

## Pak yet again shells forward areas along IB, LoC

JAMMU, JAN 22: Pakistani troops on Monday yet again opened fire and lobbed mortars at forward border outposts and the civilian areas along the international border and the Line of Control, across this region.

"There was heavy firing along the IB in Pargwal, Marh, RS Pura, Arnia and Ramgarh sectors of Jammu and Samba districts, which stopped at 0545 hrs on Monday," an official here said.



Meanwhile, Pakistan troops also resumed heavy shelling along the LoC in Bhawani, Karali, Said, Numb and Sher

CONTD ON P-2

## 43 cases registered for raising slogans, illegal assembly since 2008: J&K Govt

JAMMU, JAN 22: The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Monday said that as many as 43 cases have been registered in Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts since 2008, for alleged raising of slogans, illegal assembly and taking out processions.

"In total, 43 cases have been registered on alleged illegal assembly, raising slogans, taking out processions, especially under Sections 120-B and 153-A of CrPC in Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban since 2008," Minister In-charge, Home Mehbooba Mufti said in a written reply to a question raised by PDP MLC Firdous Ahmad Tak in the Upper House. The government also replied that the amnesty scheme is also applicable for the first time offenders and stone pelters in whole of the state.

CONTD ON P-2

## Power crisis rocks J&K Assembly, Oppn stages walkout

JAMMU, JAN 22: Opposition members on Monday staged a walkout as power crisis in the state rocked the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly.

Congress MLA Vikar Rasool had sought a reply from the government during Question Hour that whether it is a fact that there is a huge power crisis in the state particularly in Kashmir valley and winter zones of Jammu Province, on which Deputy Chief Minister Nirmal Singh, who is also

In-charge Power said, "As per the contact demand, registered connected load of the consumers which is presently around 310 MW, the demand factor is identified as ratio of peak demand and total connected load and takes care of natural diversity in the consumer load."

He said during summers in Jammu Province, power demand increases due to excessive use of cooling devices and likewise in the winter regions of Jammu by way use of

heating gadgetry rampantly. "The unprecedented demand of the consumers exceed the agreement load thereby the installed capacity of the transformers and its allied equipment at different levels gets overloaded as such department is forced for scheduled/un-scheduled curtailments to save the vital equipment at receiving station," said the Minister.

Rasool expressed that he was not satisfied with

the reply and said, "People are not getting sufficient power supply. They are suffering."

National Conference MLA Ali Mohammad Sagar also made a point on power crisis but he was disallowed to speak following which he said, "you (Speaker) are getting directions from someone in the House to curb our voice but we will not allow it to happen."

He also raised an issue of border firing besides

CONTD ON P-2

## BSF destroys Pakistan firing positions, fuel dump in retaliatory fire

JAMMU: The Border Security Force (BSF) said on Monday that it had retaliated against ceasefire violations by Pakistan and destroyed its firing posts at several locations along the International Border (IB).

"BSF is giving suitable and pin-pointed retaliation to an unprovoked fire by Pakistani forces from across the IB in Jammu. At several locations, the enemy's firing positions, ammunition

and fuel dump have been destroyed by the precision firing of the border guarding force personnel," said a BSF spokesperson, PTI reported.

The spokesperson also released two small video clips purportedly showing the destruction of the fuel dump.

Twelve people, including five security personnel, have been killed and over 60 others injured in Pakistani firing from

across the border in Jammu since Thursday.

On Sunday, a civilian was killed and two persons were injured in the Pakistani shelling along the IB in Kanachak belt of Jammu district. "There was night-long firing along the IB in Pargwal, Math, RS Pura, Arnia and Ramgarh sectors (of Jammu and Samba districts). It stopped at 05:45 hours today (Monday)," a BSF officer said.

While a BSF jawan and

a teenage girl were killed on Thursday, four persons including two civilians and one BSF jawan and an Army jawan were killed and over 40 others injured in the Pakistani firing on Friday.

BSF officials said authorities were keeping a close eye on the situation and have rushed police teams to affected areas to ensure prompt assistance to the people.

Meanwhile, amid fresh

CONTD ON P-2

## Security forces burst teargas shells to disperse students in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, JAN 22: Security forces on Monday burst teargas shells to disperse protesting under-graduate girls students, who blocked M A road in the summer capital, Srinagar, against alleged result discrepancies.

Dozens of under-graduate students also protested at various places in the valley, including outside Kashmir University (KU),

CONTD ON P-2

## HC rejects pre-arrest bail of Judicial Officer

JAMMU, JAN. 22: State High Court today rejected the pre-arrest bail application of Rajesh Kumar Abrol Judicial Officer in rape case.

While rejecting the bail application, Vacation Judge of J&K High Court Jammu Wing Justice Sanjay Kumar Gupta observed that "497-C. Special provision regarding bail in certain offences against women etc. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Code no person accused of an offence punishable under sections 304-B, 326A, 370, 376, 376A, 376C, 376D, or 376E of Ranbir Penal Code shall if in custody, be released on bail or on his own bond unless the Public Prosecutor has been given an opportunity of being heard on the application for such release: Provided that such accused person shall not be released on bail or on his

CONTD ON P-2

## 1,555 police constables promoted in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, JAN 22: As many as 1,555 police constables were promoted to the next level in Kashmir valley, a police spokesperson said here on Monday.

He said the Departmental Promotion Committee under the chairmanship of

CONTD ON P-2

## Civilian injured in grenade attack in south Kashmir

SRINAGAR, JAN 22: A civilian was injured in a grenade attack by militants near a bus stand in south Kashmir district of Pulwama this evening, official sources said here.

They said militants lobbed a grenade at security forces near Khrew bus stand in Pampore in Pulwama this evening, resulting in injuries to a

civilian. The injured was immediately taken to a hospital, where his health condition is stated to be stable.

Meanwhile, the militants managed to escape during the chaos created due to the explosion of the grenade.

However, they said additional security forces have been rushed and a

search operation has been launched in the area to nab the attackers.

This is the third incident in the last four days in south Kashmir. Unidentified militants lobbed a grenade towards Police Station Shopian on January 20 though no one was injured in the attack. Eight police personnel,

CONTD ON P-2

## 25 JKNPP activists tonsure heads to mourn the murder of Jammu's aspirations by BJP MLAs



JAMMU, JAN. 22: Accusing the BJP of ruthlessly murdering the very self esteem and the aspirations of the people of Jammu region to satiate its lust for power, 25 Panther volunteers ton-

sured their heads to mourn the political sin committed by the MLAs of the Saffron party near Maharaja Hari Singh Statue on the 8th day of JKNPP's relay hunger strike in Jammu today.

Meanwhile, a batch of several activists from District Kishtwar, Doda and Poonch relieved and replaced their earlier fellow colleagues of district Rajouri to hold the protest against the subjugation of

Jammu Pradesh and its youth.

While making a forceful appeal to the Jammuites to oppose and depose the BJP's juggernaut for its demagoguery and sheer

CONTD ON P-2

## Lapse in investigation leads to acquittal in NDPS

JAMMU, JAN. 22: 2nd Additional Sessions Judge Jammu acquitted one Topinder Singh against whom police registered a NDPS case.

2nd Additional Sessions Judge Jammu Pawan Dev Kotwal after hearing Adv Zulker Nain for the accused observed that there are many lapses and infirmities in the investigation and consequently prosecution and the prosecution evidence suffers from serious inconsistencies and above all there are glaring violations of mandatory provisions of the Act and, therefore, the prosecution failed to bring home guilt against the accused beyond doubts and as such, charge-sheet is dismissed and accused is acquitted of the offence under section 8/15 NDPS Act.

## SF launch search operation in a south Kashmir village after firing shots

SRINAGAR, JAN 22: Security forces launched a search operation in a south Kashmir Pulwama village after some firing shots were heard Monday afternoon, official sources said.

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FROM PAGE-1

**Pak yet...**

Makri areas of Rajouri district last evening, officials said.

A civilian was killed and two others were injured in the shelling along the IB in Kanachak belt of Jammu district on Sunday.

So far, 12 people had died and over 50 got injured in the firing.

Schools however, continue to remain closed in the border belts, added an official.

"We are keeping a close eye on the situation and have rushed police teams to the affected areas, to ensure prompt assistance to the people," he added.

Police have also appealed to the people to stay indoors and not to touch any live shell landing in their premises or the fields.

**BSF destroys...**

shelling by Pakistan at Indian positions along the IB and the LOC, Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh said on Monday that the government would not let the country down even in adverse circumstances.

"Under no circumstances, however adverse they may be, we will never let India down," he said. Singh, on the last day of his three-day visit to Uttar Pradesh, was speaking at a public meeting in Barabanki, but did not name Pakistan. The HM added, "India is no longer a weak nation. It has become a strong nation and its image before the world has changed."

**Security forces...**

demanding photocopies of their answer-sheets. Scores of girl students hit the streets outside Women's College to protest against alleged result discrepancies and blocked the busy MA road in the summer capital, leading to massive traffic jam.

However, security forces deployed in the area, burst teargas shells to disperse the protesting girl students. The students alleged that they were manhandled by the security forces despite holding a peaceful protest. "We were protesting peacefully for our future, but despite that we were manhandled by security force personnel, who also burst teargas shells," she alleged.

Dozens of students also hit the streets outside KU to protest and blocked the traffic against the university authorities for failing them en-masse after misplacing their answer papers.

"The results for our first semester examination, for which we appeared over one-and-a-half year ago, came out recently. And to our surprise about so much time, majority of the students are failing in multiple papers," the protesting students said.

"When many of us approached the university authorities for photocopies of their papers, they straight away denied our request," they alleged.

They further said that many students who had appeared in all the papers were marked absent in some papers. "I appeared for all my papers. But to my surprise I have been marked absent in Urdu. If I was absent in Urdu paper how is it possible that I have marked my attendance," an agitated student said.

Similar protests by students were also held at various other places in the valley, including Press Enclave in Srinagar and Anantnag.

**43 cases registered...**

Giving a break-up, he replied that in Doda, 16 cases were registered and 23 accused were arrested, while in Kishtwar, 12 cases were registered and 359 accused were arrested and in Ramban, 15 cases were registered and 155 accused were arrested.

The government also said that no case registered under Sections 120-B and 153-A has been recommended or approved for amnesty.

"However, the particulars of persons belonging to districts of Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban, are also approved for amnesty," he added. The Minister said that further action for providing amnesty to the youths of three districts was underway.

**Power crisis...**

power shortage in the Kashmir valley. After Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Rehman Veer's intervention, Mr-Sagar was allowed to speak, but not satisfied with the reply from the Minister In-charge Power, he staged a walkout amid slogans, "Aap Kashmir ko andhere mein rakhe hain" (you have no policy for power.)

However, Congress MLA Usman Majid and Mr Rasool also protested in the House and later staged walkout.

Later speaking to reporters outside the Assembly, Mr Rasool criticised the PDP-BJP Government on alleged failure in mitigating people's problems.

He also asked Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti to step down and break alliance with the BJP.

**1,555 police...**

Additional Director General (ADG) of Police Munir Ahmad Khan on Monday approved a huge chunk of promotions in favour of 1,555 constables of Executive Wing to the rank of Selection Grade Constables having lien and seniority with Kashmir Zone.

"The entire exercise has been completed on the directions of Mr Khan within the time bound manner on the eve of Republic Day 2018 as a token gift to the Jawans in particular and to their families in general," he said.

Meanwhile, Mr Khan has felicitated the promoted officials and their families and expresses hope that they will strive to work for the public peace and order.

**HC rejects...**

own bond if the Court, on a perusal of the case diary or the report made under section 173 of the Code, is of the opinion that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the accusation against such person is prima facie true. The restrictions on granting of bail specified in sub-section (1) shall be in addition to the restrictions under the Code or any other law for the time being in force on granting of bail. Nothing in section 497A of the Code shall apply in relation to any case involving the arrest of any person accused of having committed an offence specified in sub-section (1)."

Justice Sanjay Kumar Gupta observed that Bare perusal of clause (3) of Section 497-C Cr.P.C., it is evident that

provisions of Section 497-A Cr.P.C. (grant of anticipatory bail) shall not be applicable in cases falling under Sections 304-B, 326-A, 370, 376, 376A, 376C, 376D, or 376E of Ranbir Penal Code. Therefore, without commenting on merit of the case, present bail application for grant of anticipatory bail in FIR No.06/2018 registered by Police Station Janipur under Section 376/420 IPC, is not maintainable. With these observations High Court dismissed the bail application.

Meanwhile in a petition filed by Rajesh Kumar Abrol seeking quashment of the FIR, after hearing Adv Aseem Sawhney appearing for the petitioner where Adv Deepika Singh Rajwat appearing for the complainant observed that Vide Order No.1346 dated 17.01.2018, even Judicial Magistrate has been suspended by the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir, and departmental enquiry is ordered to be initiated. Further, perusal of FIR reveals that High Court has directed the police to proceed further in the matter in accordance with law and issued notice to respondents and directed Registry to list this petition on February 9, 2018 and in the meanwhile ordered that investigation in the case shall go ahead and Investigating Officer shall not produce final report without prior permission of this Court. He shall file status report on the next date of hearing fixed for 09.02.2018.

**Civilian injured...**

including an Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI), were injured in a grenade attack by militants near Pulwama police station on January 19.

**25 JKNPP...**

opportunism, Harsh Dev Singh Chairman JKNPP said that Saffron brigade which got overwhelming mandate from Jammu region on the slogan of demolishing the father-daughter Party (Baap-Beti Sarkar) fell flat before the PDP immediately after winning 25 seats from Jammu region and had literally begged before it to accept it as its junior partner. He said that three years BJP's rule was a sordid tale of failures, betrayals and surrenders with none of its elected representatives raking up the promised issues of Jammu region. Pointing towards the war like situation on borders which had caused unprecedented death and destruction, he lamented that all the election time slogans and promises of BJP had proved hoax. Accusing BJP of having sold its every single slogan and its fundamentals for keeping the unholy alliance intact, he said that while the PDP continued to dictate terms on almost all issues, the BJP leaders remained content with the lollypops of ministries and two flags flying atop their official luxury cars thus making a mockery of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee's philosophy of 'Ek Nishan, Ek Vidhan. Likewise, Saffron party which trumpeted to abrogate Articles 35-A, 370 before the elections took a U-turn on the issue when its own govt. in the State had filed an affidavit before the Supreme Court to seek the dismissal of the petition filed for abrogating Art 35A, on the ground that the said article was a permanent feature of the constitution and a settled law, Harsh rued.

Peeved over BJP's silence over the discrimination with Jammu youth in the process of selections by the PSC/SSB, Harsh Dev Singh said that there had been a huge regional bias in the recruitments made by them for the last three years which revealed a petty low share of Jammu region plummeting to mere 3-5 percent as compared to Kashmir valley. He wondered over the slogans of "Achey Dier" and "Beti bachao, Beti Padhao" sold by the Saffron brigade with a big splash and extravaganza while the contractual lectures comprising of female candidates claiming regularization of their services were tormented and left in lurch under the open skies for

more than 11 months. Likewise, the NHM employees had been protesting for a suitable job policy for more than a month but the dispensation had paid no heed to the misery of the educated youth, harsh divulged. The ominous alliance of BJP-PDP had resorted to the policy of suppression to silence the voice of the people against its wrongdoings. A recent baton charge executed on the NHM protestors bore the testimony of the police atrocities during which several women employees were mercilessly manhandled and critically injured, Anquish Harsh said. While demanding revocation of SRO 202 and amendments in SRO 520, he said that underemployed youth were treated like 'throw aways' by the present regime and their future was put into jeopardy by the Saffron flavoured dispensation.

Balwant Singh Mankotia warned the State government to immediately come out with the regularization policy of all the contractual employees including lecturers, NHM and MGNREGA employees, SPOs, Home Guards, Anganwari and ASHA workers, terminated Wireless Operators, Kargil Porters, etc. otherwise the fire of the youth's outrage would consume the ominous alliance of BJP-PDP. Elucidating the traumatic subjugation being experienced by the people of Jammu region in development sphere, Balwant Singh Mankotia narrated the tragic saga of abortion of Artificial Tawi Lake project besides deterioration of Mubarak Mandi Heritage complex which had turned into ruins. He said that persistent neglect and deprivation of the region amid a threat to its demography with unlawful settlement of Rohingyas around the 'city of temples' had left the Dogras to face severe identity crisis. He regretted that the people of this region who had exhibited tremendous endurance and patience with the hope that the decades old discrimination with Jammu region would end someday, were shaken to shock when their aspirations and wishes were murdered by the 25 Saffron MLAs for the loaves of power.

Yash Paul Kundal the leaders asserted that Panthers party shall avenge all the betrayals of the BJP which had colluded with PDP to rehabilitate the surrendered militants and stone pelters in Kashmir, provide jobs and compensation to NOKs of deceased anti-national elements, appease secessionist forces in the valley and show aversion towards the nationalists and the patriots.

Those who tussled their heads to mourn the BJP's betrayals included Gagan Partap Singh, Parshotam Parihar, Sewa Singh Bali, Rehmat Choudhary, Sukhjit Singh, Shakti Singh, Ajay Singh (Bablu), Rinku Kumar, Anil Kumar, Amit Kumar, Pinku Kumar, Dalip Kumar, Rajesh Kumar, Kailash Kumar, Raj Singh, Sonu Kumar, Karan Singh, Bachan Singh, K.D Singh, Hem Raj, Puran Chand, Vidh Lal, Amar Nath, Divansh Sharma, Natha Singh.

Prominent among others who spoke on the occasion included Ishaq Rana, Rehmat Choudhary and Imitaz Ahmed.

**SF launch...**

They said on a tip off about the presence of militants security forces and Special Operation Group (SOG) launched a joint search operation in village Lassipora, Pulwama this afternoon. However, when the security forces were sealing the area, some firing shots were heard.

Additional security forces were rushed from nearby camps and all exit points were sealed, they said adding the operation was going on when the reports last came in. A police spokesman also confirmed that a search operation has been launched after entire area was cordoned off when some firing shots were heard at Lassipora.

**HELPLINE**

<b>POLICE STATIONS</b>	
Bagh-e-Bahu	2459777
Bakshi Nagar	2580102
Bus Stand	2575151
City	2543688
Gandhi Nagar	2430528
Gangyal	2482019
Nowbad	2571332
Paoca Danga	2548610
Railway Station	2472870
Sainik Colony	2462212
Satwari	2430364
Chanmi Himmat	2465164
Transport Nagar	2475444
Trikuta Nagar	2475133
Gandhi Nagar	2459660
SSP City	2561578
SP City North	2547308
SP South	2433778
<b>Public Utility Services</b>	
<b>INDIAN AIR LINES</b>	
City Office	2542735
Air Port	2430449
Jet Air Ways	2453999
City Office	2573399
<b>RAILWAYS</b>	
Railway Enquiry	131, 132, 2476407
Booking	2470318
Reservation	2470315
<b>Public Health Engineering Stations</b>	
Bakshi Nagar	2543557
Gandhi Nagar	2430786
Company Bagh	2542822
New Plot	2573429
Panjirithi	2547537
<b>Telecommunication Department</b>	
Directory Enquiry	197
Fault Repair	198
Trunk Booking	180
Billing Complaint	2543896
<b>JAMMU MUNICIPALITY</b>	
Jn. Lines	2578503
Administration Officer	2542192
Health Officer	2547440
<b>POSTAL SERVICES</b>	
Head Post Office City	2543606
Gandhi Nagar	2435863
<b>FIRE SERVICES</b>	
Control Room	101, 132, 2476407
City	2544263
Gandhi Nagar	2457705
Canal	2554064
Gangyal	2480026
<b>COOKING GAS DEALERS</b>	
Chenab Gas	2547633
Gulmour Gas	2430835
JAKFED	2548297
HP Gas	2578456
Shivangi Gas	2577020
Tawi Gas	2548455
<b>POWER HOUSES</b>	
Gandhi Nagar	2430180
Canal Road	2554147
Janipur	2533828
Nanak Nagar	2430776
Parade	2542289
Satwari Cantt.	2542813
<b>HOSPITALS</b>	
GMC Hospital	2584290
S.M.G.S. Hospital	2547635
C.D. Hospital	2577064
Dental Hospital	2544670
Gandhi Nagar Hospital	2430041
Sarwal Hospital	2579402
G.B. Pant Cantt. Hospital	2433500
Ayurvedic College	2543661
C.R.P. Hospital	2591105
Acharya Shri Chander	2662536
Mental Hospital	2577444
Swami Vivekanand	2547418
Blood Bank	2547637
Ambulances	2584225, 2575364
Ambulances (Red Cross)	2543739
<b>NURSING HOMES</b>	
Maddan Hospital	2456727
Medicare	2435070
Triveni Nursing Home	2452664
Suvidha Nursing Home	2555965
AI. Firdous Nursing Home	2545050
Astha Nursing Home	2576707
Bee Enn Charitable Trust	2505310
Chopra Nursing Home	2573580
Harbans Singh Mem Hsp.	2541952
Jeevan Jyoti	2576985
Yudhvir Nursing Home	2547821
Mediald Nursing Home	2466744
Sita Nursing Home	2435007
Vibhuti Nursing Home	2547969
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## Abdul Haq inaugurates bridge at Bangi Nowgam

ANANTNAG, JANUARY 22: The Minister for Rural Development & Panchayati Raj and Law & Justice, Abdul Haq today inaugurated a steel girder bridge here at Bangi Nowgam in Anantnag.

On the occasion, DDC Anantnag Mohammad Younis Malik, Director Rural Development Ganganar Ali, SSP Anantnag Altaf Ahmad Khan, besides, the ACD, BDOs, engineers of RDB and others were present. "Connecting Bangi Nowgam with Ashajipora-Mirbazar road was the commitment made by the former Chief Minister, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and the Department has completed it in a record time of 13 working months," said the Minister.

The 14x40 span bridge has been constructed by the Rural Development Department at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.41 crore. It is the first bridge of 40 metres span constructed by the Department in the district.

Meanwhile, the Minister directed the ACD to speed up the works taking during the current financial year.

People, present on the occasion, thanked the Minister for providing the connectivity to the area in a record time.

Earlier, the Minister chaired a review meeting of the officers at Khatulgaon regarding the implementation of direction passed by the Chief Minister during her outreach programme and the DDB decisions pertaining to the Rural Development Department.

## DESK takes stock of coaching centres for civil services at GDC B'la SRINAGAR, JANUARY 22: Director School Education, Kashmir Dr. G.N. Itoo along with Head of the State Institute of Education (SIE) Kashmir, Mehboob Hussain today visited the Government Degree College (GDC) Baramulla to take stock of the arrangements made for the establishment of CMS Super 50 Coaching Centres for civil services.

He also held meeting with Principal Government Degree College Baramulla in this regard, where he was apprised about the arrangements made in this regard. The officer expressed satisfaction on the arrangements made for starting free coaching centre for civil services examinations here and assured full cooperation and support in this regard. During the meeting Director School Education Kashmir told that Free Coaching and other necessary facilities will be provided to the selected 50 aspirants.

## DDC flags of progressive farmers tour under ATMA POONCH, JANUARY 22: District Development Commissioner Tariq Ahmed Zargar flagged off training cum exposure tour for farmers, here today.

The DDC was accompanied by an agricultural officer, district agriculture officers, extension agriculture officers besides prominent persons from civil society and media persons. 25 progressive farmers were selected from all agriculture zones of the district for training programme at SKUAST Chatha under ATMA scheme. The training programme will impart training on "Vegetable Nursery raising Under Protective Cultivation", "Seed Production Technology in Fodder Crop Oats" and Vermicomposting".

Highlighting the need to organize such training programmes and awareness camps on regular basis, the DDC stressed for transfer of technology from lab to land and updating farmers about advancements in the field of Agriculture.

Farmers were encouraged to get maximum benefit from this training programme and adopt the practices in the field for boosting the agriculture production. They were also informed about Farmers' specific schemes like PMGSY & PMFBY among others which are aimed at increasing the productivity and double the farmers' income by 2022.

## Works on 40 community bunkers are nearing completion on LoC: DDC Poonch POONCH, JANUARY 22: DDC Tariq Ahmad Zargar inspected works on community bunkers at Khari-khramara area, here today. It was given out that construction of 40 community bunkers that had begun earlier are nearing completion wherein cross border firing affected residents can be accommodated. While speaking on the occasion, the DDC said that community bunkers have capacity to accommodate 30 to 35 persons. He further said that necessary arrangements including separate accommodation for women, toilet facility, water and light facilities will be made available in these bunkers being constructed along LoC in Sawizian, Balakote, Mendhar, Khari-Khramara, Jhulas Salotri.

He further said that work on already sanctioned 628 community bunkers and 1320 individual house hold bunkers will be started soon for the safety of LoC residents.

Zargar visited the under construction bunkers and also met with locals at village Khari Khramara affected in recent shelling.

An inter-departmental team headed by DDC has supervised the construction of these bunkers including BDO pooch Ashiq Rafiq, field officer, Naib Tehsildar AEE REW besides front line field functionaries.

## ADC Bhaderwah finalize Republic Day BHADERWAH, JANUARY 22: ADC Bhaderwah Imam Din convened a meeting to finalize the arrangements for the Republic day celebrations. It was decided in the meeting that the main function would be held at Government Boys Higher Secondary School Bhaderwah, where the National Flag would be unfurled by the Chief Guest followed by march past by the contingents. Threadbare discussions were held on various arrangements regarding smooth celebrations of national function including security, first aid, sanitation, Fire and Emergency Services, Seating arrangements, drinking water and Power Supply, transport, traffic regulation and prize distribution at the venue.

ASP Bhaderwah, CEO BDA, SDPO Bhaderwah, Tehsildar, Exn PWD, BDO Bhaderwah, SHO besides others Tehsil Officers/officials also attended the meeting.

# Good roads vital for sound economic growth: Saroori

DEMANDED FOR EARLY SANCTIONING OF NEW ROAD SCHEMES FOR INDERVAL CONSTITUENCY

ASKED FOREST MINISTER THAT GUJJARS AND BAKERWALS SHOULD NOT BE HARASSED IN FORESTS AND ALLOWED TO REPAIR THEIR KOTHAS

JAMMU, JANUARY 22: - Member of Legislative Assembly from Inderwal, Ghulam Mohammad Saroori said that an effective communication network is essential not only for meeting the requirements of travel and transport but also for rapid socio-economic development of the state and the country, adding that good connectivity and economic growth are linked with each other. He said road connectivity is even more important because it is directly linked to the promotion of tourism", Saroori said while participating on the grants of Roads and Building department.

Saroori while strongly advocating for construction of proposed 10-Km long (5km of two tubes each) Singpora-Valloo tunnel connecting Kishtwar with Kashmir valley, said it will help to provide a nearest all weather alternate highway between Jammu to Srinagar and will help in its holistic development. He said on completion, the tunnel will go a long way in developing a mega Tourism Circuit comprising of Lakhampur-Bani-Basoli-Chatergala-

Bhaderwah-Kishtwar-Chatroo and Kashmir Valley, thereby bringing socio-economic prosperity in the entire region.

He has also raised public related demands including detail projects should be furnished to connect the villages which are having population of 100 souls under core net work programme of PMGSY. Immediate upgradation of Kishtwar-Sinthan road which is in deplorable condition, blacktopping on all the link roads in Inderwal, Release of compensation under PMGSY, CRF and NABARD for smooth construction of roads without the hindrance of land and structure holders, demanded sanctioning of 4no. roads under CRF for Inderwal Constituency. Opening of all snow bound roads in Doda and Kishtwar, release of wages in favour of gain Collies who are engaged for maintenance of roads, enhancement of funds on district level in road sector, revision of rates for stage II PMGSY road projects, regularization of all casual labourers, Temporary Gang, Coolies, release of state matching

share for roads under execution through NABARD for their speedy completion, immediate release of funds against work done liabilities in Chatroo, Kishtwar and Gansoh R&B divisions, release of funds for completion of Dak Bunglows at Chingam, Jakyas, Malanoo, Sinthan, Kuriya, Thakrie, Sarthal, Mangthalla and Sigdi.

Speaking on the grants of Forest department, Saroori asked the forest minister Lal Singh that Gujjars and Bakerwals should not be harassed in forests and allowed to repair their Kothas. "Gujars and Bakerwals shouldn't be harassed in forests and be allowed to repair their temporary Kothas and Dhokas." "They are being harassed while repairing their Dhokas," he alleged adding that they have rights over the forest-land. He also questioned the minister over allocation of funds under the CAMPAA scheme. "I don't want to tell where funds have gone," he said.

He hailed the Minister for handing over of timber distribution work to JKSFC but he demanded for opening of more timber

deposits in Inderwal Constituency. He asked the government to upgrade the damaged infrastructure of forest and its allied Department's assets under CAMPAA in his Constituency. He also pleaded for enhancing of compensation being given for man-animal conflict cases. He appreciated the government's decision for opening of Kheber-e-Jangal policy. He pointed out that the Forest Department has not issued No Objection Certificates (NOCs) for clearance of eight sanctioned PMGSY roads in his Constituency and urged the government for early issuance of the same so that the construction works on these prestigious road projects to be taken up at an earliest.

Earlier as soon as proceedings of the House began, Congress MLA G. M Saroori slammed the police for use of force by police on Gujjars who were protesting against the murder of eight-year-old girl in Hiranagar area of Kathua district echoed in the Legislative Assembly on Monday, with legislators seeking action against the policemen involved in the lathi-charge.

## Kavinder Gupta asks BJP's Local Urban Bodies Cell to address public's issues

JAMMU, JAN. 22: BJP Local Bodies Cell led by its State Convener, Deepak Gupta in presence of Speaker J&K Assembly & MLA Gandhi Nagar, Kavinder Gupta held a state level meeting of its state office bearers in view of approaching Panchayat and then Urban Local Bodies elections in the state at party headquarter, Trikuta Nagar.

Kavinder Gupta, while addressing the meeting prompted all the office bearers of the Cell to work extra hours for addressing the issues of public ensuring the good performance of party in the coming elections. He stated that these elections are held on very ground level, where the personal performance and the working of the



candidate is scrutinized by the public. Although the Panch elections are not to be fought on the party basis but it still becomes the responsibility of the cadre of the party to project and support all the candidates wisely while keeping their personal

integrity in mind and considering that their working is similar to the ideology of the party. He also emphasized on the role of the Cell in ensuring the reach of party schemes, ideology and achievements to the public, well before the elections.

Sudhir Jamwal, Molvi Tariq, Hakeem Masood, Abid Hussain, Rajesh Kohli, Rohit Mahajan, Malvinder Singh (Shanty), Anil Kaul, Surinder Mahajan, Rajkumar Sharma, Manoj Kulgami and others were among the prominent members of Cell present in the meeting.

## Farmers call BJP Kissan Morcha to solve Khair Wood issue

JAMMU, JAN. 22: BJP State Kissan Morcha led by its State President Rajinder Singh Chib held an open meeting in presence of local farmers to address their genuine concerns at Dinga Amb, Kandi Mandal Billawar.

Morcha President was apprised by the farmers hitting from the area about their plights they are facing and asked him to take and represent their genuine concerns to the party high command as well as the alliance government. The farmers said that the public of the region has supported BJP at all times and they consider that the only this is the party holding the merit of Nationalism in its

veins while working with genuine concerns for mitigating the sufferings of the masses.

He was apprised that the issue of Khair Wood is the major concern for them as it is fetching low prices in the local market and so the farmers want that some major steps must be taken by the government to increase the revenue.

Rajinder Singh Chib assured them that their concern will be attended by the party. He also said that the Khair Wood has the capacity to raise more funds for the farmers if it may be granted permission to be sold outside the state. He also said that he is aware of the fact that no new

industry in this connection is being given permission to be started in the state but he has already taken that matter with the higher ups. Chib further said that he will request the party to support for the demand of raising government "Mandi" for the Wood, by which government may purchase the wood directly at a fixed genuine price after which it can sell it through its own measures.

Harbans Lal, Darshan Lal, Gatti Singh, Dinesh Singh, Kewal Singh, Om Parkash, Prem Chand, Kesar Kumar, Rashpaul Chand and others were among the prominent persons who attended the meeting.

## KU Vice Chancellor felicitates KU North Zone delegation: 7 students Qualified for Nationals

JAMMU, JANUARY 22: Kashmir University's cultural delegation comprising of 32 students from different colleges and departments under Cultural Officer, Shahid Ali Khan, represented the University of Kashmir in 33rd North Zone Inter University youth festival held in Maharishi Markandeshwar University, Ambala.

The team bagged 5 prizes in the festival and 7 students of Kashmir University will now represent the North Zone in all India Level National Youth festival to be held in Ranchi next month in literary, theatre and Fine Arts events.

The festival was organized by Association of Indian Universities and Ministry of Youth Affairs, Govt. of India. Prof. Khurshid Iqbal Andrabi, Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir, Prof. Khurshid Ahmad Butt Registrar University of Kashmir and Dean Students Welfare, Prof. G. N. Khaki welcomed the delegation back to the campus and celebrated the winning movements with the students. VC, KU, said, "It gives me overwhelming pleasure that our students brought laurels for the University and congratulate the students and Department of Students Welfare". On the occasion, Register University of Kashmir Prof. Khurshid A. Butt said, "We have been and will be providing all the facilities to the students to promote talent, and rich cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir State.

## Div Com reviews Jamia Masjid Beautification plan



SRINAGAR, JANUARY 22: Divisional Commissioner Baseer Ahmad Khan today reviewed the status of various developmental works that have been undertaken under Jamia Masjid Beautification plan and directed the officials to complete the project within the deadline.

He was speaking at the meeting wherein DC Srinagar, Director Tourism and officials representing R&B, PDD, SMC

and other departments participated. The Div Com was apprised of the completed and the ongoing works at the historically important site. He said that the area is in the heart of the cultural history of Srinagar and it needs to be preserved at all cost. He said that all pending works like underground cabling, repair of damaged Khatamband ceiling, completion of certain works should be completed as per the fixed time-

line. The Director Tourism said that the project was conceived at a total cost of Rs 4.92 cr out of which Rs 3.93 has been spent. He said that the Restaurant and Interpretation centre at the site has been a huge success and it will become an ideal place to showcase the local talent.

The Div Com directed the SMC officials to depute a team for inspecting a deep drain in the periphery of Jamia Masjid which is suspecting of leaking water and get it repaired at the earliest. He also directed the officials to start an anti-pollution drive in the area so to make it environment-friendly.

## CEC Kargil calls for establishment of milk pasteurization plants, stresses for proactive approach to revive dairy sector

KARGIL, JANUARY 22: Chairman and Chief Executive Councilor Kargil Kachoo Ahmad Ali Khan has today called for establishment of dairy plants with a complete set of machinery required for milk pasteurization in the district to meet the demand of pasteurized milk. The CEC stated this while chairing a meeting of the officers of Cooperative and Animal Husbandry Department which was convened to review the status of projects undertaken by the departments for the encouragement of local milk and other cooperative societies in Kargil. The CEC underlined the need to enlighten the local cooperative societies with the latest technical know-how, and to spread awareness with regard to the schemes and incentives of the Government. He said such steps will go a long way in boosting the farmers economy. It was given out at the meeting that there are six registered milk processing societies in the district which supply an average quantity of five lakh litres of milk to Army as well civilians per annum. The officers further informed the CEC that the intensive Cooperative Development Project (ICDP) sponsored by the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) a number of projects for the establishment of dairy farms, poultry farms, Cooperative Super Bazaars, District Consumer Cooperative Stores at block levels, Primary Agriculture Credit Societies, Milk Cooperative Societies in the district are under pipeline and work on their establishment is expected to be kick-started in the present year.

## VC's favourite drags JU to court, gets rewarded as Spl Secy to VC JYF questions silence of Chancellor over prevailing mess in JU

JAMMU, JAN. 22: The infirmity of the present administration under the nose of Prof. Ramji Dass Sharma can be measured from the fact that Neeraj Sharma who disregarded University Council and also dragged university of Jammu into court finally managed his entry into power corridors of JU.

While questioning the wisdom of Hon'ble Chancellor of the Jammu University, Hon'ble NN Vohra, the Jammu Youth Forum (JYF) has urged his Chancellor to wake up from deep slumber and immediately set the things right in Jammu University.

This was stated by Deepak Kumar, President, Jammu Youth Forum today while addressing a press conference. He stated that Neeraj

Sharma, promoted as special secretary to vice-chancellor was demoted, following recommendation of empow- erment committee, constituted by the then Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to probe administrative impropriety, favoritism and financial irregularities in Jammu University (JU).

He informed that the probe committee gave its observation that Neeraj Sharma was recruited as Assistant Registrar on March 10, 2003 and appointed as Deputy Registrar on July, 10, 2006. "Notwithstanding the decision of the University Council (67 Meeting) to place the appointment of the Special Secretary at the discretion of VC, the appointment of Sharma without considering the similarity sit-

uation Deputy Registrars or by inviting applications, was prima facie questionable," he added.

Deepak Kumar said that the committee further recommended the appointment of Neeraj Sharma be reviewed by the University Council. "In fact University Council may also review the earlier decision to allow VC to make an appointment as per his discretion, as such provision lacks merit, transparency and equity, he said added. He further informed that Neeraj Sharma had challenged council's decision, got stay on council's order and remained OSD Finance, OSD DDE, and OSD Director CDC besides Prof. R D Sharma awarded him with Post of Special Secretary to VC.

Deepak Kumar alleged

that eversion Prof R D Sharma assumed the charge of VC; he is working to strengthen particular community. "If one goes through appointments and promotions, it can be understood, a particular community is holding major posts and running affairs of the university", he added.

JYF members demanded Gov. of the State who is Chancellor of Jammu University to constitute a fully fledged enquiry committee involving the investigating agencies of the State to look into and probe the irregularities took place during the three years tenure of Prof. R D Sharma.

Among those who were present in the press-conference included, Amit Sharma, Rohit Gupta, Rahul Malik and Sachin Sharma.

## Pune: IT engineer beaten to death over parking space dispute



**PUNE:** An IT engineer on Saturday died after he was allegedly beaten with an iron rod and stones over a parking space dispute here.

39-year-old Neville Battiwala was beaten by three men. He had objected to parking of vehicles in front of his bungalow located in Kondhwa.

Battiwala was partying on his rooftop when an

argument broke out with the drivers of a tourist company which escalated into a fight.

Following this, the 39-year-old was rushed to the hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

On Thursday, the three accused - Sriganesh Raskar (31), Yogesh Kadwe (22) and Vikram Bhombe (31) were arrested.

A senior police officer of Kondhwa police station said that Raskar runs a transport business, and his driver used to park the vehicles in front of the gate of Battiwala's bungalow.

"Battiwala often objected to it. On Friday night, the deceased had another argument with Raskar over the issue that led to the scuffle," said the officer.

Raskar and the other two attacked Battiwala with rods and left him injured. "Battiwala was rushed to the hospital, where he succumbed to injuries," he said.

Neville had relocated to Pune two years back and was working with a software firm.

## With 20 AAP MLAs disqualified, Delhi may head for by-poll soon

**NEW DELHI:** Following the disqualification of 20 Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) legislators over holding office of profit on Sunday, Delhi is likely to face by-polls soon.

The top party leaders have asked the disqualified MLAs to prep for both legal and electoral battles, said sources.

In a big setback to Delhi's ruling AAP, the Election Commission of India on Friday recommended disqualification of 20 MLAs came, for holding office of profit. On the same day, Delhi High Court refused to give any interim relief to the disqualified party members.

President Ram Nath Kovind on Sunday accepted the EC's recommendation to dis-



qualify 20 MLAs. "Having considered the matter in the light of the opinion expressed by the Election Commission, I, Ram Nath Kovind, President of India, in the exercise of the powers. Do here hold that the aforesaid 20 members of the Delhi legislative Assembly stand disqualified from being members of the said Assembly," a notification issued by the Law

Ministry quoted the President as saying. The matter will be taken up by the court again today.

"We hope to get justice in the court. Even if we don't get justice then we will go to the people's court which is the highest court,"

Madanlal, who represented the Kasturba Nagar constituency prior to his disqualification, said.

According to former

party member Kapil Mishra, who rebelled against the AAP leadership in 2017, said, "This is the win of Indian Constitution. Today, Arvind Kejriwal must have realised that nothing is bigger than the Constitution and law. Now, he also should not raise questions on the EVMs (Electronic Voting Machines), the EC (Election Commission), and also President of India. He (Kejriwal) should be ready to face elections. Delhi will be going for elections soon and a new government will be formed."

Reacting to the disqualification of the lawmakers, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said that God gave the party 67 seats knowing that this day

was coming. The 20 MLAs include - Adarsh Shastri (Dwarka), Alka Lamba (Chandni Chowk), Anil Bajpai (Gandhi Nagar), Avtar Singh (Kalkaji), Kailash Gahlot (Najafgarh) - who is also a minister - Madan Lal (Kasturba Nagar), Manoj Kumar (Kondli), Naresh Yadav (Mehrauli), Nitin Tyagi (Laxmi Nagar), Praveen Kumar (Jangpura), Rajesh Gupta (Wazirpur), Rajesh Kishi Janakpuri, Sanjeev Jha (Burari), Sarita Singh (Rohtas Nagar), Som Dutt (Sadar Bazar), Sharad Kumar (Narela), Shiv Charan Goel (Moti Nagar), Sukhtir Singh (Mundka), Vaidar Garg (Rajinder Nagar) and Jarnail Singh (Tilak Nagar).

## Wrote to Modi 30 times, never replied, has an ego: Anna Hazare

Almost a week after hitting out at Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal over entering politics through his movement, anti-corruption crusader Anna Hazare has now targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying that he has an "ego of Prime Ministership".

Modi also accused PM Anna of not responding to any of his letters. Speaking at a public rally in Atpadi tehsil in Sangli in Maharashtra on Sunday, the anti-corruption crusader said that he written over 30 letters to PM Modi in the last years but was yet to get a reply.

"I have written to PM Modi in the last three years but he never replied to them. Modi has an ego of his Prime Ministership, hence he



did not respond to my letters," said Anna.

This comes months ahead of an agitation by Anna Hazare on March 23 on farmers' issue. The rally at Atpadi was the first of the three rallies Hazare would be addressing in an effort to mobilise support for the agitation.

"It will be a never-seen-before kind of massive agitation that will be a warning to the government," he said. "I have no intention of garnering votes through my rallies and agitations. The way there was a huge rally for Jan Lokpal, I believe there will be a similar agitation on farmers' issues," he said.

Hazare said that his demands included implementation of the Lokpal, appointment of a Lokayukta, a pension of Rs 5,000 to farmers and higher rates for farm produce.

Talking about his agitation on January 16, the anti-corruption crusader

had attacked Kejriwal, saying he would ensure no political leader rises out of his movement.

Hazare said he would ask for an undertaking from anyone who wants to join his movement that they would not enter active politics. He was asked a question on this in light of his announcement of a 'peaceful protest' from March 23 demanding steps to improve the condition of farmers across the country.

"No, it will never happen again. I will make sure that it will never happen again," Hazare pronounced. "I was not very alert then. But now, before joining me, a person has to give affidavit saying they won't join any political party or fight elections," he said.

## India is a Hindu Rashtra, will survive till Hinduism thrives: Mohan Bhagwat

**GUWAHATI:** Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat on Sunday said India has forgotten all enmity against Pakistan but same is not the case with the neighbouring country. Addressing a gathering of RSS 'swayamsevak' in North-East here, days before three states of the region go to polls, the RSS chief said India will survive as long as Hinduism thrives.

"Struggle took place. Pakistan was born. 'Bharatvarsh' forgot the enmity with Pakistan from August 15, 1947. Pakistan has not forgotten it yet. This is the difference between Hindu nature and other nature," Bhagwat said at the rally.

Bhagwat said all ancient civilisation such as Mahenjodaro, Harappa

and our culture developed in places which are now in Pakistan. "Why didn't Pakistan tell (India) to take another name since everything of 'Bharat' has emerged from here. So we are 'Bharat' and you take any other name."

"They did not say this and rather wanted to separate from the name 'Bharat'. Because they know that with the name 'Bharat', Hindutva comes in. And Hindutva is there, so is 'Bharat'," he said.

The RSS chief said that despite its diversity, India was united because of Hindutva. "We have internal unity based on Hindutva and that is why India is a Hindu Rashtra," he said. Bhagwat said India gives the world the message of humanity.

"Others talk, but do not

behave. India teaches others with its own behaviour. The world names this nature of 'Bharatvarsh' as Hindutva. That is why the people of 'Bharatvarsh' are called Hindu," he said.

"If the people of India forget the Hindutva sentiment, then their relation with the country also gets snapped," he said.

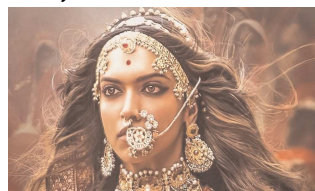
Bhagwat said that during the formation of Bangladesh, the country did not merge with India despite having similarities with it because of lack of Hindu sentiment. "After partition of Pakistan, why did Bengali-speaking Bangladesh not merge with 'Bharat' (Because) That sentiment is not there - Hindu sentiment... If Hindu sentiment is forgotten, then 'Bharat' breaks," he said.

## Padmaavat row: 'Chetavani Rally' in Chittorgarh, thousands of women threaten to end life

**JAIPUR:** Thousands of women brandishing swords on Sunday took out a 'Chetavani Rally' or a warning march in Rajasthan's Chittorgarh town to warn the authorities to stop the release of 'Padmaavat' movie or else be prepared for 'jauhar' by them.

Among the protesters were women, said to total 1,908, who have already registered for performing 'jauhar' (committing suicide) by jumping into fire in Chittorgarh.

The protesters began their march from the Chittorgarh Fort and ended it at the main market in the town where they submitted a memorandum addressed to Prime



Minister Narendra Modi to District Collector Indrajeet Singh.

The memorandum said that the march was taken out to ensure that Rani Padmavati's honour was maintained and the screening of the film, which is set for release on January 25, be stopped or

else the Rajput women will perform 'jauhar' on January 24.

Shri Rajput Karni Sena Spokesperson Vijendra Singh said that the body will approach cinema hall owners across India in the next three days to request them not to screen the Sanjay Leela

Bhansali movie. "On Sunday, we contacted around 100 cinema halls in the National Capital Region and they have given in writing that they will not screen the film."

However, he warned, in case cinema halls screened the movie, they will be responsible for the consequences.

A few cinema halls in Ahmedabad, Faridabad and Ballabhgarh were engaged in advance booking for the film and hence they had to face the community's wrath, he added. He said the organisation had called for a shutdown across the country on January 25 to protest against the film's screening.

## CISF recovers 20 live cartridges from woman at Delhi metro station

Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel on Monday recovered 20 live cartridges from a woman at a metro station in the national capital. The cartridges were recovered at Adarsh Nagar metro station during security checking.

The Adarsh Nagar metro station is located on the Yellow Line stretch of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), which runs from Samaypur Badli to Huda city centre in Gurgaon.

They said the woman hailing from Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh, was found carrying the



rounds on Sunday evening by CISF personnel at the Adarsh Nagar station when her bag was being scanned.

The lady was travelling with her father and other family members, they said adding her father

produced a copy of his arms license and said the 20 rounds of ammunition (.32 calibre) belongs to him.

The woman and others have been handed over to the Delhi Police by the Central Industrial

Security Force (CISF) team for further investigation, they said.

Security in the Delhi Metro and other public transport facilities is stepped up in view of the Republic Day celebrations on January 26.

## Saraswati Puja 2018: Sudarsan Pattnaik pays sand art tribute to goddess of knowledge



**NEW DELHI:** On the auspicious occasion of Basant Panchami, goddess Saraswati is revered in many parts of the country. The spring festival falls on the fifth day of the Magha month (January or February).

Revering the goddess of knowledge, renowned sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik took to Twitter and shared the pictures of the beautiful sand art tribute. He wrote: "Our

and devotees seek blessings in the form of for prosperity, well being and wisdom. Special prasad is prepared including fruits and sweets are offered to goddess Saraswati first before it's distributed to all.

Saraswati puja includes recitation of various mantras and chants which echo the whole surrounding.

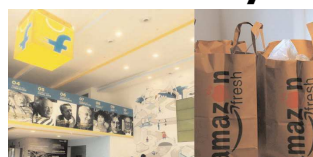
Besides, many bhakts throng Saraswati temples, play music and chant her name the whole day. It also happens to be the day when parents introduce letters to their children. They initiate them into writing letters of alphabet or study together.

Here's wishing the readers a very happy Saraswati Puja!

## Amazon, Flipkart offer heavy discounts in online sale: All you need to know

Online retailers Amazon and Flipkart on Sunday kickstarted Great Indian Sale and Republic Day Sale respectively, offering a bouquet of discounts on a range of products. While Amazon's Great India Sale is slated to go on till January 24, Flipkart's Republic Day Sale will end on January 23. Discounts are being offered on several smartphones such as Google Pixel 2 XL, Samsung Galaxy S7, Xiaomi Mi MIX 2, Xiaomi Redmi Note 4, Lenovo K8 Plus and Moto G5 Plus.

Apart from huge discounts on smartphones, the online retailers have put on sale several household/kitchen appliances,



fashion products and apparels.

Both Amazon and Flipkart are also offering cashbacks apart from discounts of upto 80 per cent. On Amazon, cashback worth 10 per cent is being offered on purchase by HDFC credit and debit cards. On the other hand, is offering 10 per cent cashback on purchase by Citibank cards. The e-commerce major,

choose from a host of offers. Here are some deals.

Pixel 2 XL: Sale price Rs 48,999  
Samsung Galaxy S7: Sale price at Rs 26,990  
Xiaomi Mi MIX 2: Sale price Rs 29,999  
Samsung Galaxy On Nxt 64GB and 16GB: Sale price Rs 10,999 and Rs 9,999 respectively.

Xiaomi Redmi Note 4: Sale price Rs 10,999  
Lenovo K8 Plus: Sale price Rs 8,999  
Moto G5 Plus: Sale price Rs 10,999  
Smarttron t phone P: Sale price Rs 7,999  
Infinix Note 4: Sale price Rs 7,999  
Panasonic Eluga A3: Sale price Rs 6,499

Meanwhile, customers shopping during the Great Indian Sale can look forward to big savings on some of the biggest brands such as Apple, OnePlus, Samsung, 10.or, UCB, Puma, Adidas, Wrangler, Titan, Marks & Spencer, American Tourister, Verro Moda, BPL, Micromax, TCL, Lenovo, HP, IFB, Bosch, D'Decor, Philips, Lakme, Pampers, LG, Whirlpool, Bajaj, Prestige, Usha, McAfee and Kaspersky among others, the company said.

Special discounts also being offered on the Kindle Paperwhite, Kindle Paperwhite Starter Pack, Fire TV Stick, eBooks and more.

### Budget Session 2018-19 LC Proceedings-Calling Attention Notice

## Govt vigorously pursuing construction of Sadhna Top Tunnel: Hanjura

JAMMU, JANUARY 22: Minister for Agriculture Production, Ghulam Nabi Lone today informed the Upper House that with a view to improve the road condition, road safety and to avert accidents on Sadhna top on Kupwara-Karnah Road, various works such as strengthening, permanent works, resurfacing etc have been planned to be executed during the financial year 2018-19 by the Project Beacon.

Responding to a Calling Attention Notice moved by MLC, Qaiser Jamsheed Lone, the Minister informed that the State Government took up the issue for construction of Sadhna Tunnel with the Union Minister for Defense

during her visit to the State in September 2017.

Besides, the State Government, as a follow-up action, approached Ministry of Defense, GoI for accord the highest priority for the construction of said tunnel and is earnestly pursuing the matter with the Government of India for its sanction, he added.

The Minister further informed that most of the accidents have occurred due to the negligence of drivers and when there was no snow on the terrain.

MLC also demanded to take the issue of construction of tunnel on priority and also take vigorous steps to avoid such accidents to save precious lives of people.

Nadhyam from Karnah side," he added.

Besides, the Minister said that Project Beacon has also proposed to construct 6.12 kms long Sadhna Tunnel on the road from Chowkbal-Tangdhar-Chamkot between km 28 to Km 42 which is under consideration with the Ministry of Defense.

The Minister further informed that most of the accidents have occurred due to the negligence of drivers and when there was no snow on the terrain.

MLC also demanded to take the issue of construction of tunnel on priority and also take vigorous steps to avoid such accidents to save precious lives of people.

## PM envisioned fostering entrepreneurship with 'Start up India': Priya

**\*\*Minister asks youth to be job creators instead of job seekers \*\*Launches Future-Talks logo**

JAMMU, JANUARY 22: Minister of State for Education and Tourism, Priya Sethi today said that Start up India is a revolutionary scheme that has been launched to help the people who wish to start their own business and exhorted upon youth to avail the benefits of the scheme to become job creators instead of job seekers.

The Minister said this during 3rd Jammu and Kashmir Future Talks 2018 programme hosted by Cluster University Jammu at Government College for women Gandhi Nagar here.

She expressed hope that future talks 2018 programme will help to promote vistas of entrepreneurship and employability in the state.

Priya said that STARTUP INDIA campaign is a revolutionary scheme that has been started to help the youth who wish to start their own business units and said that government will provide them all necessarily support to establish successful business units.

She said that most important point about this campaign is that it involves youth of the country as start-ups as they have fresh mind, innovative ideas, required strength, energy, skill, and new thinking to lead business.

The Minister exhorted upon students to explore the entrepreneurial avenues as both the state and central government have announced number of schemes for them. She

added that Prime Minister has launched STARTUP INDIA campaign with the aim to foster entrepreneurship in the country with special focus on youth.

Under STARTUP INDIA campaign, incentives like Tax exemption for three years, Rs.10,000 crore corpus fund to support to start ups and 80% reduction in patent registration fee are exemptions given by the government. The Minister also stressed that such opportunities are available to the youth and they should avail these optimally.

The Minister appreciated the efforts of colleges and universities of the state for promoting entrepreneurship culture among the students within campuses. She informed

that as per recent NASSCOM report India ranks third in Global Start up eco systems with more than 7000 new age companies and 75% of the founders are less than 35 years old. "You all are the leaders of tomorrow, ones who will be grappling with great challenges facing our nation and the world", she said.

Prof Anju Bhasin, Vice Chancellor, Cluster University Jammu in her address encouraged the students to become employers rather than employees, also for creating more employment opportunities and playing effective roles in sharing social responsibilities. She asserted that universities should be willing to promote entrepreneur climate by inter-campus collaborations with dedicated

works pace in the universities and also emphasized that we should think about reshaping the curriculum to face the real world challenges. She added that Cluster University Jammu envisions enhancing the multiple skills of our young minds towards developing their future prospects, both progressively and productively.

Prof R D Sharma, Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu in his address stated that there are ample entrepreneurial opportunities lying in the region of Jammu and Kashmir especially in the field of horticulture, tourism, and handicrafts and suggested the creation of start-up cells for expert guidance on the grave issues of students.

## RTI Act, a vital tool for effective development and public service delivery: CIC

**HOLDS ROUNDTABLES AT RAJOURI**

RAJOURI, JANUARY 22: Turning Right to Information Act as a vital tool for quality development and effective public services delivery, Chief Information Commissioner, Khurshid Ahmed Ganai today called for implementation of the act in letter and spirit.

The CIC was addressing the Roundtable of First Appellate Authorities (FAAs), Public Information Officers (PIOs) and Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO) of District Rajouri.

Secretary J&K SIC Ashok Pandita, Deputy Commissioner Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, ADDC A S Chib, SEP Youngal Manhas, ADC Qayoom Mir, Addl SP Mohd Yousof, media persons

from electronic and print media besides all FAAs, PIOs and APIOs of various government departments attended the Roundtable.

Deliberating on the objectives of the act the CIC said the act envisages to provide a transparent and accountable governance to the people with greater aim of establishing a corruption free society.

Linking corruption with lack of information in public domain, he said easy and increased flow of information will enable the public to question public spending and social auditing of the government's projects and schemes, which in turn will enhance the quality of development and effectiveness in delivery of public services.

The CIC called upon the PIOs and FAAs present in the Roundtable to go through the J&K RTI Act, 2009 and Rules carefully to ensure that they perform their duties in conformity with the provisions of the Act. He said that slackness in the implementation of Section 4 of the Act pertaining to mandatory and suo moto disclosure of information through websites is a big concern which needs to be addressed by all the Public Authorities. He also impressed upon them to establish dedicated RTI cells in their offices to facilitate applicants and ensure time bound replies.

He said that there is sense of fear associated with the act and PIO and APIOs should shun it

and share information more openly as enshrined under the act to make the system more transparent and accountable.

CIC made detailed presentation of various sections and rules under RTI act, responded to the queries raised by the participants and also distributed booklets on RTI Act among the participants. Earlier Dr Shahid informed that of 3300 RTI applications received in the district in last two years more than 3200 stands disposed off. He further informed that in past six months massive awareness has been carried in every nook and corner of the district in more than 180 Camps and implementation of RTI is monitored and reviewed on monthly basis by District Administration.

## Govt focused on improving rural infra: Lal Singh

**Minister inaugurates developmental works**

KATHUA, JANUARY 22: To raise sustainable rural infrastructure and to provide basic amenities to the people living in far flung areas, Minister for Forests, Environment & Ecology Ch. Lal Singh today kick started and inaugurated various developmental works in village Rajbagh, Ghati, Palai, Bade Nal, Jakhole, Dhanni and Sait covering Panchayats Forelain East & West, Bothein North & South and Jakhole of Basohli constituency.

Speaking on the occasion Lal Singh said providing sustainable infra-

structure in rural and far flung areas is getting a major thrust and assets to improve road connectivity, irrigation schemes, augmenting water and power supply and health sector are being developed in rural areas to meet the requirements of the local population.

Rural economy plays a significant role in our overall economy as it has a very high potential in terms of labour and natural resources, which are the basic inputs in production process, Lal Singh added.

After inaugurating link

& tractor roads, lanes, drains and protection wall in various panchayats the minister said that providing of basic infrastructure facilities would help in tapping the vast resources in the rural areas therefore, the gaps in rural infrastructure need to be addressed properly so as to achieve optimal growth and alleviate poverty, he stressed.

Hailing Govt's decision of 33 per cent reservation for women in 4098 posts of Sarpanchs, the minister said this decision would reserve 1366 posts of Sarpanchs in a total of

4098 Panchayats exclusively for the women, a decision aimed at empowering the women right from the grass root level.

He further directed the executing agency to complete these projects as per the prescribed timeframe and further stressed on maintaining quality while executing works.

ACD Kathua, Rajiv Khajuria, Conservator Forest (East) Jammu, Khawaja Qamardin, BDOs, Engineers and DFOs besides officers of allied wings of forest department were present on the occasion.

## 79666 B&OC workers registered in 3 yrs: Dr Drabu

**'Govt to establish extension centres in far-off areas for registration'**

Minister for Finance, Labour & Employment, Dr Haseeb A Drabu today said the government would establish extension centres in far-off areas for the registration of Buildings and Other Construction (BOC) workers.

Replying to a question of Sajad Ahmad Kichloo, the Minister informed the House that 79666 B&OC workers have been registered during the last three years under the J&K BOCW (RE&CS) Act, 1996 in the state.

The Minister said an amount of Rs 2.15 crore has been received from 127626 registered workers for renewal of their cards in 2016-17 and 2017-18. Meanwhile, an amount of Rs 20333 crore has been disbursed under various schemes to these workers in Kishtwar during the current financial year, he added.

He further said that the government is contemplating to renew job cards in the month of June-July. He assured that the government would clear the liability pending with the department on account of scholarships, disability and deaths cases soon. Every construction worker will be provided with an assistance of Rs 10000 at the time of emergency, he added.

Legislators Sham Lal Bhagat and Vibod Gupta raised supplementary questions related to the main question.

## 11442 SPOs engaged through transparent selection process: Hanjura

Minister for Agriculture Ghulam Nabi Lone Hanjura, while responding to a question on behalf of Minister for Home, said 11442 SPOs have been engaged in the last three years in the state.

Replying to a question of Legislators Ghulam Nabi Monga and Thakur Balbir Singh, the Minister said District Level Committees were constituted in 2016 under the chairmanship of concerned Deputy Commissioners to carry out the process of engagement of SPOs. While intervening in the question, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Rehman Veeri said the state government carried out a transparent recruitment process for engagement of SPOs in the police department.

He further informed that previously the engagements of SPOs were carried out on operational grounds by the concerned district Senior Superintendent of Police/Unit Heads with prior approval of the concerned Authorities i.e. Police Headquarters/Zonal Heads/Range Deputy Inspector General of Police, taking into consideration

the right aptitude, ability to collect actionable intelligence and its speedy dissemination as also yearning to be a part of the state security set-up.

"No specific qualification was prescribed for the engagement of SPOs prior to 2016," the Minister said, adding that after August 2016, matric was prescribed as minimum qualification for their engagement.

He informed that no physical test was conducted for their engagement prior to 2016, however after August 2016, the physical test for recruitment of SPOs was conducted through designated selection committee and 5,689 SPOs have undergone the physical test after 2016.

## SRO 202 under examination: Veeri

Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Rehman Veeri informed the house that keeping in view the impact on the employment scenario in the state and other relevant aspects, the government shall examine various issues raised in the representations seeking abrogation SRO-202.

The Minister was replying to a question raised by legislator Mohammd Khurshed Alam.

The Minister said Jammu and Kashmir Special Recruitment was notified vide SRO Rules 2015 dated 30.06.2015, which interalia, provide for filling up the vacant posts in various departments in a time bound manner.

He further informed that 6420 appointees are working

in various government departments as on date, pursuant to SRO 202.

## PMAY under implementation in JK: Dy CM

The Deputy Chief Minister Dr Nirmal Singh informed the House that Prime Minister Awas Yojana (PMAY) is under implementation in the state which envisages 'Housing for all by 2022'.

The Deputy Chief Minister was replying to a question raised by Ashok Khajuria in the Upper House.

The Deputy Chief Minister said that PMAY-HEA (U) and PMAY (G) mission aim at addressing the aggregate housing demand by 2022. Dr Singh said that PMAY is under implementation in entire state. The Deputy Chief Minister informed that under PMAY-HEA (Urban), central assistance of Rs 1.50 lacs and state share of Rs 16,666 for construction of each house for identified economically weaker section household is admissible under beneficiary led construction. Whereas financial assistance of Rs 1.30 lac per house is being implemented in rural areas, by Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department, PMAY-Graamnet to eligible beneficiary.

Dr Singh informed said that Rs 12000 for construction of Toilet units in convergence with SBM (G) / MGNREGA and 90-95 days of unskilled wage labour under MG NREGA over and above is also admissible.

### Budget Session 2018-19 - LC Proceedings - Discussion

## 4 power projects operational on River Chenab, 7 more proposed: Dy CM

**\*\*Prestigious Rattle Hydropower Project to be developed by JKSPDC**

JAMMU, JANUARY 22: The Deputy Chief Minister Dr Nirmal Singh today said a comprehensive Relief and Rehabilitation (RR) policy has been formulated for the affectees of three Power projects i.e. Pakal Dul, Kiru and Kawar in Kishtwar district wherein Rs 33 lakh would be provided for undertaking the construction for individual house, the extent of stamp duty would be limited to Rs 25 000 besides providing an amount of Rs 40 000 for construction of work shed and 25000 for cattle shed and providing a scholarship of Rs 1000 per month for undertaking studies of the children of the affected families.

The Minister was replying to the discussion held on a starred question raised by Sajad Ahmad Kichloo in the Upper House today.

The Deputy Chief Minister said there are 4 power projects with 1680 MW cumulative capacity operational on River Chenab, while as 7 more projects having total capacity of 5388 MW have been proposed to be constructed on the river flowing through

Chenab Valley comprising Kishtwar, Doda and Ramban districts.

Giving details of the commissioned power projects on River Chenab, the Minister said that Dulhasti Power Project with a capacity of 390 MW, Bhagliar Hydro Electric Project (BHEP) Stage-I and II with capacity of 450 MW each and Salal Hydro Electric Project (HEP) with capacity of 390 MW are operational and are generating power which is being supplied as per set norms.

Dr. Singh further informed the House that 7 more Power projects having total capacity of 5388 MW include 1000 MW Pakal Dul HEP, 624 MW Kiru HEP, 540 MW Kawar HEP, 1856 MW Sawalakote HEP, 390 MW Kirthai-I, 930 MW Kirthai-II and 48 MW Lower Kalnai are proposed to be constructed on River Chenab. The Minister said that out of these projects 3 projects Pakaldul, Kiru and Kawar HEPs are in advanced stage of tendering while as final clearance is awaited at CEA for Sawalakote HEP.

Minister said that DPR for Kirthai-I project

is under appraisal at CEA while as Kirthai-II has been appraised by the CEA for which a consultant has been engaged for preparation of bid document for execution of project in EPC mode.

The Minister said that execution of Lower Kalnai Project at an estimated cost of Rs 576.87 crore has been taken by M/S Coastal Projects Limited, but only 10% progress has been achieved and due to poor performance of contractor the work is bound to get delayed. He said an amount of Rs 108.10 crore has been expended so far.

With regard to the 800 MW Bursar HEP, the Minister said that the project is one among the 7 projects handed over to NHPC for development under central sector under an MoU in July, 2000 between the State government and the government of India. He said the project is under investigation and DPR preparation/ appraisal. However, the project is yet to be cleared by government of India for construction, the Minister said.

The Minister said that in respect of 330

MW Wudwan-Bursar, 235 MW Barium HEP, 230 MW Shous and 370 Shamnot projects PFR has been prepared by JKSPDC through M/s WAPCOS which shall be followed by preparation of DPR and appraisal from the competent authority.

In respect of the 850 MW Rattle Hydroelectric Project (HEP), the Minister said that the project was awarded on BOOT basis to M/s GVK through tariff based competitive bidding. However, he said, the developer abandoned the project in the year 2014. Minister said that the State government has terminated the PPA with the developer.

Dr. Singh further said that the project shall now be developed by Jammu and Kashmir State Power Development Corporation (JKSPDC). He said that the claims of the developer and the counter claims by the state government are under arbitration. He said that, to proceed further, JKSPDC on the directions of the State government has engaged the IIT-Roorkee for valuation of the

assets created by the developer.

Deputy Chief Minister informed the House that JKSPDC does not engage the services on temporary basis and no staff is engaged specifically against the projects. He said that total 210 persons are at presently engaged in Chenab Valley Power Projects (P) Ltd including those on transfer or deputation basis from NHPC, State government and directly recruited by CVPP. He said among those 116 are technical and 94 are non-technical.

The Minister informed the House that 416 employees of Dul Hasti Power Station, Kishtwar including technical and non-technical are on the rolls of NHPC while as 610 employees including technical and non-technical of Salal Power Station, Reasi, are on the rolls of Corporation. He said the JKSPDC have centralized mode of recruitment based on the project requirement and in line with the procedures adopted in State government. Minister said that in CVPLL the recruitment for engagement of staff is being made through open advertisement.

JINDRAH IMAGES

Jammu's destiny remains unchanged

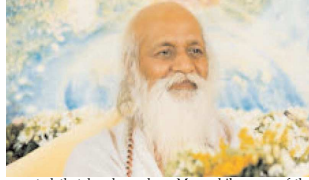
Given the alleged discriminatory attitude of the state government towards Jammu region, it can be very well construed that Jammu's destiny is not going to be changed even during the BJP-PDP rule. Even as so-called pro-Jammu BJP is part of the government in J&K, nothing is being done to develop Jammu as a tourist destination. Soon after the formation of BJP-PDP government, then chief minister Mufti Mohammad Syed, now dead, had assured to transform Jammu into an attractive tourist destination and said that the government was committed in this regard. As part of development activities in the capital cities of Jammu and Srinagar, the government had also shown its resolve to expedite work on other development works in Jammu. He had also announced to allocate Rs 50 cr for macadamization of roads in Jammu while saying that eight CRF projects worth Rs 190 cr were being taken up shortly in Jammu division which include Samba-Mansar, Jathana Bridge at Kathua and Hatli roads. Though work on some of the projects was taken up and has been completed, others still continue to be ignored. As promised, Mantalai has still not been developed as International Yoga Centre under the Centre's Swadesh Darshan scheme. Patnitop, Sanasar and Baglihar in Jammu are also yet to receive focussed attention of the government. A golf course at Sanasar with a water sports facility was also promised to be made. The government had also announced that the technology used in Gulmarg Gandola Project would be used in the Jammu Ropeway Project and the process for land acquisition would be expedited so that the work on the project gets started at the earliest. The government had also emphasised the need for improving road connectivity to Basohli for promotion of Ranjit Sagar Dam and to develop it as an independent tourist destination. All these promises are yet to be fulfilled by the government. It is also unfortunate to note that the state has so far not been able to tap the huge tourism potential of Ranjit Sagar Dam which is ideally located with Dalhousie in Himachal Pradesh on one side and the great expanse of the lake on the other. Other promises, like good governance, transparency in system and providing a corruption-free government to the people, are also nowhere in sight. The government is also yet to come true to its commitment of taking care of tertiary medicare in Jammu. It remains to be seen as to when it would turn into a reality. As promised, efforts are also not yet made to further upgrade the super speciality hospital in Jammu. As of now, many government departments are still unresponsive to the people's needs. The government is also yet to work on another all-weather link with tunnels from Chenani-Sudh Mahadev-Khelani to connect the Chenab region. Apart from its failure to take up development programmes in Jammu region, the government has also failed to operationalise the new recruitment policy to fill vacancies in the government sector on priority. District health services have also not been upgraded to reduce referrals to tertiary health-care institutions. Let government try to fulfil the promises it has made with the people of Jammu after coming to power.

Of the Beatles, an ashram in Rishikesh and would-be royals

KISHWAR DESAI

Ob la di, Ob la da, life goes on... and here is another reminder of how fast time flies! It is now 50 years since the Beatles came to Rishikesh to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's ashram. Fifty years later, an exhibition of photographs has been put together to recollect those historic moments at the Beatles' Story museum at Liverpool. These were taken by Paul Saltzman, a Canadian who had also come to the ashram after his girlfriend had jilted him. Whilst there he mingled with the Beatles and their entourage which included the four Beatles — Ringo Starr, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and John Lennon — as well as their wives and girlfriends. In fact, Saltzman's photographs will be supported by the memories of the former Mrs George Harrison, Pattie Boyd, who was also there at the time.

Looking at some of the photographs now one realises how much Maharishi Mahesh Yogi had impacted not just the Beatles, but the music of the times — as the biggest and most famous group in the world headed for his ashram and stayed there. This interest in India and the subsequent journey led to the Beatles' interaction with Pandit Ravi Shankar as well. Mahesh Yogi is a forgotten man today — but it was he who first broke into popular culture with the concept of TM, or Transcendental Meditation, which he taught at centres at Los Angeles and London. It is



reported that he charged (in those days) around £2,500 for a five-day course! Of course this would mean that only the elite could afford it — but nonetheless it made TM a worldwide brand, and the Yogi a rich man.

As the exhibition opens in Liverpool in mid-February, one wishes we could work on the ashram in India as well and revive and regenerate it. Undoubtedly, this trip down the memory lane will bring many to Rishikesh, just like one sorrow-laden Canadian came 55 years ago!

Interestingly, it was Pattie Boyd who had introduced the Beatles to the Maharishi. Later, the "Maharishi" who was born Mahesh Prasad Varma also got embroiled in a few controversies as people questioned his claims that he could levitate, and similar queries came up about his credibility as a "guru".

However, let's not forget that he was the first guru to the "superstars" — and excellent music resulted from it. The 1960s are embedded in our minds — linked with the long-haired hippie movement, which also impacted India in a big way. Those were the days, my friends, when Lucy was in the sky with diamonds.

est pronouncement! He does specialise in flummoxing you, doesn't he? After all he was the biggest champion of Brexit and, some would say, that he and his ilk almost wrecked the country and the economy in the pursuit of it. But now when President Emmanuel Macron visits from France, Mr Johnson decides that he would like to see the creation of a 20-mile bridge connecting the UK and France across the channel. Oh well, I suppose he would still like more tangible links to the EU than now seems possible.

Some people have taken Mr Johnson's suggestion seriously — though it was not formally endorsed by either Prime Minister Theresa May or President Macron. Undoubtedly, big infrastructure projects are also one way to generate employment, not just bonhomie.

Talking of bonhomie that Oscar selfie seems to have got everyone looking for an unforgettable and very crowded selfie. Prime Minister Theresa May also was part of a large group selfie, along with President Macron, following a dinner at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Undoubtedly, there were jokes doing the rounds, knowing of Mr Macron's very welcome interest in older women or at least one older woman. But to be honest, where in the present fraught world would we place most leaders? Would President Donald Trump be at one end of the spectrum and Mr Macron at the other? Or are there many about whom we simply don't know enough?

And sometimes it is only when things change, that they remain the same. Honestly, I cannot fathom foreign secretary Boris Johnson and his lat-

Mystic Mantra: Art of conscious birth and death

The enlightened mystics like Buddha, Guru Nanak, Kabir and so many more our world has known are never born and they never die, because their birth and death are conscious happenings. Osho had been meditating deeply in his previous birth that happened 700 years ago in Tibet, as he informed us in one of his discourses on Dimension Beyond the Known, which is included in a book The Great Challenge.

A disciple asked him, "Were you fully conscious of the gap between your last death and this birth?" Osho said: "Yes, I was fully conscious for those 700 years. I was fully conscious, but it was a consciousness of the gap, of the vacuum, of the emptiness, of nothing happening. Nothing can happen. 'Happening' means being embodied. Only if you are in the body can anything happen."

Osho adds: "So if you are conscious between one life and another, you are only conscious of your consciousness. Nothing — no thought, no desire but the last desire — will have any effect on you. And the effect of your last desire is automatic, because to enter a body again was the last suggestion of your mind; nothing has to be done about it. If at the moment of death one dies fully conscious, with no desire, no thought, then rebirth becomes impossible."

Whenever there is an opportunity, a situation in which you can be reborn, you will be reborn. And if you have been conscious in your last life, then you will be conscious in this life also. Your birth will be a conscious birth; you will know what is happening. Then that will be your last life. If this birth has been a conscious birth, then this death will be a conscious death. Then there can be no further birth possible. Once someone is born with full alertness, then that is his last birth. One more death will happen of course, but after that there will be no more births, no more deaths.

January 19, The Osho Mahotsav is the puny-athiti. It is the celebration of this consciousness as a great reminder: What happened to him can happen to everybody on earth.

Osho says: "I celebrate myself, and I hope soon the day will come you will be celebrating yourself. And when thousands and thousands of people around the earth are celebrating, singing, dancing, ecstatic, drunk with the divine, there is no possibility of any global suicide. With such festivity and with such laughter, with such sanity and health, with such naturalness and spontaneity, how can there be a war?"

'Kabhi Gussa, Kabhi Pyar'

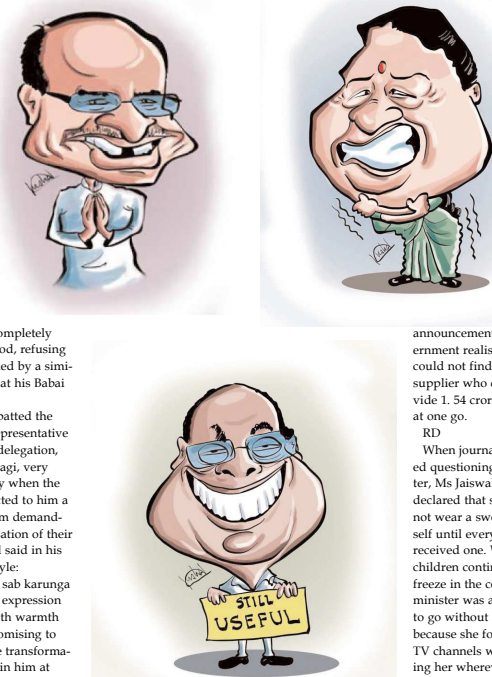
The "mood swing" noticed in Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan in two public functions last week had made headlines. The chief minister had taken everyone by surprise when he received a delegation of agitating ad hoc teachers in his "characteristic style" with respect and affection, while joining the state-sponsored Ekam Yatra kicked off last fortnight to retrace Adi Shankara's journey in Babai, Madhya Pradesh on January 18. For the tight slaps he gave to one of his personal security guards for annoying him at an election rally in Sardar Nagar, Dhar district, barely five days before the Babai incident, were still fresh in public memory.

Mr Chouhan lost his cool and gave two punches in the face to the cop when the latter was found "unwittingly" ramming him repeatedly after himself being pushed by the surging crowd at the rally. The incident caught in a video camera had gone viral later, causing acute embarrassment to him. The chief minister, however, clarified at another public function that he had merely put the cop aside when the latter tried to block people from meeting him at the rally. He was however

found in a completely different mood, refusing to be provoked by a similar situation at his Babai event.

He rather patted the cheek of a representative of teachers' delegation, Jitendra Bairagi, very affectionately when the latter submitted to him a memorandum demanding regularisation of their services, and said in his inimitable style: "Karunga re sab karunga (a colloquial expression peppered with warmth and love, promising to oblige)." The transformation noticed in him at Babai was truly amazing, a member of the delegation observed. He was, of course, referring to the "slapgate" controversy involving Mr Chouhan.

MINISTER GOES HOT AND COLD



Anupama Jaiswal, a first-time minister of state for basic education in Uttar Pradesh, has landed herself in hot soup and that too in this freezing winter. The minister pompously announced that "every child in a government school" would get a sweater this winter. After making the

dren have started getting sweaters and the minister is also wearing hers.

Writing to remain relevant When you are sacked from the council of ministers and do not have much work to do, then write articles for newspapers and stay connected with your followers. Or else you will be a completely forgotten figure. This is what dropped Odisha minister and BJD vice-president Damodar Rout prescribes for leaders who have faced a fate like him. RD

"When you are dropped from the council of ministers and stripped of your party position, people consider you as a useless fellow. But newspaper editors look forward to you very eagerly to know your views on governance and many other issues. If you give your reaction and views to them over the telephone or TV bites, they sometimes mischievously twist it and show edited parts of it that puts you in further embarrassment. I should rather write articles. I wrote an article today stating the conspiracy theory leading to my ouster from ministry, and you people came to me to know more about it. Now I'm once again a useful person for you and my followers, aren't I?" said Dr Rout, with a broad smile of accomplishment.

# Baahubali actor Prabhas to tie the knot this year?

New Delhi: The header shocked you, right? Well same was our reaction! Actor Prabhas who shot to fame with his role in the epic movie Baahubali might be tying the knot this year, as per reports. Prabhas is currently busy shooting for his upcoming film Saaho, which also stars Shraddha Kapoor and Neil Nitin Mukesh.

Prabhas has often been linked to his Baahubali 2 co-star, Anushka Shetty. Time and again, Anushka and Prabhas have denied their link-up rumours. Buzz was strong that the alleged couple might get

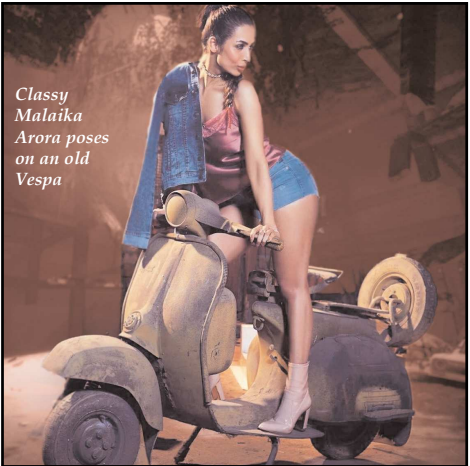


engaged last year in December but that didn't happen. Now, however, Bollywoolife reports that this might be the year that Prabhas ties the knot. With whom? That we don't know yet! The news comes from Prabhas' uncle, Krishnam Raju who is a popular Telugu star, reports Bollywoolife. As per the report, it was

during a media interaction that Krishnam Raju confirmed the news and said that his nephew will get married this year.

Talking about Saaho, this will be Prabhas' first film after SS Rajamouli's two-part Baahubali which released in 2015 and 2017 respectively.

Saaho is one of the most anticipated upcoming films. Directed by Sujeeth Reddy, Saaho, a futuristic action film promises to showcase some death-defying action sequences and jaw-dropping visual effects.



Classy Malaika Arora poses on an old Vespa

# Kriti Sanon's birthday message for rumoured beau Sushant Singh Rajput is too cute to miss



NEW DELHI: After his much talked about breakup with longtime girlfriend Ankita Lokhande, rumour mills were rife that Sushant is dating 'Raabta' co-star Kriti Sanon.

However, the two have always denied any link-up rumour and maintained the 'good friend' stand.

Sushant turned 32 on January 21, 2018 and his 'good friend' Kriti took to Instagram to write a special birthday wish. She posted a photograph of them along with the caption-

"Happyyyyy Birthday @sushantsinghrajput !! Keep that childlike smile always alive!! May you

always stay as curious and excited as ever and may all that you wish for comes true!?"

A post shared by Kriti (@kritisanon) on Jan 20, 2018 at 9:54pm PST

A while ago, the Raabta co-stars were out on a vacation in the Alps with their friends. The duo took to their respective Instagram handles to share pics from the place.

In case you are wondering about what Sushant did on his birthday, DNA reports that the actor was busy shooting in Chambal along with Abhishek Chaubey. The untitled film also stars Bhumi Pednekar. Sushant will also be seen in Kedarnath opposite Sara Ali Khan.

# Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweety release date postponed

NEW DELHI: The Pyaar Ka PUNCHAMA gang will soon be back on-screen, delighting and entertaining us! Titled Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweety, the film is helmed by Luv Ranjan and stars Kartik Aaryan, Nushrat Bharucha, Sunny Singh in lead roles. However, as per the latest update, the film's release date has been postponed and the movie will now release on Feb 23, 2018.

Noted film critic and trade analyst Taran Adarsh took to Twitter and shared the news. He wrote - "#SonuKeTituKiSweety, which was slated for release on 9 Feb 2018, has been shifted to 23 Feb



2018... Stars Kartik Aaryan, Nushrat Bharucha and Sunny Singh... Luv Ranjan directs." Kartik and Nushrat's pairing remains the ultimate jodi for the filmmaker

as they were a part of the series in both the previous films while Sunny was seen playing one of the friends in 'Pyaar Ka PUNCHAMA 2' which hit the screens in 2015. Sada Ho Gaya' and Yo Yo Honey Singh, who was on a sabbatical due to health issues is back with a new song in this film. The song is a rehashed version of Hans Raj Hans' 'Dil Chori Dil Chori' and Yo Yo's vocals have been

# Priyanka Chopra promotes her second Hollywood movie at Sundance Film Festival



NEW DELHI: Priyanka Chopra is a global icon and a role model for many who wish to make a career in Bollywood. From giving superb performances in the Hindi Film Industry to making us all proud when she went abroad, there is something special about our gorgeous Desi Girl! The actress is currently shooting for season 3 of the famous TV series, 'Quantico' in USA.

Priyanka was recently at the Sundance Film Festival, promoting her second Hollywood film A Kid Like Jake. Going by her Instagram posts, the global icon opted for a casual look in the snow-clad Sundance, donning cargo pants, white high-neck sweater and a jacket. She shared a picture with the cast of the film 'A Kid Like Jake' which has been captioned as, "So proud to be a part of

#AKidLikeJake, a story that humanizes the struggle of parents trying to do right by their kid.' This film breaks down the barriers of being socially correct, and encourages you to embrace the qualities that makes each one of us unique. So happy to bring my support to this already stellar cast. See you at the pictures...#SundanceFilm Festival"

The Desi girl also gave glimpses from the event through her social media handle. Here are the pictures:

A Kid Like Jake, directed by Silas Howard and written by Daniel Pearle, is based on his own 2013 play of the same name. The film stars Claire Danes, Jim Parsons, Octavia Spencer, and Priyanka.

# Got a dream debut with Salman Khan, says Zareen Khan



NEW DELHI: Actress Zareen Khan says Veer, featuring superstar Salman Khan, was a dream debut for her.

"Salman is somebody who will always be very dear, special and very close to my heart because if not for him, I had never thought of becoming a part of this industry. I would have never been a part of this industry because this was not my plan and now I am here. The debut I got was a dream debut for me," Zareen told IANS

over phone from Mumbai. The actress, 30, worked with the Dabangg star in Veer too. She remains grateful to him. "I know a lot of people who grow up with a dream of becoming an actor and leave their homes and come to Bombay (Mumbai) with this dream of fulfilling this passion. But unfortunately, this dream of theirs is never fulfilled... Salman is somebody whom I always respect. I am very thankful to him..."

# Ranveer Singh's transformation for Gully Boy will leave you amazed!



Ranveer Singh who recently kickedstart the first schedule of Gully Boy shared a physical transformation picture of himself.

The actor who was beefed up for Alauddin Khilji's character in Padmaavat has now undergone a drastic physical transformation for Excel Entertainment and Zoya Akhtar's Gully Boy.

Ranveer has shed all that weight and muscles that he had gained for Padmaavat and is now in a lean avatar for Gully Boy. Gully Boy is Ranveer's second collaboration with Zoya. The first movie they had worked on together was 'Dil Dhadkne Do'.

The film stars Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt in the lead role. Gully Boy is a story inspired by slum rappers of Dharavi. Ranveer Singh who is paired opposite Alia Bhatt for the first time on the big screen is playing the role of a street rapper.

The film is directed by Zoya Akhtar and is produced by Excel Entertainment.

# Basant Panchami 2018: Sing this Aarti to pay tribute to Goddess Saraswati

NEW DELHI: Basant Panchami, also called as Vasant Panchami is celebrated in various ways depending on the region. On this occasion, the Hindu deity of learning, arts and music, Goddess Saraswati is revered.

On the occasion of Vasant Panchami, pay tribute to Goddess Saraswati and seek blessings from her by singing this beautiful Aarti.

Saraswati Aarti: Om Jai Saraswati Mata. Jai jai Saraswati Mata, Sadgun Vaibhav Shalini, Tribhuvan Vikhyata, Jai Jai Saraswati Mata.

Glory to you, O Mother Saraswati. You are a treasure of good deeds and the ruler of the three spheres.

Chandradavanti padmasini, dyuti mangalakar, Sohe shub harsa savare, atul tej dhari, Jai Saraswati mata...



You are as radiant as the moon and seated on a lotus. Your ride on a swan and your strength is innumerable. Bayen kar mevina, daen kar

mala... Shish mukut mani sohe; Gal motiyani mala, Jai jai Saraswati mata... In the left hand, you hold a 'veena' and in the right the

Mala. Your head is adorned with a crown made of gems, and the neck with a pearl necklace. Devi sharan jo ae, unka

uddhar kija, Paithi Manthra dasi, Ravan sarhar kija, Jai jai Saraswati mata... Whosoever sings the Aarti for Mother Saraswati, becomes a recipient of knowledge and devotion.

of birth and death. You destroyed demon king Ravana by distorting the mind of Kaikeyi's maid- Manthara.

Vidhya gyan praadayini, gyan prakash bhara, Moh aur agyan tinir ka jay se-nash karo, Jai Jai Saraswati mata

You provide knowledge, bless us with wisdom. Remove ignorance from the world.

Dhup dip phal meva, man sveekar karo, Gyanchakshu de mata, jag nistar karo, Jai Jai Saraswati mata...

O Mother, please accept the incense, lamp and the sweets. Bless us with the eyes of knowledge and help us transcend.

Maa Saraswati ki arti jo koi jargave, Hitar sukharan, gyan bhakti pave, Jai jai Saraswati mata...

Whosoever sings the Aarti for Mother Saraswati, becomes a recipient of knowledge and devotion.

# Gardening may improve health of cancer survivors, enhance their self-worth

New Delhi: While gardening has been considered an effective way to alleviate stress and boost mental wellbeing, a study has given the practice new perspective by showing how it can improve cancer survivors' health.

According to researchers, three seasons of home vegetable gardening may increase physical activity, fruits and vegetables in the diet and also enhance feelings of self-worth.

Possibly as a result of these healthy behaviours, gardeners in the small study also tended to gain less weight around their waists compared to their counterparts on a waiting list for the gardening intervention, the study team reports.

It's estimated there are more than 15 million cancer

survivors in the US, over two thirds of whom are over age 60, they note in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*.

"For cancer survivors, especially those who are older, we look for lifestyle changes that can help them get healthier but are also holistic and have meaning," said lead author Wendy Demark-Wahnefried, chair of nutrition sciences at the University of Alabama at Birmingham's Comprehensive Cancer Center.

"We can send people to the gym, but that isn't meaningful, and we can counsel them to eat better, but we want it to be more rewarding, and we want it to be long-term," Demark-Wahnefried told Reuters Health in a telephone inter-

view. "With gardening, we've hit the ball out of the ballpark."

Demark-Wahnefried and her colleagues did a pilot study with 42 cancer survivors, randomly assigning half to participate in a year-long gardening program with cooperative extension master gardeners and the other half to be put on a waiting list for the gardening program. All the participants were age 60 or older, lived in Alabama and had been diagnosed with early and mid-stage cancers that have high survival rates - such as localized bladder, breast, prostate or thyroid cancers.

For the participants in the gardening group, the master gardeners brought raised growing beds as well as plants, seeds and other gardening supplies to



each person's home and helped them establish three seasonal vegetable gardens over the course of the experiment.

Before and after the year-long study period, researchers assessed the participants' diets, performed strength and balance tests, as well as blood tests for markers of stress and overall health. They also administered a series of questions to gauge stress levels, quality of life and mental state.

At the end of the experiment, researchers found that the gardeners were eating, on average, one more fruit or vegetable serving per day than the waitlist participants. Gardeners had also gained, on average, just 2.3 centimeters (0.91 inch) around their waists, versus nearly 8 cm (3.15 inches) in the waitlist group. Blood results showed some lower markers of stress in the gardening group, and while gardeners reported an

increased feeling of "worth," the waitlist participants had a decline in this category.

"Among participants in the gardening group, 91 percent stuck with the program through the one-year follow-up, 70 percent said their experience was "excellent" and 85 percent said they "would do it again."

"With more people with cancer surviving and living longer, we need these programs," Demark-Wahnefried said. "In this and previous studies, we've seen people are not only getting their physical functioning back, but it has an impact on quality of life."

One limitation of the study is the small size. Physical activity improvements, for example, can be

difficult to measure in small numbers, especially with an activity such as gardening that has different intensities, said Miriam Mory of Duke University School of Medicine in Durham, North Carolina, who wasn't involved in the study.

"Some people may spend all day in the garden, but how intense is it? How much exercise is it?" Mory said by phone. "That's one area where tracking and new technology will enable us to do a better job with research."

Other programs exploring the benefits of gardening for cancer survivors include the Garden of Hope, a three-acre farm hosted by The Ohio State University College of Medicine for cancer survivors and caregivers to

harvest vegetables grown seasonally by staff and student interns. Last year, 400 cancer survivors visited the farm, which is on the university's Columbus campus, and participated in studies.

"Nutrition interns walk around with them in the field, and agriculture folks show them how to harvest and keep plants thriving," said Colleen Spees, who leads the Garden of Hope program but wasn't involved in the current study.

"In the chaos of cancer, people often feel like they control nothing," Spees told Reuters Health by phone. "When you give them a new skill set, it gives them control over their destiny and a place and space to help them on this journey."

## Don't fret over conceiving with irregular periods

NEW DELHI: If your irregular menstrual cycle is worrying you about conceiving conveniently, focus on eating a balanced diet and exercising daily, experts suggest.

Lavanya Kiran, Gynaecologist at Narayana Group of Hospitals and Anil Prakash, Consultant at MMG District Hospital, Ghaziabad, list down a few things you could do to get pregnant faster with irregular periods:

- \* **Balanced diet:** A lot of hormonal and fertility issues can be tackled with the right mix of nutrition and multivitamin supplements. Always stick to a balanced diet and choose healthy options. Vitamins and folic acid are wonder foods for boosting fertility and helping you get preg-



nant faster. Include vegetables, cabbage, banana, soybean, tomatoes and dry fruits in your diet.

- \* **Physical activities:** Regular exercise is good for your health, but even better when you are trying to conceive. Moderate physical activities like a

brisk walk, yoga, and cycling help in reducing the hormonal imbalance which is the primary cause of irregular cycles. For those who are troubled by overweight problems, losing only 5 per cent of body weight can improve your chances of getting preg-

nant.

- \* **Track your fertile days:** You can get pregnant only during a few days every cycle. In order to be able to conceive, you need to be aware of these fertile days of your cycle. However, with irregular cycles, it is quite challenging to figure

out the exact date of ovulation, as it doesn't really happen at the same time each month. Fertility monitors can track your fertile days at home by detecting both estrogen and luteinizing hormone in urine.

Fertility monitors can suggest up to six fertile days every cycle specific to your body taking into account your cycle irregularities.

- \* **Lead a stress-free life:** Stress and sleep deprivation can mess with your cycle, making you more prone to infertility. There's a strong link between your emotions and your cycle. Therefore, relaxation techniques like meditation and yoga go a long way in calming your nerves. A slight alteration in work hours and a few lifestyle

changes can also do wonders for regularising your cycle and optimising fertility.

- \* **Frequent sex:** While many people suggest having ample sex is the key to getting pregnant faster, having too much of it is also not ideal. Having sex every alternate day during your five-six fertile days is perfect even when you have irregular periods.
- \* **Consult a doctor:** If you have been trying for over nine months and still unable to conceive, consult a gynecologist to evaluate the cause of your irregular cycles. Along with that, the doctor will also check for other abnormalities in ovulation or hormonal imbalance. It is always best to consult a doctor for the right treatment.

## New blood test may help early detection of 8 cancers

SYDNEY: A new blood test that can help in the early diagnoses of eight common cancers before they spread and risk patients' chances of survival has been developed by Australian researchers.

The new test would help early detection of cancers affecting the ovary, liver, stomach, pancreas, oesophagus, bowel, lung and breast, Xinhua quotes a statement from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research in Australia.

The test "has the potential to be a one-stop, safe screening test for multiple tumour types that should have high community acceptance," Jeanne Tie, Associate Professor at the institute was quoted as saying.

"For the first time, we have the promise of a screening test that will lead to earlier diagnosis and improved survival outcomes for many tumor types that are major contributors to cancer deaths in our community," Tie added.


Cancer survival rates are directly linked to how advanced the disease is in a patient during diagnosis, which means that blood tests that can accurately detect the illness well before the symptoms are present is urgently needed. There are still no effective screening tests for many major tumor types and available tests can each only screen for one cancer at a time, the report said.

The new blood test, reported in the journal *Science*, screens for key proteins and gene mutations that indicate the presence of the cancers.



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## Will Modi govt announce health insurance of upto Rs 5 lakh for all in Union Budget 2018?



**NEW DELHI:** The Narendra Modi government may offer health insurance coverage of upto Rs 5 lakh to every citizen in the upcoming Budget, as per a hindi daily.

A report in the Prabhat Khabar said that Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, who is set to present the Union Budget 2018 on February 1, may allocate Rs 5,000 crore under Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for the health insurance sector.

CSS are schemes that are largely funded by the central government with a defined state government share.

The paper quoting sources said that the central government will bear 60 percent of the expenses while the state government will contribute the remaining 40 percent for the health insurance scheme.

Government may also consider setting up of a

trust to roll out the scheme, under which everyone will be provided health insurance benefit between Rs 3 and 5 lakh, it said.

The health insurance scheme will be divided into three types - Kalyan Scheme, under which people living below poverty line will be covered; Saubhagya Scheme, under which people with Rs 2 lakh of annual income will be covered and Sarvodaya scheme under which people above Rs 2 lakh of annual income will be covered.

Government will pay the insurance premium for the BPL category and those with less than Rs 2 lakh of annual income. However, people earning above Rs 2 lakh will have to pay a very minimal premium.

Currently, only around 4 percent of the population in the country has health insurance coverage. Out of pocket

healthcare spending constitutes 86 percent of total healthcare spend in India, the Healthcare Federation of India NATHEALTH report said.

The major reason for the low penetration of health insurance is that it is currently optional.

Experts believe that investing in building and maintaining public health infrastructure should be given priority in the Budget as these facilities are lagging and vast majority of the population has to bear their own healthcare costs due to low penetration of health insurance.

As per WHO reports, Public sector accounts for only 30 percent of the total healthcare expenditure in the country, as compared to 58.58 percent in Brazil, 52 percent in China, 52 percent in Russia, 50 percent in South Africa, 48 percent in USA and 83 percent in UK.

## NPS subscribers can now partially withdraw contribution: Here are the conditions

**NEW DELHI:** Relaxing norms, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has permitted partial withdrawal under the National Pension System (NPS) for purchase.

NPS is government's flagship social security programme. Any Indian citizen, resident or non-resident, between the age of 60-65 years, can join NPS and continue up to the age of 70 years in NPS.

"A subscriber on the date of submission of the withdrawal form, shall be permitted to withdraw not exceeding 25 percent of the contributions made by such subscriber to his



individual pension account" for specified purposes, a PFRDA circular said.

Here are the conditions under which NPS subscribers can partially

withdraw their contribution. NPS subscribers who have contributed for three years can now

withdraw up to 25 percent of the corpus for meeting specified expenses. The withdrawal will be permitted only three

times during the tenure of the subscription.

The specified purposes for which funds could be withdrawn from the NPS account, include higher education of children or their marriage.

The withdrawal will be also permitted for purchase/ construction of residential house or flat.

In case the subscriber already owns either individually or in the joint name a residential house or a flat, other than ancestral property, no withdrawal will be permitted. Funds can also be withdrawn for treatment of illnesses like cancer, kidney failure, coronary artery bypass graft, heart valve surgery and paralysis.

## India Ratings projects economic growth at 7.1% next fiscal

**NEW DELHI:** India Ratings and Research on Thursday projected the country's economic growth to improve to 7.1 percent next fiscal from 6.5 percent this year, buoyed by robust consumption demand and low commodity prices.

In its outlook for 2018-19, the agency said there will be a gradual pick up in growth momentum owing to structural reforms like GST and Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) in place.

"While the implementation of GST is likely to benefit the economy over the medium to long term, the same cannot be said about the impact of demonetisation," India Ratings & Research (Ind-Ra), a subsidiary of Fitch Ratings, said.



Ind-Ra expects gross domestic product (GDP) to grow 7.1 percent year-on-year in 2018-19, it said.

The projection is a tad lower than 7.4 percent growth estimated by Asian Development Bank (ADB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) for next fiscal.

Ind-Ra said but for demonetisation and Goods and Services Tax (GST) implementation, growth would not have decelerated to 7.1 percent in 2016-17 and 6.5 percent in 2017-18.

With the global crude prices firming up, Ind-Ra expects retail and wholesale inflation to come in at

4.6 percent and 4.4 percent, respectively in 2018-19, indicating an end to the current rate cut cycle.

There is still some fuzziness with respect to the intensity and the level of its future trajectory, it said, adding that the RBI "will remain in a pause mode for an extended period of

time".

The agency said it expects fiscal deficit in 2017-18 to come in at 3.5 percent, overshooting the budgeted estimate of 3.2 percent.

"Despite 2018-19 being a pre-election year, Ind-Ra does not expect the Union Budget to be a populist budget. However, it expects some expenditure reallocation with an increased focus on the rural and agriculture sectors," it said. The agency expects fiscal deficit in 2018-19 to be at 3.2 percent, higher than 3 percent stated in the medium-term fiscal policy statement.

A mix of global and domestic factors will keep the Indian rupee range bound at average Rs 66.06/USD in 2018-19, it said.

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# Turkish troops enter Syria in operation against Kurdish militia

**HASSA:** Turkish ground troops entered Syria on Sunday to push an offensive against Kurdish militia as rocket fire hit a border town in apparent retaliation.

Turkey on Saturday launched operation 'Olive Branch' seeking to oust from the Afrin region of northern Syria the Peoples Protection Units (YPG) which Ankara considers a terror group. But the campaign risks further increasing tensions with Turkey's NATO ally the United States - which has supported the YPG in the fight against Islamic State jihadists - and also supports at least the tacit support of Russia to succeed.

Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said troops crossed into the YPG-controlled region in Syria at 0805 GMT, the Dogan news

agency reported. Turkish artillery and warplanes pounded YPG sites around Afrin and total of 153 targets, including YPG fugues and weapons stores have now been hit, according to the army.

The state-run Anadolu news agency said the Turkish troops, whose number was not specified, were advancing alongside forces from the pro-Ankara rebel Free Syrian Army (FSA) and were already five kilometres (three miles) inside Syria.

An AFP correspondent on the southwestern edge of the Afrin region saw a warplane bombing the western outskirts of the area early on Sunday.

A small unit from a Turkish-backed rebel group was manning a monitoring point on a hilltop overlooking several



Kurdish-controlled villages below. The operation is Turkey's second major incursion into Syria during the seven-year civil war after the Euphrates Shield campaign in an area to the east of Afrin against both the YPG and IS.

The army said IS was also being targeted in this operation although it no longer has any major presence in the Afrin area.

Afrin is an enclave of

YPG control, cut off from the longer strip of northern Syria that the group controls to the east extending to the Iraq border. Turkey wants the YPG to retreat east of the Euphrates River.

Yildirim was quoted as saying that the Turkish forces aimed to create a security zone some 30 kilometres (18 miles) deep inside Syria.

The YPG said that after the first strikes on Saturday 10 people were killed, including seven civilians. The Turkish army said there were casualties but insisted they were all members either of the YPG or the PKK.

A YPG spokesman claimed that the Turkish forces had sought to enter Afrin "but we blocked the attack".

In a sign of the risks to Turkey, four rockets fired

by the YPG hit the border town of Kilis early Sunday, damaging one building and lightly wounding a woman.

"No one lost their life," Kilis governor Mehmet Tekinarslan said, quoted by Dogan. "They can fire one rocket at us and we will fire 100 back. There is no need to worry." Turkey risks entering a diplomatic minefield with its action in Syria and the foreign ministry lost no time in inviting the ambassadors of all major powers to be briefed on the offensive.

The ministry said it had even informed Damascus through its Istanbul consulate. But the Syrian regime, which is at odds with Turkey, strongly denied the operation as a "brutal Turkish aggression".

# Merkel, Macron to deepen Franco-German cooperation, strengthen EU

**BERLIN:** Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Emmanuel Macron said on Sunday they wanted to deepen Franco-German cooperation and give the European Union a fresh push towards closer integration. "We are doing that in order to bring the people in our countries even closer together and we do it to give the whole of Europe a new boost, to make it even stronger," Merkel said in a joint video podcast as the countries prepare to seal a new bilateral compact.

After meeting in Paris on Friday, Merkel and Macron talked up the prospect of agreeing on reforms to the eurozone, saying they were committed to strengthening the bloc.

# Bangladesh says start of Rohingya return to Myanmar delayed

**PALONGKHALI:** Bangladesh has delayed the repatriation of Rohingya Muslim refugees to Myanmar, set to start on Tuesday, because of the process of compiling and verifying the list of people to be sent back is incomplete, a senior Bangladesh official said.

The decision comes as tensions have risen in camps holding hundreds of thousands of refugees, some of whom are opposing their transfer back to Myanmar because of lack of security guarantees.

Myanmar agreed earlier this month to receive the Rohingya refugees at two reception centres and a temporary camp near its border with Bangladesh over a two-year period starting Tuesday. The authorities have said repatriations would be voluntary.

But Abul Kalam, Bangladesh's refugee relief and rehabilitation commissioner, said on Monday the return would have to be delayed. He did not immediately give a new date for the repatriations to begin.

"There are many things remaining," he told Reuters by phone. "The list of people to be sent back is yet to be prepared, their verification and setting up of transit camps is remaining."

More than 655,500 Muslim Rohingya fled to Bangladesh after a crackdown by the Myanmar military in the northern part of Rakhine state in response to militant attacks on security forces on Aug. 25. The United Nations described the military operation as ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya, which Myanmar denies.

Myanmar said it was ready to take back the returning Rohingya. "We are ready to accept them once they come back. On our part, the preparation is ready," Ko Ko Naing, director general of Myanmar's Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, told Reuters by phone.

He declined to comment on whether Bangladesh had informed Myanmar about the delay. At the Palongkhali refugee camp, near the Naivir that marks the border between the two countries, a group of Rohingya leaders gathered early on Monday morning with a loudspeaker and a banner listing a set of demands for their return to Myanmar. These include security guarantees, the granting of citizenship and the granting of Myanmar citizenship to Myanmar's list of ethnic minorities. The Rohingya are also asking that homes, mosques and schools that were burned down or damaged in the military operation be rebuilt. Bangladesh army officials arrived at the protest and dispersed the crowd of 300. Witnesses said they saw the army take away one of the Rohingya leaders who was holding a banner. Bangladesh army spokesman Rashedul Hasan said he had not received any information on a protest from the refugee camps this morning, but said he was trying to find out more.

# Tokyo simulates first military attack since WWII amid North Korea threat

**TOKYO:** Hundreds of Tokyo residents scrambled for cover today in the Japanese capital's first evacuation drill for a military attack since World War II, amid ongoing tensions over North Korea's nuclear programme.

A loudspeaker blared out a terrifying warning at the drill, held in a Tokyo amusement park. "We have information that a missile launch has occurred. Please evacuate calmly inside a building or underground."

A park employee ran around, shouting, "a missile was launched, a missile was launched" as some 250 local residents and office workers duly evacuated to reinforced concrete buildings and a nearby subway station.

A few minutes later, a second message was announced via loudspeaker: "The missile passed. The missile likely flew over the Kanto (greater Tokyo) region towards the Pacific Ocean."

People in earthquake-prone Japan are familiar with evacuation drills simulating natural disasters and fires and annual drills are seasonal rituals seen almost everywhere in the country - from schools and workplaces to care homes.

But a drill simulating a North Korean missile attack on Tokyo is still a novel idea, although similar drills were held in other parts of Japan last year.

"I think it's better than nothing to have such a drill, but I am praying there is no missile attack from the North," Shota Matsushima, 20, a university student who was in a train station near the drill site, told AFP.

# Iraqi court sentences to death German woman who joined Islamic State

**BAGHDAD:** An Iraqi court on Sunday sentenced to death a German woman of Moroccan origin for membership of Islamic State, a spokesman said.

The German national was captured by Iraqi forces during the battle for Mosul last year, the spokesman said, declining to identify her. She is the first foreign woman to be sentenced to death in Iraq for joining the militant group. She can appeal the sentence, said Abdul-Sattar al-Biqdar, spokesman for Iraq's Supreme Judicial Council in Baghdad.

"She confessed that she traveled with her two daughters from Germany to Syria and then joined Daesh in Iraq," Biqdar said, referring to Islamic State by an Arabic acronym. The woman was convicted of participating in attacks on Iraqi security forces and offering the militant group logistical support, said Biqdar.

A German foreign ministry spokeswoman declined to comment.

Thousands of foreigners have been fighting for Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

A Russian Islamic State fighter was sentenced to death in Iraq last year for joining the hardline group.

Iraq declared victory last month over Islamic State, which had seized control of nearly a third of the country in 2014. However, IS continues to carry out bombings and other attacks in the country.



Iraq declared victory last month over Islamic State, which had seized control of nearly a third of the country in 2014. However, IS continues to carry out bombings and other attacks in the country.

# Philippines says it won't be embroiled in US-China sea spat

**Manila:** The Philippines said on Sunday that it won't get embroiled in a fresh spat between the US and China involving Beijing's protest of an American warship passing near a Chinese-controlled shoal also claimed by the Philippines.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr said that "the United States can take care of its own interests" and added "we do not wish to be part of a US-China intramural" in the disputed South China Sea.

The Chinese government had yesterday accused the US of trespassing in its territorial waters when a US guided missile destroyer sailed near Scarborough Shoal to promote freedom of navigation in the disputed waters.

The Philippines also



claims the shoal, which is a tiny, uninhabited reef that China seized from the Philippines in 2012 after a tense maritime standoff.

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has revived once frosty relations with China since taking power in 2016 and often criticises US security policies.

He has rejected planned joint patrols by the US and Philippine navies in disputed South China Sea waters along with joint combat exercises that could offend China.

His predecessor, Benigno Aquino III, backed a continued US presence in the region to serve as a counterweight to China. Under Aquino, the Philippines brought its disputes with China in the South China Sea to international arbitration in 2013 and overwhelmingly won the case three years later. China refused to participate and ignored the decision.

Duterte has refused to demand immediate Chinese compliance with the 2016 arbitration ruling, which invalidated China's vast territorial claims to the South China Sea on historical grounds.

He has promised, however, to take up the arbitration ruling with China at a still-unspecified time during his

six-year presidency. China claims virtually the entire South China Sea and has carried out extensive land reclamation work on many of the islands and reefs it claims, equipping some with air strips and military installations that have alarmed rival claimant countries and Western governments led by the United States.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said yesterday that China would take "necessary measures" to protect its sovereignty after the USS Hopper sailed within 12 nautical miles of Scarborough Shoal on Wednesday evening without China's permission.

Philippine Defence Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the US, Manila's treaty ally, did not notify the Philippines of its naval operation near Scarborough. "We have no say over whatever the Americans do in the South China Sea. They do not inform us beforehand of their activities there," Lorenzana said. Asked if the passage of the US warship in Philippine-claimed waters was a concern, Lorenzana said: "No, for as long as they are on innocent passage. International law allows innocent passage even in territorial waters."

The United States does not claim territory in the South China Sea but has declared it has a national interest in ensuring that the territorial disputes there are resolved peacefully in accordance with international law.

The US Navy regularly sails through the area to assert freedom of navigation. Lt Cmdr Nicole Schwegman, a spokeswoman for the US Navy's Pacific Fleet, said yesterday that such operations are "not about any one country, nor are they about making political statements."

Instead they aim to "demonstrate our commitment to uphold the rights, freedoms and lawful uses of the sea and airspace guaranteed to all nations under international law."

# US gov shutdown extended as lawmakers fail to reach an agreement

**WASHINGTON:** The US government shutdown has been extended as the lawmakers failed to reach an agreement to end it before the beginning of the working week.

The lawmakers postponed a crunch vote in the Senate despite marathon negotiations.

Waving to use state funds to keep the landmark monument in operation, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo had on Sunday said that the Statue of Liberty would reopen even if the US government shutdown extends into the work week.

However, dozens of other national parks and monuments were expected to remain partially or entirely closed after Congress failed to agree on a spending plan to keep the government running past a Friday midnight deadline.

Although leaders of President Donald Trump's Republican party and the opposition Democrats said progress had been made in a weekend of talks, they pushed back a vote scheduled for 1:00 am (11:30 IST) Monday for another 11 hours.

The delay means the shutdown - which cast a huge shadow over the first anniversary of Trump's inauguration as president on Saturday - will force hundreds of thousands of federal government workers to stay at home without pay when they would normally report for duty on Monday morning.

# 30 dead, several wounded in Kabul hotel attack, casualty likely to rise

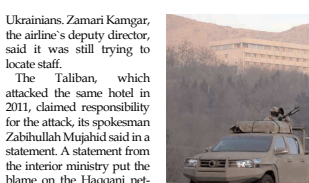
**KABUL:** Gunmen in army uniforms who stormed Kabul's Intercontinental Hotel late on Saturday and battled Afghan Special Forces through the night killed more than 30 people and wounded many more, although the final toll of dead and wounded may still be higher.

Walid Majroh, a spokesman for the ministry of public health, said that 19 bodies had been brought into city hospitals, with six identified as foreigners. However a senior Afghan security official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media, said the death toll was over 30 and might climb higher. The dead included hotel staff and guests as well as members of the security forces who fought the attackers.

All five attackers were also killed, interior ministry spokesman Najib Danesh said. The raid was the latest in a series of attacks that have underlined the city's vulnerability and the ability of militants to mount high-profile operations aimed at undermining confidence in the Western-backed government.

More than 150 guests were able to flee as parts of the building caught fire, with some shimmying down sheets tied together and dropped from upper-floor windows and others rescued by Afghan forces.

Local airline Kam Air said around 40 of its pilots and air crew, many of whom are foreigners, were staying in the hotel and as many as 10 had been killed. Local media reports said the dead included Venezuelans and



Ukrainians. Zamari Kamgar, the airline's deputy director, said it was still trying to locate staff.

The Taliban, which attacked the same hotel in 2011, claimed responsibility for the attack, its spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement. A statement from the interior ministry put the blame on the Haqqani network, a group affiliated with the Taliban that is notorious for its attacks on urban targets.

Abdul Rahman Naseri, a guest who was at the hotel for a conference, was in the hall of the hotel when he saw four gunmen dressed in army uniforms. "They were shouting in Pashto (language). Don't leave any of them alive, good or bad." "Shoot and kill them all," one of them shouted," Naseri said.

"I ran to my room on the second floor. I opened the window and tried to get out using a tree but the branch broke and I fell to the ground. I hurt my back and broke a leg." Even after officials said the attack was over, sporadic gunshots and explosions could be heard from the site.

As day broke on Sunday, thick clouds of black smoke poured from the building, an imposing 1960s structure set on a hilltop and heavily pro-

tection like most public buildings in Kabul. The Intercontinental is one of two main luxury hotels in the city and had been due to host an information technology conference on Sunday.

More than 100 IT managers and engineers were on site when the attack took place, said Ahmad Wahedi, an official at the telecommunications ministry.

Danesh said a private company had taken over responsibility for security at the hotel three weeks ago and there would be an investigation into possible failings, just days after a US embassy warning of possible attacks on hotels in Kabul. Several armoured US military vehicles with heavy machine guns could be seen close to the hotel along with Afghan police units as Special Forces manoeuvred around the site.

Hotel manager Ahmad Haris Nayab, who escaped unhurt, said the attackers had got into the main part of the hotel through a kitchen before going through the hotel, with many guests trapped in their rooms. The senior security official said that the attackers had moved directly from the first floor to the fourth and fifth floors, suggesting the attack had been carefully prepared, possibly with inside help.

"When the sixth floor caught fire this morning, my roommate told me, either burn or escape," said Mohammad Musa, who was hiding in his room on the top floor. "I got a bed sheet and tied it to the balcony. I tried to come down but I was heavy and my arms were not strong enough. I fell down and injured my shoulder and leg."

Although US and Afghan officials say the Taliban has been forced onto the back foot after the United States increased its help to Afghan security forces and stepped up air strikes last year, security remains precarious across the country.

In separate incidents on Sunday, eight people were killed by a roadside bomb in the western province of Herat and 18 members of local militia forces were killed at a checkpoint in the northern province of Balkh. As pressure on the battlefield has increased, officials have warned that the danger of attacks on high-profile targets in Kabul and other cities would increase. The insurgents have carried out dozens of such attacks over recent years.

After repeated strikes on Kabul, notably last May when a truck bomber killed at least 150 people outside the German embassy, security has been further tightened. Large areas of central Kabul are already closed off behind high concrete blast walls and police checkpoints but the ability of the assaults to get into a well-protected but frequented area by both government officials and foreigners demonstrated how difficult it remains to stop them.

## Not going to call Kohli great till he succeeds in England: Michael Holding

Kohli played five Tests in England in 2014 but failed to negotiate with the swinging conditions there. His scores of 20, 6, 7, 0, 28, 39, 0, 25, 8 and 1 on that tour reveal the magnitude of his failure. James Anderson, in particular, had his number.

Kohli has come a long way since and is considered one of the greatest batsmen the world has ever seen but Holding is not jumping the gun.

"Virat Kohli is a fantastic batsman. I was asked to name three top cricketers and I included Kohli in that list [Joe Root and Steve Smith being the other two]. He is a very good player."

"When I see him score



runs in England, I would call him a great player. I like people who score runs everywhere. He is an extremely good player," Holding told Mumbai Mirror. Holding, who sent chills down batsmen's spine with tearaway deliveries in his cricketing days, also didn't seem too impressed with Kohli's captaincy. "As a captain, he has some work to do. I don't want to condemn him too much because I like to have my own way as captain. I like to be given the team I want all the time. But it is still not the right way to go. You have to have discussions with the wiser heads from time to time, come to conclusions

and flesh out different arguments. I get an impression that he is getting what he wants.

"He is very emotional about his cricket. He means everything he wants to do. In time he will learn. Because he has been so successful since he took over, it is hard for him to change. He has to see other viewpoints and arrive at consensus," Holding added.

Kohli and his men are currently under fire following losing back-to-back Tests in South Africa. The Indian captain has also drawn the wrath of many for chopping and changing too much ahead of important matches.

## Wounded India gets back to training for third Test

**JOHANNESBURG:** Looking to salvage pride in the third Test beginning on Wednesday, team India got down to business at the Wanderers on Sunday with a practice session that lasted just under four hours.

India had lost the first Test in Cape Town by 72 runs and then were beaten in the second match at Centurion by 135 runs to surrender an unassailable lead.

The players enjoyed three days off after that hurtful loss, taking time to visit various safari and theme parks in and around Johannesburg.

On Sunday, they were back sweating in the nets, in a bid to end this series with their heads held high as the world's No.1 Test side.

Notably, skipper Virat Kohli, who had a fiery press conference in aftermath of the Centurion loss, was in a jovial mood and he chatted around with his teammates and local net bowlers during practice. After a customary warm-up game of football, the players got down to working on their skill sets. Fielding coach R Sridhar was the first to put in a serious shift, with Parthiv Patel, KL Rahul and Ajinkya Rahane working together as the slip cordon. Later, Rohit Sharma and Dinesh Karthik joined in as the trio moved to batting nets. On practice wickets, Rahul, Murali Vijay and Cheteshwar Pujara took first strike against the net-bowling duo of Shardul Thakur and Navdeep Saini, who were confirmed arrived at the team hotel late on Saturday evening.

## Andre Nel reveals he wanted to hurt S Sreesanth real bad

Former South African fast bowler Andre Nel has shed light on his much-talked-about rivalry with India's Shahabkumar Sreesanth back in 2006 during the Johannesburg Test.

India won that Test by 123 runs against all odds with Sreesanth doing wonders with the ball. However, the moment that actually hogged the limelight came when he walked into bat with Nel ready to fire on all cylinders.

In what was a low-scoring contest, the Indians, in their second innings, were trying to get whatever runs they could to put the hosts under pressure when they came out to begin their chase.

Sreesanth joined fellow fast bowler Zaheer Khan as No.10 batsman, and Nel



without taking much time started a barrage of insults towards the Indian to rattle him. Not just that, he bowled quite aggressively at him thereafter.

Sreesanth, with no real batting credentials to speak of, looked in deep trouble. However, he took Nel and fans around the world back as he hit him straight back for a six, following it up with wild celebrations as he frantically swung the bat

around his head.

"That was it though, as the visitors were soon bowled out with Sreesanth remaining unbeaten. Nel, in a recent interview to Cricbuzz, recollected the incident in its entirety. "When I saw him walk out, the first thing I thought was 'hit him on the head'."

"To be fair, that was generally my thought no matter who was batting." "To be honest, I can't remember

what I said.

"It was a heat of the moment thing and probably something along the lines of 'I've got more heart than you', I honestly couldn't say for sure."

"I never saw him celebrate," Nel continues. "When you've been hit for six after giving a guy a lot of lip you have no choice but to put your tail between your legs and turn around. But it was great fun. I always looked for a fight on the field and loved it when someone would come back at me."

Johannesburg is again likely to see some high-octane action as India and South Africa play the third and last Test starting at the New Wanderers Stadium from Wednesday.

## Viswanathan Anand suffers shock defeat against Vladimir Kramnik at Tata Masters Chess

**Wijk Aan Zee, Netherlands:** Indian grandmaster Viswanathan Anand's quest for a record sixth title suffered a setback as he slumped to a shock defeat against Vladimir Kramnik of Russia in the seventh round of the Tata Steel Masters chess tournament, here.

Having done quite well so far, Anand went for unwarranted complications against Kramnik who was at his best to match his opponent.

The Italian opening by the Indian became very complicated when Anand decided to keep his king in the middle of the board and Kramnik showed deep understanding in finding the right manoeuvres.

As it happened in the game, Anand's king proved to be under more danger



than the counterpart and Kramnik skillfully deployed his forces to carve out a fine victory in 36 moves.

The loss proved costly as Anand slipped to joint sixth spot from his overnight joint second position.

Shakhriyar Mamedyarov of Azerbaijan stretched his lead to a full point after his third straight victory in the tournament.

On the receiving end was Wei Yi of China who was outdone from a Catalan

points each.

Anand, on four, shares the sixth position along with Sergey Karjakin of Russia.

The other Indian in the masters B Adhiban played out a draw with Maxim Matlakov of Russia to inch his tally up to 1.5 points.

Adhiban has suffered four losses and drew the remaining three games thus far.

In the challenges section, grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi was again held to a draw by Lucas Van Foreest of Holland.

The Indian took his tally to five points in all and remained a full point behind tournament leader Anton Korobov of Ukraine who also split the point in his seventh round game.

D Harika was close to equalising but went down fighting against Germany's Matthias Bluebaum.

## Roger Federer eases past Marton Fucsovics into Australian Open quarter-finals



Roger Federer reached the Australian Open quarter-finals for the 14th time on Monday but the defending champion did not have everything his own way against 80th-ranked Hungarian Marton Fucsovics.

The 36-year-old Swiss was not at his dazzling best on a sun-bathed Rod

Laver Arena but claimed a 6-4 7-6(3) 6-2 to set up a quarter-final against Czech Tomas Berdych.

Fucsovics had never won a main draw grand slam match before arriving in Melbourne but after winning three rounds the 25-year-old produced a skillful and confident performance to

keep second seed Federer on his toes for two sets.

There were no real alarms for the Swiss though and he raced away to victory in the third set.

"I thought he played very well, it's fast conditions so you have to have quick ideas and execute well and he did that very well," Federer said on court after his first day match of the tournament so far.

"It was only when I had two sets and a break I felt like I had the wind behind my back."

Federer is the oldest man to reach the quarter-finals of the Australian Open since Ken Rosewall in 1977.

## Elite women runners slam Mumbai Marathon organisers

**MUMBAI:** The elite women runners of the Mumbai Marathon on Sunday slammed the event organisers, saying there were too many casual runners on the course and that the Metro construction work was also a hindrance.

"It was quite a difficult race as there were a lot of people (casual participants in other non-competitive events) on the road. It was difficult to concentrate," said women's race winner Amane Gobena of Ethiopia at the post-event media conference.

Gobena finished first in 2:25:49 and was well ahead of defending champion Borneo Kituru of Kenya who clocked

2:28:48 to finish second. She said she missed receiving water thrice at the 5, 15 and 30-km marks.

"It was difficult to get water also and there were too many corners (due to construction work for Mumbai Metro-3 line)," she said, about the chaotic manner in which the race was held.

Gobena said she knew that despite the hazards, she will win the race just after taking a clear lead.

"I had prepared very well for the race. We (She and Kituru) were together for the first 25 km, and after 25 km I knew I was going to win," she said.

"At one point I thought I will break the course record, but as I said there

were a lot of people (on the road) and temperatures were also rising, so I had to slow down," she further said.

"(Metro) construction work was a problem. The last kilometre was difficult as there were a lot of corners," said the Kenyan runner.

Joshua Kipkorir of Kenya, who finished third in the men's race, criticised the pacemakers for dropping out earlier than expected. "One pacemaker dropped out at 15 km and another at 25 km," he said.

Meanwhile, India's Asian champion Gopi Thomakal said he was satisfied with his timing (2:16:51) because of the weather conditions.

## Rohan Bopanna, Divij Sharan lose in men's doubles at Australian Open

**MELBOURNE:** India's Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan lost their respective men's doubles third round matches in the Australian Open here on Monday.

Combining with Edouard Roger-Vasselin of France, Bopanna lost to Oliver Marach of Austria and Croatia's Mate Pavic 6-4 6-7 (5) 3-6 at the Melbourne Park.

The match lasted a little over two hours and saw the Indo-French duo convert one out of two break points, while their opponents converted three out of 12 break points. Bopanna and Roger-Vasselin had two aces compared to their opponents' seven.

In an earlier match, the duo of Sharan and Rajeev Ram from the USA suffered a 6-3 6-7 (4) 4-6 defeat at the hands of Lukasz Kubot of Poland and Brazil's world number one Marcelo Melo.

While Sharan and Ram converted two out of six break points, Lukasz and his partner converted two out of four break points. The match lasted two hours and 12 minutes.

## La Liga: Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez lead Barcelona romp, Real Madrid crush Deportivo

Barcelona rode further away from their crumbling title rivals on Sunday as Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez scored twice each in a 5-0 thrashing of Real Betis which opened up an 11-point gap at the top of the La Liga standings.

A strike from Ivan Rakitic broke the home-side's resistance in the 58th minute and top scorer Messi and the in-form Suarez took turns in adding to the scoring to cap a sixth successive league win for Ernesto Valverde's imperious team.

Barca, the only unbeaten side in Europe's top five leagues, lead the way in La Liga with 54 points after capitalising on second-placed Atletico Madrid's 1-1 draw with Girona on Saturday and third-placed Valencia's 2-1 defeat at Las Palmas.

Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice before leaving the pitch with his face covered in blood as Real Madrid eased their domestic crisis by hammering struggling Deportivo La Coruna 7-1 on Sunday to reclaim fourth spot.

Betis went into the game broke the home-side's resistance in the 58th minute and top scorer Messi and the in-form Suarez took turns in adding to the scoring to cap a sixth successive league win for Ernesto Valverde's imperious team.

It took a clever rolled pass from Suarez to release Rakitic for the opening goal, which the Croatian dispatched confidently while Messi took full advantage of a slack Betis offside trap to slot the second.

The Argentine's second strike moved him on to 19



league goals while Suarez's brace took him to 15, 10 coming in his last seven La Liga games.

The convincing display was also the perfect response after Barca had surrendered their 29-game

unbeaten run in all competitions in losing to Espanyol in the King's Cup on Wednesday.

"My team are completely committed to everything we do and we stick together in the good times and the

bad," Barca coach Valverde told reporters.

"We take our steps forward and our steps back together and that's a great virtue."

**SIX STRIKES**

Real had lost two of their last three league matches and got off on the wrong foot against relegation-threatened Deportivo when former Atletico Madrid forward Adrian Lopez put the visiting side ahead against the run of play in the 23rd minute.

The stumbling La Liga champions responded in emphatic fashion, however, and went on to record their biggest win of the season in all competitions with two goals apiece from Gareth Bale and Cristiano Ronaldo as well as a long-range strike from Luka Modric.

Ronaldo was unable to continue playing after he was left with a bloodied face by the boot of Deportivo defender Fabian Schar as he struck his second goal, which took him level with

Bale as Real's top scorer in the league with six strikes.

Real climbed above Villarreal into fourth place on 35 points but are still 19 behind Barcelona.

"The players needed a game like this," Real coach Zinedine Zidane said.

"I don't know if much changed apart from the scoreline and that's the biggest difference. We played well against Villarreal (in our last match despite losing 1-0) and we were doing well when we were losing 1-0 today but we got the equaliser and I'm delighted with what we did in the rest of the game."

**BUDGET SESSION 2018-19 - LA PROCEEDINGS - DEMAND FOR GRANTS**

# Several members participate in discussion on 'Demand for Grants' of PWD

**JAMMU, JANUARY 22:** Several members today took part in the Discussion on Demands of Grants for Public Works Department in Legislative Assembly and projected series of demands of their respective constituencies.

Initiating the discussion, Syed Aga Ruhullah appreciated the government for macadamization of roads, though seeking further improvement and up gradation of major state roads, including Humhama road. He sought upgrading of Bus Yard Budgam and construction of the pedestrian path from Old Bus Stand to new Bus Stand, Budgam. He also pleaded for construction of By-Pass road and a bridge between DC Office to New Bus Yard Budgam.

He also sought speeding up of construction work on National Highway from Srinagar to Jawar tunnel like Chenarni Tunnel to Udhampur section. He hailed the Centre and State Government for the inauguration of Nashri-Chenarni Tunnel. However, he urged for early release of funding for construction of Zojila Tunnel.

Syed Ruhullah asked the government to ensure timely completion to the owners of land acquired for the construction of Ring Road Project in Kashmir.

Sat Paul Sharma thanked the minister for launching state wide macadamization works and said that majority of people have been benefited with the massive work. He suggested the government to construct concrete roads on the pattern of Mumbai to prevent erosion of blacktopping, due to rains and snow. He said due to ending of macadamization every year, Maharashtra Government opted for concrete roads to increase their lifespan.

He also expressed concern over

the traffic congestion in the Jammu city and suggested the government to construct a flyover from KC to Anbphala and from there to Janipur High court to decongest the road.

G M Sarooji urged new road projects under NABARD in far-flung areas of the State including Warwan, Dachan, Bani, Basoli and Sudmahadev. He sought early completion of Dak Banglow, School, Hospital buildings being constructed by the R&B Department in Doda and Kishtwar districts. He further sought the creation of R&B Division Thathri. He also demanded the early release of compensation for fruit trees being cut for construction and upgrading of roads under NABARD, CRF, PMSY, District Sector and State Sectors in Doda and Kishtwar districts during the last three years. He also called for the construction of a tunnel at Mudda in Kishtwar.

Mohammad Yousef Bhat praised the government for taking up massive reconstruction of infrastructure damaged in 2014 floods including macadamization of roads across the state.

He urged the government to take up up-gradation of roads in Shopian district as no major project in the area has been taken under NABARD and CRF last year.

He also urged the government to construct ring road to decongest the traffic in Shopian town as it witnesses huge rush of traffic, especially during fruit season. He also called for up-gradation and macadamization of Shopian-Kulgam road. He also urged the government to construct a road to connect the Shopian Fruit Mandi with the main road.

The legislator also stressed the need for early construction of a

tunnel to make Mughal Road alternate all weather Srinagar-Jammu highway and urged the government to take up the issue with the centre for early sanction of the project.

Hakeem Mohammad Yasin appreciated the R&B Minister for improving the working of the Department and sought more steps to streamline the working further. He also hailed the work done by the former Public Works Department Minister Syed Mohammad Altaf Ahmad Bukhari, especially for taking up massive macadamization works across the state.

He asked the government to expedite the pace of construction works on various bridges including Babapura, Dragger, Sail-bridge, Qumroo, Kangripura-Chill, Narigund Bridges in Khan Sahib Constituency. He called upon the government for construction of a bridge over Nallah Sukhar in his constituency, construction of road from Arizal to Mandi to provide easy road connectivity to Poonch District, release of pending land compensation in his Constituency and bringing transparency in the process of the tendering system as promised by the Government.

Yawar Ahmad Mir while highlighting the importance of Public Works Department in the development of the state, he praised the Minister for recording tremendous progress on road development works in his constituency.

He urged the government for rationalization of works with regard to road projects by prioritizing the neglected constituencies.

Mubarak Gul also sought liberal funding for Srinagar City under R & B sector. He sought immediate removal of bottlenecks, if any, on Circular Road Project for expedit-

ing the work on the project. He also asked the government for bringing transparency in the tendering system. He said five divisions of R & B Department are working in his Constituency and suggested for the posting of Executive Engineer for at least for two divisions.

He asked the government for providing liberal funding for Srinagar city and also urged the government for proper sharing of funds from NABARD, CRF, PMSY and State Sector. He suggested for utilization of other material like plastic etc instead of timber on panning work carried by the JKPC.

Dawinder Maniyal lauded the Public Works department for expanding road connectivity thus paving way for the development of the state. He called for laying more focus on rural connectivity and taking up more projects under CRF and construction and macadamization of important roads in his constituency.

He also urged government for taking up projects under BADP, issuing NOCs and clearances of various departments for the roads being constructed under PMSY.

MY Tarjani observes that the roads in Chenab valley has always been the concern and urged the government to prioritize public works in the area as there is dire need of construction there.

He also urged the government to take up projects under CRF, NABARD, BADP and other centrally sponsored schemes to upgrade the rural connectivity in far-flun areas.

Choudhary Mohammad Akram appreciated the government for construction of Tunnel on Mughal Road and Gurez and expediting construction of Primary Health Centre (PHC) building in his Constituency. He urged the gov-

ernment for speeding up of construction work on Mandi-Pagla Road sanctioned under CRF. He appreciated the Minister and his team for completing many projects.

He demanded to enhance the ceiling of NABARD funding for road projects in his Constituency. He also demanded construction of Bridges and widening of Bafiaz to Surankote road.

Noor Mohammad Sheikh appreciated the government for macadamization works completed during last three years. He suggested for formulating comprehensive Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for the proposed projects like bridges, roads, buildings etc to avoid technical hitch during execution. He asked the government for expediting construction work on Qamarwari Noorbagh, Shaltang and Takanwari bridges for timely completion. He called for timeline completion of Mother-Child Hospital at Bemina, though appreciating that the work on the project is in full swing.

Mohammad Shahi Uri urged the government for expediting construction work on the various ongoing road and other projects in his Constituency and also asked them for their timely completion.

Bashir Ahmad Dar appreciated the government for taking up massive projects under R&B sector during last three years. He said road connectivity was must for development and hailed the government for speeding up widening work on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway. He called for timely completion of all ongoing road and bridge projects in his Constituency. He congratulated the R & B Minister for macadamization works taken up in the State and urged for construction of Sadna Tunnel to avoid mishaps on the Kamah road.

## "Shakti Kendra Pramukh Sammelan" will boost booth activists: Sat



**JAMMU, JAN. 22:** BJP State President & MLA Sat Sharma along with State General Secretary Harinder Gupta and State Secretary Sanjay Baru held a Press Conference at the party headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, regarding the "Shakti Kendra Pramukh Sammelan" a mega endeavour by the party to boost the working of booth level activist clearly having an eye on the approaching Panchayati elections in the state.

Sat Sharma, while addressing the Press Conference, said that Panchayat and Local body elections are the wonderful medium to ensure the reach of public concerns to appropriate platform. He said that presently Booth Sammelans started by the party have been successfully completed in 89 Mandals out of total 124 Mandals taking the slogan of 1 booth-10 youth to the very ground level, in which when the activists of different morchas are combined, it reaches to 20 activists per booth. These sammelans will ensure that the 6 programmes of party be celebrated within the common masses helping to take the party ideology to public. He also mentioned about the PM Modi's "Mann Ki Baari" which is the collage of feelings of common masses.

Sat Sharma also disclosed that the party has decided to hold "Shakti Kendra Pramukh Sammelan" at K. K. Resorts on Sunday, the 28th of January at 10:00 AM. He said that BJP National General Secretary Murali Dhar Rao will attend and address the sammelan along with all the senior leaders from the state, which will witness the participation of District Presidents, Mandal Presidents, Morcha Presidents along with the Shakti Kendra Pramukh. He said that the "Gram Kendra" and "Shahari Kendra (Ward)" are pronounced as Shakti Kendra, which comprises of 3-4 Polling Booths. "Shakti Kendra Pramukh Sammelan" will boost booth activists to work effectively for the common masses, he added.

Sharma stressed that the voice of common masses reaches the top through the medium of booth activists, which has a particular significance in the organizational structure of BJP as the party never works with only the specific eye on elections, but instead it regularly works for the common masses round the year and clock and these sammelans will ensure that the voice of the ground level activist reaches the top leaders so that the genuine concerns of public be addressed promptly.

## Kashmir hospitals lack vital equipment, patients suffer, alleges DAK

**SRINAGAR, JAN 22:** Alleging that the government-run hospitals in Kashmir valley lack vital equipment like Fibrosan, DEKA scan and endoscopic ultrasound, Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) said patients suffer immensely due to non-availability of these essential diagnostic tools.

DAK President Dr Nisar ul Hassan alleged that patients are referred to private centres in and outside the state for these tests, an option which poor patients cannot afford. "Because of the absence of these instruments in hospitals, doctors in Kashmir end up on a compromise in diagnosis," the DAK President said.

He said it is unethical to keep hospitals without these facilities as doctors nowadays cannot deal with patients without these breakthrough devices.

Dr Hassan said Fibrosan is used to estimate the degree of liver damage, monitor disease progression and predict survival in patients with liver disease.

"The gadget has replaced liver biopsy which has important simple error issues, subjectivity in interpretation and real risk of complications, like bleeding," he said.

Dr Hassan said there is epidemic of hepatitis B and C in Kashmir and fibrosan will guide prognosis and assist in establishing treatment priorities in these patients.

"Kashmir is the capital of fatty liver disease patients and fibrosan is the gold standard for detecting early fibrosis in them and providing an opportunity to change their life style and prevent further progression of disease," he said.

Dr Hassan said DEXA scan is routinely used in clinical practice to diagnose osteoporosis, a condition that causes bones to become thinner, more fragile and more likely to break.

"Our population is more prone to osteoporosis because of lower bone density, vitamin D deficiency and low consumption of calcium-rich foods," he said.

"Endoscopic ultrasound is used to diagnose diseases of gastrointestinal and respiratory system and is an essential tool to detect cancer," he added.

**CLCC SCHOLARSHIP CUM ADMISSION TEST**

TEST DATE  
**11<sup>TH</sup> & 25<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY**  
Timing : 11:00 AM

FOR 8<sup>TH</sup>, 9<sup>TH</sup>, 10<sup>TH</sup> & 11<sup>TH</sup> STUDENTS

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**JAMMU & KASHMIR PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**  
Resham Ghar Colony, Bakshi Nagar, Jammu

Subject: Interview schedule for the post of Lecturer Super Speciality (Medical Gastroenterology) GMC Jammu in Health & Medical Education Department

**NOTICE** Dated: 20.01.2018

In continuation to this office notice dated 11.01.2018, it is hereby notified that the following candidates who have applied in response to the Notification No. 03-PSC(DR-PI) OF 2016 dt. 19.02.2016 of the J&K Public Service Commission for the post of Lecturer Super Speciality (Medical Gastroenterology) GMC Jammu in Health & Medical Education Department are advised to appear for the interview at the office of J&K Public Service Commission, ReshamGhar Colony, Bakshi Nagar, Jammu, at 9.30 AM, as per dates indicated against each:-

Sl. No.	APPLICATION FORM NO.	CANDIDATE	DATE OF INTERVIEW
0		LECTURER SUPERSPECIALITY (MEDICAL GASTROENTEROLOGY) (GMC-JAMMU) 03-PSC(DR-PI) OF 2016 DT. 19.02.2016	
1.	16010301300001	ATUL SHARMA	24.01.2018
2.	16010301300002	VIJANT SINGH CHANDHAL	24.01.2018
3.	16010301300003	MOHD YASIN MUJOO	24.01.2018

- The candidature of all the candidates is purely provisional;
- Only eligible candidates possessing requisite qualification prescribed under rules shall be allowed to appear in the interview subject to the further condition that they are within the prescribed age limit on the cut-off date;
- The candidates shall produce their original certificates/testimonials on the date of interview.

Note:- Candidates, if any, having obtained court orders from the Hon'ble High Court in the above mentioned disciplines for appearing in the interview may also represent before the Commission along with certified copy of the court orders by or before 24.01.2018 for appearing in the interview at their own risk and responsibility.

Sd/-  
(Sunita Anand), KAS  
Secretary  
J&K Public Service Commission

No. PSC(DR/Interview/H&ME/2017 Dated:-20-01-2018  
DIP/J-10097/17 Dt.: 22.01.2018

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