the sacrifices made by the revolutionaries in India's freedom struggle would always inspire the youth to serve selflessly toward the better interest of the nation.

"The generations will forever remember their sacrifice and courage to come," he added.

Others present on the occasion included Among others present were R.C Puri (Vice Chairman), S.S Bhalwal (President, FFMA), J.J Singh (General Secretary), Pritam Sharma, K.L Verma, Nirmal Kishore, Prabhat Kapahi (Office Secretary) and others.

# CS Dulloo receives prestigious 'Diamond States Award' at Diamond States Summit 2025 in New Delhi

#### **Top News Report**

JAMMU /NEW DELHI, Mar 23: In a moment of great pride for entire Jammu & Kashmir, Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo was today honoured with the prestigious Diamond States Award at the grand finale of Diamond States Summit 2025, organized by News18 India.

The award was presented by Jyoti Kamal, Managing Editor, News18 India to Atal Dulloo in recognition of J&K's exemplary performance in governance, development and progressive initiatives during the past few years.

In this regard the Chief Secretary expressed gratitude for the recognition and dedicated the award to the people of Jammu & Kashmir and the collective efforts of the Administration.

He highlighted the efforts made by the Gov



ernment of J&K in collaboration with Central Government in ushering an era of peace, prosperity and development. He spoke about various initiatives like bringing governance to door

steps of people besides several other welfare measures for common masses.

He also enumerated the steps that resulted in enhancing the influx of tourists to J&K which rose to more than two

crore. He also gave credit to the new connectivity measures like tunnels, highways, railways and enhanced air connectivity for this feat. He reiterated the commitment of government

## Natrang presents Hindi comedy play 'Chor'

#### **Top News Report**

JAMMU, Mar 23: Natrang presented a scintillating performance of Hindi comedy play 'Chor' which has been written by Rajindra Kumar Sharma and directed by Neeraj Kant at Natrang Studio Theatre in its Sunday Theatre Series. Equipped with situational comedy and surprise elements, the play received applauses at different

punches and dialogues. A dramatic household incident was presented in a much theatrical manner. In the play, one 'Naresh' is in sound sleep in the middle of the night which got disrupted by some unexpected noise in the room. To his dismay, he finds a girl in a thief's guise who threatens him to surrender money on gun-point. He pleaded for mercy, but the thief was undeterred and appeared hard core profes



was able to grab the gun from her and tries to scare her but to his surprise, it was a fake gun. The girl changed her tone and started blackmailing him. saving she will shout and blame him for molestation, if he does not surrenders money. Hearing the hue and cry, Naresh's brotherin-law and wife appeared from the next room and showed their displeasure over the closed room happenings. When 'Naresh'

shows his helplessness, it was revealed that the lady-thief was indeed his sister-in-law who wanted to make her first meeting dramatic and unforgettable.

Natrang actors who acted in the play included Mehak Chib, Adaksh Bhagal, Aryan Sharma and Manvi Devi. The lights were designed by Neeraj Kant and Music was rendered by Kartik Kumar. The show was coordinated by Mohd. Yaseen

#### ENIT NO. 790F 2024-25 DATED 17-03-2025

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI PHE MECHANICAL DIVISION UDHAMPUR SHORT TERM TENDER E-NIT JSPHEM/UDHR/ 790F 2024-25 DATED17-03-2025

Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division, Udhampur, on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir UT, invites tenders by e-tendering mode from registered firms who have sufficient experience in the relevant field of electromechanical/electrical works.

meditation circumstrative works.						
SI.	Name of the work	Qty	Name of	Cost of Tender Document	Earnest Money	Bid
			Division	/ Tender Fee	(in Rs)	validity
				(in Rs)		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Providing, installation, testing and commissioning of 5000 GPH x 21-29 meter head mono submersible pump motor set at WSS Shiv Nagar Udhampur Town.	,	Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Division Udhampur	Rs. 200.00 (Non- refundable in shape of treasury challan in favour of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Division Udhampur	(Rs. 2000.00) 2% (in case of non- registered firms)Or (Rs. 1000.00) 1% (in case of firms registered with DIC / SSI / MSME)	90 days

Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website <a href="http://jktenders.gov.in">http://jktenders.gov.in</a> from 18-03-2025 (11:30 AM)
 The Bids shall be deposited on the website <a href="http://jktenders.gov.in">http://jktenders.gov.in</a> from 18-03-2025 (12:00PM) to 24-03-2025 (3:00 PM).

The complete bidding process will be online <a href="http://jktenders.gov.in">http://jktenders.gov.in</a>.

- After opening tender only successful bidder shall be asked for submitting the hard copies of documents with CDR and tender fee
- 5. The technical bid will be opened on line on 25-03-2025 at 11.00 A.M or any other subsequent date in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division Udhampur.
- 6. The Financial bids of the bidders shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division Udhampur after evaluation of technical bids. The date shall be communicated separately.
- 7. Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 5 & 6 of the table (and for DIC/SSI/MSME registered firms as per Industrial Policy of J&K govt.) payable at Udhampur pledged in favour of Executive
- Engineer, PHE Mechanical Division, Udhampur.
  Bid security will have to be in form of CDR / FDR / BG of any scheduled bank and shall have to be valid for one year or more after last date of receipt of Bid. The cost of downloaded tender documents shall be in form of Treasury Challan / e-Challan in
- favour of Executive Engineer PHE Mechanical Division, Udhampur payable at Udhampur.

  Firms who will fulfill the following parameters are eligible to participate.
  - at least 30% of this estimated cost.

    Experience of having successfully completed similar works during last 07 years ending last day of month previous

Average Annual financial turnover during the last 3 years, ending 31 March of the previous financial year, should be

- to the one in which applications are invited should be either of the following:-
- a. Three similar completed works costing not less than the amount equal to 40% of the estimated cost
   b. Two similar completed works costing not less than the amount equal to 50% of the estimate cost.

10. The bid shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 90 days from the date of opening bids. If any bidder / tenderer

- c. One similar completed work costing not less than the amount equal to 80% of the estimated cost.

  Definition of "similar work" should be clearly defined.
- withdraws his bid / tender before the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the earnest money of the firm shall stand forfeited.
- 11. The tenderers are advised to visit the site of work before uploading their tenders so as to acquaint themselves with exact site conditions.
- 12. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website <a href="http://jktenders.gov.in">http://jktenders.gov.in</a>

NO. JSPHEMUDHR/**2024-25/42995-98** 

Dated:-17-03-2025

DIP/J-11280/24

Sd/-Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Division Udhampur

# Hon'ble Lt Governor Brig (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) hosts Iftar party for people from different communities of Leh district



#### **Top News Report**

LEH, Mar 23: The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) hosted lftar party for people from different communities of Leh district.

Expressing his happiness at the opportunity to host the Iftar party during the holy month of Ramadan and seeing people from different walks of life assembled for the event, the HLG highlighted the significance of Ramadan

Kareem for Muslims. He spoke about the five pillars of Islam, which are Shahaadah (Profession of Faith), Salaat (Prayer), Zakat (Alms giving), Roza/Sawm (Fasting) and Haj (Pilgrimage). He emphasised the importance of observing Zakat (Alms giving) and helping those in need.

Stating that the holy month of Ramadan teaches the lessons of benevolence and brotherhood, the HLG underscored the significance

of observing fast during this Holy month as one gets first-hand experience of what it feels like when one is denied food and water during the scorching summer months and chilling winter months. Emphasising Sallallahu alaihi wasallam's teaching of brotherhood and compassion along with living life for others and emulating his teachings, the HLG stated that we. as humans, must play the roles assigned to

us by the Almighty and

strive hard to serve humanity in the best way possible. One must be great in one's deedsomething which the holy month of Ramadan teaches us, asserted the HLG.

First Lady Smt Neelam Mishra; Chief Justice of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Justice Tashi Rabstan; Chairman/CEC, LAHDC Leh Advocate Tashi Gyalson; Executive Councillors, LAHDC Leh- Tashi Namoval Yakzee and Ghulam Mehdi; Venerable Khamtak Rinpoche; Venerable monks from Ladakh Gonpa Association; Chief Secretary, Dr Pawan Kotwal, IAS; representatives and heads of religious organisations, non-governmental organisations; officials from District Court, Ladakh Police, University of Ladakh; Army and Paramilitary forces; DC Leh, Santosh Sukhadeve, IAS; prominent citizens from Leh districts and award winners were present during the Iftar party.

# **EDITORIAL**

# **ECONOMIC GROWTH**

ase of Doing Business (EoDB) is a critical factor that determines a country's ability to attract investment, foster innovation, and create a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem. It refers to the regulatory environment, administrative efficiency, and infrastructural support that facilitate business operations. Countries with higher EoDB rankings enjoy increased foreign direct investment (FDI), job creation, and economic growth. This article explores the concept of EoDB, its key indicators, the benefits it offers, challenges in implementation, and strategies for improvement.

EoDB is a measure of how conducive a country's regulatory environment is for business operations. The World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index, which was published until 2021, evaluated economies based on ten key parameters that impact business activities.

A business-friendly environment fosters entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic prosperity. Countries that have improved their EoDB rankings experience several advantages,

When businesses find it easy to operate, foreign investors are more likely to enter the market, leading to increased capital inflows, job creation, and economic expansion.

Simplified business registration, reduced red tape, and access to credit encourage entrepreneurs to launch startups, leading to a more dynamic economy.

A favorable business environment stimulates industries such as manufacturing, services, and technology, leading to job opportunities and economic development.

When businesses thrive, tax compliance increases, boosting government revenues without the need for excessive taxation.

Countries with better EoDB rankings attract global corporations and trade partners, enhancing their competitive edge in the international market.

Despite its significance, many countries struggle to improve their business environment due to several challenges

Excessive regulations and slow government processes can discourage businesses from setting up

or expanding their operations.

Bribery, favoritism, and lack of transparency in business procedures create uncertainty and discourage investors.

Delays in contract enforcement, weak dispute resolution mechanisms, and lengthy court proceedings make it difficult for businesses to operate smoothly.

Limited access to reliable electricity, transportation, and communication infrastructure can hinder business growth and efficiency.

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) often struggle to obtain loans and financial support, restricting

their expansion potential.

Governments worldwide are implementing

reforms to create a more business-friendly environment. Some key strategies include:

Digitizing the process of company registration, reducing paperwork, and setting up one-stop service centers can help entrepreneurs establish businesses quickly.

Implementing fast-track courts for commercial disputes, ensuring contract enforcement, and increasing judicial transparency can boost investor confidence.

Encouraging banks to provide loans to startups, reducing interest rates, and offering financial incentives to SMEs can foster business growth.

Investing in roads, electricity, water supply, and internet connectivity can facilitate business operations and attract global investors.

Implementing digital governance, online payment systems, and strict anti-corruption laws can help build trust in the business environment.

Reducing tax complexities, offering tax holidays for new businesses, and ensuring timely tax refunds can encourage compliance and economic activity. Several countries have successfully improved their

EoDB rankings by implementing reforms.

Singapore consistently ranks among the top due to its streamlined business registration process, low

taxes, and strong legal framework.

New Zealand is one of the easiest places to start a business, with an online registration process that

takes only a few hours.

India has improved its ranking significantly by digitizing business registration, implementing GST (Goods and Services Tax), and simplifying insol-

vency laws.
United Arab Emirates (UAE) has established free trade zones, minimal taxation policies, and modern infrastructure to attract global businesses.

Ease of Doing Business is a key driver of economic growth, innovation, and prosperity. By simplifying regulations, improving infrastructure, enhancing transparency, and fostering entrepreneurship, countries can create an environment where businesses thrive. Governments must continuously implement reforms, leveraging technology and policy changes to ensure that both domestic and foreign enterprises find it easier to invest, expand, and contribute to national development.

A business-friendly nation is not only attractive to investors but also ensures job creation, higher tax revenues, and long-term economic stability, making it an essential goal for policymakers worldwide.

## Microplastics: are they poisoning crops and jeopardising food production?

By: Vijay Garg

the threat of microplastics could rival other serious threats, including climate change and biodiversity loss.

Microplastics: are they poisoning crops and jeopardising food production?

While poorly understood, the threat of microplastics could rival other serious threats, including climate change and biodiversity loss

Microplastics are hindering photosynthesis, the process by which plants convert energy from the sun into the fruit and vegetables we eat. This threatens massive losses in crop and seafood production over the coming decades that could mean food shortages for hundreds of millions of people.

So concludes an alarming new study. The authors combined more than 3,000 observations of the effects of microplastics on plants from 157 separate scientific reports, and then extrapolated the results using machine learning, a type of computer model that trains AI to spot patterns in data.

Microplastic exposure, they found, reduces photosynthesis in land plants and marine and freshwater algae by 7% to 12%. The authors calculated that this could eventually reduce yields of staple crops such as rice, wheat and maize by between 4% and 14%.

How realistic is this scenario? While the new study does not fully support such dramatic conclusions, it does draw attention to the possible future risks from

microplastics.

The complexities of microplas-

Plastics are useful and versatile products. But they are also difficult to recycle and during 2025 alone, will probably account for 360 million tonnes of solid waste. More insidious are the trillions

of tiny fragments these plastic products break up into, now found everywhere from the deep sea to your brain. These microplastics are less than 5mm in size and some of them are as small as 1 micron (micro-metre), meaning that 10,000 of them could easily fit inside an average plant or animal cell.

Scientists have estimated that about 11 million tonnes of these microplastics, including 51 trillion individual particles, are released into the ocean each year.

Researchers increasingly use AI models to analyse complex datasets. The results can often be useful. My colleagues and I used similar methods to analyse massive molecular datasets and determine the chemical composition of palm oil in different regions of the tropics.

In that case, it was difficult to analyse one group of compounds across a relatively small geographic region. The risks of misleading conclusions are many times greater when trying to analyse microplastics and their different effects globally, as in this new study.

New study sought to answer questions that are orders of magnitude more complex, involving vast quantities of microplastics in the entirety of the global biosphere. Other scientists have expressed concern about the limited data used by the current model, that could lead to overspeculation about the possible consequences for food supplies.

Despite these concerns, the new study is useful for highlighting the growing body of scientific data on the deleterious effects of microplastics, found in ecosystems from the Arctic to the Amazon. Over the past 20 years, evidence of the potential risk of microplastics has steadily accumulated.

More research is needed

The main conclusions of the new study are based on extrapolations that may not apply on a global scale. The reality is that there are many thousands of types of microplastics, that differ significantly in their chemical composition, size, environmental distribution and biological effects. The new study did not discriminate between them. This means that it is difficult to study their effects on individual processes within human or plant health.

Larger microplastics accumulate in the soil while much smaller microplastics can be present in the air and can be directly absorbed into plant cells. In some cases, the smaller microplastics can damage the cellular bodies, called chloroplasts, involved in photosynthesis.

Previous studies have shown that exposing some algae to microplastics can reduce photosynthesis and increase stress, leading to cell damage similar to the effects of ageing in people. Other studies on crop plants such as tobacco have concluded that the effects of microplastics on photosynthesis vary with the type and dose, exposure duration

and plant species. In other words, there is no single approach for comparing the effects on plants as different as a lettuce and an apple tree.

Given the potential risk to global food production, more priority should be given to rigorous scientific research of microplastics and their effects on both crops and the marine life that supports fish and seafood stocks.

The World Economic Forum has labelled microplastics as a top ten threat and recommends urgent action. In its latest analysis, it also reported that the average person could ingest between 78,000 and 211,000 of these particles each year. It is estimated that the emission of microplastic particles is likely to more than double in the next 15 years, possibly over 40 million tonnes annually.

Despite growing concern among scientists and civil society, several of the larger public bodies involved in microplastics research in the US and Europe are considering radical cuts to both environmental research funding and regulatory oversight. While poorly understood, the

While poorly understood, the threat of microplastics could rival other serious threats, including climate change and biodiversity loss.

(Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational Columnist Street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab)

# "Career after marriage: Flight or confusion?"

By: Priyanka Saurabh

Tamilies need to understand that marriage does not mean the end of women's careers. Men should play an equal role in the responsibilities of the home and children. Companies should provide more flexible job options for women. Instead of looking at career and marriage as opposing poles, they need to be taken together. Men should also be equal partners in the responsibilities of the home and children. Companies should provide flexible working options so that women can easily play both roles.

Imagine a girl who worked day and night for her career, got degrees, and gathered experience and then... got married! And after marriage? Often the same thing happens, which has been happening for generations—the career either stops or slowly fades into oblivion. In our society, marriage is considered a "milestone" in the life of women. But the question is whether this milestone serves to advance the career road or puts a big brake on it.

Career or marriage: should there really be a choice?

In our society, marriage is considered a "turning point" in women's lives. But the question is whether this turning point is for pushing forward or for pushing back. Many times, the family, society, and even women themselves think that a career is no longer a priority after marriage. Many times women are forced to think that career and marriage cannot go together. Family, society, and sometimes even women themselves believe that career becomes a lesser priority after marriage. Is this correct? Or is it just a social perception that needs to be changed?

"Now you have to take care of the house!"

How many times have we heard that after marriage, women give up their careers and start "taking care of the house"? If they were in a lucrative corporate job before marriage, then after marriage the question arises—"How will you manage both office and home now?" And the solution is often this—"Give up your career!" After marriage, the family and society often expect women to give priority to household responsibilities over career. Why is this thinking? Is the same expected from men as well?

Sacrifice Sale of Dreams: Wedding

Sacrifice Sale of Dreams: Wedding Special Discount!

Women's dreams and careers go on discount like goods on sale. —"Your passion comes later; family comes first!" "Husband's job is more important; yours was just a time pass!" "If you stay at home, your children will get a better upbringing!"

Mommy Track: Career break or permanent stop?

As soon as motherhood comes, women's careers are put on the "mommy track." That is, they are put out of the race for promotion in a side role. They are also given less importance in the workplace because it is believed that now they will not be as committed to a "full-time career." Many women are forced to leave their jobs after motherhood, while men's careers are not affected by it. Is this not a form of gender inequality? Can companies support women by adopting more flexible policies?

Are men asked after marriage, "What will you do with your career now?"

No, right? If the same question is asked of women, it itself tells where the problem lies. There are examples of women balancing marriage and career together. Isn't it possible that marriage brings new cooperation and support for a career? Many couples work together to advance each other's

careers. Doesn't this require a new

Rural Women's Careers: Challenges and Opportunities

In rural India, the career situation of women becomes even more challenging after marriage. Due to traditional thinking, lack of education, and unavailability of opportunities, many women are not able to remain financially independent after marriage. However, change is now coming through self-help groups (SHG), rural entrepreneurship, and government schemes. For example, women are running small businesses through Sakhi Mandal and self-help groups. Many women started their own businesses with the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana. Due to the Digital India initiative, women are now doing online business. Women are moving ahead in dairy, tailoring, embroidery, gardening, and agriculture-based businesses.

The effect of marriage on women's careers

According to the report, only 20% of women in India remain in the workforce, while their participation at the graduate level is equal to that of men. About 47% of Indian women leave their career after marriage. The earnings of married women decrease by 15-20%. 85% of Indian women believe that they face career obstacles due to marriage and children. Workforce participation of women above 30 years of age in India is only 18%, while this number is 78% for men.

Inspiring Case Studies

Indra Nooyi managed to maintain her career despite being married. In her book "My Life in Full," she has explained how she balanced her family and career and how companies need to create supportive workplaces for women. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw (founder of Biocon) built her biotech company despite marriage and society's expectations. According to her, women can successfully pursue their careers even after marriage if they get support from their family. Tennis star Serena Williams returned to the game even after motherhood and won many titles. She broke the myth that the only option after becoming a mother is to quit a career.

So what is the solution?

Families need to understand that marriage does not mean the end of women's careers. Men should play an equal role in the responsibilities of the home and children. Companies should provide more flexible job options for women. Instead of looking at career and marriage as opposing poles, they need to be taken together. Men should also be equal partners in the responsibilities of the home and children. Companies should provide flexible working options so that women can easily play both roles.

Marriage can be a new chapter, not "the end"!

Marriage should not mean "the end" of any woman's career. Rather, it should be a stage from where she can move forward in a balanced way in her personal and professional life. The next time someone asks, "What about career after marriage?", the answer should be, "What was before will remain the same—only better!"

(Priyanka Saurabh)
Research Scholar in
Political Science, Poet,
freelance journalist, and
columnist,
Ubba Bhawan, Aryanagar, Hisar (Haryana)
127045
(Mob.) 7015375570 (Talk
+ WhatsApp)

# **SMVDU Faculty Delivers Keynote at IIT Jammu's Workshop on Entrepreneurship**

#### Top News Report

JAMMU, Mar 23: Jammu & Kashmir: Dr. Sanjay Mohan, a distinguished faculty member of the School of Mechanical Engineering at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU), delivered an engaging keynote address at IIT Jammu's week-long Advanced E-SDP Programme, titled "Empowering Make in India: Nurturing Entrepreneurship in Indian Manufacturing." Organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises



(MSME), the event aimed to bolster India's manufacturing sector by promoting entrepreneurial talent and technological innovation.

In his dual role as acting CEO of the SMVDU Technology Business Incubation

Center, Dr. Mohan brought extensive expertise to the workshop. He spoke passionately about the pivotal role of technology in empowering startups, stressing how access to technical know-how and in a competitive market. His insights struck a chord with participants eager to tap into the potential of the "Make in India" initiative. The workshop drew a diverse audience, including entrepreneurs, industry professionals, and students, all keen to explore how academic institutions like SMVDU are driving progress. Dr. Mohan's involvement underscored Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University's commitment to advancing India's manufacturing landscape through

#### **J&K National Panthers Party (Bhim) Celebrates Foundation Day with Tributes** to Prof. Bhim Singh and Martyrs, Calls for **Immediate Statehood Restoration.**



#### **Top News Report** JAMMU, Mar 23:

Jammu & Kashmir National Panthers Party (Bhim) proudly celebrated its Foundation Day today, honoring the enduring legacy of its founder, Prof. Bhim Singh, and paying heartfelt homage to the revered martyrs Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru, and Sukhdev. The event, held under the leadership of Party President Vilakshan Singh, brought together members and supporters to reflect on the party's mission and renew its commitment to justice and equality.

The celebration highlighted Prof. Bhim Singh's monumental contributions as a visionary leader who devoted his life to uplifting the people of Jammu & Kashmir. His steadfast dedication to social justice and democratic values continues to guide the party in its pursuit of a fairer, more inclusive society. Alongside this, the gathering paid tribute to Bhagat

Singh, Raj Guru, and Sukhdev, whose selfless sacrifices for India's freedom remain a powerful inspiration. Their legacy of courage and patriotism resonates deeply with the party's core principles.

In his address, Vilakshan Singh urged citizens to embrace the ideals championed by Prof. Bhim Singh and the martvrs, emphasizing the need for unity, equality, and justice in today's society. He sharply criticized the National Conference, accusing it of neglecting the pressing concerns of Jammu & Kashmir's residents. "Daily wagers, unemployed youth, widows, and specially-abled individuals pinned high hopes on the new government," Singh remarked. "Yet, it appears more focused on political survival than addressing the people's

struggles.' A key highlight of the event was the party's resolution demanding the immediate restoration of Jammu & Kashmir's state

hood. Singh accused the BJP of stalling the process despite assurances made before the Supreme Court, calling it an arbitrary delay that undermines the region's rights and aspirations.

Looking forward, the J&K National Panthers Party (Bhim) reaffirmed its dedication to advancing social justice, democracy, and peace in the region, drawing strength from Prof. Bhim Singh's vision and the martyrs' indomitable spirit. The event also featured addresses by prominent leaders, including Hakikat Singh Jamwal, Naresh Chib, Balwan Singh, Sham Gorkha, Kesar Parveen, Farooq Ahmed Dar, Abdul Ahad Najar, Uttam Chand, Tranter Singh, Ravinder Jamwal, Navin Bali, Rajan Jamwal, Sanju Bhagat, Rakesh Kumar, Gulam Rasool and others who echoed the call for progress and

accountability. As the party commemorates its roots, it stands resolute in its mission to build a brighter, more equitable future for Jammu & Kashmir.

# **J&K Police Organise** 'Run for Unity' in **Bhaderwah**



#### **Top News Report**

BHADERWAH , Mar 23: The Jammu and Kashmir police today organised a 'run for unity 'in Bhaderwah to honour martyrs and promote unity and patriotism among the community members and to also spread the message that youth should stay away from drugs .Deputy Commissioner Doda Harvinder Singh was chief guest on the occasion whereas ADC Bhaderwah Sunil Kumar, ASP Bhaderwah Vinod Sharma, SPDO Shoket Ali, Tehsildar Bhaderwah Kamal Preet Singh , Advocate Mohd Maiid Malik was also present on the occasion . This event not only celebrated the martyrs' dedication and sacrifice but also fostered unity and patriotism within the community. DC Doda extended gratitude to all participants and volunteers, saying their

and dedication were instrumental in making this event memorable and impactful. The run began from the new bus stand Kotli participants embarked on a scenic route that showcased the natural beauty of the area and the event served as a testament to the unwavering commitment of JK Police to instill a sense of unity and patriotism in the community," the spokesperson added. It provided a platform for people to come together and reflect on the sacrifices made by our valiant soldiers, added Advocate Mohd Majid Malik who finishes run for unity on 4th number . "I salute the bravehearts of our Police. Their legacy will live in our hearts. On this day, let us commit ourselves to uphold the values they stood for-courage, unity and service to the nation,' he said and also threw light on NDPS Act 1985 and Article 47 of Constitution.

#### Bihar Diwas celebration in Jammu will strengthen 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat': Raman Suri

innovative ideas into sus-

tainable enterprises. "The

future of manufacturing

lies in nurturing tech-

savvy entrepreneurs," he

remarked, inspiring attend-

ees to embrace cutting-

Dr. Mohan also high-

lighted the vital contribu-

tions of incubation centers,

such as the one he leads

at SMVDU. Under his guid-

ance, the center fosters a

supportive ecosystem,

providing budding entre-

preneurs with resources,

training, and collaboration

opportunities to succeed

edge solutions.

**Top News Report** 

JAMMU, Mar 23: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Executive Member Raman Suri today said that the celebration of Bihar Diwas in Jammu Kashmir at government level as well as BJP party's level will further Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat" by fostering unity and cultural exchange at the grassroot level.

For the first time, the BJP Jammu Kashmir unit is organising various events across Jammu Division, celebrating Bihar Diwas as a 'Sneh Milan' (gathering of affection). This initiative aims to highlight the strong bond between the people of Jammu Kashmir and Bihar, proving that India, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, is one and celebrates its unity in the true spirit of nationalism. Hailing BJP Party Chief J&K Sat Sharma for spearheading this initiative, Raman Suri emphasized that the participation of prominent leaders from Bihar in these days of celebrations will add grandeur to the BJP is working to build a bridge between Jammu Kashmir and Bihar, recognizing the immense contributions

of Biharis in various sectors in Jammu Kashmir. Raman Suri also conregions.

gratulated Lieutenant Governor (LG) Manoj Sinha for taking an initiative in celebrating Bihar Diwas at Raj Bhawan and inviting students, officials and business community from Bihar living in Jammu Kashmir to join the moment. He also lauded the Union Government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his efforts to unite Bharat and hold such events across the work. length and breadth of Bharat. Today, entire Bharat, he added, is cel-

a national festival. Raman Suri said, "People from Bihar have played a crucial role in the growth and development of Jammu Kashmir as bureaucrats, technocrats, laborers, artists, engineers and academicians. Their contributions deserve recognition and should continue in the future," Suri said.

ebrating Bihar Diwas as

He further explained that Bihar Diwas in Jammu will showcase Bihar's rich cultural heritage through various programmes, including cultural performances, traditional art exhibitions, and interactive sessions. This will provide the people of Jammu an opportunity to experience Bihar's culture, strengthening the cultural harmony between the two

research, innovation, and

strategic mentorship.

"The abrogation of Article 370 has ensured that all Indians are equal, and Bihar Diwas in Jammu is a testament to this new era of inclusivity. He also assured the Bihar community in Jammu Kashmir that the BJP stands with them. and if any of their family members face issues in Bihar, they will receive full support from the party through its net-

Raman Suri urged all Bihar residents in Jammu Kashmir to participate wholeheartedly in the upcoming celebrations and make it a festival of unity. He added that these events will not only strengthen emotional ties between but also reinforce the ideology of "One Nation, One Identity."

Bihar Diwas celebrations mark the formation of Bihar as a separate state in 1912. It is a day of pride for Biharis and is celebrated with cultural programmes, seminars, and public events showcasing the state's history, achievements, and heritage. By bringing Bihar Diwas to Jammu, the BJP aims to celebrate this rich legacy while strengthening the spirit of national unity and brotherhood.

# **Teachers' Federation Calls for Transparent Transfer Policy in Education Department**



#### **Top News Report**

JAMMU, Mar 23: The Akhil Bharatiya Rashtrya Shakshik Mahasangh has urged the government to implement a transparent transfer policy in the **Education Department** to ensure fairness and efficiency in teacher placements.

During a meeting held in Ramban, Vippan Sharma, President of the Federation's Ramban district unit, emphasized the urgent need to address various issues affecting the education sector. He demanded the immediate filling of vacancies for both teaching and non-teaching staff in schools across the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmiri. He also called for the regularization of all cadres within the department at the time of their promotion.

Akhil Bharatiya Rashtrya Shakshik Mahasangh strongly reiterated its demand that teachers should be exempted from extraacademic duties, as previously assured by the Education Department. Members expressed

concern that assigning teachers non-teaching tasks hinders the delivery of quality education and disrupts academic schedules.

The meeting also highlighted the failure of the J&K government to implement its own transparent transfer policy, adversely impacting the academic environment in schools. Speakers argued that the lack of a fair transfer mechanism results in unnecessary delays, hardships for teachers, and academic

disruptions for students. Teachers working in remote and far-flung areas of J&K and Ladakh particularly suffer due to irregular transfers, leading to a shortage of staff in these institutions. The Federation stressed that without a well-structured transfer policy, schools in rural areas continue to face severe staff shortages, ultimately affecting the quality of education.

Another key issue raised in the meeting was the infrastructure crisis in educational institutions. Many schools lack basic facilities, proper classrooms, and essential teaching aids. The Federation urged the government to take concrete steps toward improving school infrastructure and ensuring that all institutions are well-equipped to provide quality edu-

Additionally, the regularization of all teaching and non-teaching staff at the time of their promotion was emphasized as a critical step in ensuring job security and career progression for employees. The Federation stressed that delays in regularization create uncertainty and discourage skilled individuals from joining the education sector.

Akhil Bharatiya Rashtrya Shakshik Mahasangh has urged the **Education Department** to address these pressing issues without delay. They called for:

Immediate implementation of a transparent transfer policy.

Filling up of vacant teaching and nonteaching posts to ensure smooth functioning of schools.

Exemption of teachers from extra-academic duties to let them focus solely on academics.

Infrastructure improvement in schools, especially in remote areas.

Regularization of all cadres at the time of promotion to provide job security.

The Federation warned that if these demands are not met, it may resort to peaceful protests and representations before higher authorities to ensure justice for teachers and students alike

# "Congress will not rest until full Statehood is restored": Sawhney

#### **Top News Report**

unwavering support

JAMMU, Mar 23: Former minister J&K and senior Congress leader Yogesh Sawhney held a crucial preparatory meeting for the upcoming district-wise convention under the 'Hamari Riyasat Hamara Haq' campaign in Reasi District. The campaign, launched by Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President Tariq Hameed Karra, will begin on February 21 to demand the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting, held by Sawhney in two phases—one in Katra and another in Reasi-focused on mobilizing public participation and strengthening the party's stance on statehood. Sawhney emphasized that if the demand is not met, the campaign could escalate into a larger agitational movement.

Speaking at the meeting, Sawhney asserted that Congress is fully committed to the restoration



Sawhney highlighted the

of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood and will not rest until it is achieved. He criticized the delay in reinstating statehood, calling it a betrayal of the people's trust. "Jammu and Kashmir had a proud history as a full-fledged state, with a unique identity and constitutional safeguards. Stripping it of its statehood was an undemocratic decision. and the people of J&K will not accept this status indefinitely," he said. Sawhney reiterated that Congress is ready to take the fight to every district, ensuring that every citizen's voice is

growing discontent among the people, stating that the Congress campaign is not just a party initiative but a people's movement. "The government cannot suppress the aspirations of the people forever. The voices demanding statehood are getting louder, and ignoring them will only deepen the resentment among the people of Jammu and Kashmir," he remarked. He urged citizens, particularly the youth, to actively participate in the upcoming

conventions and make their

stand clear. "If the govern-

ment continues to ignore

the rightful demand of the people, this campaign will intensify, and we will not hesitate to take it to the streets," he warned.

Sawhney said that the participation of senior Congress leaders, local workers, and supporters is encouraged, and they discussed strategies for ensuring maximum public engagement in the district convention. Sawhney stressed that the February 21 launch marks the beginning of a strong, organized movement that will extend across all districts of Jammu and Kashmir. He urged party workers to gear

up for an aggressive campaign, emphasizing that if statehood is not restored, the movement will transform into a mass agitation. He concluded with a resolution reaffirming Congress's stand and calling upon the government to fulfill its promise of restoring full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir Along with Former Minis-

ter Yogesh Sawhney, several prominent leaders present in the meeting at katra and Reasi were District President Bhupinder Singh, Rajesh Sadhotra, Rakesh Wazir, Madan Dogra, Vice President Vijay Sharma Ji. Ex-President Pritam Singh, Munshi Ram Salalia, Vice President Jagdish Sharma, Sohan Chand, Karan Singh, Mahila President Subha Sharma, Block President Varinder Singh, Angrez Singh, Mohan Singh, Anil Sharma, Rafiq, Ranjeet Singh, Vikram, Karan Thappa, Seva Ram, Anuj Dutta, Abhishek Sadhotra, Nikhil Sharma, and

Edited, Printed, Published and Owned by: Rajiv Mahajan, Office: 17- New Rehari Jammu, Published from 17- New Rehari Jammu, and Printed from GK Offset Printing Press situated at Shivalik Puram Janipur, Jammu on behalf of Rajiv Mahajan. Senior Editor: M. K Bangroo, Executive Editor: Anita Gupta, Photo Journalist: Aman Sharma (9906198186), Head Office Jammu. Mobile No: (9906300707, 9086072548), Fax No: 0191-2561688.

e-mail: topnewsjk@gmail.com, editortopnewsjk@gmail.com

(All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent courts and forums in Jammu City).

# **Zeenat Aman urges women in the industry** to push for pay parity

Veteran actor Zeenat Aman has been vocal about her journey in the Hindi film industry and how far things have changed in the last few decades. She had previously pointed out how the 'gender pay gap' still remained the same. At The Hollywood Reporter India's Women In Entertainment awards ceremony, Zeenat addressed the issue once again and urged women to 'push' for pay parity.

What Zeenat said Zeenat was presented the Iconic Artist award at the cer-

emony by actor Sushmita Sen. On stage, she thanked the audience for the standing ovation and expressed gratitude for the recognition. In her speech, she said, "I know women in entertainment are being celebrated. But I think it is important to remember that all women must be celebrated. Not just women in entertainment."



'I remember more than 50 years ago...'

She went on to add, "It is an illustrious gathering. I remember more than 50 years ago, I would be the only woman on set. What is so heartening to see now is that now in every sphere of film-making there are women who have created their own space. In the corporate world this is something that I am really proud of. But I do have something to say. Please, please push for pay parity. From my perspective you have come a long way, baby! So cheers to that, thank you."

On the work front, Zeenat will be seen next in the Netflix series The Royals. The show, which will release later this year, also stars Ishan Khatter and Bhumi Pednekar. She also has a role in the film Bun Tikki, which is directed by Faraz Arif Ansari. The film also stars Shabana Azmi and Abhay Deol.

## **Anubha Arora enters The Delhi Files: The Bengal Chapter**



Anubha Arora, who last appeared in Amazon's Power of Paanch, will now be seen in a new project, The Delhi Files: The Bengal Chapter, which is scheduled to hit the screens on August 15.

August 15.

She shared, "I've always taken up projects as per my instinct and taken into account that my character has a significant impact on the story. That would give me an opportunity to act more and see myself more on the screen, as that gives me true joy."

"Also, some projects, you know from the beginning, are going to be very interesting to work on, like The Delhi Files: The Bengal Chapter. It presents some hard-hitting facts in a screenplay that's woven beautifully," she added.

# Akshay Kumar's 'Kesari 2' to release in theatres on April 18

Bollywood star Akshay Kumar announced that his upcoming film, "Kesari 2" will be released in theatres on April 18.

Also starring R Madhavan and Ananya Panday, the movie is a sequel to Kumar's 2019 hit film of the same name.

The 57-year-old star took to social media to share the news about the release date of "Kesari 2", and also said that its teaser will be unveiled on March 24.

"A revolution painted in courage #KesariChapter2 teaser drops this Monday! Brace yourselves! Releasing in cinemas on April 18!," the post read.

The second chapter, directed by debutant filmmaker Karan Singh Tyagi, is produced by Karan Johar's Dharma Productions, Kumar's Cape Of Good Films, and Anand Tiwari and Ampritpal Singh Bindra.



According to media reports, "Kesari 2" will bring out the poignant story of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

Bagh massacre.
The first part of "Kesari"
narrated the tale of the
Battle of Saragarhi,

fought between Afghan tribesmen and the 36th Sikhs regiment of the British Indian Army in 1897. It was directed by Anurag Singh and also starred Parineeti Chopra.

# **Ektaa Kapoor blames audience for Superboys of Malegaon failing at box office**

Filmmaker Ektaa Kapoor recently addressed the ongoing debate about Indian content not matching the standards of internationally acclaimed films and TV series, and says the audience is responsible for the box office failure of films like Superboys of Malegaon and The Buckingham Murders.

Ektaa took to Instagram and without mincing her words, the fimmaker provided a 'solution' for filmmakers 'crying' about Indian content not being at par with international content. She wrote, "When Indian creators cry that Indian content is not at par wit internationally acclaimed tv series and films, I wonder if it is ego, anger or just misplaced accusations."

Ektaa says audience is the real culprit

She further claimed that the real reason



films like Superboys of Malegaon and The **Buckingham Murders** failed at the box office was not the industry but the audience itself. She wrote, "Can we blame the real culprits—the 'audience'? Since it's no fun blaming people in such abstract terms (because we can't take them down on social media), let's just say that a major part of India is in its evolutionary stage as far as content is concerned! You could call it adolescence."

Ektaa urges creators to put money into film-making

She also took a dig at money-driven corporate studios and streaming platforms, including herself, stating, "These money-hungry corporate studios and apps only think of numbers (me included)!!! Moviemaking, content creation is not a business—it's an

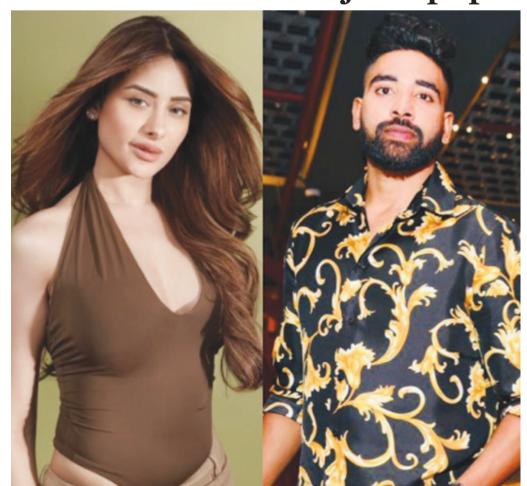
art! So, I urge creators to put in their own money... Problem solved!!!!"

Is Ektaa Kapoor throwing shade at Anurag Kashyap?

Reddit users quickly speculated that Ektaa's comments were a direct jibe at Anurag Kashyap, who recently slammed Netflix India for what he called its "corrupt" leadership and lack of creative vision. Kashyap had praised the international Netflix series Adolescence while criticising the platform's approach to Indian content.

One Reddit user commented, "She is shading Anurag Kashyap for calling Netflix India corrupt—especially since its head, Monika Shergill, is Ektaa's friend." Another wrote, "This must be a jab at Anurag Kashyap—she made sure to bring up 'adolescence' just after he praised the show."

# Mahira Sharma again clarifies relationship status with Mohammed Siraj: 'Stop spreading rumours'



Actor Mahira Sharma has denied rumours of a romantic relationship with cricketer Mohammed Siraj. She went to social media to set the record straight and put an end to speculation.

Mahira sets the record straight

Mahira took to her Instagram Stories to address the speculation, issuing a clear and direct message that the rumours surrounding her and Mohammed are entirely baseless and should be put to rest immediately.

Taking to her Instagram handle, Mahira wrote, "Stop spreading rumours, I'm not dating anyone."

Her social media post comes after she was teased by photographers in Mumbai about her connection with the cricketer. When Mahira made an appearance at an award ceremony, photographers asked her about the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) and her preferred team. The exchange was captured on video and subsequently emerged

on social media.

The cricketer also took to social media to request photographers to refrain from asking questions about him to others. He took to his Instagram story to share, "I request paparazzi's to stop asking questions around me. It is completely untrue and baseless. I hope this ends".

About the romance buzz

For several months, rumours have been swirling about a romantic connection between Mohammed Siraj and Mahira Sharma, who rose to fame after her stint on Bigg Boss 13. Agency reported that Mahira and Siraj are "romantically involved." The report claimed that sources close to the two revealed they are dating, although they have been keeping their relationship private. It further stated that they had been getting to know each other over the past few months.

The rumours intensified after Siraj liked one of Mahira's Instagram posts, and the two started following each other on the platform. In the past, during an interview with Filmy Gyan, Mahira was asked about fans commenting that they are heartbroken about the news of her dating Mohammed Siraj. To which, Mahira responded, "Kisi ka kuch nahi hai (There is nothing). I'm not dating anyone."

The host asked her how she deals with such news and reports of link-ups as a public figure. Mahira said, "Fans can connect you with anyone. We can't stop them. When I work, I am linked to them (co-stars) too. They make edits and all. But I don't give much importance to all this. If you like this, do it, but there is nothing like this."

Mahira gained widespread recognition with her participation in Salman Khan's reality show, Bigg Boss 13. Earlier, Mahira was in a relationship with Paras Chhabra. The two met on Bigg Boss 13 and fell in love. However, they parted ways in 2023.

# Pooja Hegde admits she was a victim of targeted trolling: 'It was a shock'



Actor Pooja Hegde was shocked to discover that people are being paid to troll her on social media. In a recent interview, Pooja said it is bizarre that PR strategies are often exploited to target and bring down actors, highlighting the sinister underbelly of the entertainment industry.

In an interview with agency, Pooja opened up about negative PR strategy and targeted trolling.

Pooja said, "Many times, and to me, it was a shock. The one thing I'm really bad at is PR. I remember there was a time when I was constantly getting trolled by

meme pages, and I was like, why are they constantly talking negatively about me? It looked targeted. People are spending a lot of money on pulling down other people. When I found out about it, my parents and I were very bothered. But I also took it as a compliment because if someone feels the need to pull you down, it means you are above them. I kept reassuring my parents that it was okay. But after a point, it became too much. I found out that people were spending lakhs

Pooja also disclosed that upon instructing her

just to troll me".

team to investigate the source of the negativity by contacting popular meme pages, she was appalled to discover that the trolling was, in fact, a monetised endeavour, with individuals being paid to spread malicious content.

She added, "I told my team to connect with the meme pages and ask them what the problem was. And they said. 'This is how much they are paying us. If you'd like to stop it or troll them back, this is the amount.' To me, it was just bizarre. People believe such things but don't know why I'm being trolled or what the reason behind it is. Sometimes, I see a horrendous comment, go to the profile, and find that there's no display picture or any posts. These are just paid bots."

Pooja's upcoming work

Pooja was last seen on the big screens in Deva with Shahid Kapoor. The film garnered a lukewarm response from critics, and underperformed at the box office, failing to make a lasting impact on audiences. Next, she will be seen with Varun Dhawan in Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai. It is being described as a "commercial entertainer".

# PM Modi pays homage to **Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev** and Rajguru

NEW DELHI, Mar 23 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday paid homage to revolutionary freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru, who were hanged by the British for their role in the Lahore conspiracy

The three revolutionaries joined hands to oppose British rule, with Singh throwing a bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly in April 1929.

The bomb was not intended to kill anyone but to highlight their protest.



They were hanged on this day in 1931. All three of them were less than 25 years old at the time of their deaths

"Today, our nation remembers

supreme sacrifice of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev. Their fearless pursuit of freedom and justice continues to inspire us all," Modi said in a post on X.

# Preparations for 2027 Kumbh Mela in Nashik slow, but will overcome challenges, says Fadnavis MUMBAI, Mar 23

(Agencies): Preparations for the 2027 Kumbh Mela in Nashik are progressing at a slower pace than anticipated, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said on Sunday, describing it as an event of "faith and technology".

Speaking at a programme of CII Young Indians in Nashik, Fadnavis acknowledged the challenges in organising the large-scale event but expressed confidence in overcoming

The chief minister noted that while work on infrastructure is currently behind schedule, the situation is improv-

"We started prepara-

(Amendment) Bill that

could be tabled during

the ongoing Budget

session and the options

for the opposition, Sibal

said one must see what

the NDA coalition part-

ners are willing to do in

this matter because the

BJP does not have a

"Let us see what their

position is. There are

elections coming in

Bihar. I think that if they

introduce the bill, they

may be worried what

impact that might have

in the election process

"So I don't know what

the fallout of that is

going to be. So let us

wait and see. Of course

if the bill is passed there

are options available to

in Bihar," he said.

majority.



tions for the Kumbh Mela last year. If we had started the work in 2020, we would have been in a more comfortable position today," he said

Fadnavis credited the efficiency of the team working on the event that has been following a reverse planning strategy and assured that despite the delays,

progress was being made, drawing from the experience of the successful Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj.

"In 2015, Nashik hosted the Kumbh Mela, and after many years, no fatalities were reported. This time, we are looking at a similar model of success and efforts underway to develop Nashik and Triambakeshwar," he said. Describing the upcoming event in Nashik as a "Kumbh of faith and technology", Fadnavis highlighted that the integration of artificial intelligence, crowd management systems, and augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) tools will offer an immersive experience for attendees.

"The event will be held across 300 acres, significantly smaller than the 7,500 hectares of Prayagraj," he said.

Fadnavis expressed his gratitude to the sadhus and seers for their cooperation in making the event run smoothly despite the challenges. He also discussed the social impact of the Kumbh Mela,

citing Prayagraj's 2025 event, where nearly 50 crore people attended, coming together regardless of caste or financial background, united by their faith.

"People from across the country attended the Kumbh in Prayagraj, and it changed the economy of Uttar Pradesh. The state's GSDP figures next year will be surprising," Fadnavis said, expressing hope for a similar surge of faith and participation at Maharashtra's Kumbh Mela

The chief minister called for people to connect with Maharashtra in the same spirit, supporting the state's preparations and contributing to the event's success in

# INDIA must appear to be a 'bloc and not un-bloc' itself in public domain: Sibal

NEW DELHI, Mar 23 (Agencies): INDIA should appear to be a "bloc and not un-bloc" itself in the manner that it does in the public domain, Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal has said as he batted for a formal structure for the opposition alliance with spokespersons to represent its views

In an interview with agency, Sibal said INDIA parties need to have a cohesive policy, ideological framework and a programme for the future.

Asked about the recent run-ins among INDIA bloc partners in the state assembly polls and if it was bad optics, the Independent Rajya Sabha MP said, "I think it (INDIA) should appear to be a bloc and not unbloc itself in the manner that it does in the public domain." "They (INDIA parties) need to have a cohesive policy, a cohesive ideological framework and a cohesive programme for the future," he said.

"I am not talking about

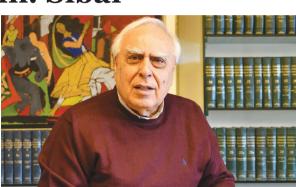
the state level or the national level, there has to be cohesiveness in the way in which it thinks on issues that are of great national importance and unless that mechanism is put in place and unless there are spokespersons of the bloc who represent the views of the INDIA bloc, I don't think that this can move forward very effectively," Sibal told agency.

On whether there should be a formal political structure in place for the bloc, Sibal said he has been batting for it for a long time.

"Obviously, either it is not something that is palatable to somebody or the other, or they feel this is not the appropriate time, but I can't possibly talk on behalf of the bloc," he said.

Sibal, however, exuded confidence about the opposition's future.

"I see a future for the opposition, what form it takes, what structure it takes, we'll see," the former Congress leader added.



The Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) of opposition parties came together ahead of the Lok Sabha elections to counter the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance at the Centre.

INDIA bloc constituents, particularly the Congress and the AAP, were involved in sharp exchanges and traded barbs especially in the Delhi Assembly polls. Several political commentators cited lack of cohesiveness in the INDIA bloc for the BJP gaining ground after the Lok Sabha polls and winning the elections in Harvana, Maharashtra

and Delhi Asked about the Waqf those who wish to challenge it," Sibal said.

On the contentious delimitation issue, Sibal said it has very serious implications for the polity of the country and that is why Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin called a meeting and a lot of representatives, including those of the Congress participated.

"It has an impact on the future of our polity but in any case the condition is that unless a new census is done the delimitation will not take place.We have not done a new census as in 2021 also it was not done. First the census and then the delimitation. So, 'abhi Dilli door ast'." the senior advocate said.

Sibal, who was a Union minister during the UPA 1 and UPA 2 governments, quit the Congress in May 2022 and was elected to the Rajya Sabha as an Independent member with the Samajwadi Party's support.

# **NIA Chargesheets Four** Khalistani Terror **Operatives In Chandigarh Grenade Attack Case**

NEW DELHI, Mar 23 (Agencies): The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has chargesheeted four terror operatives of the Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) terrorist organisation in the September 2024 Chandigarh grenade attack case, an official statement said on Sunday.

The accused include Pakistan-based designated terrorist Harwinder Singh Sandhu alias Rinda, and USbased Harpreet Singh alias Happy Passi, it

In the chargesheet filed before the Special NIA court, Chandigarh, all four accused persons have been charged under multiple sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), the **Explosive Substances** Act, and other related provisions, for their roles in planning and supporting the attack.

The two terrorists — Rinda and Happy Passi — were the primary handlers and conspirators behind the attack, said the statement issued by the NIA.

They had provided logistical support, terror funds, weapons, and ammunition to India-based on-ground operatives in Chandigarh for executing the grenade attack, it said.

The September 2024 attack was intended to target a retired officer of Punjab Police, who the assailants believed to be the occupant of the house, the statement said.

Investigations revealed that Rinda, along with Happy Passia, had orchestrated the conspiracy to strike terror among

law enforcement officials and the general public through the grenade attack, as part of the broader aim to promote BKI's terrorist agenda, it added.

They had recruited local operatives, namely Rohan Masih and Vishal Masih, who were tasked with carrying out the attack under their direct instructions, the probe agency said.

Rinda and Happy directed the other accused, Rohan Masih and Vishal Masih. to conduct reconnaissance on the target twice before hurling the grenade, investigations revealed, it said.

Investigations in the case are continuing and NIA is trying to track down other members of the BKI terror group and dismantle its network in India.

# Driver 'dozes off', bus overturns, leaving 3 dead, 25 hurt in MP's Jabalpur

JABALPUR, Mar 23 (Agencies): Three persons were killed and more than 25 others injured when a Nagpur-bound private bus overturned in Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur district early on Sunday, the police said.

place around 4 am in the Ramanpur Ghati area under Bargi police station limits, an official

The accident took

Three persons were killed and more than 25 others injured in the incident, according to the police.

The bus was on its way

from Ayodhya (in Uttar Pradesh) to Nagpur (Maharashtra), a police official said, adding the initial investigation indicated that the accident occurred as the vehicle

The deceased have been identified as Malmma (45), a resident of Hyderabad, Shubham Meshram (28) and Amol Khode (42), both residents of Nagpur, the official said.

The injured persons were admitted to hospitals in Lakhnadon town and Jabalpur city, the official said.

# Waqf Bill assault on Constitution, part of BJP's strategy to damage harmony: Congress

NEW DELHI, Mar 23 (Agencies): The Congress on Sunday termed the Waqf (Amendment) Bill an "assault" on the Constitution and alleged the proposed legislation was part of the BJP's "continuing attempts to damage" the centuriesold bonds of social harmony.

It is also part of the BJP's attempts to "demonise minority communities" by spreading propaganda and creating prejudices, the opposition party alleged.

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 is "deeply flawed".

"The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 is part of the BJP's strategy and continuing attempts to damage the centuries-old bonds of social harmony in our uniquely multi-religious society," he said in a statement.

It is part of the BJP's strategy and continuing attempts "to demonise minority communities by spreading false propaganda and creating prejudices", Ramesh



claimed.

He alleged that the Bill is aimed at diluting Constitutional provisions that guarantee equal rights and protection to all citizens, regardless of religion

It is part of the BJP's strategy and continuing attempts to "defame traditions and institutions of minority communities to keep our society in a state of permanent polarization for electoral gains", the Congress leader alleged.

He claimed the proposed legislation is deeply flawed for five reasons.

Ramesh alleged that all the institutions created by previous laws to administer Waqfs were actively sought to be reduced in stature, composition and authority to deliberately deprive the community the right to administer its own religious traditions and affairs.

"Deliberate ambiguity has been introduced for determining who can donate their land for waqf purposes thus altering the very definition of waqf itself," he said.

The waqf-by-user concept developed by the nation's judiciary on the basis of long, continued and uninterrupted customary usage is being abolished, Ramesh claimed.

"Provisions in the existing law are being removed without any reason just to weaken the administration of the waqf. Enhanced

defences are now being introduced in the law to protect those who have encroached on wagf

lands," he claimed. Ramesh said farreaching powers have been given to the collector and other designated state government officers on matters related to disputes concerning waqf properties as well as their registration.

Officers of the state governments will now have the powers to derecognize any waqf on anyone's complaint or on a mere allegation of the waqf property being a government property till a final decision is taken, he claimed.

"It bears recall that a 428-page report was literally bulldozed through the JPC without it ever having gone through a detailed clause-byclause discussion. It thus violates all Parliamentary practices," Ramesh said.

"Most fundamentally, the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 is an assault on the Constitution of India itself," the Congress leader asserted. His remarks came after the Parliament's joint committee submitted its report on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill. Though not listed yet, there is speculation that the proposed legislation could be brought for passage in Parliament during the ongoing Budget Session.

The 31-member panel on the Bill, after multiple sittings and hearings, suggested several amendments to the proposed legislation even as the opposition members disagreed with the report and submitted dissent notes.

The 655-page report was submitted to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on January 30.

The joint committee adopted the report that contained changes suggested by members of the ruling BJP by a 15-11 majority vote. The move prompted the opposition to dub the exercise an attempt to destroy Waqf boards.

The Bill was referred to the joint committee on August 8 last year, following its introduction in the Lok Sabha by Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju.

# Two die as truck overturns on e-rickshaw in UP's Hathras HATHRAS. Mar 23

(Agencies): An appleladen truck overturned onto an e-rickshaw on the Aligarh-Etah road here on Sunday, leaving two persons dead, police said.

The incident occurred around 9:30 am when the truck was en route to Orissa.

The e-rickshaw driver and a passenger were killed instantly while the



The injured truck driver was taken to the Sikandrarao Community Health Centre.

"The deceased have been identified as Gopal (20) and Kanhaiya (21)," Station House Officer of Kotwali police station Arvind Rathi said.

# Heavy Israeli strikes on southern Gaza kill 19, including senior Hamas political leader

Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen, who are allied with Hamas, meanwhile launched another missile at Israel, setting off air raid sirens.

DEIR AL-BALAH, Mar 23 (Agencies): Israeli strikes across the southern Gaza Strip killed at least 19 Palestinians overnight into Sunday, including a senior Hamas political leader and several women and children, as the military ordered people to evacuate from part of the city of Rafah on the border with Egypt.

The military said it would soon operate against militants in the already heavily destroyed Tel Sultan area of Rafah. Israel launched a major offensive in the southern city last May, when it captured a strategic corridor along the border with Egypt and the Rafah crossing.

The military ordered people to evacuate on foot along a single route to the Mawasi area, a sprawling area of squalid tent camps with few public services. It was not immediately clear if the evacuation order signaled a renewed ground operation.

"Remaining in camps, tents, or houses in Tel al-Sultan or walking on any other route endangers your lives and the lives of your family members," military spokesman Col. Avichay Adraee said in a statement.

Hamas said that Salah Bardawil, a member of its political bureau and of the Palestinian parliament, was killed in a strike in Mawasi that also killed his wife. Bardawil was a wellknown member of the group's political wing who gave media interviews over the years.

Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen, who are allied with Hamas, meanwhile launched



another missile at Israel, setting off air raid sirens. The Israeli military said the projectile was intercepted, and there were no reports of casualties or damage.

At least 2 families among those killed in southern Gaza

Two hospitals in southern Gaza said they had received 17 bodies from strikes overnight, including several women and children. The toll did not include the Hamas official and his wife.

The European Hospital said the dead included five children and their parents killed in a strike in Khan Younis. Another family — two girls and their parents — were killed in a separate strike on the southern city. The Kuwaiti Hospital said it received the bodies of a woman and child killed in another strike.

The Palestinian Red Crescent emergency service said Israeli forces were preventing its ambulances from responding to strikes in Rafah and that wounded. There was no immediate comment from the military.

several of its medics had been

Israel ended its ceasefire with Hamas last week when it launched a surprise wave of airstrikes that killed hundreds of Palestinians across the territory. The Houthis resumed their attacks on Israel, portraying them as an act of solidarity with the Palestinians, despite recent U.S. strikes targeting the Yemeni rebels.

Ceasefire in tatters after Israeli strikes

The ceasefire that took hold in January paused 15 months of heavy fighting ignited by Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023 attack into Israel.

Twenty-five Israeli hostages and the bodies of eight others were released in exchange for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners, Israeli forces pulled back to a buffer zone, allowing hundreds of thousands of people to return to what remains of their homes, and there was a surge

in humanitarian aid.

The sides were supposed to begin negotiations in early February on the next phase of the truce, in which Hamas was to release the remaining 59 hostages — 35 of whom are believed to be dead - in exchange for more Palestinian prisoners, a lasting ceasefire and an Israeli withdrawal.

Those talks never began, and Israel backed out of the ceasefire agreement after Hamas refused Israeli and U.S.backed proposals to release more hostages ahead of any talks on a lasting truce.

Hamas-led militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and took 251 hostage in the Oct. 7 attack. Most of the captives have been released in ceasefire agreements or other deals, while Israeli forces rescued eight alive and recovered dozens of bodies.

Israel's offensive has killed at least 49,747 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which says women and children make up more than half the dead but does not distinguish between combatants and civilians in its records. Israel says it has killed around 20,000 militants, without providing evidence.

The offensive has destroyed vast areas of Gaza and at its height had displaced around 90% of the population. Israel sealed off the territory of 2 million Palestinians from food, fuel, medicine and other supplies earlier this month to pressure Hamas to change the ceasefire agreement.

# 3 killed after Moscow targets Kyiv with a mass drone attack ahead of ceasefire talks

The attack on the Ukrainian capital came ahead of ceasefire negotiations in Saudi Arabia in which Ukraine and Russia are expected to hold indirect U.S.-mediated talks on Monday



KYIV. Mar 23 (Agencies): At least three people were killed, including a five-yearold child, after Russia launched a barrage of drones targeting Kyiv overnight on Sunday, according to local Ukrainian officials and emergency services.

The attack on the Ukrainian capital came ahead of ceasefire negotiations in Saudi Arabia in which Ukraine and Russia are expected to hold indirect U.S.-mediated talks on Monday to discuss a pause in long-range attacks targeting energy facilities and civilian infrastructure.

The Ukrainian delegation is expected to meet with U.S. officials in Saudi Arabia a day ahead of the indirect talks, Ukrainian President Voldoymyr Zelenskyy said. Ukraine is planning to send technical teams to discuss the details of the partial ceasefire.

Russia launched 147 drones across Ukraine, according to the Ukrainian Air Force. Ukrainian air defenses shot down 97 and 25 others didn't reach targets due to Ukrainian countermeasures. The attacks also struck Kharkiv, Sumy, Chernihiv, Odesa and Donetsk regions.

Extended sounds of explosions were heard in the early hours of the night as the air raid blared for over five hours. Russian drones and debris from shotdown drones, which

were flying at lower altitudes to evade air defenses, fell on residential buildings. Ukraine's Kyiv City Military Administration said three people were killed and 10 others were injured.

Two residential buildings in the district of Dnipro caught fire due to falling drone debris, according to Kyiv City Military Administration head Tymur Tkachenko. A fire broke out on the top floors of a 9-storey building, killing one woman, the State Emergency Service said.

In the district of Podil a fire broke out on the 20th floor of a 25-storey building. In Holosiivskyi, fires broke out in a warehouse and office building, killing one person, according to the State Emergency Service.

Also on Sunday, Russia's Ministry of Defense said it had shot down 59 Ukrainian drones overnight, including 29 over the region of Rostov and 20 more over southwestern Astrakhan. In Rostov, one person was killed and a car caught fire due to the Ukrainian drone attack, according to the area's temporary governor, Yuri Slyusar.

#### **Straits Exchange Foundation advises** caution for Taiwanese travelling to China

TAIPEI, Mar 23 (Agencies): The Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) urged caution for Taiwanese travelling to China, as reported by the Taipei

This comes as three more Taiwanese nationals were detained, and one more went missing in China.

SEF Secretary-General Luo Wenchia emphasized that China is not a safe destination due to its lack of democracy, rule of law, and unclear rights and procedures, which make it difficult to predict or address incidents involving Taiwanese citizens.

According to Luo, a Taiwanese entrepreneur and his son were arrested in Wuhan under unspecified circumstances, while another Taiwanese national disappeared in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province.

The family of the missing individual was later contacted by a Chinese prisoner who claimed the person was being held in jail, Taipei Times reported.

Additionally, Luo noted an incident where a Taiwanese academic who had been hired by a university in Guangdong saw his housing contract suddenly

voided by the school. According to the Taipei Times, Luo

also criticized Beijing for failing to uphold the Cross-Strait Joint Crime-Fighting and Judicial Mutual Assistance Agreement, which mandates that Taiwanese authorities be notified when a Taiwanese citizen is arrested in China. He argued that China's refusal to honour this agreement, along with its lack of transparency and disregard for established procedures, undermines its credibility and trustworthiness in the eyes of the Taiwanese people.

Despite these issues, Luo reiterated that Taiwan remains committed to maintaining an open, constructive, and equal dialogue with Beijing, as President William Lai has emphasised since taking office in May last year. SEF called on Chinese authorities to respect the existing agreements to foster better crossstrait relations.

China-Taiwan relations are marked by political tension, with China viewing Taiwan as a part of its territory while Taiwan maintains its sovereignty. Diplomatic ties are limited, and economic exchanges continue despite disagreements. Cross-strait relations are affected by differing political systems, with occasional efforts for dialogue and cooperation.

# **MQM leader Altaf Hussain slams Pakistani authorities** over arrest of human rights activist Mahrang Baloch

LONDON, Mar 23 (Agencies): Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) leader Altaf Hussain has strongly condemned the arrest of Mahrang Baloch, a prominent human rights activist and leader of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee during a peaceful protest in Quetta. The arrest of Baloch, along with her associates, has triggered widespread criticism, with many viewing it as an unjustified attempt to suppress peaceful activism.

Hussain, in his statement, expressed his deep concern over the detention of Baloch and her colleagues, emphasizing that their peaceful activism was carried out within the framework of the law. He called the arrest a direct violation



of human rights and an infringement on the freedoms guaranteed by the constitution of Pakistan. According to Hussain, Baloch has been a staunch advocate for the rights of the Baloch people and has tirelessly campaigned for justice, both within the country and on the

international stage.

"Mahrang Baloch has always raised her voice for justice and human rights through legal and peaceful means. Her arrest is unconstitutional, illegal, and inhumane," Hussain said, adding that it was a blatant effort to silence peaceful voices advocating for the rights of marginalized communi-

The MQM leader warned that such actions by the Pakistani authorities would only deepen the divide between the Baloch community and the national establish-

He expressed concern that the arrest of activists like Baloch would lead to further unrest in the region and exacerbate tensions that already exist.

Hussain called for the immediate release of Mahrang Baloch and her associates and demanded an independent inquiry into the actions of those responsible for their detention. He also urged the government to respect fundamental human rights and to

cease any practices that undermine the rights of peaceful activists.

Human rights organi-

zations, political leaders, and activists across Pakistan have rallied behind Baloch, calling for accountability and an end to the harassment of those who seek justice through nonviolent means. The situation remains tense as the call for the release of Mahrang Baloch and her associates grows

The arrest has also drawn international attention, with calls for Pakistan to adhere to international human rights standards and to protect the rights of its citizens, including those who engage in peaceful activism for social and political change.

louder.

## Baloch group alleges Pak brutality as fire opened, tear gas lobbed on peaceful protestors

LASBELA, Mar 23 (Agencies): Leading Baloch human rights group Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) shared that a peaceful protest staged in Lasbela saw Pakistani police and security personnel launch a crackdown wherein they opened fire and lobbed tear gas upon peaceful protestors on Sunday.

In a post on X, BYC shared the details of the actions committed by the police and security personnel.

It highlighted that the crackdown took place early in the morning upon the families of missing persons and BYC activists who, despite the atrocities, remained peaceful.



"Crackdown on BYC Lasbela Sit-in: Tear Gas, Firing, and Arrests- In response to the central call of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee, the BYC Lasbela Region staged a sit-in at Hub Bawani. Early this morning, police and security personnel launched a crackdown on the protest camp, where fami-

lies of missing persons

and BYC activists were

peacefully gathered.

They dismantled the tent, fired tear gas, and opened fire, sabotaging the protest. Despite this aggression, the participants remained peaceful. One protester has been arrested."

The actions by security forces come on the heels of the arrest of BYC organiser Mahrang Baloch who was taken by the Pakistani forces on Saturday while participating in a sit-in pro-

Human rights organizations, political leaders, and activists across Pakistan have rallied behind Baloch, calling for accountability and an end to the harassment of those who seek justice through nonviolent means. The situation remains tense as the call for the release of Mahrang Baloch and her associates grows The arrest has also

drawn international attention, with calls for Pakistan to adhere to international human rights standards and to protect the rights of its citizens, including those who engage in peaceful activism for social and political change.

## **Emirates Franchise convenes second meeting** of 2025 to advance sector development

ABU DHABI, Mar 23 (Agencies): The Emirates Franchise held its second meeting for 2025, chaired by Noor Al Tamimi, Chairperson of Emirates Franchise and Board Member of the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, with representatives from other emirates in attendance.

The discussion covered the Franchise's operational plan, finalising bylaws, and setting strategic priorities to enhance its impact on the national economy.

Board members, along with the Executive Committee and working groups from each emirate, reviewed progress on the organisation's agenda and highlighted key outcomes from recent discussions.

These included identifying challenges within the sector, proposing solutions, and offering actionable recommendations to align UAE franchising with global standards.

Emphasis was placed on driving innovation, boosting competitiveness, and creating a platform for collaboration among entrepreneurs, franchisees, and stakeholders to promote sustainable growth.

Al Tamimi reaffirmed the Franchise's commitment to empowering the sector as a catalyst for economic diversification and entre-

"The UAE spares no effort in providing enablers to achieve its economic vision. Our organisation will play a key role in advancing the franchise sector by implementing ambitious initiatives, including a flexible business framework that supports continued growth and prosperity," she said.

She also highlighted the importance of protecting intellectual property, raising awareness of franchising rights, and expanding the presence of Emirati brands locally and globally.

She also stressed the importance of embracing innovative ideas, fostering a forward-thinking and ambitious business environment, expanding partnerships, and promoting franchising as a tool to strengthen the presence and engagement of entrepreneurs, while providing them with investment opportunities and meeting their needs to help them achieve their goals. Noor Al Tamimi emphasised that

one of the main objectives of the franchise sector in the current period is to enhance its operational structure. The goal is to position the UAE as the ideal business environment for supporting and fostering the international growth of local franchises while also attracting global franchises to the UAE's business landscape, further reinforcing its status as a leading global destination for the franchising sector.

# **SMVDU Alumni Joel Michael, Wins Prestigious RamnathGoenka Awards for Excellence in Journalism**

#### **Top News Report**

JAMMU, Mar 23: In a testament to his exceptional talent and creativity, Joel Michael, an alumnus of School of Architecture and Landscape Design, SMVDU, Katra, has been awarded the prestigious RamnathGoenka Awards for Excellence in Journalism. The award recognizes outstanding contributions to the field of journalism that have made a significant impact on society.Award was given by President DroupadiMurmu on



Tuesday, where she spoke about the critical role of free and fair journalism in sustaining democracy while addressing the Awards ceremony. Ar. Joel Michael won award in Environment, Science & Technology category

for his story on deadly industrial pollution in Punjab — how 11 persons dropped dead in 15 minutes due to a gas leak from open sewers in Ludhiana's Giaspura in April 2023. Prof. Pragati Kumar, Vice Chancellor of SMVDU, and Ar. Abhiney Gupta, Head of the School of Architecture & Landscape Design, along with other faculty members, congratulated Ar. Joel Michael on his achievement. This accomplishment showcases the academic excellence and research capabilities of SMVDU's architecture students, and their ability to contribute meaningfully for the society.

# Union Minister Harsh Malhotra Visits Ladakh, **Highlights Key Aspects of Union Budget 2025-26**

#### **Top News Report**

LEH. Mar 23: Union Minister of State for Corporate Affairs and Road Transport & Highways, Harsh Malhotra, on his one day visit to Ladakh held a press briefing in the presence of Hon'ble Chairman/ CEC, LAHDC Leh, Adv. Tashi Gyalson, and BJP State President, Phunchok Stanzin, to provide an overview of the Union Budget 2025-26. He emphasized that this year's budget aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, aiming to make India a fully developed nation by its 100th year of independence.

Hon'ble Minister highlighted India's economic progress over the past decade, noting that the country has advanced from being the 11th largest economy in 2014 to the 5th largest today, with a target of securing the 3rd position within the next four years. He also underscored significant strides in poverty alleviation, stating that 25 crore people have been uplifted above the poverty line.

The minister highlighted the government's substantial investments in infrastructure and connectivity, particularly in national highways, as a key driver of economic growth. He noted that between 2014 and 2024, India constructed 55,000 km of new national highways, significantly improving connectivity and boosting development. He emphasized that infrastructure spending plays a crucial role in



GDP expansion, while the growth of transport networks has generated both direct and indirect employment opportunities. Additionally, he pointed out that the number of airports has increased from 72 to 152, and over 90% of Indian Railways has been electrified.

On the education front, he highlighted that 20 AIIMS institutions have been established, while the number of IITs has increased from 16 to 23, and IIMs from 13 to 21. To enhance skill development, the government has introduced on ground skill internship program benefiting 1 crore students aged 21-24 years based on certain criteria.

Hon'ble Minister also highlighted the financial allocation for Ladakh in this year's budget, stating that the Union Territory has been sanctioned Rs 4,692.15 crore for the financial year 2025-26.

Since Ladakh became a Union Territory in 2019, the region has seen major central government projects across multiple sectors. Connectivity has significantly improved, with

the distance to Zan skar reduced from 470 km to 220 km, drastically cutting travel time.

Infrastructure development has been a priority, with three bridges completed at a cost of approximately Rs 60 crore. Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, approx Rs 288 crore has been sanctioned for Ladakh, and major roads have been completed, enhancing connectivity to remote villages and providing better market access for farmers. The Zojila

Tunnel, a critical project for year-round connectivity, has received a substantial allocation of Rs 6,808.69 crore. Similarly, the Shinku La Tunnel, crucial for both civilian and strategic access, has been allocated Rs 1,200 crore. Road infrastructure continues to be a priority, with Rs 2,405 crore earmarked for the Nimu-

Padam-Darcha (NPD) road, further strengthening Ladakh's connectivity. Additionally, funding has been provided for the double laning of the Khaltsi-Batalik road, with a total project cost of Rs 508.70 crore, along with

multiple high

way and bridge projects to improve acces-

ity across the region. Additionally, Rs361.31 crore has been allocated under the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) to further support critical connectivity projects across Ladakh.

In a major push for air connectivity, the Leh airport expansion project has been allocated Rs640 crore for the construction of a new terminal building, aimed at improving travel and trade facilities.

Under the Vibrant Villages Programme, Rs 4.09 crore has been allocated to support the development of border settlements by improving essential services and promoting sustainable livelihoods. Additionally, Rs129.50 crore has been set aside for the Changthang development package, focusing on the socioeconomic upliftment of the region.

In the second session, the Hon'ble Minister took part in a public interaction in the presence of Hon'ble Chairman/CEC, LAHDC Leh, Adv. Tashi Gyalson; Hon'ble Deputy Chairman, Tsering Angchuk; Hon'ble Executive Councillors Stanzin Chosphel, Tashi Namgyal Yakzee, and Ghulam Mehdi; Hon'ble Councillors; BJP State President, Phunchok Stanzin; Former Member Parliament, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal; Former CECs Gyal P Wangyal and Rigzin Spalbar, along with various religious leaders, representatives from the transport association, hoteliers, entrepreneurs, and other prominent figures.

discussion The focused on Ladakh's development and the way forward, covering infrastructure, employment, and social programs. Malhotra reiterated the government's commitment to Ladakh's long-term growth, particularly in infrastructure, connectivity, and social development, despite the budget allocation decreasing from Rs5,958 crore last year to Rs 4,692.15 crore for the financial year 2025-

Following the discussion, a question and answer session allowed attendees to raise concerns regarding job creation, economic growth, and regional development. Malhotra addressed various queries and reaffirmed the government's commitment to fostering inclusive progress.

The event concluded with Hon'ble Minister Harsh Malhotra reiterating the government's vision of building a stronger, self-reliant India, ensuring equitable growth and prosperity for all.

# **Community Awareness Camp on Education organised**



#### **Top News Report**

JAMMU, Mar 23: A community awareness camp focusing on the importance of education was organized at PM Shri GGMS Jindrah, Dansal. The event saw enthusiastic participation from students, teachers, and members of the local community. The primary objective of the camp was to highlight the significance of education in shaping individuals and society, while also emphasizing the collective responsibility of parents, teachers, and the community in fostering an effective learning environment.

The camp was presided over by Shamash Din, Incharge Head-

master, who delivered an insightful address on the role of education in personal and social development. Various students took part in the event, delivering speeches on different aspects of education, such as literacy, skill development, and moral values. The participants eloquently expressed their views on how education serves as a tool for empowerment and

progress. A key highlight of the program was the discussion on the tripolar process of education, where speakers emphasized the interconnected roles of teachers, parents, and the community in ensuring a well-rounded educational experience for children. It was stressed that education is not solely the responsibility of schools but requires active involvement from parents and society at large to create a conducive learning atmosphere.

The event was coordinated by Sadaket Ali, teacher, who played a pivotal role in organizing and managing the program. The camp received appreciation from the attendees for its informative and motivational sessions, encouraging parents and students alike to take education more seriously and contribute to a brighter future.

The awareness camp concluded with a pledge by all participants to prioritize education and work collaboratively to enhance learning opportunities for children in the region. The initiative taken by PM Shri GGMS Jindrah, Dansal, was widely acknowledged as a step forward in strengthening educational awareness in the community.

#### **MLA Rajouri Iftkhar Ahmed visits** S.O.S. International, assures support for PoJK Displaced Persons

#### **Top News Report**

JAMMU, Mar 23: In a significant move, MLA Rajouri Iftkhar Ahmed visited the S.O.S. International office in Bakshi Nagar, Jammu, where he was warmly welcomed by the team led by Chairman Rajiv Chuni. The meeting, which was held today, focused on the longstanding issues faced by PoJK Displaced Persons, with Mr. Chuni providing a detailed briefing on the key demands

The pressing issues discussed during the meeting included the implementation of the PoJK DPs package, which was passed by the Congress-NC Coalition Government in 2014. Other critical matters included the reservation of 8 Assembly Seats in the J&K Assembly granting ST Status to PoJK DPs, and the formation of Mirpur, Muzaffarabad, and Poonch Scouts to guard the Line of Control.

Mr. Chuni also briefed MLA Iftkhar Ahmed on the issue of granting only nominated seats for PoJK in the J&K Assembly to non-political persons from PoJK. Furthermore, the formation of a PoJK Advisory Committee, headed by the Chief Minister, was also discussed. The committee would comprise members nominated from PoJK DPs, ensuring that their voices are heard and their concerns addressed.

Another key issue discussed during the meeting was the disbursement of



cash assistance to PoJK DPs. Mr. Chuni emphasized the need for immediate disbursement of the assistance, which has been pending for several years. MLA Iftkhar Ahmed assured the team that he would take up the matter with the concerned authorities and ensure that the assistance is disbursed at the earliest.

Mr. Chuni also expressed gratitude towards MLA Iftknar Anmed for his prompt response in addressing the concerns of Dhangri PoJK DPs, whose lands were attempted to be snatched by the J&K Forest Department. Ahmed's swift action in raising the issue in the J&K Assembly ensured that the land-snatching attempt

was stopped immediately. In his address, MLA Iftkhar Ahmed assured the members of S.O.S. International that he would raise the demands of the PoJK Displaced Persons at the appropriate level and work towards finding solutions. He also reiterated his commitment to providing sup

port to the PoJK DPs, ensuring that his services are available to them at all

This meeting marks a significant step towards addressing the longstanding issues faced by PoJK Displaced Persons. With MLA Iftkhar Ahmed's assurance of support, there is renewed hope for the community, which has been struggling for years to have their voices heard. The team at S.O.S. Inter national is optimistic that this meeting will pave the way for meaningful change and a brighter future for the

Other office bearers of SOS International present are Prof. N N Sharma, V K Datta, Ved Raj Bali, Amarjeet Singh, Arun Gupta, Jagjeet Singh, Daleep Chib, Tunda Ram, Mela Ram, Pardeep Kumar, Daleep Sharma, Dharamvir Gupta, Vijay Dutta, Vipan Sharma, Vijay Sharma, Sanjeev Suri, Sahil Jamba, Bishambar Dass, Vijay Kala, Vinod Bakshi, Inderpal Singh.

# FromPage No:1

#### **Religion-Based** reservation vio**lates Constitution:** RSS

century Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's grave in Maharashtra, Hosabale remarked that Aurangzeb was made an icon and not his brother Dara Shikoh, who believed in social harmony, .

People who went against the ethos of India were made icons. the senior RSS leader added.

He also wondered whether those who fought against the British were called freedom fighters and not those who resisted the invaders.

Hosabale lauded figures like Rajput king Maharana Pratap for fighting against Mughal emperor

The RSS leader claimed that people with an "invader mindset" pose a threat to India. "We should stand with those who are with the Indian ethos," he added.

#### **Four tourists killed**

### in road accident in central Kangan

Kangan for urgent medical treatment.

J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed condolences to the bereaved families.

"Deeply saddened by the tragic road accident on highway near Gund, Kangan, which has claimed several lives and left many others injured. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. Praying for the swift recovery of the injured. Authorities are providing all possible assistance," office of the chief minister said on X.

#### **Tourism-related** infrastructure being developed along Mughal Road in J&K

CAPEX budget, the department has completed 12 works costing Rs 2.51 crore and eight new works

#### have been initiated at an estimated cost of Rs 84 lakh for FY 2024-25. Besides, the department intends to develop tourism infrastructure at

Dubjan and Peer-ki-Gali. However, construction is currently not permitted in the area, which falls under the jurisdiction of the department of forest, the chief minister said.

However, he said in order to develop infrastructure at Peer-ki-Gali, the department has taken up work "construction of cafeteria and public convenience on the way to Peer-ki-Gali at Hirpora" at a project cost of Rs 35 lakh under State Capex Budget 2024-25. The identification and transfer of land for construction of the said facility is under process.

The department also intends to construct eco-log huts, cafeterias, dormitories, viewing decks and other requisite infrastructure in these areas for which the department will take up the matter with the department of forest and will also apply for transfer of land on Parivesh portal, he added.

**Puniab Police** 

#### says Narco-Terror module busted, 4 men held with 4 Kg heroin

Further investigations are on to unveil their forward and backward linkages, the DGP added.

Giving further information, the state police chief said Navjot Singh, Sukhwinder Singh, Gurpreet Singh and Aniket were arrested near the Naraingarh Government Hospital area in Amritsar's Chheharta.

The DGP asserted that the Punjab Police remains resolute in its commitment to dismantle organised crime and ensure peace and harmony in the state.

#### **Terrorist hideout** unearthed in Doda

However, the officials said no contact was established with the suspected persons so far.

Rs 22 crore spent,

## 15 years gone: Check dam project remains incomplete in Kathua

spots) were completed at a cumulative expenditure of Rs 22.65 crore ending March 31, 2024, he said.

The minister said the amicable solution to the land dispute took a long time due to which price escalation affected the project and the work remained incomplete and is abandoned for want of additional funds. He said a revised Detailed Project Report was submitted to the Central Water Commission (CWC) Delhi for sanction.

However, the CWC has returned the DPR with the observation that the scheme is a part of cluster of 54 Surface Minor Irrigation (SMI) schemes included under Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) during 2007-08 and central assistance has been released to the scheme under AIBP. Therefore. the project may not be revised

under minor irrigation, Rana said. In order to complete the balance work, he said a comprehensive proposal is under formulation by taking into account the changed site conditions and shall be prepared in due course of time.

### Kashmiri Pandits pay tributes to 2003 LeT attack victims in Nadimarg Village

one of the natives of the village who migrated to Jammu, said the locals decided to hold the function in the village itself this year.

"We have been doing it in Jammu every year but it was decided that this year we shall do it at Nadimarg. There is no need to say what happened that night as the deserted houses are a testimony

to the massacre," he said. A large number of children accompanied the men and women who gathered to pay tributes as part of acquainting them with their

# 10 PLI schemes given Rs 14,020 crore incentive: Govt

According to government data, as many as 176 MSMEs are among PLI beneficiaries in sectors such as bulk drugs, medical devices, pharma, telecom, white goods, food processing, textiles and drones

NEW DELHI, Mar 23 (Agencies): In a bid to boost domestic manufacturing, the government has disbursed Rs 14,020 crore under Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes for ten sectors, including electronics and pharma, since the launch of the support measure.

In a statement, the Commerce and Industry Ministry said the incentive amount of around Rs 14,020 crore was disbursed under PLI schemes for 10 sectors, including large-scale electronics manufacturing, IT hardware, bulk drugs, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, telecom and networking products, food processing, white goods, automobiles and auto components and drones.

"Individual cases have been approved over a period of time through a transparent mechanism," the government said, while disclosing that the projects are implemented over a period of time ranging from twothree years, depending on the nature of manufacturing, and claims are usually made after first year of production.

Noting that most of the projects are at the implementation stage and will be filing incentive claims in due course, the Ministry said that as of date, 764 applications have been approved under the



have been made by compa-

nies out of Rs 27,106 crore

committed and these projects

have given direct employment

to 9,000 people in the scheme

for specialty steel. Incentive of

Rs 48 crore has been released

The government said the Min-

istry of Steel estimates that an

incentive of Rs 2,000 crore will

be disbursed by the end of the

scheme tenure. "14 of 58 proj-

ects withdrew from the scheme

due to changes in business

plans of the company and proj-

ect execution delays," the state-

ment revealed, while sharing

that 35 companies have shown

interest in the second round of

the PLI scheme for speciality

steel. They have committed an

investment of Rs 25,200 crore.

The steel ministry is in the pro-

cess of selecting and signing

to the industry so far.

schemes for 14 sectors.

According to the government data, as many as 176 MSMEs are among the PLI beneficiaries in sectors such as bulk drugs, medical devices, pharma, telecom, white goods, food processing, textiles and drones.

"Actual investment of around Rs 1.61 lakh crore (USD 18.72 billion) has been reported till November 2024, which has generated production/sales of about Rs 14 lakh crore (USD 162.84 billion) and employment of over 11.5 lakh," the statement said, while divulging that the schemes have witnessed exports surpassing Rs 5.31 lakh crore (around USD 61.76 billion), with significant contributions from sectors like electronics and pharmaceuticals.

The Ministry said about Rs 20,000 crore of investments MoUs with these companies.

Disclosing that an incentive of Rs 3,600 crore is estimated to be disbursed to these projects, the government said for 2022-23, an incentive of Rs 474 crore has been disbursed, and for 2023-24, the disbursement target is Rs 700 crore, which is on track to be achieved, in the food processing sector, in which currently 171 active beneficiaries are there across all categories. Six firms have withdrawn their applications.

The departments implementing their respective schemes are "responsible for the disbursals," the Ministry said, while adding that the scheme's aim is to attract investments in key sectors and cutting-edge technology, ensure efficiency, bring economies of size and scale in the manufacturing sector and make Indian companies and manufacturers globally competitive.

With an outlay of Rs 1.97 lakh crore, the government had, in 2021, announced PLI schemes for 14 sectors like telecommunication, white goods, textiles, manufacturing of medical devices, automobiles, speciality steel, food products, high-efficiency solar PV modules, advanced chemistry cell batteries, drones, and pharma.

# Digitisation, reforms, financial inclusion among factors in India doubling its GDP in 10 years, say experts



NEW DELHI, Mar 23 (Agencies): Digitisation, reforms, financial inclusion are among several factors that have contributed to India's economic growth over the past decade, economists have said as IMF data, cited by BJP leader Amit Malviya, showed that the country doubled its GDP from USD 2.1 trillion in 2015 to USD 4.3 trillion in 2025.

Pankaj Jaiswal, an economist, said that India has seen significant growth in the last ten years. "Since Prime Minister Modi took office, the country has experienced rapid economic growth," he said. He also talked of benefits of financial inclu-

sion and contributions of people, who were earlier not part of formal economy, also being counted now due to digitisation.

Sharad Kohli, also an economist, attributed the rapid pace of growth to the policy reforms undertaken by the BJPled government.

"This is the outcome of reforms and policies undertaken by the government. And these reforms have happened

across the sectors. Take for example, agriculture, fintech, governance and why forget manufacturing or infrastructure, which has contributed in a huge way," he said. Earlier in the day, referring to the IMF data, BJP leader Amit Malviya posted on the micro-blogging site X that India has reached a remarkable economic milestone, doubling its GDP from USD 2.1 trillion in 2015 to an impressive USD 4.3 trillion in 2025, marking an extraordinary 105 per cent growth that stands

In the post, the BJP leader hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi, adding that the achievement reflects his decisive leadership and relentless efforts of his government.

unmatched by any other

major global economy.

China, which is seen as the major economic superpower in Asia, added 76 per cent in one decade.

The GDP of Germany witnessed an addition of 44 per cent.

#### Current antivirals may be less effective against severe infection caused by bird flu virus in cows' milk: Study

WASHINGTON DC, Mar 23 (Agencies): Scientists found that frequently used flu antivirals do not work well against the H5N1 avian influenza virus

Existing antivirals may be less effective against this H5N1 bird flu strain, and prevention measures, such as avoiding raw milk consumption and reducing exposure in dairy workers, maybe the most effective way to protect against the virus.

As the H5N1 avian influenza outbreak continues in the United States, scientists are working to better understand the virus's threat to human health.

The virus has been found in dairy cows' milk and has infected farm workers, prompting scientists at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital to study potential treatments.

Results showed that in a preclinical model, two FDA-approved flu antivirals generally did not successfully treat severe H5N1 infections. Additionally, the researchers found that the route of infection, whether through the eye, the nose or the mouth, significantly impacts a treatment's effectiveness.

The findings were published today in Nature Microbiology.

"Our evidence suggests that it is likely going to be hard to treat people severely infected with this bovine H5N1 bird flu strain," said corresponding author Richard Webby, PhD, St. Jude Department of Host-Microbe Interactions.

"Instead, reducing infection risk by not drinking raw milk and reducing dairy farm workers' exposures, for example, may be the most effective interventions."

Though H5N1 infections in people are rare, there are more than 60 people who have become infected from dairy exposures to date in the current out-

Some were infected through exposure to contaminated raw cows' milk, such as dairy workers who were infected through splashes or aerosolized particles reaching their noses or eyes.

Given the risks to human health, the scientists used a mouse model to test how each antiviral drug worked against the virus when it was obtained through three different exposure routes.

"In general, baloxavir [Xofluza] caused a greater reduction in viral levels than oseltamivir [Tamiflu], but neither was always effective," said first author Jeremy Jones, PhD, St. Jude Department of Host-Microbe Interactions.

The researchers studied exposure routes that included the eye, mouth and nose, which are the most common ways to become infected with the virus. The oral route, which mimics drinking raw infected cow's milk, caused the worst infections that were hardest to treat.

In contrast, findings showed that baloxavir controlled infections through the eye fairly well. These results are particularly relevant as the ocular route appears to be the common infection pathway for people who work directly with dairy cows.

# SP Group set to raise largest private rupee credit worth Rs 22,000 crore

MUMBAI, Mar 23 (Agencies): Construction and engineering conglomerate Shapoorji Pallonji & Companay (SP), which has a debt of close to Rs 60,000 crore in its book, is on course to raise Rs 29,000 crore credit to refinance its costly forex debt maturing by late May. More importantly, as much as 75% or around Rs 22,000 crore of this will be raised in rupee, making it the largest such private credit mop-up in the country, and over a dozen investors are readying their term-sheets.

Late last year, the SP was on the verge of signing an agreement with the state-run Power Finance Corporation to raise Rs 20,000 crore. But the deal fell apart at the last leg of the negotiations which sources attributed to the lender's apprehension about the high leverage of the group.

The SP Group is planning to mop up as much as 75% of its close to Rs 29,000 crore, from five funds, which will make it India Inc's largest private credit raising in the rupee, two sources in the know of the dealings told agency.

The funding is likely to be closed next week or in the first week of April, one of the sources said.

According to these sources, five private credit funds, including Davidson Kempner Capital Management, Cerberus Capital Management, Ares Management, Farallon Capital Management and One Investment Management are set to extend around Rs 22,000 crore funding that the Group needs to refinance its dollar debt.

Of these five, Farallon Capital and One Investment are existing creditors to the diversified group.

According to sources, more than a dozen investors are participating in the fund-raising programme, with completion anticipated by early April.

The 160-year-old Shapoorji Pallonji Group, known for constructing iconic structures in Mumbai like the RBI headquarters, will use the funds to refinance existing debt

raised against its promoters' 18.6% stake in Tata Sons, the holding company of the \$165-billion Tata Group.

The funds are being raised by Evangelos Ventures, equally owned by SP Group chairman Shapoor Mistry and his nephews Firoz Mistry and Zahan Mistry.

The rupee-denominated bonds, likely to be in the 3.5 year tenor, will carry a higher interest rates given the already high leverage of the group and may range close to 20% range. The debt will be listed on the bourses.

In 2022, Goswami

Infratech, which owns 25% of SP Group company Afcons Infrastructure, which recently went public with a Rs 5.400-crore IPO, had secured \$1.6 billion (then about Rs 14,300 crore) from a group of 10 investors at 18.75% interest. Evangelos will also be responsible for the tax obligations on investors' interest earn-

The Group, one of oldest business houses in the country, has a debt of around Rs

60,000 crore, with half belonging to the promoters (the Mistry family) and the rest with operating real estate and construction companies.

Proceeds from the fundraise will be used to repay loans of the group's real estate and infrastructure companies, said one of the sources cited above.

Sterling Investments, the main holding company of the group, holds a little over 9% in Tata Sons, while other group entities own the remaining stake in the country's largest conglomerate. This means the SP group's stake is worth over \$30.5 billion.

The SP group did not respond to calls seeking confirmation.

The group has been looking for fund-raising since early 2024 but without much success. Most of its existing debt was maturing in May 2024. Since then, it got an extension from creditors by paying the interest. And most of the group's debt is linked to the group's promoter entity. Sterling Investments, which had secured \$2.6 billion in 2021 from alternative investment manager Ares Management and the hedge fund Farallon Capital with a tenor of 3.5 years.

Davidson Kempner is an alternative investment management firm based in New York since 1983 managing over \$39 billion, whereas Cerberus Capital, also based in New York, is a global alternative investment advisor since 1992 managing around \$65 billion in assets across complementary credit, private equity etc., and the Los Angeles-based Ares Management has been operating in the credit, private equity and real estate markets since 1997 and manages over \$300 billion assets.

The San Franciscoheadquartered hedge fund Farallon Capital primarily manages capital for university endowments, foundations, and high-net-worth individuals. Founded in 1985 it manages assets worth \$39 billion. Both the group have lent money to the SP group earlier.

# Antibody-based therapy several notches closer to treat lethal mucormycosis: Study

CALIFORNIA, Mar 23 (Agencies): Mucormycosis, a fungus infection caused by Mucorales, has a high mortality rates in those with weakened immune systems and those who have suffered severe trauma, such as burns, blast injuries, or natural disaster victims.

The condition caused significant infection among COVID-19 patients treated with high doses of corticosteroids, with mortality rates approaching 60 per cent.

In the United States, there are approximately 4,000 cases per year

in Southeast Asia where the disease is endemic to India. While vaccines and immunotherapies are available for viruses and bacteria, effective antifungal immunotherapies for mucormycosis, specifically, are lacking. Ashraf Ibrahim, PhD,

with a rate of 200,000

an investigator at The Lundquist Institute for Biomedical Innovation at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center for more than 33 years, and Assistant Research Scientist, Yiyou Gu, PhD, at TLI for more than eight years, have been conducting research using monoclonal antibodies

Ibrahim's research focuses on advancing the understanding of the pathogenic mechanisms and virulence factors of fungal and

to address this gap.

bacterial infections, and on translating this knowledge into novel immunotherapeutic strategies to combat infectious diseases. Their paper, "A humanized antibody against mucormycosis targets angioinvasion and aug-

ments the host immune response," was recently accepted and published in the Science Translational Medicine journal. In it, they discuss



the use of monoclonal antibodies to target a key fungal cell surface protein, CotH, which enables the fungus to

invade human cells and cause mucormycosis. Their findings will increase the efficiency of the current treatment

options and thus will improve the outcome of treatment of lethal mucormycosis. "Mucormycosis is a

devastating disease that usually occurs in patients who suffer from weakened immune system such as patients with poorly controlled diabetes, cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, and transplant patients," said Ibrahim, adding that the disease has had a steady increase over the last four decades due to an increase in people with diabetes and cancer, as well as advancement in transplant procedures.

sive and considered a medical emergency that needs immediate attention, often with disfiguring surgery to remove infected tissues. The damage to blood vessels is concerning because it's how antifungal drug therapy is delivered to the infection site. "Our humanized monoclonal antibody allows antifungal drug therapy to reach to infected tissues because it prevents fungal cells from damaging human

The infection is aggres-

As a result, Ibrahim and Gu developed an

Ibrahim said.

cells and blood vessels,"

antibody called VX-01, a humanized antibody that has proven more effective at binding to the fungus compared to the original antibody. Although both protect from infection, the humanized antibody reduces immunogenicity and enhances therapeutic effect when used in humans, a major translational step.

Early tests show that VX-01 is safe, with no harmful effects on healthy cells, suggesting that VX-01 could be a promising treatment to help fight mucormycosis in people with weakened immune systems.

# Kohli, Salt help RCB thump champions Kolkata for winning start to IPL campaign

KOLKATA, Mar 23 (Agencies): Royal Challengers Bengaluru made an auspicious start in their latest bid to lift a maiden Indian Premier League trophy as Virat Kohli and Phil Salt ensured a seven-wicket win over holders Kolkata Knight Riders in Saturday's season opener.

Chasing 175 for victory, the three-time runners-up rode Kohli's unbeaten 59 and former Kolkata batter Salt's blistering 56 at the top of the innings to comfortably reach their target in 16.2 overs.

Bengaluru's ever-present talisman Kohli, playing in his 18th IPL campaign and 400th T20 match overall, continued to heap pressure on the Kolkata bowlers with new skipper Rajat Patidar (34) before Liam Livingstone (15 not out) hit the winning runs.

Salt said he was most pleased by his 95-run partnership with Kohli which set the tone for the victory.

"We haven't batted much together, Virat and I, so to go out



and put a partnership together was the most important thing for us in game one," Salt added.

"It's a ground I know very well. I had a clear and simple game plan and I would have liked to go on a bit longer, but it wasn't to be."

Earlier, seamer Josh Hazlewood (2/22) marked his return from a hip injury that forced him out of Australia's Champions Trophy campaign by taking the wicket of Quinton de Kock in the opening over after Bengaluru won the toss and opted to bowl.

The pre-match threat of thunderstorms failed to materialise but it rained fours and sixes at Eden Gardens thereafter as Kolkata looked to be on a mission to become the first team in the league's history to breach the 300-run barrier.

Veteran batsman Ajinkya Rahane led the way as Kolkata's new captain with brutal ball-striking in his 31-ball 56 and although his dismissal along with that of Sunil Narine for 44 stalled the home side, they still had plenty of firepower left.

However, a couple of wickets in quick succession through Krunal Pandya (3/29) as the ball began to grip the surface meant that the hosts ultimately ended up with a below-par 174/8 thanks to youngster Angkrish Raghuvanshi's 30. "We have to learn from our mistakes," said Rahane. "We have the batting power to go out and express ourselves. We tried our best but it didn't work out today. We thought that 210-220 on this wicket would be achievable, but two to three wickets in the middle overs changed the momentum."

Brief scores: Kolkata Knight Riders: 174/8 in 20 overs (Rahane 56, Narine 44, Raghuvanshi 30; Krunal 3/29); Royal Challengers Bengaluru: 177/3 in 16.2 overs (Kohli 59\*, Salt 56, Patidar 34).

# IPL 2025: Shardul Thakur set to join LSG camp as replacement for injured Mohsin Khan

NEW DELHI, Mar 23 (Agencies): India's experienced fast bowling all-rounder Shardul Thakur is set to join Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) as a replacement for left-arm fast bowler Mohsin Khan, according to ESPNcricinfo.

Shardul, who went unsold during last year's mega auction, is currently with the LSG squad in Visakhapatnam, according to ESPNcricinfo. The Rishabh Pant-led side will begin its campaign against the Delhi Capitals on Monday.

According to ESPNcricinfo, during the Vijay Hazare Trophy, Mohsin tore the anterior cruciate ligament tear (ACL) on his right knee on December

Mohsin had survived a career-threatening injury after IPL 2022 but went on to recover and participated in the last edition. ESPNcricinfo also reported that Shardul and Uttar Pradesh fast bowler Shivam Mavi has been training with the LSG since the franchise started its preparatory camp in Lucknow.

Shardul has enjoyed a fruitful run in India's domestic circuit, scoring over 400 runs and taking 34 wickets at an

average of 21.67 to help Mumbai storm into the semi-final of the ongoing Ranji Trophy season.

LSG camp has been plagued with injuries to its fast bowlers, and Shardul's inclusion will offer them much-needed reprieve. Apart from Mohsin, the pace trio of Mayank Yadav, Avesh Khan, and Akash Deep are unavailable due to injuries and are currently recovering at the BCCl's Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru. As of now, there is no official update on the pace trio's return date.

The Delhi tearaway Mayank Yadav is recovering from a lower-back stress injury. According to ESPNcricinfo, Avesh is recovering from niggles in his right knee. While Akash is recovering from a stress injury in his lower back.

LSG Squad for IPL 2025: Rishabh Pant (c), David Miller, Aiden Markram, Nicholas Pooran, Mitchell Marsh, Avesh Khan, Mayank Yadav, Mohsin Khan, Ravi Bisnoi, Abdul Samad, Aryan Juyal, Akash Deep, Himmat Singh, M Siddharth, Digvesh Singh, Shahbaz Ahmed, Akash Singh, Shamar Joseph, Prince Yadav, Yuvraj Chaudhary, Rajvardhan Hangargekar, Arshin Kulkarni, Matthew Breetzke.

# Juan Pedro Benali extends contract with NorthEast United FC

NEW DELHI, Mar 23 (Agencies): Indian Super League (ISL) side North-East United FC (NEUFC) have agreed on a new two-year contract extension with head coach Juan Pedro Benali, keeping him at the club until the end of the 2026-27 season, the club announced on Saturday, according to the official website of ISL.

Benali, who joined the club in May 2023, has ignited a transformative period for NorthEast United FC. His impact has been immediate and profound, steering the team to unprecedented heights.

In his first assignment, he guided the Highlanders to the semi-finals of the historic Durand Cup and took the club to within one point of ISL playoffs qualification, laying a strong foundation for future success.

The current season has witnessed a remarkable resurgence under Benali's leadership. The club achieved a historic milestone by clinching the Durand Cup title - the first major silverware in North-East United FC's history.

Furthermore, the team has secured a coveted spot in the Indian Super League (ISL) playoffs after a four-year hiatus, showcasing significant progress and fulfilling the aspirations of fans across the Northeast. The Highlanders finished fourth in the ISL standing and secured a 'home advantage' for the playoff where they will host Jamshedpur FC.

In light of the news, NorthEast United FC owner John Abraham praised Juan's leadership and spoke of his delight at the manager's decision to stay.

"I am ecstatic that our head coach Juan Pedro Benali has signed a new contract with the club. The way Juan has built this team is commendable with his insatiable hunger for improve-



ment and success. We have a vision for the club and with Juan at the helm, we believe we can build something meaningful at NorthEast United FC," Abraham said, as quoted from the official website of ISL.

"I have truly special feelings for this football club. With John and Mandar we have a clear vision of what we want to build at this club. After two seasons, I feel at home at NorthEast United FC, with this incredible bunch of players, the coaching staff and the other staff. We are one big family, we're moving in the right direction and together we can build something meaningful at NorthEast that the fans will be proud of," Juan Pedro Benali expressed.

CEO Mandar Tamhane echoed Abraham's sentiments, emphasising the importance of continuity.

"Continuity is the cornerstone of our project at NorthEast United FC. Extending Juan's contract was an easy decision. It is a reflection of our dedication to continuity and our vision of empowering youth. We believe this long-term project will have a profound and lasting impact on football development in NorthEast India and Indian football," Tamhane said.

# Chennai Super Kings lean on spin strength against depleted Mumbai Indians in their IPL opener

CHENNAI, Mar 23 (Agencies): Chennai Super Kings will lean on their formidable spin strength under favourable conditions at Chepauk as well as recent record against Mumbai Indians when the two sides face each other in their Indian Premier League (IPL) campaign opener here on Sunday.

Five-time winners CSK augmented their spin attack in the IPL mega auction last year by including Ravichandran Ashwin, Noor Ahmad Shreyas Gopal and Deepak Hooda, with India veteran Ravindra Jadeja also in the mix.

CSK's pre-season moves indicate how the spin-friendly conditions at MA Chidambaram Stadium here could be a major factor in their game plan. Starting their season against an equally formidable opponent in Mumbai Indians, this strategy could well deliver the goods right from the beginning.

For CSK, MS Dhoni will be the cynosure of all eyes once again, having remained with the team since the inception of the IPL in 2008.

On the other hand, the absence of India bowling spear-head Jasprit Bumrah could be acutely felt in the MI ranks as the right-arm pacer remains on a comeback trail from a back-related issue which has kept him sidelined so far this year.

Bumrah is expected to miss the initial stages of this IPL and his absence will leave MI without their lethal weapon in



the death overs, presenting the management with a headache to work with other options and strategies.

MI will also be without regular skipper Hardik Pandya for this clash as the India all-rounder serves a one-match ban for the side's slow over-rate in their final league match last year.

But for a team which has no dearth of leadership options, MI will have India T20I captain Suryakumar Yadav leading them in their tournament opener and important away clash.

CSK face a healthy selection conundrum for the opening slot with one among the two Kiwis, Rachin Ravindra and Devon Conway, set to partner skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad at the top.

The middle order is set to feature the likes of Rahul Tripathi, Shivam Dube, Hooda and Vijay Shankar, followed by Dhoni and Jadeja.

Among the favourable factors

is CSK's recent record of four wins in their last five matches over Mumbai Indians including three victories in last as many

Pandya's appointment as MI skipper, replacing Rohit Sharma, heavily marred the five-time IPL winners' campaign last season where they had finished at the bottom. The squad looks well settled now after the turmoils of last season.

Even though Ishan Kishan's exit has left a void at the top, the explosive South African wicketkeeper Ryan Rickelton can be expected to match Rohit's firepower at the top, followed by India batting mainstays Suryakumar and Tilak Varma in the middle.

While MI will have to wait to field their desired fast bowling attack which comprises a mix of veterans in Trent Boult, Deepak Chahar and Reece Topley and Bumrah, the presence of Corbin Bosch makes things interesting as to how their think tank is able to use their resources optimally.

Former CSK frontman Mitchell Santner's experience and knowledge of conditions at Chepauk is likely to come in handy along with Karn Sharma and Mujeeb Ur Rahman.

Sunday's contest between CSK and MI could also give some impressions of how the ball-change rule in the second innings plays out.

Teams:

Chennai Super Kings: Ruturaj Gaikwad (c), MS Dhoni (wk), Devon Conway, Rahul Tripathi, Shaik Rasheed, Vansh Bedi (wk), C Andre Siddharth, Rachin Ravindra, Ravichandran Ashwin, Vijay Shankar, Sam Curran, Anshul Kamboj, Deepak Hooda, Jamie Overton, Kamlesh Nagarkoti, Ramakrishna Ghosh, Ravindra Jadeja, Shivam Dube, Khaleel Ahmed, Noor Ahmad, Mukesh Choudhary, Gurjapneet Singh, Nathan Ellis, Shreyas Gopal, Matheesha Pathirana.

Mumbai Indians: Hardik Pandya (c), Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Robin Minz, Ryan Rickelton (wk), Shrijith Krishnan (wk), Bevon Jacobs, Tilak Varma, Naman Dhir, Will Jacks, Mitchell Santner, Raj Angad Bawa, Vignesh Puthur, Corbin Bosch, Trent Boult, Karn Sharma, Deepak Chahar, Ashwani Kumar, Reece Topley, VS Penmetsa, Arjun Tendulkar, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Jasprit Bumrah.

# International Squash returns to nation with India Open 2025

The countdown has begun to what is set to be a landmark moment in Squash in India. Indian Open 2025, India's first-ever PSA Squash Copper tournament, with a prize purse of USD 53,500. The Indian Open 2025 will commence on March 24, with the finals scheduled for the 28th at the Bombay Gymkhana.

MUMBAI, Mar 23 (Agencies): The countdown has begun to what is set to be a landmark moment in Squash in India. Indian Open 2025, India's first-ever PSA Squash Copper tournament, with a prize purse of USD 53,500. The Indian Open 2025 will commence on March 24, with the finals scheduled for the 28th at the Bombay Gymkhana. The competition will begin on the indoor courts, with the quarterfinals, semifinals, and final set to be played on a fullglass outdoor court, offering fans a unique experience, as per the PSA press release.

The India Open is even more significant for the Indian sports fraternity as it welcomes back a major squash tournament to the country after a seven-year hiatus. Coincidentally, squash is set to make its Olympic debut at the 2028 Los Angeles Summer Games.

The return of top-level squash

in India with the India Open was announced in the presence of Manisha Malhotra, President, Inspire Institute of Sports, Divyanshu Singh, COO Sports, Ramit Tandon (India No 1 in Men's Squash) and Anahat Singh (India No 3 in Women's Squash).

This tournament will see top Indian squash players such as Ramit Tandon, Velavan Senthilkumar, Veer Chotrani, Anahat Singh, and Akanksha Salunkhe take the court alongside some talented international athletes from France, Spain, Holland, Egypt, Canada, England, and USA, Malaysia, and Japan among other countries. Both the men's and women's draws will see a total of 24 players each, with India's Ramit Tandon and Akanksha Salunkhe going in as the top seeds. Meanwhile, India's Suraj Kumar Chand and Anjali Semwal are the two Wild Card entries at the India Open.



Manisha Malhotra, President of IIS, said as quoted by the PSA press release, "We are delighted to be able to bring squash back to India at the highest level. Sports like squash need to see the return

of circuits at the state and national levels. Through such events, we have to promote and support our players, and they need to learn how to play bigger events. From an Indian perspective, it's definitely a sport we can dominate, so this will be a good opportunity for us. Divyanshu Singh, COO of JSW

Sports, stated, "We are trying to develop an ecosystem when it comes to the business of sport in India. It is dominated by cricket, but our endeavour is to change that and promote other Indian sports. Very luckily, Indian squash has six players in the top 100, which is a phenomenal achievement already. There is great optimism that going forward up to LA2028, these athletes will shine for India and we are here to get them on the spot."

"From a marketing perspective, our endeavour is to raise the profile of the players and to raise the popularity of the sport," he added. When asked about his thoughts on the tournament, India No. 1 Ramit Tandon said, "It's always good to play at home. I think in India, we don't get the opportunity

to do it enough, so I'm very thank-

ful to JSW and everyone involved who has made this possible. Especially with the Olympics coming up, our PSA rankings are going to be crucial, and home-court advantage is something Indians don't really get at the top level. Since this is the biggest squash event ever to be hosted in India, it's important to reach out to more people and get more eyeballs on the sport. I think it's a beautiful thing to have some more sports events within the country, so I'm excited."

India No. 3 Anahat Singh stated, "This will be one of the bigger tournaments for me up till now and getting to play in India as well as being able to play with so many international players is going to be wonderful. Especially for me, it's really important for my ranking and getting to play at home rather than travelling outside the country so much."

# Asha Kiran Welfare Society Celebrates 16th Foundation Day; Sh. Sham Lal Sharma Lauds Social Initiatives



#### **Top News Report**

JAMMU, Mar 23: Asha Kiran Welfare Society (Regd.) celebrated its 16th Foundation Day with a grand event at Shiv Shakti Temple Hall, Janipur Colony, Jammu. The occasion was graced by Hon'ble MLA Jammu North, Sh. Sham Lal Sharma, as the Chief Guest, while Sh. I.D. Soni, President of Old Age Home, Jammu, Dr. Rajeev Bhagat, Hon'ble MLA Bishnah, and Ex-Corporator Smt. Sunita Gupta attended as Guests of Honour. The event commenced with a lamp-lighting ceremony by the dignitaries and members of the Society, followed by a Saraswati Vandana presented by the Sadikas of Bhartiya Yog Sansthan. Dr. Vikrant Sharma, President of the Society, welcomed the guests and presented them with Shree Phal and Rose Flowers as a mark of respect. He also provided an overview of the Society's objectives, achievements, and ongoing initiatives.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Guest Sh. Sham Lal

Sharma praised the Society for its relentless efforts in uplifting the underprivileged. He remarked that over the past sixteen years, Asha Kiran Welfare Society has become a symbol of hope and service, playing a crucial role in transforming lives through education, skill development, and healthcare. He highlighted that the Society's contributions, including distributing sewing machines to widows, offering scholarships to meritorious students, providing medical assistance, and ensuring food security for the needy, reflect its deep commitment to social welfare. He emphasized that true progress is achieved only when society collectively works towards the betterment of those who need support the most. He urged people to come forward and contribute to such noble causes, stressing that social service should not be seen merely as charity but as a shared responsibility that strengthens the very foundation of the community.

Asha Kiran Welfare Society has been instrumental in improving the lives of thousands

through its diverse initiatives. The Society has donated 24 sewing machines to economically weaker women, including widows, while also training 57 women at its Sewing and Tailoring Centre in Janipur, helping them achieve financial independence. It has awarded cash merit scholarships to 277 students from Classes 4th to 10th to encourage academic excellence. The Society's dispensary has provided free medical aid to over 44,000 patients, and it regularly organizes medical camps to ensure specialized healthcare reaches those in need. More than 106 underprivileged families have received ration kits consisting of essential items like atta, rice, and pulses, and 335

Reaffirming his full support for the Society's future initiatives, Sh. Sham Lal Sharma congratulated the members and volunteers for their dedication and service. He assured them that his doors would always be open for such impactful initia-

blankets have been distributed

to poor and deserving individu-

als, particularly during the harsh

winter months.

tives and expressed his hope that the organization would continue to expand its reach and bring positive change in more lives. The event also saw the distribution of sewing machines to two widows, Smt. Veena Verma and Smt. Rajni Mukesh, as a step toward empowering women through skill-based selfreliance. In addition, mementos were presented to donor members who had extended their financial and material support for the construction and development of the Society's infrastructure.

Guests of Honour also extended their appreciation for the Society's efforts. Sh. I.D. Soni lauded its commitment to social upliftment and encouraged attendees to embrace the philosophy of karma, urging them to actively participate in helping the less fortunate. Dr. Rajeev Bhagat, Hon'ble MLA Bishnah, commended the Society's focus on education, especially its scholarship program for students, and assured his full support in furthering its initiatives. Ex-Corporator Smt. Sunita Gupta also praised the Society's efforts in women empowerment, education, and healthcare, emphasizing the need for collective efforts to uplift the weaker sections of society.

The event concluded with a heartfelt Vote of Thanks delivered by Sh. Kamal Netar, General Secretary of the Society, who expressed gratitude to the Chief Guest, Guests of Honour, donors, participants, and all members of the organization for making the event a success. He also extended special appreciation to Sh. Anil Kohli, Publicity Secretary, for his efforts in organizing the program efficiently and appealed to everyone present to continue supporting the Society both physically and financially to ensure its continued growth and impact.

#### MLA Arvind asks youth to follow Bhagat Singh's path of courage & nationalism

#### **Top News Report**

JAMMU, Mar 23: Arvind Gupta, senior BJP leader and MLA Jammu West, paid heartfelt tributes to Shaheed-e-Azam Sardar Bhagat Singh Ji on his Balidan Diwas at Bhagat Singh Chowk here today. The event witnessed the participation of BJP leaders, Karyakartas, and local residents who gathered to honor the supreme sacrifice of the legendary freedom fighter.

Speaking on the occasion, Arvind Gupta hailed Bhagat Singh as an epitome of patriotism, courage, and selfless service to the nation. He emphasized the need for the younger generation to draw inspiration from Bhagat Singh's ideology and commitment to national integrity. "Shaheed Bhagat Singh dedicated his life to the country at a young age. His sacrifices continue to ignite the spirit of nationalism among millions of Indians," he said.

The MLA further reiterated the BJP's

commitment to preserving the legacy of India's great freedom fighters. He urged citizens, particularly the youth, to contribute actively to the progress and development of the nation.

Arvind Gupta reaffirmed his dedication to working tirelessly for the welfare of the people and fostering a spirit of unity and patriotism among all sections

The program concluded with floral tributes at the statue of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, followed by patriotic slogans that resonated through the gathering. Participants pledged to uphold the values of justice, equality, and nationalism, as envisioned by the great revolutionary.

Among those who were present included Mandal President Kushant Prajapati, Ex-Corporators Sanjay Baru and Rajinder Gupta, BJP Karyakartas, including Ayodhya Gupta, Prem Gupta, Hardev Singh, Happy Sharma, Vikrant Gupta, Sonu Manhas, Ajay Anand and prominent people of Ward No. 27.

## Inter - School Level Bocce Ball Championship Concluded, Sun Shine High School

#### **Top News Report**

JAMMU, Mar23: Open Inter School Bocce Ball Championship-2025 Concluded At Sunshine High School The Championship Witnessed Enthusiastic Participation Around 70 Athletes .The Championship Was Org By Reffa Boules India Federation.Approved By Niti

Aayog Govt of India
The Valedictory Function Was Graced By Mr
Sharat Chander ( Dsp
Pcr Jammu ) As A Chief
Guest .Sh R.K Sharma
Principal of Sun Shine
School Was The Guest
of Honour .Other Dignitaries Present On

The Occasion Sunny Nanda (General Secretary Reffa Boules India Federation), Renu Devi (Director Rbif), Gurvansh Choudhary International Athlete.is also present

Speaking On This Occasion Dsp Sharat Chander Encouraged The Participants To Continue Their Dedication To Sports And Bring Laurels To The Region. Winners Were Felicitated With Trophies And Certificates, And The Event Concluded With A Commitment To Making Bocce Ball More Popular Among Young Athletes. The Medal Winners Are

U-12 Yrs Boys .Urvansh Kumar ( Gold), Samer Katru( Silver) Vikrant Bazila( Bronze) Under-14yrs Harsh Kumar ( Gold), Anmol Mehra (Silver), Aryan Mehra (Bronze), Open Solo .Yuvraj ,Gagandeep Singh( Silver) Under-12 Yrs Girls Kavya Kaith ( Gold),Harshita ( Silver),Khushi

Silver), Khushi Sohal(Bronze) Under-14yrs Vaishali Kumari (Gold), Cuenca Raj(Silver), Jaanvi Lakhotra (Bronze) Open Girls Bhavan Sharma (Gold) Indu Bala(Silver) Mansi Bharti (Bronze) all medal winners selected for distt level.

# Youth must uphold the legacy of Bhagat Singh: Kavinder Gupta



#### **Top News Report**

JAMMU, Mar 23: Youth must uphold the legacy of Bhagat Singh and other freedom fighters by working towards the nation's development, fighting against corruption, and ensuring social harmony.

This was stated by senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta after paying heartfelt tributes to Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev in a function held at the BJP headquarters in Trikuta Nagar on the occasion of Shaheed Diwas.

Diwas.
The event witnessed the presence of several prominent BJP leaders, including BJP J&K Organizational General Secretary Ashok Koul, MLA Bahu Vikram Randhawa, District President Naresh Singh, along with Rekha Mahajan,

Jai Deep Sharma, Ajay Gupta, Lucky Puri, Vijay Sarpanch, Ritika Dhaman, Surjeet Singh, Ajay Partap, Sanjay Bahu, Sahil Mahajan, Indu Puri, Pummy Chowdhary, Pankaj Baral, Sunny Bakshi, and Bharat

Gupta.

Speaking on the occasion, Kavinder Gupta said that the sacrifices of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev remain an eternal source of inspiration for every Indian. He emphasized that true tribute to these martyrs lies not just in remembering them on special occasions but by following their ideals in real life. "These young revolutionaries fought against injustice and laid down their lives for the nation. It is our duty, especially the youth's, to take forward their vision by ensuring a

corruption-free and pro-

gressive India," he

added.

Kavinder further stressed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a 'New India' is deeply rooted in the principles of these great revolutionaries, where the country is strong, self-reliant, and just.

Ashok Koul, General Secretary Org, BJP, J&K urged the younger generation to dedicate themselves to nation-building by actively participating in democratic processes, social service, and constructive initiatives for the country's growth.

Other BJP leaders also paid rich tributes to the martyrs and reiterated their commitment to carrying forward the spirit of patriotism and sacrifice in their political and social endeavors.

The event concluded with slogans of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and a renewed pledge to uphold the ideals of India's revolutionary heroes

