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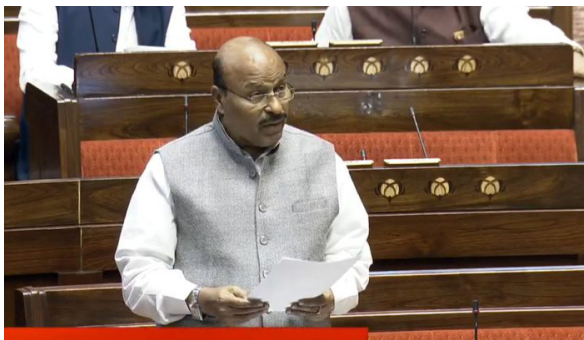


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Rajya Sabha takes up three bills on J&K

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 9

The Rajya Sabha on Friday took up for consideration and passage three bills on Jammu and Kashmir that seek to provide reservation to Other Backward Classes in local bodies and modify the lists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Union territory.



The Jammu and Kashmir Local Bodies Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024; the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024; and the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 were passed by the Lok Sabha earlier this week.

The Jammu and Kashmir Local Bodies Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, moved by Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai, seeks to provide reservation to OBCs in local bodies in the Union territory.

Currently, there is no provision for reservation of seats for OBCs in panchayats and municipalities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024, moved by Minister of

Social Justice and Empowerment Virendra Kumar, adds Valmiki community as a synonym of Chura, Balmiki, Bhangi, and Mehtar communities in the list of Scheduled Castes in Jammu and Kashmir.

The bill seeks to amend the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order of 1956, which lists the castes deemed to be Scheduled Castes in Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Union Minister of Tribal Affairs & Agriculture and Farmer Welfare moved the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 that seeks to amend the Constitution

(Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order of 1989 to create separate lists for Scheduled Tribes for Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 seeks to add four communities – Gadda Brahmin, Koli, Paddari Tribe, and Pahari Ethnic Group – to the list of Scheduled Tribes in Jammu and Kashmir.

Thereafter, discussion for consideration and passage of the three proposed legislations ensued simultaneously in the Upper House. Before the bills were moved,

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96.88 Crore people registered to vote for 2024 lok sabha election, says Election Commission

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 9

The Election Commission (EC) on Friday announced that 96.88 crore people are registered to vote for the forthcoming General Elections, marking it the largest electorate.

It also added over two crore youth electors in the age group of 18 to 29 years have been added in the voters' list.

After a months-long intensive Special Summary Revision 2024 exercise and ahead of the General

Elections 2024, the Election Commission of India has published the electoral rolls in all States/UTs across the country with reference to January 1, 2024, as the qualifying date.

"This also included the successful completion of the revision of electoral rolls in Jammu and Kashmir and Assam, following the delimitation of constituencies. The endeavour, undertaken with meticulous planning, coordination and participation of political parties has yielded

ed noteworthy achievements in terms of inclusivity, health and purity of the electoral rolls," the EC stated.

Meanwhile, the gender ratio has increased from 940 in 2023 to 948 in 2024, the poll panel said.

The Commission has put special emphasis on the purity and health of the Electoral Roll along with disclosures and transparency in the revision of electoral rolls.

It may be recalled that Chief Election

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LG directs concerned authorities to increase awareness on Wildlife conservation

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 9

Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha chaired the 5th meeting of Wildlife Board for the UT of J&K, at Civil Secretariat today.

The meeting was attended by Sh Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Sh Dheeraj Gupta, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Forest, Ecology and Environment; Sh. A. K. Choudhary, Special DG Crime; Sh Shailendra Kumar, Principal Secretary, Agriculture Production Department; Sh Roshan Jaggi, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF and Sh.



Sarvesh Rai, PCCF / Chief Wildlife Warden, J&K.

The meeting discussed various key interventions for sustainable management of rich biodiversity and integrated development of wildlife habitats. In-principle approval was accorded to several agenda points to further

strengthen the wildlife ecosystem.

The Lt Governor directed the concerned authorities to increase the awareness for protection and conservation of valuable wildlife resources. He further instructed for organizing a series of promotional activities to increase

the visibility of mega projects like Jambu Zoo at all the major public places.

The Lt Governor reviewed the proposal for expansion of Jambu Zoo. He also sought an action taken report on the directions passed in the previous Board meeting.

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Rajya Sabha passes examinations bill, Dr Jitendra dedicates it to Youth of India

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 9

The Rajya Sabha today passed "The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024" aimed at curbing leaks, malpractices as well as organised malpractices in recruitment examinations like UPSC, SSC etc and entrance tests such as NEET, JEE, and CUET. The Bill, which has already been passed by the Lok Sabha, will now become a law after the issue of notification.

Initiating the debate on the Bill, Union Minister Incharge DoPT, Dr Jitendra Singh said, "the Public Exams Bill, which is possibly the first of its kind in the history of India's Parliament, is dedicated to the youth of India".



"Prevention of Unfair Means Bill, 2024" will also cover entrance examinations held by the Union Public Service Commission, the Staff Selection Commission, the Railways, banking recruitment examinations and all computer-based examinations conducted by the National Testing Agency.

Stating that the Bill is the first of its kind in the history of Indian Parliament, Dr Jitendra Singh this legislation seeks

The Bill has already been passed by the Lok Sabha after an extensive discussion on 6th February 2024.

"We have a stake in the country's youth, who form the majority 70% of the country's population. Their contribution is imperative for nation-building over the next two decades in the making of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Viksit Bharat," he said.

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Two Terrorist hideouts unearthed in Baramulla

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEB 9

Security forces have unearthed two terrorist hideouts in Sopore area of Baramulla district in Jammu and Kashmir and recovered a cache of arms and ammunition, officials said on Friday.

Two suspected terror associates were also arrested during the search operation which yielded the arms and ammunition haul, the officials said.

They said police, while investigating a terror-related case of last year in Sopore Police Station area developed actionable leads.

A search operation was launched in the house of slain terrorist commander Abdul Qayoom Najar where security forces found a concrete hideout

"During the search, a secret concrete hideout was found inside the residential house of Abdul Rashid Najar from which arms and ammunition like IEDs, pistol, pistol magazine, live ammunition and other incriminating electronic items were recovered," the officials said.

They said Abdul Rashid Najar, a relative of the slain terrorist commander, was taken into custody and, during questioning, he revealed the involvement of one Abdul Jameel Larah,

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2 dead, 10 injured in Kishtwar accident

JI NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, FEB 9

Two persons died while ten others sustained injuries in a road accident that took place on Friday evening in Kishtwar district, officials said.

The accident took place when a passenger vehicle (Tata Sumo) they were travelling in skidded off the road and plunged into a deep gorge near Hakko Palali road Paddar in Kishtwar district, an official told the news agency.

"The passenger vehicle bearing registration number JK17-7378 was on its way from Gulabgarh to Hakko Palali Paddar when the driver lost his control over the vehicle and fell into a deep gorge, resulting in death of two persons and injuries to 10 passengers including the driver," the official said.

Meanwhile, the bodies were retrieved and all injured persons were evacuated to Public Health Centre (PHC) Atholi Paddar for treatment.

White Paper is serious document, everything is with evidence: Sitharaman slams opposition parties in LS

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 9

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday said that the 'White Paper on Indian Economy' tabled by the government in Parliament was a "serious document" and reflects the dedicated efforts of the BJP-led government to bring the economy "back on rails" after 10 years of "economic mismanagement" of the UPA government.

Replying to the debate on the White Paper in Lok Sabha, Sitharaman talked of the steps taken by the



Modi government to boost self-reliance in defence and expedite environmental clearances for faster economic development.

"I challenge anyone who says this document is baseless. Everything is

with evidence. I challenge anyone who says that we have kept the White Paper which has no proof," she said amid interruptions by opposition members.

"The White Paper is a serious document for

documentary evidence for everything that is said in it and prepared with an intention of informing the House of the 10 years' dedicated effort to get the government work in such a way that the economy is back on rails and also progress in such a way that our aspirations can be met," she added.

The White Paper, comparing 10 years of economic management of the Congress-led UPA government with that of the Modi government, was tabled in Parliament on Thursday.

RSP leader NK Premachandran slammed the

government, saying the government was apprehensive of the electorate in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections and had brought the White Paper to blame the UPA government for its failures.

He said the government was afraid of "exponential growth in unemployment and spiralling price rise" and urged members to disapprove the motion brought by the government.

He urged them to approve the substitute motion brought by him. The White Paper said

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PM announces Bharat Ratna for Charan Singh, Narasimha Rao, M S Swaminathan

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 9

Former Prime Ministers P V Narasimha Rao and Charan Singh as well as Green Revolution pioneer M S Swaminathan will be conferred the Bharat Ratna, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced on Friday.

The Government had earlier named former Bihar chief minister Karpuri Thakur, a champion of backward empowerment, and L K Advani, a founding BJP member credited with charting the course of its rise through the 1990s, for the



country's highest civilian honour.

At five, one more than the four announced in 1999, this is the maximum number of Bharat Ratnas announced for a year.

Making the announcements for Rao, whose

liberalisation policies revolutionised the economy, Singh, a champion of farmer causes, and Swaminathan, a globally renowned agricultural scientist, Modi lauded their contributions to the country.

Singh, a Jat leader from western Uttar Pradesh who was prime minister in 1979-80, was one of the pioneers of anti-Congress politics at a time the party was a hegemonic political force. Congress leader Rao, a Telugu, who was Prime Minister for a full five-year term during 1991-96, is widely recognised for ushering in economic reforms.

It is our Government's fortune that Singh is being honoured with the Bharat Ratna and it is dedicated to his incomparable contributions to the country, Modi said.

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Young Man fatally hit by blacklisted Government vehicle, driver arrested

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

In the Janipur area of Jammu district, a young man lost his life after a collision with a government official's vehicle. The driver, identified as Kuldeep Kumar, has been arrested, and a case has been registered at Janipur Police Station.

The unfortunate event unfolded on February 7 when a fast-moving vehicle, belonging to a Block Development Officer (BDO), struck 26-year-old Rajat Bhola. The victim, a mechanic, was on his way home on a scooter.



Promptly responding to the incident, the police reached the scene and apprehended the accused driver along with the vehicle.

The vehicle involved in the collision displayed a 'J&K Government' board and was promptly identified

by locals after the incident. Notably, the vehicle had been blacklisted according to the Privahan App of the Government. The order stated, "Vehicle is flagged as Not To Be Transacted (NTBT) by JAMMU

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DC Rajouri approves 244 cases under Holistic Agriculture Development Program

JJ NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, FEBRUARY 9

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Om Prakash Bhagat today presided over a significant meeting and approved 244 cases under the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP) including 166 under the Agriculture and 78 cases under the Animal Husbandry sector. The meeting focused on evaluating the progress made in achieving the objectives of the program and informing farmers about the innovative interventions that have been made.

The HADP is an ambitious initiative aimed at establishing a sustainable and profitable agricultural ecosystem. Deputy Commissioner Om Prakash Bhagat emphasized the overarching goal of the program which is to empower local farmers



by equipping them with knowledge and tools that can significantly enhance their productivity and profitability. Simultaneously, the HADP seeks to contribute to the overall growth of the agricultural sector.

One of the key features of the HADP is its provision of a platform for farmers to engage with experts from the Agricultural and allied departments. This engagement allows farmers to seek expert guidance on various aspects of farming, enabling them to improve their agricultural practices. By adopting such a multifaceted

approach, the HADP aims to elevate agricultural productivity, enhance livelihoods, and make substantial contributions to the region's broader economic growth. The enthusiastic embrace of the HADP by the district administration and the active involvement of various stakeholders position Rajouri as a role model for sustainable and prosperous agricultural practices. With the unwavering commitment of the district administration and the support of concerned officers such as the agricultural sector in Rajouri is poised to thrive. This growth will benefit not

only the farmers but also the larger community.

Overall, the meeting showcased the dedicated efforts of the district administration in ensuring that the benefits of the HADP reach the intended beneficiaries. With the approval of 244 cases, the HADP is progressing towards its objective of transforming the agricultural landscape of Rajouri. The meeting was a testament to the resolve and commitment of the district administration to drive sustainable agricultural development and uplift the farming community in Rajouri.

CPO, Mohammad Khurshid, ACP Sheraz Chohan; CAO Sohan Singh, DSHO, Dr PP Sagotra; CAHO Dr Khalid Hussain; LDM Sanjeev Bhasin; DHO Shafiqat Khan; AD Fisheries, Bodh Raj and other concerned officers attended the meeting.

Green Innovation for Sustainable Future Anshika clinches first position in poster making competition



JJ NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, FEBRUARY 9

The J&K Science technology & innovation Council Department of Science and technology today organised a poster making Competition on the theme "Green Innovation for Sustainable Future" in Collaboration with Government Girls High School, Garhi here on Friday.

The program began with a welcome address by the Principal of the institution. As many as 20 students took part in the

competition with great enthusiasm and showcased their views on the given theme.

Anshika Sharma of class 10th clinched first position while Simran and Sanjana both of 9th class clinched 2nd and 3rd position in the competition.

The consolation prizes were won by Sonia Sharma, Shahjahan & Komal.

District Co-ordinator, Shruti Khanna thanked the Principal for his Support in organising the event for its successful conduct.

Resham Krishi mela cum awareness camp held at Ramkote



JJ NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, FEBRUARY 9

A Resham Krishi Mela was organized today here in Ramkote by the Central Silk Board in collaboration with the Directorate of Sericulture Development Department, Jammu & Kashmir.

Dr. N.K Bhatia was the chief guest, and Ashwani Kumar Sharma, Additional Director Jammu was the Guest of Honour.

Around 250 rearers from Udhampur District

participated in the event.

In the technical session, Dr. Santosh Kumar, Scientist Incharge RSRS Jammu, delivered a lecture on mulberry cultivation and maintenance of mulberry plantation. Dr. Amar Dev, Incharge SSPC Laddan Udhampur, provided insights into silkworm rearing techniques, while Dr. N.S Gehtot, Incharge DCTC Jammu, discussed post-cocoon activities. The best progressive rearers of the area were also honored during the mela.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao: DC inaugurates month long Self-defence Training program for Girls at Kishtwar

JJ NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, FEBRUARY 9

Aimed at empowering the girls, the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Abhiyan campaign touched new heights in district Kishtwar as Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Devansh Yadav on Friday inaugurated a month-long self-defence training program for girls aged 14-18 years.

The training program, encompassing martial arts and Taekwondo has been hosted in the Sports Club of the CRPF 52nd Battalion HQ by the District Social Welfare Department, in collaboration with the District Youth Services and Sports Department, under the auspices of District Administration Kishtwar, led by Deputy Commissioner Dr. Devansh Yadav.

The inaugural ceremony of the month-long training programme witnessed the presence of Deputy Commissioner Dr. Devansh Yadav as the chief guest and CO 52nd Bn CRPF Parma Shivan as the Guest of Honour.

District Social Welfare Officer Zubair Ahmed Lone, District Youth Services and Sports Officer Kharati Lal Sharma and Mohinder Kumar Second-in-Command 52nd Battalion CRPF were the special guests.

TSWO Kishtwar



Rajesh Sharma, Cultural Incharge Awani Sen, TSWO Paddar Chetna Sharma, Staff of OSC, DHEW and Kishtwar Academy for Martial Arts (KAMA) besides girl participants also remained present on the occasion.

The welcome address was delivered by DSWO Zubair Ahmed Lone, providing insights into various government-sponsored schemes for women and the girl child

under the Social Welfare Department besides throwing light on the aims and objectives of the training programme.

This training program, conducted under the flagship Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Abhiyan, aims to holistically empower the girl child.

In his inaugural address, the Deputy Commissioner extended best wishes to the trainees while emphasizing

the importance of holistic preparation for overcoming life's challenges, encompassing both physical and mental readiness.

The Chief Guest also drew attention towards the inspiring journey of Paralympic Champion and Arjuna Awardee Sheetal Devi, who overcame numerous obstacles in life, serving as a beacon of inspiration for young girls. He further

encouraged them to embrace Taekwondo not only as a passion but also as a potential pathway to a sports career, emphasizing its significance as both a form of self-defense and safety training.

CO 52nd Battalion CRPF, Parma Shivan, provided valuable insights on how the girls could effectively utilize the training, highlighting the crucial aspects of mental, moral, and social strengthening in addition to physical defense. He urged the participants to extract maximum benefits from the session, emphasizing the holistic development that could be gained through the comprehensive training program.

The inaugural ceremony also featured a cultural and Taekwondo performance by girl children. The event also featured speeches by Awani Sen and others besides TSWO Kishtwar Rajesh Sharma, who conveyed the vote of thanks.

The participating girls exhibited enthusiasm, reflecting the positive impact and importance of initiatives fostering the empowerment of the girl child in Kishtwar district. The month-long program promises to equip these young individuals with valuable skills for personal development and self-defense.

GHSS Gajansoo hosts spectacular Annual Day function

JJ NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 9

Government Higher Secondary School Gajansoo, nestled in the heart of Zone Marh, District Jammu, shimmered with exuberance and zeal as it hosted its much-awaited "Annual Day" celebration function today.

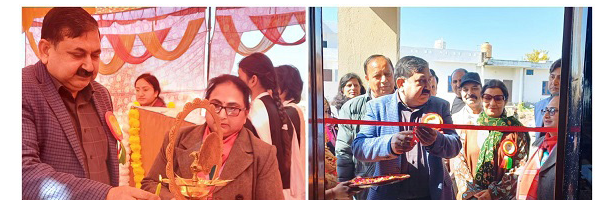
The event, graced by esteemed dignitaries, showcased the exceptional talent and achievements of the school's vibrant student body.

The highlight of the event was the presence of the Director of School Education, Jammu, Ashok Kumar Sharma, who adorned the role of Chief Guest with utmost grace and enthusiasm.

Joint Director Subah Mehta and Chief Education Officer Jammu Jagdeep Kumar Padha added to the charm of the occasion as Guests of Honor.

The festivities commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp by Ashok Kumar Sharma and other esteemed guests, followed by a warm welcome address by Sandeep Sharma, Senior Lecturer of Commerce, Principal Namarta Khajuria then presented the Annual School Report, highlighting the remarkable achievements of the students in both academic and co-curricular realms.

Subah Mehta emphasized the importance of aligning with the targets set forth in the National Education Policy - 2020 and advocated for remedial classes to support weaker students, fostering an inclusive learning environment.



The event witnessed mesmerizing performances by the students, showcasing their artistic prowess and cultural flair, captivating the audience throughout. A noteworthy moment of the celebration was the unveiling of the second edition of the school magazine "KSHITIZ" (The Horizon), symbolizing the school's commitment to nurturing creativity and literary pursuits.

In his address, Ashok Kumar Sharma lauded the collective efforts of the school team and students in organizing a remarkable event. He urged the students to strive for excellence in both academic and real-life skills, offering valuable guidance to the teachers to excel in their profession. Additionally, he assured the institution of support to enhance its academic and overall standards.

Subah Mehta emphasized the importance of aligning with the targets set forth in the National Education Policy - 2020 and advocated for remedial classes to support weaker students, fostering an inclusive learning environment.

Government Higher Secondary School Gajansoo reaffirmed its commitment to fostering holistic development and academic excellence, leaving an indelible mark on the educational landscape of Jammu.

Divisional Level Sensitization Workshop on Tobacco Control hosted in Govt Hospital Gandhi Nagar

JJ NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 9

A Divisional Level Sensitization Workshop on Tobacco Control was today organised for key Stakeholders by State Tobacco Control Cell, Directorate of Health Services, Jammu here in the Government Hospital Gandhinagar.

The workshop was held under the supervision of the Director Health Services Jammu, Dr Rakesh Mangotra.

The event was held under the aegis of National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) with technical support from Vital Strategies India New Delhi.

Several Officers from diverse departments such as School Education,



Police, Higher Education, Food and Drug Administration, Drug Controller, Health attended the workshop. Participants were enlightened regarding Epidemiology of Tobacco use and overview of NTCP, including implementation of Tobacco Free Educational Institutions Guidelines and various provisions of Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act 2003(COTPA-2003) and the Prohibition of E-Cigarettes Act (PECA2019).

Dr. Sanjay Sharma, Deputy Director Dentistry, extended a warm welcome to all attendees and encouraged them to take full advantage of this opportunity to educate themselves about their roles and responsibilities in Tobacco Control.

The Nodal Officer from the Directorate of Health Services presented the progress of the National

Tobacco Control Programme in Jammu Division and a detailed presentation on ToFEI Guidelines. It was informed that the Programme has been extended to all the districts. Tobacco Cessation Centres have been set up in all District Hospitals throughout the Division, where trained Psychologists/Counselors will assist individuals in quitting tobacco.

Further, a detailed presentation on the provisions of COTPA-2003 and PECA-2019 was presented by State Project Coordination, NTCP.

The department has been organizing several sensitization programs in schools and colleges, quarterly DLCC meetings, training sessions for law enforcers, and sensitization targeting key departments to eliminate the menace of tobacco from society. Regular awareness campaigns are conducted through both print and electronic media platforms.

The workshop concluded with an interactive session where queries were addressed, and way forward were discussed. The Divisional Coordinator NTCP Jammu delivered the vote of thanks.

The valleys of Gulmarg received a fresh snowfall last week and snowboarder Rizza Alee along with his friend Saqib Mir accompanied three other skiers to seek thrill upon the mighty slopes.

Two friends recall Gulmarg Avalanche horror, close shave with death

JJ NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEB 9

Little did they know that the fateful day would test their courage and resilience like never before.

It was a crisp Monday morning when Alee and Mir set out with their snowboard and ski equipment to glide over snowy mountains. As they glided down the slopes, the tranquility of the mountains began to betray them. Without any prior indication, a deafening roar shattered the stillness, echoing through the valleys

like a thunderous beast unleashed. In an instant, Alee and Mir found themselves engulfed in a maelstrom of ice and snow.

"We were five people including two skiers of Slovakia who went out for skiing and snowboarding. While we were descending from the phase second, we were trapped in a snow avalanche, which came from two sides. It was a very panicking situation since the area was a green zone," Alee said. Fortunately, Alee along with his another fellow skier managed to breathe while Mir was buried under many feet of snow.

"We were rescued by the Slovakian skiers who were following us. The only guy who was missing was Saqib. We could locate him and started

rescuing him," Alee said. Recounting the episode, Mir said the entire calamity occurred within a fraction of second.

"It was calm everywhere and we were enjoying our adventure. All of sudden avalanche hit the area and I was completely buried under many feet of snow. I couldn't move my hands and feet and lost all hope of survival," Mir said.

It was the Slovakian skiers who traced his location and started the rescue operation. "If my rescue was delayed by more than a minute I wouldn't have survived. My fellow Kashmiri skiers and Slovakian skiers wasted no time to rescue me. Later people who were around also came and joined the rescue operation," Mir said.

MVD Anantnag gifts Road Safety Mugs & Appreciation certificates to disciplined drivers

JI NEWS SERVICE
ANANTNAG, FEBRUARY 9

In a novel attempt to motivate the citizens to adhere to the traffic rules, Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) Anantnag officials in collaboration with Traffic department distributed Appreciation certificates and Mugs depicting road safety message to disciplined drivers and also felicitated the traffic violators with Red Roses.

The drive was conducted as part of the National Road Safety Month 2024.

During the campaign, MVD officials and traffic personnel after catching violators, mainly without helmet riders and drivers without seat belts, took them road side and handed them Red Roses and requested them to wear helmets and follow



traffic safety rules for their own safety and for the safety of their family.

Those who were found following the traffic rules were felicitated with appreciation certificates

and Road Safety Mugs carrying important messages on road safety.

ARTO Anantnag, Dr Mohammad Zubair Lattoo said that making people understand about the

importance of traffic rules is a major challenge which needs to be checked immediately.

The officer said that by felicitating the disciplined drivers on spot we believe that one can send positive message among the commuters as well as drivers with regard to adhering to traffic rules. People must cooperate with the authorities in order to ensure violation-free passage of traffic in the district.

It is a unique initiative and we want the people to be educated about the risks to their own lives and those of others due to their errors, said Dr Mohammad Zubair. The awareness campaign is also focused on stunts performed by the youth.

Farewell accorded to outgoing Commandant IRP 16th Battalion



JI NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, FEBRUARY 9

The IRP 16th Battalion bid a heartfelt farewell to Commandant Pawan Parihar, as he embarks on a new journey at IRP 7th Battalion.

In recognition of his exemplary service and dedication, a vibrant farewell-cum-cultural program was organized at Battalion Headquarter, Ramban.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commandant of the Bn Reyaz Tantray (SP) highlighted his significant contributions in maintaining law and order and for his efforts in bolstering the strength of the battalion.

The leadership and unwavering commitment of the outgoing Commandant have left an indelible

mark on the battalion and the community it served, he maintained.

The event was graced by the presence of distinguished guests including Commander, 11 Sector, Senior Superintendent of Police, Traffic NHW, Rohit Baskotra; ACR, S. Harpal Singh; Officers from civil administration of Ramban distt. and prominent citizens from Gool, Ramban, Sangaldan, Banihal and Batote participated.

Their presence added to the warmth and significance of the occasion. As Commandant Pawan Parihar transitions to his new role, all the dignitaries along with all the officers and officials of the IRP 16th Battalion extend their heartfelt gratitude for his service and wish him continued success in his future endeavors.

Walkathon organised to promote Road safety habits among students



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 9

As part of ongoing National Road Safety Month, an impressive Walkathon was held today to promote road safety awareness among the students.

The walkathon was flagged off by RTO Jammu Pankaj Bhagotra in presence of CEO Jammu, Jagdeep Padha witnessing participation of students of Government Higher Secondary School Domana.

Speaking on the occasion, the RTO Jammu said that every year Lakhs of people fall victim to rash driving and it is important to realize the significance of imbibing road safety habits in day today life to save lives. "We want

to reduce the number of accidents by over 50% and for that, it is important to create awareness on road safety among locals," said the RTO Jammu.

The CEO asked the school administration concerned to conduct regular awareness programmes, mock drills, to motivate students to encourage their friends and family members.

Earlier also an awareness camp to sensitize drivers for road safety was also organized at Driving Trial Test Ground Nagrota Jammu.

Among others ARTO Hq. Rehana Tabassam, Principal Govt. Hr. Sec. School Domana, Staff Members and students are present on the occasion.

DC Poonch reviews scheme wise progress of Aspirational Block Development Program



JI NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, FEBRUARY 9

Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Yasin M. Choudhary on Friday reviewed the scheme wise progress made under the Aspirational Block Development Programme here at a meeting held in the conference hall of the DC office. The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Program Officer ICDS, ACP, Chief Medical Officer, District Information Officer, Chief Education Officer., Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, District Lead Bank Manager, Xen's and other concerned.

The DC reviewed the progress made under the programme in the identified areas that required improvement. He directed concerned departments to take necessary steps to improve the indicators and achieve the tar-

gets. The meeting also discussed the physical progress of ongoing works being executed by RDD, PWD, Agriculture, Education, Health and other departments.

He also stressed the importance of channelizing resources towards the modernization and overall development of Aspirational Blocks.

In addition to the Aspirational Block Development Programme, the DC reviewed the implementation of the dairy development scheme in the Aspirational Block Mankote.

The chair was informed by the officers of the concerned departments about the ongoing activities and progress thereof. The DC stressed on promotion of integrated farming and promotion of animal rearing for diversifying the economic activities, adding that the need of the hour is to increase farmers' income by such interventions.

Excavator among 07 Vehicles involved in illegal mining seized in Kathua



JI NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, FEBRUARY 9

A team of geology and mining department, led by District Mineral Officer (DMO), Rajinder Singh seized seven vehicles including an excavator for indulging in illegal mining here today.

As per the department, four vehicles were seized at Gandial and Bhagatali for transporting minerals without e-challans, one each at Lakhampur and Taraf Tajwal and the excavator was seized from Sahar Khad areas for illegal excavation in late night hours. The quantity of raw mineral and documents of seized vehicles were also verified by the officials of the mining department and accordingly seizure memos were issued to the violators as per the extant rules. The DMO also

informed that a total of 10 excavators and 150 vehicles involved in illegal mining and illegal transportation have been penalized from various locations of the district in the last two and half months during day and night operations.

It was also informed that due to extreme strictness and harsh measures during day time, now the violators have been turned towards night hours and try to excavate and lift minerals during night for which the department always remains ready to take them to task.

Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Rakesh Minhas has already issued instructions to the department for taking strong action against violators and imposing heavy penalties on them so that no one dares to steal the precious minerals.

Hajj pilgrims from Ladakh dip from 475 to 357 this year: official

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEB 9

Authorities in Ladakh Friday said that a total of 357 pilgrims including three women without Mehram from the region will perform Hajj this year.

Compared to last year, the pilgrims will be little less this year as a total of 475 pilgrims from Ladakh performed Hajj last year.

The applications for Hajj 2024 were invited last year and dates were also extended by competent authority for the ease of the public.

Talking to the news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Ali Majaz Chairman of Hajj Committee Union Territory of Ladakh said that a total of 357 applications were received and given the quota all of them will head to perform Hajj once the schedule is announced.

He said that the majority of the applicants are from Kargil district.

A total of 357 applications including 285 from

Kargil and 72 from Leh district were received this year.

The Chairman said that this year three women will undertake the holy journey without a Mahram.

He informed that four persons above the age of 70 years are also among the pilgrims.

The Chairman expressed satisfaction saying that since the inception of Hajj Committee Ladakh separately over a year ago quota for the region has also been increased to which people have responded very positively.

Further, the chairman also praised Hajj Committee of J&K and administration for their cooperation given that the embarkation point for Ladakh pilgrims is in Srinagar.

"We don't have a passport center in Kargil forcing aspirants to travel to Leh or Srinagar to avail the facilities. We have multiple times approached the authorities for Passport Kendra and hopefully the issue will be resolved," he

Road Safety Month: MVD hosts Medical Camp at HPP Site Dangduroo, Awareness Program at Palmar

JI NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, FEBRUARY 9

In a proactive initiative to prioritize the health and well-being of drivers associated with the Hydro Power Project, a comprehensive awareness program and medical cum eye check-up camp was organized at Project Site of JP Associates Ltd at Dangduroo. Simultaneously, an awareness camp was conducted en route Palmar by the Motor Vehicle Department.

The event at JP Associates Ltd focused on ensuring the physical and medical fitness of drivers, crucial for their safety and the efficiency of operation at the hydroelectric project.

The medical camp, featuring eye check-up, aimed to address any health concerns and

promote preventive care among the drivers.

The Motor Vehicle Department Kishtwar played a pivotal role in spreading awareness on road safety measures during the Palmar enroute camp. The initiative aligns with the department's commitment to fostering a culture of safety and well-being among drivers, contributing to overall road safety.

The collaborative efforts between JP Associates Ltd and the Motor Vehicle Department Kishtwar underscore the significance of holistic driver wellness. Such initiatives not only enhance the health of drivers but also contribute to the safety and efficiency of transportation infrastructure, emphasizing the commitment to road safety in the region.

Dheeraj Gupta chairs public darbar at Marh



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 9

Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Department of Forest, Ecology & Environment, Dheeraj Gupta, today chaired a mega public darbar at Parwah panchayat in Marh block to assess the public grievances besides reviewing development profile of the area.

Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, Additional District Development Commissioner, Sher Singh besides other senior officers were

present on the occasion.

The event also witnessed participation of public representatives including DDC member Balbir Lal, BDC Chairman Marh, former PRI representatives and others. Prominent issues highlighted in the public darbar included dilapidated condition of roads, repair of irrigation canals, installation of grates for field protection, infrastructural improvement in local schools, upgraded facilities in SDH, consistent power supply for farming activities and development of sports infrastructure in

the block besides coverage of left out beneficiaries under PMAY, availability of veterinary facilities and dispensaries for the local population.

Dheeraj Gupta, responding to issues raised during the programme, assured the public that all their grievances and demands would be addressed in a timely manner.

ACS exhorted upon the officers to ensure strict adherence to PSGA guidelines while extending benefits of government services to the common masses. He gave specific

instructions regarding PMAY benefits and addressed some of the crucial grievances raised during the session. Reaffirming administration's commitment towards addressing every grievance promptly, Dheeraj Gupta said, "It has always been our endeavour to assess and address the public grievances and demands on priority."

Later, the ACS handed over sanction orders to the beneficiaries under various government schemes including HADD.

Market checking conducted in Kishtwar



JI NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, FEBRUARY 9

On the directions of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Devansh Yadav, an intensive market checking was conducted by the market enforcement team in Kishtwar town. The team of officers comprising Tehsildar Kishtwar and EO Municipal Committee Kishtwar Ninand Sen, Legal Metrology and Police Department Kisht-

war under the supervision of Tehsildar Kishtwar, Nirbhay Sharma conducted the market checking.

During the market checking, rotten vegetables/ fruits/ expired eatables were destroyed on the spot.

Further, Strict instructions were issued to the defaulters to maintain the hygienic condition and display rate list and other necessary documents at their shops.

NORTHERN RAILWAY			
E-TENDER NOTICE			
No. 413-2023-24-JAT-DRM-FZR	Date: 09.02.2024		
Sr. DEN-III/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date-04/03/2024 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. In place of Earnest money deposit, "Bid Security Declaration" is to be submitted or prescribed format as available in document section on the portal.			
Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System	
Open	Works	Single Bid System	
Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time	
09.02.2024/15:39	19.02.2024	04.03.2024/15:00 Hrs.	
S.No. : 1	Tender No. : 413-2023-24-JAT-DRM-FZR		
Details of Tender : Provision of 10 Nos. Security Mochas, 05 Nos. Guard Room, 04 Nos. Watch Tower, 5500 meter Boundary Wall at JAT Railway Station in Phase-1 Security Infrastructure on Jammu-Lakhanpur in c/w Security works Multi-Disciplinary Committee Report.			
Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
9,31,20,031.60/-	6,15,600.00/-	60 Days	10 Months
Note:- 1. Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against tender. 447/2024			
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE			

NORTHERN RAILWAY			
E-TENDER NOTICE			
Sr. DEN-III/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date-29/02/2024 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through only payment modes available on IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. For more information logon to www.ireps.gov.in .			
Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System	
Open	Works	Single Bid System	
Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time	
07.02.2024	15.02.2024	29.02.2024/15:00 Hrs.	
S.No. : 1	Tender No. : 408-2023-24-ADEN-I-ASR		
Details of Tender : Improvement to water conservation by providing Rain Water Harvesting chamber and replacement of sewer pipe line in Mech. Workshop under environment related work in the section of SSE/W/S/ASR under ADEN-I/ASR.			
Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money	Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
1,26,30,026.71	2,13,200/-	60 Days	06 Months
Similar nature of work: "-Any civil work other than track work".			
Note:- 1. Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against tender. No. 408-2023-24-ADEN-I-ASR Date: 07.02.2024 427/2024			
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE			

Gaon Chalo Abhiyan

Kavinder asks cadre to counter lies of opposition to clean sweep LS poll

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister, Kavinder Gupta on Friday asked the party cadre to counter the lies of opposition parties with full force to ensure resounding victory of the party in J&K in upcoming Lok Sabha poll.

The BJP stalwart leader was addressing a meeting of the party leaders and workers under the ongoing popular Gaon Chalo Abhiyan here in Booth No 87 at Nanak Nagar locality of Bahu constituency.

Kavinder said that in the name of pre-poll alliance opposition parties which are poles apart as far as their ideologies are concerned are concocting stories to misled the electorate against BJP and therefore it becomes



solemn duty of each and every worker of the party to dispel all the wrong notions spread by NC, Congress and other constituents of India Bloc as this was utmost important to ensure that unprincipled parties do not succeed in swaying the people away from BJP's nationalist agenda in J&K.

The former Deputy Chief Minister said that every party worker should accomplish his or her task

with utter dedication as this was prerequisite for clean sweeping Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir.

Later, the senior BJP leader interacted with prominent persons of the Booth, beneficiaries of welfare schemes and sought feedback about various policies and programmes of the Modi government meant for the socio-economic upliftment of the different sec-

tions of society. He also focused on the upcoming plans of the party which will help propel the country towards becoming top economic power in the coming years as promised by none other than the PM Narendra Modi.

Kavinder Gupta also initiated the party's logo on a wall and asked the party workers to ensure that the same logo should make space inside hearts of the people without any exception as there is no other party as nationalist as BJP.

Later, he also discussed strategy about strengthening the booth with the Booth President and Panna Parmukh and gave them suggestions to achieve the targets in minimum time as Lok Sabha polls are on cards and there is much to accomplish before the polling day.

Divisive politics is DNA of Congress: Rana

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Lashing out at the Congress for its divisive politics, Senior BJP leader Mr Devender Singh Rana today said the north-south narrative generated in sheer desperation over losing ground across the country is not new as the so-called grand old party has already bruised the national psyche by encouraging and promoting separatism in Jammu and Kashmir.

"The nation is still grappling with the historic blunders of the Congress and Jammu and Kashmir has been the worst victim and sufferer of its wrong policies", Mr Rana said while interacting with deputations and individuals during his weekly public hearing at the BJP headquarters at Trikuta Nagar here today along with Shalinder Vaid, Additional Protocol Secretary, BJP.

He said the Congress is reaping the fruits of its evil deeds and facing political turmoil due to historic



blunders and the time has come to make the party redundant. He exuded confidence that the nationalistic and pragmatic policies of the BJP will lead to Congress Mukh Bharat.

Rana said that Jammu and Kashmir has hugely suffered under the Congress and the rule by the parties supported by it for over seven decades. The misgovernance coupled with nepotism and corruption had pushed the erstwhile state to wall, which is why it has been lagging in development and economic empowerment. Now that the Yashasvi Prime Minister Narendra Modi has initiated path breaking steps to transform the Union Territory into Naya Jammu and Kashmir, the people are feeling difference for the first time and are hopeful

about being equal partners in the country's process of growth, he added.

"As if J&K turmoil was not enough, the Congress is now plaguing the country with sinister north-south divide in a vain bid to seek relevance in the Indian politics", he said, hoping that the people will foil all these machinations by breaking free from the shackles of division and embrace diversity as a source of strength and resilience in spirit of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas that has emerged as a huge factor for steering the nation towards holistic development and progress. The dividends are already discernible with India emerging as the fifth economic global power and set to be third in the row during the third

term of the BJP government led by Mr Narendra Modi. This has been possible due to sustained and tireless efforts during the past ten years, he added.

Devender Rana slammed the Congress for germinating a feeling of separation among the compatriots in the southern states thus posing threat to the unity and integrity of this great nation. It is high time that the people recognize the detrimental impact of the North-South divide perpetuated by the Congress in India, which has actually been responsible for regional disparities and widening the gap between the states to further its nefarious political agenda, he added.

Rana also listened to the individual and collective problems of the people, revolving around road connectivity, power and drinking water supply, utility services, and similar other issues. He assured that these will be taken up at the appropriate level for earnest redressal.

Police arrests 02 drug peddlers in Baramulla

J I NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, FEB 9

Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Police have arrested two drug peddlers in Baramulla and recovered contraband substances from their possession. A police party headed by IC PP

Palhallan at a checkpoint established at Palhallan, intercepted a person identified as Aamir Ahmad Gajree @Anaconda son of Mohammad Ramzan resident of Gojri Mohalla Palhallan. During search, officers were able to recover 108 grams of Charas from his possession. He has been arrested and shifted

to police station where he remains in custody.

In a similar action, a police party led by IC PP Mirgund, arrested a drug peddler identified as Syed Mohammad Shah son of Syed Ismail Shah resident of Kripalpora Payeen. During search, 105 grams of Charas was recovered from his possession. He

has been arrested and shifted to police station where he remains in custody.

Accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered and investigation have been initiated.

We urge the common masses that if you witness drug peddling or any other

crime anywhere near you, feel free to contact nearest police establishment or dial 112. People are requested to cooperate with police in curbing the menace of drugs from the society. We reassure the community members that police will act tough against the criminals as per law.

Police seizes 8 quintals of illegally procured rice in Budgam, 04 accused arrested

J I NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, FEB 9

Police in Budgam foiled a black-marketing attempt by seizing 800 Kgs of rice meant for government ration depots and arrested the accused persons involved in the commis-

sion of crime.

A Police party of PP Soibugh at a checkpoint established at Arath Crossing, intercepted a vehicle (load carrier) bearing Chassis Number BBXWRC66797 with three persons on board. They have been identified as Nisar Ahmad

Lone son of Ab Rashid Lone, Ab Qayoom Bhat son of Sonaullah Bhat, both residents of Singhpora Pattan and Ab Majid Wani son of Ghulam Rasool Wani resident of Arath Budgam. During search, Police party recovered 16 sacks containing 50 Kg of rice each.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

Rajya Sabha takes up...

Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar announced the government's decision to award Bharat Ratna to former prime ministers Chaudhary Charan Singh and P V Narasimha Rao and agriculture scientist M S Swaminathan.

He said it is an honour to announce the prestigious award to the aforementioned personalities for their contributions to the respective fields.

"When Bharat Ratna is given it is an honour not only for the person but the entire nation," Dhankhar said.

He further said it is a matter of satisfaction and joy for every Indian.

The government had earlier announced the country's highest civilian honour for L K Advani and Karpoori Thakur.

96.88 Crore people...

Commissioner Rajiv Kumar, in first, held a press conference at Pune during the launch of the Special Summary Revision Exercise in November 2022.

He explained in detail the various tasks involved in the revision of electoral rolls along with the participation of political parties at every stage.

Moreover, it is noteworthy that there is an increase in female voter registrations, exemplifying a concerted effort towards gender parity and inclusivity within the electoral framework.

"The Electoral Roll gender ratio has surged positively, indicating the growing role of women in shaping the democratic fabric of the nation. Over 2.63 crore new electors have been included in the electoral roll, out of which around 1.41 crore are female electors which surpassed the newly enrolled male voters (- 1.22 crore) by over 15 per cent," it poll body said.

Special endeavours have been undertaken to achieve 100 per cent registration of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG), making the electoral rolls the most inclusive to date, it added.

According to the Election Commission, after thorough house-to-house verification, names of 1,65,76,654 deceased, permanently shifted, and duplicate electors have been deleted from the electoral rolls.

"This comprehensive cleanup ensures the integrity and purity of the electoral process. It includes 67,82,642 dead voters, 75,11,128 permanently shifted/absent voters and 22,05,685 duplicate voters," it added. (Agencies)

LG directs concerned...

Various agenda points presented during the meeting include Kandori Ski Lift in Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary, Construction of Yatri Niwas and Disaster Management Centre by Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board at Bahu Conservation Reserve Jammu; Chhat Zorawar Operational Track; procurement of vehicles for Man-Animal Conflict Management, various Water Supply Schemes and road projects.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor inaugurated the Wildlife Office Complex at Raj Bagh Srinagar, and released a Coffee Table Book and a short film on Jambu Zoo.

A report on the Biodiversity Assessment of Wild Fauna (Mammals, Birds and Butterflies) and Flora in

Jasrota Wildlife Sanctuary Kathua, J&K and a booklet on Kashmir's Wetland Conservation Reserves titled Conservation Triumph- 2024 was also released by the Lt Governor.

Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Sh Shiv Anant Tayal, Secretary Tribal Affairs; eminent Conservationists, Ecologists, Environmentalists, representatives of Army, Botanical Survey of India, National Society on Water Resources, Wetlands & Forests and other board members also attended the meeting.

Rajya Sabha passes...

to address a very recent phenomenon affecting the youth. Government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always placed youth at a very high priority, he said.

Participating in the debate, Senior Congress leader Digvijay Singh said, the Bill deals with a subject in the Concurrent List and called for its extension to States. Dr Jitendra Singh countered Digvijay Singh by reminding him that at one time Education used to be a part of State list and the then Congress Govt had changed it over to Concurrent list.

Speaking on the issue, Prakash Javadekar, BJP said that the National Testing Agency was a crucial step in the direction to check malpractices in exams.

P. Wilson, DMK; Sandeep Kumar Pathak, AAP; Muzibulla Khan, BJD; Dr V. Sivadasan, CPI(M); Dr Ameer Yajnik, Congress; Dr Dinesh Sharma, BJP; Sandosh Kumar P., CPI & Dr Fauzia Khan, NCP also participated in the debate.

Replying to the debate, Dr Jitendra Singh said the Bill will ensure more transparency and time-bound selection process and provide level-playing field. Government will encourage the States to adopt the Bill.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, in the last ten years of Prime Minister Modi's leadership, India's economy has gone "from Fragile 5 to Top 5". In the Global Innovation Index, we ranked 81 in 2014, we have jumped 41 places, today we are No. 40 in the world, he said.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, India today has the 3rd largest Startup Ecosystem globally. From just about 350 StartUps in the year 2014, after PM Modi gave the clarion call 'StartUp India, Stand Up India' from the ramparts of the Red Fort in his Independence Day address and rolled out the special StartUp scheme in 2016, today we have over 1,30,000 Startups, he said. Dr Jitendra Singh said, four-five years back, we had just one Startup in the Space sector, today we have 190 private Space Startups after opening up of the sector. There has been an investment of over Rs.1,000 crore by private Space Startups in the current financial year from April to December 2023, he said.

The S&T Minister said India today is ranked in the top 5 Manufacturing countries of the world. In Biotech, we had just 50 Startups, today we have 6,000 BioTech Startups, he said.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Modi Government has initiated several youth-centric provisions and schemes in the last ten years, such as ensuring transparency and providing equal opportunity and level-playing field in recruitments and higher studies.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, PM Modi took a major initiative in 2014 by scrapping the rule of attestation of documents by a Gazetted Officer and introducing self-attestation, saying that we have trust in our own

youth. Later, interviews were scrapped in Government recruitment and higher education to curb favouritism and nepotism.

The DoPT Minister said, transparency and fairness has also been ensured by introducing online exams by UPSC, SSC and other recruitment agencies and the entire selection process has been reduced from one-to-two years to 6-7 months. With the vision and direction of PM Modi, the process of Rozgar Melas was introduced so that vacancies could be filled in bulk, - 50,000 to 60,000 (and even) 1 lakh appointment letters being issued together, - 45 stations across the country getting connected.

"The level of the merit of the new appointees has gone up," he said.

"The future of our youth up to 40 years of age, who comprise 70% of our population, is at stake, who are stakeholders in the Viksit Bharat of 2047," he said.

White Paper is...

that when the BJP-led government formed in 2014, "the economy was in a fragile state, public finances were in bad shape, there was economic mismanagement and financial indiscipline, and there was widespread corruption"

"It was a crisis situation. The responsibility to mend the economy step by step and to put the governance systems in order was enormous. Our government refrained from bringing out a white paper on the poor state of affairs then. That would have given a negative narrative and shaken the confidence of all, including investors. The need of the hour was to give hope to the people, to attract investments, both domestic and global and to build support for the much-needed reforms. The government believed in 'nation-first' and not in scoring political points..."

"Now that we have stabilised the economy and set it on a recovery and growth path, it is necessary to place in the public domain the seemingly insurmountable challenges - left behind as a legacy by the UPA Government," the White Paper said. (Agencies)

PM announces Bharat...

Be it as an MLA, as Uttar Pradesh chief minister or the country's home minister, he always speeded up the nation-building exercise and also stood strongly against the Emergency, he added.

Then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had imposed the Emergency in 1975.

Singh's dedication to farmers and commitment to democracy during the Emergency inspires the country, the Prime Minister said.

The honour for Singh comes at a time the RLD, led by his grandson Jayant Singh, is believed to be in talks with the BJP for an alliance for the Lok Sabha polls, expected in April-May. Singh died in 1987.

Paying rich tributes to Rao, who passed away in 2004, Modi said he served the country extensively in various capacities as a distinguished scholar and statesman.

He said Rao is equally remembered for the work he did as the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, a Union Minister and as lawmaker in Parliament and assembly for many years.

"His visionary leadership was instrumental in making India economically advanced, laying a solid

foundation for the country's prosperity and growth," Modi said.

"Narasimha Rao Garu's tenure as Prime Minister was marked by significant measures that opened India to global markets, fostering a new era of economic development," he added.

Modi said Rao's contributions to India's foreign policy, language and education sectors underscore his multifaceted legacy as a leader who not only steered India through critical transformations but also enriched its cultural and intellectual heritage.

The Modi Government's move to recognise two stalwart politicians who came from non-BJP backgrounds is resonant with political and social messaging. It is expected to boost the BJP's efforts to present itself as a party which represents pan-India interests and aspirations and recognises leading people in different fields.

Rao's admirers have long argued that he has not been given his due by the Congress due to his less than warm relations with the Nehru-Gandhi family, a point often made by BJP leaders too.

As the country's first and only full-term prime minister from south India, Rao occupies a special place in the region.

Modi said it is a matter of immense joy that his government is conferring the Bharat Ratna on Swaminathan in recognition of his monumental contributions to the nation in agriculture and farmers' welfare.

"He played a pivotal role in helping India achieve self-reliance in agriculture during challenging times and made outstanding efforts towards modernizing Indian agriculture. We also recognise his invaluable work as an innovator and mentor and encouraging learning and research among several students," he said.

Swaminathan's visionary leadership has not only transformed Indian agriculture but also ensured the nation's food security and prosperity, the prime minister said, noting that he knew him closely and always valued his insights and inputs.

The agronomist passed away last year. Four of the five awards this year are posthumous. Advani, 96, is the only one alive. (Agencies)

Young Man fatally...

RTO, Jammu and Kashmir due to reason Others, SPECIAL LEAVE TO APPEAL(C) NO. 2496/2021 TITLED UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR & ORS V/S JAMMU AUTOMART PVT. LTD dated 29-Nov-2021."

The police informed that the Scorpio vehicle, bearing registration No. JK02CM-0018, collided with a two-wheeler registered as JK02CO-9859 in the Sector 02 area of Roop Nagar late at night on February 7. The incident was captured on a nearby CCTV camera. The accused driver, Kuldeep Kumar, a resident of Kishtwar district, served as the private driver of the BDO.

Two Terrorist...

a resident of Sopore, in similar subversive activities. The searches at Larah's residence led to recovery of arms and ammunition and other incriminating material, the officials said, adding both the accused persons were arrested. (Agencies)

Bhupinder Kumar chairs public outreach, grievances redressal camp at Sersundwan

JI NEWS SERVICE
REASI, FEBRUARY 9

Secretary, Public Works Department, Bhupinder Kumar, today chaired a public outreach cum grievances redressal camp at Government High School, Sersundwan in Bhomag.

The primary objective of the camp was to foster direct engagement between the public and government officials with emphasis on resolving grievances and concerns of the locals.

Speaking on the occasion, Bhupinder Kumar reaffirmed LG government's commitment towards ensuring that every area within the region is connected with roads. He elaborated the transformative impact of projects like the World Highest Chenab Bridge, which not only enhanced

connectivity but also bolstered tourism fostering economic growth in the region. He assured that efforts are underway to provide road connectivity in the unattended habitations, ensuring no community is left behind in the journey towards progress.

The Secretary urged upon the people to collaborate with government departments to expedite development initiatives. He encouraged residents to avail benefit of various schemes sponsored by both the central and UT administrations. He reassured the public that all genuine grievances and demands would be accorded priority and addressed effectively.

He exhorted upon women fraternity to



establish home stays near the world's highest Chenab Bridge to raise their income. He emphasized the potential for self-income generation through such ventures, highlighting the importance of community engagement and entrepreneurship.

Chairperson District

Development Council, Saraf Singh Nag, emphasized the importance of resolving issues timely in ensuring effective development.

Issues raised by the participants, during the camp, inter alia included construction of Dak Banglows, up-gradation of schools and school build-

ings, water scarcity, road connectivity, promotion of Sersundwan as tourism village, initiation of RTC bus services, fresh surveys for PMAY and BPL, acceleration of work on bridge over Anji and clearance of pending road compensations, monkey menace.

The local community apprised the Secretary regarding severe water scarcity issues stemming from the ongoing construction of railway tunnels in the area.

On the occasion, various departments installed their stalls, showcasing a diverse range of central and UT government schemes.

Speaking on the occasion, District Development Commissioner, Vishesh Mahajan, underscored the significance of effi-

cient water management, acknowledging the challenges faced by the area in this regard. He outlined plans to alleviate water scarcity by diverting water from tunnels with the collaborative efforts of railway and JalJeevan Mission (JJM) department.

The students of GHS Sersundwan presented a mesmerizing cultural programme like traditional Kud dance.

The residents of Sersundwan presented a memorandum of demands to the Administrative Secretary during the grievances camp. ADDC, Sukhdev Singh Samyal, SSP Mohita Sharma, PO Poshan, Mohammad Anwar Bandy, ACR Anshumali Sharma, SE PWD and PMGSY, ACD, Tensildar, BDO and other senior district officers were present on the occasion.

Road Safety awareness event held at Trial Ground Bharderwah



JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, FEBRUARY 9

The Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) Doda, on the direction of Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh and under the supervision of ARTO Rajesh Gupta on Friday, organized a road safety awareness campaign in Trial Ground Bharderwah. The event took place at the Bharderwah trial ground, as part of the ongoing celebration of National Road Safety Month. The initiative aimed to educate the general public and new driving license (DL) seekers about road safety measures.

During the event, an oath on road safety was administered by the Motor Vehicles Department, with the participation of new DL seekers, the driving community, and MVD officials. The ceremony emphasized the importance of adhering to road safety guidelines and precautions. Large banners promoting road safety were prominently displayed, drawing a significant crowd of local residents and drivers from the community.

dents and drivers from the community.

ARTO Doda addressed the audience, stressing the significance of practicing safety measures, especially in hilly terrains. He urged newly licensed drivers and the driving community to prioritize safety while driving, emphasizing the unique challenges of navigating mountainous roads. Additionally, ARTO Doda highlighted the ongoing celebration of National Road Safety Month and reiterated the department's commitment to promoting safe driving practices.

In addition to the event, emphasis was placed on specific safety measures crucial for driving in hilly areas. These included maintaining a safe speed, staying vigilant of road conditions, utilizing headlights during foggy conditions, and adhering to designated lanes. Furthermore, drivers were encouraged to undergo proper training for handling challenging terrain and to regularly inspect their vehicles for optimal performance and safety.

Road Safety Awareness Campaign conducted by MVD Doda on NH244



JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, FEBRUARY 9

Under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh, and the supervision of ARTO Doda Rajesh Gupta, a road safety awareness drive was conducted on NH244, here the other day. The campaign focused on passengers traveling in buses and minibuses. They were educated about safe travel practices and asked to closely monitor vehicle operators' driving behavior.

As part of the ongoing National Road Safety Month, pamphlets containing vital information on road safety measures and precautions were distributed among the passengers. The initiative underscores the importance of promoting responsible driving habits

among both drivers and passengers to reduce the risk of accidents and ensure safer journeys.

The ARTO emphasized the significance of proactive measures in enhancing road safety, stating that such initiatives play a pivotal role in reducing road accidents and fatalities. He urged both commuters and drivers to adhere to traffic regulations and exercise caution while on the road.

The collaborative effort between local authorities and transportation officials reflects a commitment to fostering a culture of road safety and responsible travel within the community. With continued awareness campaigns and enforcement efforts, the aim is to create a safer road environment for all travelers on NH244 and beyond.

Udhampur hosts 35th UT Level Volleyball Championship



JI NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, FEBRUARY 9

The Volleyball Association Udhampur, in collaboration with the District Administration Udhampur, and Sports Council Udhampur, is set to host the 35th UT Level Volleyball Championship for under-19 category Boys and Girls.

The championship will take place from February 21st to 23rd in Udhampur district. Deputy Commissioner Udhampur today chaired a meeting in the Mini Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex to discuss the arrangements for the upcoming volleyball championship.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner,

Joginder Singh Jasrotia, senior officers from various departments, and representatives of the Volleyball Association.

During the meeting, the DC instructed the heads of the stakeholder departments, including EO Municipality, Executive Engineers of PHE, PDD, PWD to ensure comprehensive arrangements for sanitation, drinking water, power supply, and construction of temporary toilets well in advance.

The DC commended the efforts of the Association and encouraged their initiative in organizing the championship in the district. All department heads were urged to provide necessary assistance for the successful completion of the championship.

J&K Bank opens Easy Banking Unit at Surinsar



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 9

Continuing its mission of providing convenient banking services to the people of remote areas, J&K Bank today operationalised an Easy Banking Unit (EBU) at Surinsar in Jammu. The EBU will provide the basic facilities of banking like cash deposit, cash withdrawal, account openings etc. to the people of the area.

The Bank's General Manager & Divisional Head (Jammu) Sunit Kumar e-inaugurated the EBU Surinsar in the presence of Zonal Head (Jammu) Rajesh Dubey, Cluster Heads with elected public representatives of the area, prominent persons and local residents present in good numbers at the base Branch Tootan-Di-Khui.

Speaking on the occasion, the Divisional Head reiterated the Bank's commitment citing its contribution in render-

ing world class banking facilities to the people irrespective of their location and status. He said, "We will continue to expand as well as deepen our footprint to serve the people belonging to different geographies by extending the latest banking facilities and financial services to their nearest possible destinations. The EBU at Surinsar will go a long way in helping the people of the area in meeting their daily banking needs."

While seeking support from the public, the GM assured them that the outlet will make every effort to meet the expectations of the people of the area.

People present at the base branch Tootan-di-Khui expressed their gratitude to the Bank management for opening an EBU in their area. "The EBU will definitely enhance the bonding of the people with the J&K bank", they said.

Development of BSNL Infrastructure in GP/BHQs reviewed at Udhampur



JI NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, FEBRUARY 9

Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai today chaired a meeting in the Mini Conference Hall, DC Office Complex regarding development of BSNL infrastructure in GP/BHQs, involving officers from the line departments.

During the meeting, Sanjeev Chopra delivered a comprehensive Power Point presentation outlining the process and progress of optical fiber laying in villages and Panchayats

across the district under the Government of India initiative. He highlighted infrastructural issues identified during the Bharatnet phase-III survey in the District Udhampur, noting that the survey has been successfully completed. The DC emphasized the inclusion of government establishments, including Patwari khana and Panchayat ghars, under this Union Government's initiative. She urged inter-departmental coordination to ensure the effective implementation of the scheme.

CAHO clarifies on sale of R2B Vaccine in Doda

JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, FEBRUARY 9

The Department of Animal Husbandry, Doda has issued clarification on the sale of R2B vaccine at Govt. Poultry farm cum Hatchery Doda on February 3, 2024.

Following a thorough investigation conducted by a committee constituted by Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Dr. Mayan Ud Din Gures, it has been concluded that the allegations raised by a section of media were entirely baseless.

"The committee's findings, outlined in a detailed report, indicated that the Poultry birds were indeed sold to the public on February 3, 2024. The sale included the issuance of R2B vaccine along with poultry birds. Media personnel emerged from the crowd during the sale and demanded documents such as challan, causing confusion among the staff. Staff members, unaware of the media's presence, initially mistook them for regular beneficiaries, lead-

ing to a misunderstanding. Amidst this confusion, a misunderstanding arose regarding the pricing of the R2B vaccine. The media alleged that poultry staff charged higher rates for the vaccine, which was promptly refuted by the staff. The actual price of a vial of R2B vaccine is Rs. 10, and each farmer was provided two vials for Rs. 20 upon request" a statement stated.

It further stated that "The misunderstanding arose from the media's misinterpretation of the pricing, mistaking the cost of one vial for Rs. 20."

The department further said "Upon careful examination, it has been established that there was no misconduct on the part of the poultry staff. Once the staff became aware of the presence of media personnel, they extended courteous treatment accordingly. The Department of Animal Husbandry, Doda, assures the public of its commitment to transparency and accountability in all its operations."

Sheep Husbandry department organizes farmers tour under ATMA

JI NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, FEBRUARY 9

Department of Sheep Husbandry Udhampur today organized Training for Farmers under centrally sponsored Scheme ATMA for the year 2023-24.

District Sheep Husbandry Officer Udhampur, Dr. Farhat Bashir flagged off the tour of thirty Sheep Farmers from different Blocks of District Udhampur, to Government Sheep Breeding farm Panthal, District Reasi to learn latest scientific techniques in rearing sheep.

The farmers visited various sections of Government Sheep Breeding farm Panthal for on spot practices being undertaken in feeding and management of Government Sheep on scientific lines besides Embryo Transfer Technology (ETT) and Artificial Insemination (AI) in Sheep and Goat under Holistic Agriculture Development Program. The farmers were educated regarding latest sheep Husbandry Practices by delivering lectures, through banners,

posters and distribution of resource material among the farmers.

Assistant Director Government Sheep Breeding Farm Panthal, Dr. Deepak Kichloo Delivered lecture and apprised the visiting farmers regarding scientific practices of sheep rearing for increasing mutton and wool production in order to enhance socio economic status of sheep rearing communities.

During the tour, farmers were also educated regarding income generating schemes like Integrated Sheep Development Scheme (ISDS), Tribal Sub plan scheme (TSP) and Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP) Scheme for overall benefit of Sheep farming communities to double the income through distribution of resource material. Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Veterinary Assistant Surgeon accompanied the tour who made required arrangements of catering, transport etc. for smooth organizing of tour and making the whole event a successful activity.

Power shutdown

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 9

Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDCL Jammu has informed that the power supply to Airforce installation will remain affected on February 10 from 9 am to 1 pm.

Similarly, the power supply to Kishtwar town and adjoining areas will remain affected on February 12 from 9 am to 3 pm.

Likewise, the power supply to Tanda, Miran Sahib, Simbal, Kotli, Darsapur, Trishul Bottle and adjoining areas will remain affected on February 12 from 9 am to 2 pm.

Similarly, the power supply to Upper Barnai, Lower Muthi, Paloura, JK Colony, Chandan Vihar, PHE Roop Mahar, MES Rajouri Lines, Patoli, BSF Paloura and adjoining areas will remain affected on February 12 from 9 am to 12 noon.

Meanwhile, Superintending Engineer O&M Circle Rajouri (JPDCL) has informed that the power supply to Sunderbani R/Stn to Thandapani Shamshan Ghat will remain affected on February 10 to 20 from 6 am to 11am.

Roshan Lal, Harpal Singh assume offices as ADDC, ACR

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, FEBRUARY 9

Roshan Lal, today assumed the office as the Additional District Development Commissioner, Ramban.

Concurrently, S. Harpal Singh, also took charge as the Assistant Commissioner, Revenue,

Ramban. Their appointment marks a new chapter in the administration of Ramban district.

The incoming officials were warmly welcomed

by the officers and officials of the District Administration, signifying a smooth transition and fostering a spirit of collaboration.

EDITORIAL

Ensure robust mechanism for utilization of funds

On Friday, the Project Approval Board (PAB) approved Rs 1665 crore annual plan under Samagra Shiksha for the financial year 2024-25. It is a welcome step under which 554 schools approved under Vocational Education, while 2,000 smart classrooms and 600 ICT labs will be established in the next year. There is no denying in fact that the Centre has always provided liberal funding to Jammu and Kashmir to improve its educational infrastructure. Unfortunately, the official indifference and lethargy have become a major hindrance in spending the sanctioned amount. Recently, the Ministry of School Education has recently revealed that Jammu and Kashmir failed to utilize over Rs 4,200 crore central grants optimally under the Government of India's flagship Samagra Shiksha Scheme during the last five years. The figures are a stark testimony of poor utilisation of funds meant for ensuring "inclusive and equitable quality education" at all levels of school education. Consequently, the department faced a significant cut in its annual allocation of funds from the Ministry of Education, Government of India under the scheme over the financial years starting from 2018-19 to 2023-24. This was even though the SED had been complaining about the paucity of funds to carry out various infrastructural development activities but the allocated funds, which were lying in its coffers, remained unspent for varied reasons. The Ministry has further revealed that the Centre made the proposed release of funds worth Rs 9,840.94 crore for Jammu and Kashmir between the financial years 2018-19 and 2023-24 against which an amount of Rs 3,999.57 crore actual central shares was released for the period. The SED, however, failed to utilize the funds optimally as the Central grants worth Rs 4214.47 crore remained unspent between 2018-19 and 2022-23. The Ministry has not cited any specific reasons for the failure of the J&K education department to ensure timely expenditure of funds. In the year 2018-19, an amount of Rs 837.62 crore central share remained unspent which was escalated to Rs 1340.05 crore in the next financial year 2019-20. The central grants worth Rs 612.19 crore remained unutilized in the year 2020-21, Rs 744.28 crore in 2021-22 and Rs 680.53 crore in 2022-23. The careful study of the official document revealed that Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a major cut in the annual allocation of funds from the Government of India due to the SED's failure to utilise 100 percent of allocated funds under Samagra Shiksha Scheme in the past five fiscal years. The erstwhile Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) along with other two centrally sponsored schemes of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE) have been subsumed under a new Integrated Scheme for School Education-Samagra Shiksha, launched in the country from 2018-19. The fund-sharing pattern between the Centre and the UT of Jammu and Kashmir is 90:10 unlike the ratio of 60:40 between the Centre and all other States and UTs with Legislature, except for eight North-Eastern States and two Himalayan States viz. Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. With over Rs 1,600 crore in its kitty, the Jammu and Kashmir administration should make a robust mechanism for proper utilization of the sanctioned amount to give a major facelift to government schools. Any success in this regard will help achieve the dream of quality education in government-run schools.

Solar scheme offers free electricity and economic empowerment

RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently announced a groundbreaking initiative in her budget speech, confirming that participants in the government's newly unveiled rooftop solar scheme will receive 300 units of complimentary electricity per month. This initiative aims to assist households in saving up to Rs 18,000 annually, with distribution companies ensuring its implementation. This announcement comes on the heels of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's declaration of the 'Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana' shortly after his return from Ayodhya on January 22. Under this scheme, rooftop solar power systems will be installed in one crore homes, though a specific timeline for achieving this ambitious target was not provided.

The scheme arrives at a crucial juncture as the government's goal of installing rooftop solar power plants has not gained significant traction. Despite a target of 40 GW by the end of 2022, only 5.87 GW of rooftop solar projects were installed by May last year, representing less than 15% of the target.

In alignment with the government's energy transition plans, a substantial portion of the renewable capacity, totalling 292 GW out of 500 GW by 2030, is expected to be solar power.

Additionally, the Finance Minister highlighted that the scheme will facilitate the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) by incorporating home charging stations. It is also anticipated to generate entrepreneurship and employment opportunities in the supply, installation, and maintenance sectors.

The 'Pradhan Mantri



Suryodaya Yojana' extends the longstanding rooftop solar energy program, which aimed to contribute 40 GW to the government's initial target of installing 100 GW of solar capacity by 2022. However, as of the end of 2023, the country's total solar capacity reached 73.3 GW, with grid-connected rooftop systems comprising only 11 GW, or 15%.

Industry experts, including the Delhi-based Council on Energy, Environment, and Water

(CEEW), suggest that installing solar power on rooftops of 10 million homes could add 20-25 GW of new capacity. Furthermore, this initiative is expected to lead to savings of about Rs 2 lakh crore for distribution companies over the next 25 years.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana, approximately 10 million households will benefit from the ability to sell surplus electricity to distribution companies. Sitharaman estimated that fami-

lies could save between Rs 15,000 and Rs 18,000 annually through this project, with the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) Limited serving as the designated nodal agency.

The scheme mandates the provision of 300 units of free electricity to low- and middle-income households. After recovering the installation cost of Rs 80,000 (post-subsidy) for a 2 kW plant in four years, the surplus power generated can be sold to the grid. Distribution companies stand to benefit from reduced infrastructure investment and losses.

While the project's implementation faces challenges, including limited panel manufacturing capacity, experts advocate for a focus on practical sectors such as commercial and industrial, where subsidies and clear policies can drive cost reductions. Despite previous shortcomings, the government remains

committed to renewable energy targets, including the expansion of e-vehicle infrastructure and the promotion of green growth initiatives.

In conclusion, the 'Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana' signifies a pivotal stride towards a brighter, cleaner future for India. By harnessing the power of the sun, this initiative not only offers free electricity to millions of households but also paves the way for economic prosperity and environmental sustainability. With continued commitment from both the government and citizens alike, India is poised to emerge as a global leader in renewable energy adoption, driving positive change for generations to come. Let us embrace this opportunity to shape a greener, more prosperous tomorrow for our nation and the world.

(The writer is a senior journalist; views are personal)

Fiscal injustice is the charge, and sentiments matter more than logic

BHARAT BHUSHAN

Protests by the southern states about fiscal injustice in the devolution of taxes seem to have caught the Union government by surprise. Already there has been one march led by Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and another by his Kerala counterpart Pinarayi Vijayan in Delhi, opposing 'economic discrimination' against south Indian states.

The protests have cut the government to the bone. Prime Minister Narendra Modi fulminated against the Congress at the end of the Budget Session of Parliament alleging that it was "trying to divide the north and the south". He exclaimed, "What language is being used in the country today? Our taxes, our money? Stop searching for new narratives to break the nation".

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman replied against charges of discrimination against the South that she had no "discretion" in allocating tax revenues as "devolution to states... happens as per Finance Commission recommendation". Finance Secretary T V Somanathan was roped in on television to explain that financial allocations to states are based on uniform guidelines that left no room for discrimination.

Referencing the rules set by the Finance Commission is hardly likely to soothe agitated sentiments. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government should know better than anyone else that sentiment cannot be trumped by logic. It has whipped up sentiments unwarranted by logic against its adversaries, more often, than any other political party. It has from its inception accused the Congress of 'minority appeasement' - whereas the last nation-wide study of Indian Muslims, the Sachar Committee report of 2006, concluded that the condition of Muslims was worse than that of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

One might also wonder what is the contribution of the BJP in agitating southern sentiments by provocative statements on Hindi by its leaders, and the imposition of untranslatable Hindi names to the three criminal codes it has passed in Parliament. Several of its Governors in the Opposition-ruled states are seen as the Centre's instruments to harass the elected non-BJP governments in the South. The people of the southern states and their elected governments can, therefore, be forgiven for their resentment against the Centre in general, and the BJP in particular.



Admittedly, the principles of a federal union demand that the total tax kitty be distributed equitably between the less industrialised and urbanised states and the more advanced ones. However, there is nothing wrong in asking that the principles of distribution of the tax pool be looked at again transparently to make them acceptable to all.

Does Modi remember that in June 2008, as Chief Minister of Gujarat, he had kicked up a storm by his remarks on fiscal injustice in the devolution of funds from the central kitty? He had claimed that while the Centre collected Rs 40,000 crore in taxes from Gujarat, it gave only 2.5 per cent of central funds to the state. He had dared the Centre to pay nothing to Gujarat for a year but also forgo taxes from the state. In October 2013, Chief Minister Modi suggested to the 14th Finance Commission that the Centre ought to provide 50 per cent of

the total tax revenue to the states instead of only 32 per cent.

It may be time to relook at adjusting the criteria for devolution of funds to the states. Data from the reports of the various finance commissions shows that the devolution of central taxes to the five southern states - Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala - came down from 18.62 per cent in 2014-2015 to 15.8 per cent during 2021-2022 and 2024-2025. In the very first year of the 15th Finance Commission, a perceptible fall had already begun with the share of the five southern states at 18.04 per cent in 2015-2016. It prompts questions about the weightage formulae used by the commission.

Each finance commission decides on a formula for devolution based on several criteria to balance needs, equity, and performance. Different weightage is given to each cri-

terion such as the difference between the income level of the state with the highest income level state, its population, and area to demographic performance and tax collection efficiency. The major difference in the devolution criteria used by the 14th and 15th Finance Commissions was in the weightage given to population and in the Census data used.

In the 14th Finance Commission, the population weightage was 17.5 per cent with the 1971 Census data being used, while in the 15th Finance Commission the weightage was 15 per cent with the 2011 Census. In addition, the latter introduced a new criterion, 'demographic performance' (i.e., population control) with a weightage of 12.5 per cent. The southern states opposed the use of 2011 Census figures as they feared the 15 per cent weightage would skew the devolution in favour of states with larger populations, while it was unclear whether the absolute size of the population would be adequately neutralised by the 12.5 per cent demographic performance parameter.

Perhaps it did not do so sufficiently which

might explain the falling share of the southern states with their decreasing populations. In this year's Interim Budget, Uttar Pradesh received 18 per cent of the total share of the funds devolved to the states, while Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu 4 per cent, Karnataka 3 per cent, Telangana 2 per cent, and Kerala 1 per cent. These numbers feed the sentiment of discrimination.

It also happens that most of the North Indian states are ruled by the BJP either directly or with alliance partners. While Sitharaman may declaim in Parliament about being bound by the recommendations of the finance commission, the sentiment (not the logic) would suggest that she was favouring the laggard states at the cost of the better performers, urging altruism in the name of national unity. Altruism will work only if those on whom demands are being made believe that these are just and fair.

The general elections are only weeks away, and an anti-Centre agitation in the South can stymie the chances of Modi making any effective inroads into the southern states. The southern states have got hold a stick and there is no reason why they should not wield it.

(Bharat Bhushan is a Delhi-based journalist.)

Geo-Politics in the election Year

KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

A poll-bound government is likely to highlight the domestic socio-political economy rather than focus on global geopolitics. However, in a world where food on the plate for citizens is dictated by ravaging wars and inimical neighbours, geo politics finds itself through to every conversation, even if it is addressed to a political constituency. In the past week, the entire Indian government has laid out the influence of external factors on the domestic economy and therefore their voting choices.

The successful conclusion of the G20 summit in New Delhi, last September, topped with a joint communique, is the geo-political showpiece that will be used in election rallies by the ruling party members. The build-up to the G20 summit was a careful exe-

cution of several events, meetings, conferences and exhibitions criss crossing the entire country. One of the first meetings leading to the G20 summit was in Andamans, where the foreign heads of G20 countries were treated to the scenic beaches in the middle of the Indian Ocean. Several diplomats, this author, spoke to later, had never been to Andamans, neither hoped to set up a vacation in future, had it not been for the diplomatic event.

Going beyond setting up a Bharat culture and diversity tourism pitch, the G20 events were an early roadshow for the Modi government, beginning in December 2022, almost a year and a half ahead of the general elections. Elaborate street decorations, cosmetic and essential lift of meeting venue infrastructure, putting a celebratory appeal to an otherwise boring diplo-



matic affair, and getting many diverse stakeholders on board, made the Indian G20 presidency closer to the citizens. Almost every taxi driver, hotel owner, local shop owner and person out on a stroll in the venue city would be discussing the G20 summit, with a palpable excitement, similar to a cricket match.

However, the Prime

Minister knew Indians wanted more, they were used to a grand extravagant wedding-type spectacle, and he ensured all of it with his state visit to France, followed by the US and finally the grand finale of the G20 summit in New Delhi. The common message away from the twists and language of diplomatic documents, meant for a common citizen was India

has arrived at the global stage and the world is eagerly waiting for India's global leadership. Prime Minister, Modi summed it up during his speech on the vote of accounts earlier this week in Lok Sabha, where he counted the G20 summit as one of the key highlights of the government under his leadership for a decade. "He said that the world's views and opinions towards India can be summed up by the success of the G20 Summit. Prime Minister Modi underlined that the whole world is watching the speed of the work of the government as well as its big goals and courage."

Meanwhile, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented her sixth consecutive budget (the current one being interim) last week and even though she kept the document and her speech to be a bland vote on accounts (as it should be) she did

squeeze paragraphs on the importance of Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITS) for getting fresh investment in the economy. Her speech highlighted "Geopolitically, global affairs are becoming more complex and challenging with wars and conflicts. Globalization is being redefined with reshoring and friend-shoring, disruption and fragmentation of supply chains, and competition for critical minerals and technologies. India assumed the G20 Presidency during very difficult times for the world. The country showed the way forward and built consensus on solutions for those global problems." Even though India is pushing for a multilateral world order, the global agenda has reached the electorate's doorstep in an election year.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

AAP intensifies Door-to-Door campaigning in vill Pattian of Keran Panchyat

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Intensifying its door to door public awareness / awakening program about the magical development in Delhi & Punjab Pattern, the AAP Sr. Leaders Mr. Kuldeep Kumar Rao & Mr. Ranjodh Singh, distributed pamphlets to the men, women & youths, in Pattian village of Keran Panchyat, in Jammu North Assembly Constituency, highlighting the achievements of AAP Delhi government, the AAP leaders said that the AAP is serious to give a clean time tested alternative to the electorates in J&K UT to get rid of 75 years misrule of corruption, nepotism, casteism & divisive politics of religion & region. They further said that the only alternative before the people is 4-point magical Mantra of Delhi model (i) free electricity up to 200 units without any cut (ii) free potable water up to 20,000 litres per house hold (iii) quality Health service on door steps through Mohalla clinics & (iv) quality Education in government Institutions for Delhites besides Char Dham yatra free of cost to Senior citizens, free Metro & bus services to women irrespective of caste, creed & colour, in addition to several other social welfare schemes, as our constitution guarantees the right to life to everyone living in the country. They said that AAP has revolutionized & galvanized the lives of Delhites which can be done here also in J&K if AAP is brought to power. They further said that time has come now when every Indian is appreciative of Delhi Model of governance which, in the



first instance, hammers a death blow to the virus of caste, creed & colour and instead ensures development of all sections of society. The Sr. AAP leaders further deliberated on the present sky rocketing prices of Kitchen items like atta, rice, edible oils, missing of Kerosene oil, sugar, vegetables and unprecedented un-employment in last 45 years, corruption, nepotism and worst law & order mismanagement putting the lives of common masses in danger. They further said that LG, Manoj Sinha, as per practice of PM Modi & other BJP leaders, is busy here in J&K, throwing JAMLAS after JUMLAS & said that who will trust this type of ornamental JUMLAS because earlier also PM Modi promised 15 lacs into the accounts of each house hold, doubling the income of farmers by ending 2022, MSP to the benefit of farmers, 2 crores jobs to the frustrated highly educated youths. Terming BJP Bhartiya Jhooth Party, the Sr. AAP leaders questioned as to where is Samriti Irani as the LPG has jumped to Rs. 1100/= from Rs. 430/= per

cylinder, prices of Diesel, Petrol, fertilizers, quality seeds, Milk, curd, Atta, transport fares etc? They expressed serious concern over devaluation of money as Indian rupee has dipped record low over Rs 83 as compared to U.S dollar and said our GDP is astonishingly lower than our small neighbors and the Nation has to pay billions more on account of Import bills. They further said that on International scenario, the hunger index, the mal-nutrition India is alarmingly at a low position. And in such a situation how can we become VISHAV GURU, they questioned. Adding fuel to the fire, several thousands of youths engaged on contractual basis, ad-hoc basis, daily wagers or need based arrangements in all departments be it Home guard, Education, PDD, PHE, Health, Food & civil supplies & so on so forth has compounded the miseries of frustrated youths with every passing day as scores of them are crossing age limit or nearing the same without any hope of ACHHE DIN, the AAP leaders maintained and said that previous

leaders of successive state governments are squarely responsible for the present mess who, without any planning & application of mind, adjusted the youths simply to create vote banks & appease their kith & kins, has put thousands of youths in great dilemma & worst confusion & the LG administration is again repeating the same process in J&K-UT, the Director Jammu & Director Kashmir have sought again application for contractual post of Lecturers in Higher Secondary Schools & same is the case in Degree Colleges, which is very unjust with the Educated youths of J&K. The AAP leaders further said that BJP has nothing new to sell to the country men; JUMLAS of every kind is now at the tip of tongue of every citizen; thank God, polarization has got a good drubbing in Delhi, Punjab and recently in Karnataka; really "you can't befool all the people for all the time. alas ! Jammuites see through the game earlier the better as if country has achieved freedom in 2014; it's a matter of great satisfaction that every political party wants to switch over to Delhi/Punjab pattern of governance; Delhi and Punjab people have given a befitting reply to those who shamelessly call the same as " muft ki rewadi" because in almost all developed countries, health and education sector is on top priority, then why not in our country? Time has really come when we should not lend an ear to the flurry of JUMLAS and rather gird up our loins to teach them a lesson like Delites, Punjabi as also Karnataka people.

CPMFWA urges PM Modi to address grievances of Ex Central Paramilitary Forces

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Ex-Central Paramilitary Forces Welfare Association (CPMFWA) of Jammu and Kashmir UT appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for pension revisions and urged for the implementation of the Cabinet Committee on Security's directives to extend suitable benefits to Paramilitary Forces personnel. Addressing a press conference here on Friday, the Chairman of the Association, Ashok Kumar highlighted a series of longstanding grievances faced by the Ex-Central Paramilitary Forces. Ashok Kumar, flanked by the association's General Secretary, D.K. Chauhan, projected various demands which include disparities in treatment compared to Defense Forces, particularly concerning pension schemes and post-retirement benefits. They emphasized that Paramilitary Forces exhibit the same level of dedication, valour, and



patriotism as Defense Forces, however, they are not receiving similar benefits and post-retirement privileges, which is against natural justice. They urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to revise the pension scheme for Paramilitary Forces, citing examples of disparity between Defense and Paramilitary Forces pensions. They highlighted the approval by the Cabinet Committee on Security to extend suitable benefits to Paramilitary Forces personnel, akin to those provided to Ex-Servicemen of Defense Forces by state and UT governments. They also urged for the timely implementation of the 7th Pay Commission recommendations and payment of pending DA arrears, warning of boy-

cott to vote BJP in coming elections if demands are not met. They expressed gratitude to the Finance Minister for ongoing efforts and appealed for fair treatment in the upcoming budget, particularly requesting a 50% GST concession for Paramilitary Forces. The association stands united in its commitment to advocating for the rights and welfare of Paramilitary Forces personnel. Others present in the press conference include Ashok Kumar Chairman (CPMFWA), Harbans Lal Vice President (CPMFWA), Noor Mummad General Secretary (CPMFWA), Yash Pal (CPMFWA), Mela Ram (CPMFWA), Hans Raj (CPMFWA), Naresh Kumar (CPMFWA), Harvinder Kour (CPMFWA) and Jagan Nath (CPMFWA).

Samsung launches Galaxy XCover7, its first-ever enterprise exclusive smartphone

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Galaxy XCover7, a powerful device which is rugged, and offers exceptional usability. Galaxy XCover7, engineered to survive extreme conditions aims to ease the lives of professionals, providing faster connectivity, seamless continuity, and minimizing risk of interruptions caused by external factors, allowing them to work faster and smarter. The Galaxy XCover7 will deliver enhanced mobility with 5G connectivity, upgraded mobile processor performance and increased memory. Additionally, the Galaxy XCover7 comes with a new powerful rear camera optimised for single and multiple barcode/QR code scanning and expanded display size and resolution, providing users the ability to work in a variety of settings. The easy POGO charging pin for convenient recharging in any setting, and increased touch sensitivity to support usage even with the gloves on makes Galaxy XCover7 a reliable and convenience-oriented product. Defined by its durability and cutting-edge features, the Galaxy XCover7 ensures seamless continuity and enhanced productivity that enable users to work from anywhere in the world. The smartphone series come with an immersive, wide-screen display that enhances visual clarity, allowing users to work more efficiently even on the field. Knox Vault in Galaxy XCover7 helps protect the most critical data on these devices, including lock screen information like PIN codes, passwords and patterns. "At Samsung our objective is to provide our users convenience and durability through our product offerings. We have introduced Galaxy XCover7 series in two variants, the Galaxy XCover7 Enterprise Edition and Standard Edition. Both devices are engineered with cutting-edge technologies making them extremely powerful and resistant to tough weather conditions.

Samsung R&D Institute signs MoU with IIT Kanpur

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Samsung R&D Institute, Noida (SRI-Noida) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with The Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK) for a period of five years to focus on key growth areas that will include joint research projects by IIT Kanpur students, faculty and Samsung engineers, helping students become industry-ready. These research projects will span areas such as health, visual, framework and B2B security, and cutting-edge technology areas such as Generative AI and Cloud. Apart from research projects, the MoU seeks to provide opportunities for upskilling Samsung engineers in key technology areas such as AI, Cloud and other emerging technologies. The MoU was signed by Mr. Kyungyun Roo, Managing Director, SRI-Noida, Prof. Tarun Gupta, Dean, Research and Development, IIT Kanpur and in the presence of Prof. S. Ganesh,

Director, IIT Kanpur; Prof. Sandeep Verma, Department of Chemistry, IIT Kanpur; Prof. Tushar Sandhan, Department of Electrical Engineering, IIT Kanpur; and other senior delegates from Samsung. We are excited to begin this collaborative journey with IIT Kanpur. This collaboration reflects our dedication towards merging academic excellence with industrial innovation, thereby making students industry-ready. We look forward to a dynamic exchange of ideas, knowledge and talent, which will certainly play a crucial role in the success of groundbreaking projects and contribute to the growth of both Samsung and IIT Kanpur," said Mr. Kyungyun Roo, Managing Director, SRI-Noida. "By combining the academic excellence of IIT Kanpur with the industry expertise of Samsung India, we aim to create a dynamic environment for cutting-edge projects and provide invaluable opportunities for our students and researchers. This MoU

complements IIT Kanpur's relentless efforts in bridging the gap between academia and industry, while creating a connection between theoretical knowledge and practical industry solutions," said Prof. S. Ganesh, Director, IIT Kanpur. "The MoU reflects our commitment to providing our students and researchers with opportunities that go beyond academics, contributing significantly to technological advancements and growth of the academic landscape of our institute," said Prof. Tarun Gupta, Dean, Research and Development, IIT Kanpur. As part of the joint research projects, students and faculty of IIT Kanpur will work on real-world industry challenges, aligning themselves with actual market needs. They will also work on Digital India related solutions, along with Samsung engineers. Students and faculty of IIT Kanpur will also be encouraged to publish joint research papers with Samsung engineers.

YNC felicitates Ajaz Jan after coming from Umrah

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Ajaz Jan, Provincial President Youth National Conference, Jammu, was felicitated by the Youth National Conference Office bearers and Senior leaders of the party, after performing Umrah coming back to Jammu and Kashmir at Sher-e- Kashmir Bhavan, Jammu today. During his Umrah, Ajaz Jan informed that he along with Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah prayed for



the peace and prosperity of people of the country in general and Jammu and Kashmir in particular. They also prayed that the peace will always prevail in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Ajaz Jan asked

the party workers to gear up for upcoming parliament election to ensure a smooth victory of National conference so that people get rid of the governance that has given them nothing except miseries. Those

who were present on this occasion: Abdul Majeed Larmi former MLA, Rahim Daad Ex-MLC, Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Th. Yashu Vardhan Singh Additional Spokesperson Jammu, Umesh Talashi Additional Spokesperson Kashmir, Rakesh Singh Raka Vice President Central Zone, S. Tejinder Singh District President Jammu Urban YNC, Zamir Quersh, Nitish Gowsami, Jasin Malik, Adhyan Sharma, Mudrit Seth, Kousar Malik, Ashanand and others.

Zindagi Breaks Boundaries with 'Abdullahpur Ka Devdas' – A Tale of Love, Sacrifice, Friendship set to Captivate Indian Audiences

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Zindagi, the trailblazing entertainment brand, is set to mesmerize Indian audiences with the launch of its much-awaited show Abdullahpur Ka Devdas on February 26, 2024. Directed by Anjum Shahzad and written by Shahid Dogar, this 13-episode show promises a captivating blend of love, friendship, and poetic drama. Set in a small town, Abdullahpur Ka Devdas is the coming-of-age story of Fakhar, played by Ek Jhoothi Love Story fame Bilal Abbas, and Kashif, played by Raza Talish—two best friends unknowingly in love with the same woman, Gulbano, as essayed by Sarah Khan. However, Gulbano's fantasies have been captured by an anonymous poet

named Devdas. As the plot progresses, Kashif reveals himself to be Devdas, becoming the object of Gulbano's desire. Unbeknownst to her, the true Devdas is Fakhar. Abdullahpur Ka Devdas is a classic story of love and how a person truly in love can cross all boundaries, even if that means sacrificing their love. This heartfelt story is a power package of love, friendship, betrayal, and sacrifice. Moreover, the ensemble cast, featuring Savera Nadeem, Anoushay Abbasi, and Noman Ijaz, adds depth to the narrative. The show also explores the delicate balance between love and friendship, posing the poignant question, "Mehboob ya Mohabbat?" While love holds all the power in our lives, sacrifices, and com-

promises become predominant in the show. As we see Fakhar (Bilal Abbas) worrying about his lover's happiness before his own, he goes in the end to sacrifice it all together. Zindagi's commitment to bold multicultural narratives shines through, making this show one of the most anticipated. Elevating the experience, Abdullahpur Ka Devdas also promises to bring to you soul-stirring melodies, which include tracks like 'Biba Sada Dil Morr De' by Zain Ali, Zuhaib Ali, Sami Khan, Iqra Manzoor and lyrics (recreated) by Sami Khan and 'Oh Sahib' by Adnan Dhool, Zain & Zohaib and lyrics by Asim Raza enriching the storytelling with a melodic touch. The soon-to-be national crush of India Sarah Khan said, "Abdullahpur Ka



Devdas introduces a spin to the idea of love stories in the most heart-breaking but relatable way. It was a wonderful experience working with such talented people on a unique script. I knew I wanted to play Gulbano as soon as I heard the story in the first meeting. Working with Shahzad Nawaz, Sawera

Nadeem, Bilal Abbas and the rest of the cast is a dream come true moment for any actor. The director, Anjum Shahzad worked on every minuscule aspect of the show that made me want to portray Gulbano at the maximum capacity. It is incredibly exciting to know its release on Zindagi; Indian audience

has always been generous with their love, and I am eagerly anticipating the response to our heartfelt tale." The talented actor-Raza Talish, who plays Kashif, said, "I am thrilled about 'Abdullahpur Ka Devdas' making its way to Indian screens through Zindagi. The whole cast and crew's belief in the project reflected the immaculately knit story. This made the filming journey both realistic whilst profound. This story makes us yearn for more such stories, and I am glad that I have been a part of this creative piece. Now with its TV release, I'm eager to see how the audience connects with our tale of love, sacrifice, and friendship. It's an exciting moment for all of us." Commenting on the upcoming launch of the

show on Zindagi, director, and visionary Anjum Shahzad said, "Abdullahpur Ka Devdas is more than just a love story, it's a roller coaster ride of human emotions. Love and Devdas are two sides of the same coin. Whether it's the classic Devdas or the modern Abdullahpur ka Devdas, true love is at the heart of both stories. Shailja Kejriwal (Producer, India) was as a key person in making this story happen. Zindagi has been a fantastic platform for cross-cultural storytelling. I am looking forward for valuable feedback from our friends in India." Talking about Abdullahpur Ka Devdas's release on Zindagi, producer Shailja Kejriwal said, "The story unfolds in a small town Abdullahpur, seamlessly intertwining passion, heartbreak, and unex-

pected twists, revealing the intricate web of relationships. Abdullahpur Ka Devdas delves into the human heart, showcasing how love's highs can also bring unexpected turns and deceit. I can't wait for you to experience the captivating storytelling and powerful performances by our talented actors, portraying characters that resonate with the universal ebb and flow of love." Abdullahpur Ka Devdas emerges as the most awaited show of 2024, poised to initiate a movement through art that transcends geographical confines and fosters a shared appreciation for diverse narratives. Don't miss the premiere on Zindagi DTH Tata Play (Channel no. 154) Dish TV and D2h (Channel no. 117), and Airtel TV (Channel no. 102) on February 26, 2024.

G H Mir inaugurates North Madras Cafe at Gulmarg Road, Dhobiwan

J I NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEB 9

In a momentous occasion showcasing the intersection of culture and commerce, Ghulam Hassan Mir, the Former Cabinet Minister and Senior Vice President of the Jammu Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP), inaugurated the North Madras Cafe, owned by Aijaz Ahmad Malik, on Gulmarg Road in Dhobiwan, Jammu and Kashmir. The event, held on February 9, 2024, marked a significant milestone in the region's culinary landscape and economic development.

The inauguration ceremony was not just about cutting ribbons and serving refreshments; it symbolized a convergence of efforts to stimulate local business, promote cultural exchange, and foster community engagement. As Ghulam Hassan Mir, a respected figure in J&K's political and social



spheres, graced the occasion, his presence lent weight to the importance of such initiatives in bolstering the region's economy and fostering unity among its diverse populace.

Local residents and dignitaries gathered to witness the unveiling of the North Madras Cafe, eagerly anticipating the flavors and experiences it would

bring to Gulmarg Road. The cafe's establishment represents more than just another eatery; it serves as a beacon of entrepreneurship, resilience, and hope for the community. Amidst the challenges faced by the region, the opening of the cafe signals a renewed spirit of progress and prosperity.

The choice of "North Madras Cafe" as the estab-

lishment's name itself speaks volumes about the diversity and inclusivity it aims to promote. By bringing flavors from South India to the picturesque setting of Jammu and Kashmir, the cafe not only tantalizes taste buds but also bridges cultural divides, fostering greater understanding and appreciation among residents and visitors alike.

Ghulam Hassan Mir's role in inaugurating the North Madras Cafe underscores the JKAP's commitment to supporting local businesses and promoting economic growth in the region.

His endorsement of such ventures sends a powerful message of encouragement to entrepreneurs and investors, inspiring confidence in the potential of J&K's business landscape.

As the aroma of freshly brewed coffee and exotic spices wafts through the air of Gulmarg Road, the North Madras Cafe stands as a testament to the resilience, innovation, and spirit of enterprise in Jammu and Kashmir. Beyond serving delectable dishes, it serves as a hub for social interaction, cultural exchange, and economic empowerment—a place where people from all walks of life can come together to savor the flavors of unity and progress.

NSS SMVDU Volunteers participate in Nat'l Adventure Camp at Pongdam, Kangra



J I NEWS SERVICE
REASI, FEB 9

NSS SMVDU, Katra volunteers participated in 10 Day National Adventure camp at Pong Dam (Kangra). The camp was organized by Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Mountaineering and Allied Sports (ABVIMAS), Kangra. The camp was funded by the Regional Directorate, NSS New Delhi. A total of 45 participants, including 04 from

SMVDU, embarked on water activities. The camp focused on enhancing Swimming skills, covering aspects like Boating, Rafting, Sailing, Swimming, kayaking and river crossing. Beyond physical challenges, the camp aimed to develop social awareness and leadership skills. The success of the event was credited to ABVIMAS' expertise and the volunteers' enthusiasm, showcasing teamwork and camaraderie.

The NSS volunteers that participated in the camp were Chetan Gupta, Priyanka Sharma, Shatakshi Tewari, Astabhujanath Pandey. NSS coordinator Dr. Rajiv Kumar and co-coordinator Dr. Kamaldeep congratulated the volunteers for successfully completing the National camp. Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Pragti Kumar appreciated the efforts of NSS volunteers and congratulated them for bringing laurels to the University.

Mirchi Kanno Dekhi Film Festival Brings the Magic of Movies to Visually Impaired Students, at Jammu

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

98.3 Radio Mirchi brings the Mirchi Kano Dekhi Film Festival to the city of Jammu, an initiative aimed at showcasing a specially audio-dubbed movie, meant to bridge the gap between sighted and visually impaired audiences by providing an immersive and inclusive movie-watching experience. The screening featured Sushant Rajput starer 'M.S Dhoni', which is a Biography based on the life of the "Thalla of Cricket" - Former Indian Captain Mahender Singh Dhoni. The special AD version of the movie has been created by SAKSHAM TRUST in association with TOC COMBINE PVT LTD. The Script and voiceover have been done by Narendra Joshi.

The event began with a

warm welcome of all the students and esteemed guests by the Team of 98.3 Mirchi including Mirchi Shwetima and Mirchi RJs RJ Chaitanya, RJ Tani, and RJ Rohit, who ensured the audience laughs their heart out even before the movie began. Their dynamic hosting and engaging interactions with all the kids truly enhanced the experience for all the attendees.

Mirchi Team were honoured to have Dr Arun Kumar Manhas JKAS, Director Industries Jammu, and Ms Anusuya Jammal JKAS, ADC Jammu and Mr Bharat Manhas JKAS, Secy J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages as our esteemed guest at the event. They graced the occasion with their insightful remarks and shared invaluable wisdom.

Radio Mirchi extends its gratitude to Archit Puri,



Director P Mark & Chairman CII J&K, Nakul Mehra MD Naturis Cosmetics, Abhinandan Gupta MD Raddisson blu Jammu, Ranjiv Khajuria, Mudassar MD Wheelocity Skoda, Dr Abhishek Sachdeva Owner Sachdeva Netralya, and Gautam Bali Owner Gautam Bali Makeup Studio & Academy for their generous support in making this event possible. As we reflect on the success of "kanno dekhi" we extend our special thanks to Harpreet Singh Anand, Chairman of Jammu San-

skriti School for providing busses to escort children, and Atul Vinod Duggal of AVD motion pictures who contributed to making this event a resounding success.

Ms Anusuya JKAS, ADC Jammu in her interaction with students expressed her joy and said, "This pioneering initiative seeks to provide visually impaired individuals with an immersive cinematic experience through audio descriptions, thereby breaking barriers and fostering a more inclusive society.

Acceptance is all they seek and that is what we as Society should be collectively focussing on."

In her remarks, Programming Head of 98.3 Mirchi Jammu, Shwetima said, "We are deeply grateful to the Louie Braille Memorial Residential School for Sightless children, Swadhargreh 'Neha Ghar' and Jammu Sanskriti School for taking care of such children with utmost love and care." She expressed her gratitude to the Saksham Trust for their pivotal role in creating this specially adapted version of the movie for blind students. The support from the J&K Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages further strengthened the cause. The festival extends special thanks to the Department of Social Welfare for their consistent support and commitment to inclusivity.

Chaitanya Gupta, Station Head of Radio Mirchi Jammu said "we believe in the power of entertainment to unite communities and break down barriers. The event embodies our commitment to creating an inclusive society where everyone can participate and enjoy cultural experiences. We are extremely grateful to everyone who listen to us on Radio and support us off radio as well". Deeba Khan, Station 98.3 Radio Mirchi J&K said, "We are a leading entertainment brand dedicated to providing innovative and inclusive content to its audience. With a focus on fostering cultural experiences and community engagement, 98.3 Radio Mirchi would continue to be at the forefront of inclusive entertainment initiatives which eventually help shaping up the society".

Davinder Kumar remembered, Langar organized in his memory



J I NEWS SERVICE
RS PURA, FEB 9

Social activist and senior PDP leader Narinder Sharma and others today organized Langar in memory of Social activist Davinder Kumar alias Puppy at his native village Kotli Shah Doula of RS Pura Constituency. Recalling his social works, Narinder said Davinder Kumar will be missed not only because he was an exceptional human being who was friend, colleague and mentor to so many in society, but as one who drew the loyalty and admiration of people across class and creed, he will be missed because of his long years of faithful service, his deep experience of public life, his integrity and his rare ability to inspire and work with everybody he came in contact with. Narinder further said that Davinder was called social activist by everybody who knew

him, his sheer stamina and diligence that even advancing age could not dim. I have seen for myself the great respect he commanded across all sections of society. In spite of his years and at times indifferent health, he confronted these challenges boldly and met his tormentors with his trademark smile. I would get agitated at his ordeal but Davinder himself always remained calm and collected. To me personally, Davinder was always a source of sage and wise counsel both on people and on issues. I would consult him on all sorts of matters because I knew very well that he could be relied upon to give me honest, unbiased advice that would remain totally discreet. Because he was so easily accessible to everyone from across the society, he would very often tell me about what he had heard from them which I would always find was very valuable feedback.

Cong condemns Habba Kadal attack, demands strict action against Pak

J I NEWS SERVICE
SAMBHA, FEB 9

Jammu Kashmir Congress, District Samba President Sanjeev Sharma has strongly condemned the Habba Kadal terrorist attack in which two non-locals from the minority community were attacked. Out of which, Amritpal Singh of Punjab lost his life on the spot and another person named Rohit also lost his life in the hospital after injuries. Sanjeev expressed condolences to the families of Amritpal Singh and Rohit who were martyred in the terrorist attack. Sanjeev said that the minority community in Jammu and Kashmir is facing continuous attacks at the hands of Pakistan sponsored terrorists and the government has failed to ensure the security of the minority community. He said that despite making tall claims, BJP has failed to

ensure the security of minorities in the valley. Sanjeev said that the government should take concrete steps to ensure the safety of minorities in Jammu and Kashmir. Sanjeev said that terrorists supported by Pakistan are raising their heads again and again and there is a need to deal with them strictly. Sanjeev said that Pakistan has not improved its ways till date and it is making every possible effort to disturb the peace in Jammu and Kashmir. Sanjeev said that BJP leaders only give strong condemnation but they have no answer to give to the families of those who are continuously losing their lives. He said that on one hand BJP claims peace in the valley and on the other hand terrorists are continuously targeting people. Due to which the false peace of BJP in the valley is coming in front of everyone.

Bhalla asks party cadre to gear up for Parliament elections

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

A meeting of District Congress Committee Jammu Urban was held here today at PCC HQ Jammu to take stock of the preparations for the upcoming Parliament elections besides discussing the burning issues of the people. The meeting was chaired by PCC Working President Shri Raman Bhalla. The meeting was organized by District Congress Committee Jammu Urban led by Th. Manmohan Singh and attended by Senior leaders of PCC, DCC, Block & Ward Presidents, Frontal Organizations heads and others. Prominent among them include PCC Vice Presidents Yogesh Sawhney (Ex-Minister), Shri Naresh Gupta (EX-MLC & AICC Coordinator for Jammu Parliamentary Seat), Ved Mahajan (Ex-MLC), Rajnish Sharma (Treasurer), Pranav Shagotra, PCC General Secretaries Narinder Gupta (Org), Suresh Dogra, Thomas Khokhar, Amrit Bali, Satish Sharma, Seva Dal Chief Vijay Sharma. Jyoti Vaid, Michael Wazir, Dr. RK Khajuria, Latis Sharma, Ricky Dalotra, S.P Sapolia, Atul Sharma, Chander Shekhar, Pawan Sharma, Sanjeev Katal, Anil Kumar, Darshan Verma, Nageshwar, Sunil

Sharma, Yash Sangral, Ashwani Sethi, Gharu Ram, Ram Magotra, Sushan Gupta, Dewan Chand, Manjeet Singh Bedi, Balderv Singh Wazir, Balwinder Singh Rinlu, Anoop Gupta, Farooq Ahmed, and others.

The meeting took stock of the preparations for the Parliament elections and asked the party cadres to gear up for these elections and defeat the anti people anti youth, anti students, anti farmers, BJP regime. The party sought input from block and Ward presidents regarding the activities of the party.

Raman Bhalla lashed out at those parties who have been exploiting the sentiments of the people on various emotional issues for vote bank politics but utterly failed to deliver. He asked the party functionaries to make aware the people of the communal agenda of BJP and defeat the nefarious designs of communal, divisive and separatist forces. He complimented the people of



Jammu region for believing in togetherness and religious harmony despite grave provocations by vested interests

He said that BJP Govt. in its more than 9 years rule under the prime minister ship of Shri Narinder Modi has ruined the country in every field. Every section of the society is suffering due to its wrong policies and wrong

decisions. The people of Jammu and Kashmir are the most sufferers. The Modi Govt. has snatched the right of jobs and land from the people of J&K by downgrading a full-fledged state into Union Territory. The property tax, toll plazas, smart meters, unemployment has added more in the miseries of people of Jammu and Kashmir,

Bhalla added.

Raman Bhalla said that unemployment is increasing day by day. Govt. advertizes jobs, Sell application forms by charging heavy fee and then cancel these jobs on reasons. In this process many youth have become over aged and frustrated for their future. The people, especially youth will certainly ask the

local leaders of BJP, what they have done for them. Naresh Gupta in his address criticized BJP leadership for ignoring and neglecting the mandate of Jammu who remained as mute spectators for the sake of power. The people are deeply hurt over attitude of BJP leaders in the Govt. but unfortunately the people are exploited in the name of religion and castes. Such a divisive politics is dangerous for the state and nation. He asked the leaders and activists of Jammu Urban to fan out in their areas and educate the masses about the failures of BJP Govt. at the Centre and State.

Th. Manmohan Singh stressed upon the need to counter the false propaganda of BJP claiming to be champions of Jammu for last seven decades but miserably failed when they got huge mandate on falsehood and unachievable slogans. BJP stands exposed totally and it can no longer befool the masses of Jammu region. The people must reject all opportunists and exploitative politics in coming elections, he added.

Punjabi Writers Seminar by JKAACL concludes

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

A two days' Punjabi Writers Seminar organized by J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) concluded today at K. L. Saigal Auditorium of the Academy. The topic of the Seminar was 'Samkali Punjabi Sahit Jammu-Kashmir- 2019- 2023'. Various aspects related to literary activities in the Union Territory of Jammu- Kashmir, during this period, were intensely discussed and shared by the group of a large number of intellectuals, writers, poets, faculty students and scholars of Jammu University and other colleges, and lovers of Punjabi language.

Three Academic sessions and a session on Cultural bonanza were conducted by the Academy under the guidance of Sh. Bharat Singh, Secretary, JKAACL on the concluding day of the Seminar.

During the 1st Academic



ic Session of the second day of the Seminar, four research papers were presented by Prabhjot Kour on 'Jammu Kashmi Da Punjabi Natak- Stithi Ate Sambavnaavaan', Jang S. Verman on the topic of 'Jammu Kashmir Di Punjabi Patarkaarta: Itihaas Te Paripekh- 2019- 2023', Ratan Singh Kanwal on the topic 'Ajokey Dour Vich Punjabi Boli Te Bhaasha', and Dr. Sukhwinder Singh on the topic 'Jammu- Kashmir Da Punjabi Novel' Vartmaan Stithi'.

Prof. (Dr.) Baljit Kour, University of Jammu

and Prof. Surinder Singh Seerat, a senior Punjabi writer, S. Popinder Singh Paras, Editor Sheeraza Punjabi, JKAACL were present in the presidium during this session. They gave impressions on the content and presentation of research papers during the session.

Poetry recitation was conducted during the second session of the day where Ajit Singh Mastana, Baljit Singh Raina, Joginder Singh Pandhi, Devinder Singh Vishavnagrik, Dr. Monojit, Harjit Singh Uppal, Suraj Singh, Suraj

Rattan, Surinder Singh Seerat, Balkar Singh, Bhupinder Singh Raina, Bhupinder Singh Bhargav, Rajkumar, Baldev Singh Panchi, Harpal Singh Pali, Swami antar Neerav, Balwinder Singh, Bahan Bharti, Surinder Singh Sodhi, Pritam Singh Anjan presented their poetry in various genres of Punjabi poetry on different issues of life. Senior Punjabi writer & former President, Punjabi Lekhak Sabha, Jammu Devinder Singh Vishavnagrik, Harjit Singh Uppal, President Punjabi

Sahitik Sabha, R S Pura and senior writer Surinder Singh Sodhi were present in the presidium and expressed their views on the second session of the seminar.

During the the last session of the Seminar on the second day of the Punjabi Writers Seminar conducted by the J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, a cultural programme was presented in which the groups like Thoru Ram Premi & Party, Harman Cultural & Educational Society (Giddha), Jaswinder Singh & Party (Bhangra), Dilsher Singh & Party and Chaman Matoi & Party presented various cultural items projecting Punjabi culture.

The proceedings of the programme were conducted by S. Popinder Singh Paras and T S Preme. Formal vote of thanks was extended to the dignitaries and guests present by S. Popinder Singh, Editor Sheeraza Punjabi, JKAACL.

Pavneet Kour concerned over poor implementation of PMAY in Chatha



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 8

Apni Party Provincial President, Women Wing, Pavneet Kour today expressed concern over improper implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana in favour of the homeless people in Jammu.

As per the press release, Pavneet Kour, while addressing a meeting at Chatha area in Satwari, interacted with the people

of different segments of society.

The people complained that many of them were not given benefits under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) by the authorities.

"The PMAY scheme was launched to provide homes to the homeless people under the Govt sponsored schemes that need proper implementation without any biased approach," she said after hearing their concern.

She further stated that the concerned authorities have also not been able to implement the development of the lanes and drains in the rural areas of Jammu outskirts.

She, however, assured the people that their concern shall be highlighted before the concerned authorities.

The meeting was attended by Ritu Devi, Varsha, Devinder Singh Gill, Pooja, Yashpaul Choudhary and others.

JJSF to launch agitation for revival of waiting lists in recruitments

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Jammu Joint Student Federation on Friday held their emergent meeting at GGM Science College Jammu. The meeting was chaired by Keshav Malhotra District Jammu President JJSF whereas JJSF units of GGM Science College Jammu and SPMR College participated in this meeting to discuss the consequences of repealing the rules mandating recruiting agencies to draw a waiting list for filling dropout vacancies for each job test. The members present in the meeting discussed in detail about the matter and expressed their concern about the aspirants of various recruitment exams. They further unanimously decided to launch a province Level agitation to revive waiting list provi-



sion in recruitment. While addressing the gathering, district President JJSF Keshav Malhotra raised questions over decisions of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir to abrogate waiting list provision of recruitment rules. He said that due to incompetent officials of prominent recruitment boards and a derailed recruitment process since 2021, youth of Union Territory was suffering. Various recruitments have been piled up and many meritorious candidates are getting selected for

multiple posts as most of the recruitments are concluding at the same time. The direct impact of this decision of removing the waiting list has caused damage to the future of many aspirants. By this order the government has also violated the fundamental right of equality in public employment as waiting list provision is available in all other states and even in various recruitment bodies of the Government of India. He added that this unconditional decision should be recalled and waiting list provision should be rein-

stated as soon as possible so that aspirants of JKPSI, VLW, Finance Account Assistant, Junior engineer and others could have their right. Raghav Singh JJSF President SPMR College of Commerce said that Jammu Joint Student's Federation always stood first to fight for rights of students and youth. He said we all have pledged together that we will leave no stone unturned to revive the waiting list provision in various recruitments of Jammu Kashmir.

Others present during the meeting are Bharat Verma JJSF President GGM Science College, Ritik Verma Vice President JJSF, Vishal Dogra, Vansh Johal Working President JJSF, Samaksh Sharma General Secretary, Vansh Johal Gourav Sharma General Secretary, Vipan Malhotra District Secretary, Vansh Sharma etc.

CUJ hosts Thought-Provoking Lecture on Cultural and Gender Studies

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

An Awareness Workshop on National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS) was organized by Board of Apprenticeship Training (Northern Region), Ministry of Education, Government of India at Central University of Jammu under the esteemed patronage of Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor CUJ.

The workshop was attended by about 100 representatives from more than 63 different central & state governments, public sector undertakings and private establishments.

Sh. Sunil Kumar, Assistant Director, BOAT(NR), Ministry of Education, GOI graced the occasion and informed about the objectives of National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS), its effectiveness, plan for implementation of NATS in Jammu & Kashmir, UT and the expectation from the stakeholders mainly from the Industries established in the Industrial Estate of



Bari Brahmana and Samba areas along with others.

Prof. Yashwant Singh, Registrar CUJ, in his address informed about the apprenticeship training opportunities for candidates and industries can develop skilled manpower for their future requirement. He also briefed about the academic programs offered by the Central University of Jammu and said that Central University Jammu is working to meet the demand and skills required by Industries.

Representatives from different sectors shared their views and underlined the importance of apprenticeship training and the difficulties faced by the candidates for apprenticeship training in their

organization as there are limited educational institutions in Jammu and Kashmir.

Dheeraj Dhawan, HR member from LUPIN said that there are no or few pharmacy colleges in Jammu and how the pharmaceutical sector is facing problems for the students. He said the apprentices are imparted on-the-job training in establishments for improving their skills and employability. Stipend is paid to the apprentices by the establishments during their training. He gave the detailed information about the different modules of the NATS portal and how establishments can complete the apprenticeship cycle for a student in their organization using the portal in

online mode.

Some of the major companies participated in the event were Lupin, Anphar Organics, IISER Mohali, Emcure Pharmaceuticals, Kwar HEP CVPPPL, Chenab Valley Power Projects, Berger India, Dabur India, Central institute of Hand Tools, JKB Financial Services, Vitasta Health care centre, Reliance Industries Limited Hoshiarpur and many more.

Viraj Magotra, Training and Placement Officer- CUJ emphasised on the importance of students training in getting relevant industry experience and briefed the attendees that the students of the Central university of Jammu getting paid training in organisations of repute which eventually turns into job offers.

Capsule Training Course for PSOs concludes at PTTI Vijaypur



JI NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYPUR FEB 9

"10 days Capsule Training Course for PSOs" concluded at Police Technical Training Institute (PTTI) Vijaypur today on 09.02.2024. The objective of the course was to enhance the capabilities and tactics of police officials to protect VIPs/protected persons. On this occasion a Valedictory function was organized

which was graced by Shri Dushyant Sharma, SSP, Incharge Principal PTTI Vijaypur who while speaking on the occasion said that these trainees have been trained in Crises management, Reaction Drill, Evacuation, Anti ambush techniques, Tactical position taking and medical contingency which would definitely help them while performing their field duties with VIPs/Protected persons.

The officer further told that during course the trainees were put on strenuous outdoor activities to make them physically fit with a motive to keep them mentally alert in tough situation. Among others, Shri Zia-Ul-Haq, Dy.SP (Outdoor), Surinder Paul Singh (Dy.SP (Indoor/Tech), Insp. Ram Lal (CLI), Insp. Pawan Anand, ASI Naresh Kumar were present during valedictory function.

GDC Chenani organizes Door-to-Door campaign on Nasha Mukht Bharat

JI NEWS SERVICE
CHENANI, FEBRUARY 9

NSS Unit "Prayatna" of Government Degree College (GDC) Chenani organized a door to door campaign on "Nasha Mukht Bharat" in adopted village Champadi of Tehsil Chenani here today.

The programme organized under the able guidance of college Principal Dr. Anil Khajuria, Prof. Kewal Kumar. While speaking on the occasion, Principal of the college Dr. Anil Khajuria complimented the organizers for holding this event for the awareness of college students and masses in general. He urged the organizers to organize such more programmes in the near future also.

Volunteers of NSS unit actively participated in the program and aware the people of adopted village Champadi about the hazardous effects of drugs on their lives and family in particularly and on the society in general.

The total thirty NSS volunteers have participated in the campaign. Volunteers are divided into two groups of 15 volunteers in each group.

Tax Bar Association felicitates Commissioner PK Bhat

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Tax Bar Association Jammu today welcomed and felicitate newly appointed Commissioner State Taxes PK Bhat along with Additional Commissioner State Taxes Nimarta Dogra here today at Tax Bar Room Office at Rail Head Complex, Jammu. The event organized under the leadership of Tax Bar Association Jammu President Rakesh Kapahi. The felicitation programme was followed with interactive session between the guests and the worthy members of tax bar association.

Senior Vice President Adv. Vikram Dubey, Vice President Adv. Renu Verma, General Secretary Adv. Dheeraj Bhasin, and Joint Secretary and Treasurer Adv. Ishant Gupta were also present on this occasion.

While speaking on the occasion, Rakesh Kapahi, the President of Tax Bar Association Jammu said that he feels great pleasure and honor to welcome the esteemed guest Commissioner State Taxes P.K. Bhat,



and Additional Commissioner Namarta Dogra. Kapahi added that the appointment of P.K. Bhat as the Commissioner of State Tax marks a significant moment for all of us. With over 30 years of experience in the field of taxation, Mr. Bhat's journey from a village in Anantnag district to his current position is truly inspiring. His dedication and expertise, demonstrated through various roles within the Sales Tax Department, including DC Appeal, make him a commendable choice for this crucial role, especially during the critical phase of GST implementation.

PK Bhat while speaking said that he feels privileged to be a part of such a department in which

he has already served over 30 years and also thanks all the advocates with whom he learnt and got expertise in the field of taxation. He said that the grievances which the worthy members are facing will be addressed on priority and hope that all will work together with full cooperation and coordination.

Vikram Dubey has done the proceedings of the meeting and said we also express our gratitude for addressing the long-standing demand for VAT amnesty, with special thanks to Additional Commissioner Smt. Namarta Dogra for her important role in this matter during her tenure as DC Recovery. Renu Verma & Dheeraj Bhasin said that we are confident that our griev-

ances will be addressed in a timely manner, benefiting both taxpayers and tax professionals.

Ishant Gupta extended vote of thanks and said that we look forward to a productive collaboration and fruitful outcomes under his guidance.

Prominent who present on this moment were Subash Dutt, Rattan Lal Gupta, VK Grover, Mohinder Gupta, Vinod Suri, BM Mangotra, Sunil Sharma, Vikas Chopra, Rakesh Modi, Kamal Gupta, Anil Gupta, Sourav Mahajan, BB Bakshi, Rajinder Sharma, Rohit Gupta, Suraj Singh Wazir, Bageshwar Khajuria, Ashwani Goswami, Gourav Arora, Sumeet Mahajan, Pawan Sharma, Balram Gandotra, Yudvir Gupta and Others.

Khatana enlightens MIT School students Stresses on youth to join politics, sports; keep distance from addiction



J I NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEB 9

Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and senior BJP leader, Ghulam Ali Khatana on Friday enlightened the students from 'MIT School of Government, Pune' on importance of joining politics at a younger age.

A group of these students from the 19th batch of "Master's Programme in Political Leadership and Government" was on a visit to Parliament on "National Study Tour".

Addressing these students Khatana said that youth of today will run the nation tomorrow and youth is the proper period of life to join politics.

Giving reference of his own college days wherein he also remained a prominent student leader, Ghulam Ali Khatana said that leadership builds discipline in the students at a very young age.

"As over 55 per cent of Indian population is that of young people, our country is also known as the nation of young people and these young people should also think of politics as an option apart from medical, engineering, civil services and other professions," he maintained adding that honest, disciplined and learned youth have better chances to serve the nation in a better way."

The BJP MP said that in the last about 10 years India has seen remarkable progress in every field under the able leadership of PM Modi who



J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU FEB 9

Under the directive of Chairman DPAP, Ghulam Nabi Azad, a delegation of DPAP leaders, led by Chief Spokesperson Salman Nizami, visited Sabzi Mandi Banihal to offer financial assistance to the victims of the recent fire incident. During the visit, Nizami presented a donation of one lakh cash on behalf of Chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad and urged the affected individuals to compile a comprehensive list for additional support. The gesture was made with a commitment to provide ongoing aid and ensure the protection of the livelihoods of the affected shopkeepers. Nizami

launched many schemes for the welfare of youth of the country.

"Start-ups, loan facilities to start own ventures, etc are all designed to make the youth of the country employed and empowered," Khatana further said.

He also said that the PM is very keen in guiding the youth of the country like a great leader wherein the radio programmes like 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' etc are historic steps.

The Rajya Sabha member asked the students to work hard in their subjects to excel in studies so that our country may get fruits of their hard work.

"The youth should join politics and become visionary and foresighted leaders like our Hon'ble PM Modi Ji," he said.

The MP said that the youth should also take an active part in sports and should maintain a distance from addiction of intoxicants which is spoiling the country.

"Image of our country today is shining across the world and it is the result of hard work of PM Modi. We have stepped over the moon and many other such programmes are under-process in our country," the senior BJP leader continued.

It is pertinent to mention here that MIT School of Government, Pune is an elite institution of Maharashtra and students of this institute are addressed by a select group of prominent Parliamentarians.

BJP workers undertake "Gaon Chalo Abhiyan", in plain, snow bound areas across J&K

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 8

Braving harsh weather conditions in hilly and far-flung areas of Jammu and Kashmir, BJP workers in large numbers travelled on foot to cover different booths in many areas of the erstwhile Doda district and other mountainous booths on the second day of the "Gaon Chalo Abhiyan".

Dalip Singh Parihar, senior leader & former MLA, along with local booth president Ashok Kumar, reached booth number 135 in snow-bound Gandoh in Doda district. He interacted with prominent persons, the beneficiaries of various welfare schemes and sought feedback about various schemes of the Modi government meant for the socio-economic upliftment of the different sections of society. BJP senior leader & former minister Sat Sharma reached booth number 7 in Toph Sherkhania area of Jammu West under "Gaon Chalo Abhiyan", where he, discussed the programmes and poli-



cies of BJP and the welfare schemes of Modi-led union government.

Former Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta reached booth number 87 of Bahu constituency under this Abhiyan.

BJP Vice President Yudhvir Sethi covered booth number 119 in ward number 10 of Jammu East. Vice-president & former minister, Shakti Raj Parihar, reached village Kuthyara in Assar Mandal of Doda district.

BJP Vice-president & former minister Sham Lal Sharma covered Kangrail village of Amb Gharota Mandal under "Gaon Chalo Abhiyan".

Vice President & former minister, Surjeet Singh Salathia, reached booth numbers 70 and 71 in Mandigarh in Gurrah Salathia. BJP senior leader &

former minister, Chander Prakash Ganga, undertook the Abhiyan in the village Patti of Vijaypur Mandal.

Former minister, Sukhandan Choudhary, reached Flora village of Marh Mandal and former minister Bali Bhagat covered booth number 57 in Lower Roop Nagar under the Abhiyan.

Akhnoor district president & former MLA Rajiv Sharma undertook the Abhiyan in booth number 84 of Akhnoor Mandal.

BJP Spokesperson & former MLA, R.S. Pathania, reached the village Panjian in Khoon Mandal of Udhampur District.

Meanwhile, BJP general secretary & former minister, Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, along with Samba district president Kashmir Singh, party leaders Kulbhushan Jasrotia,

Vinod Singh Sambyal, Mohinderpal and Shivati Sharma, addressed the "Gaon Chalo Abhiyan" workshop in Bain village of Rajpura-Bain Glad Mandal of Samba district. Later, they gave a warm send-off to 21 booth convenors under this Abhiyan.

Former MLA Balwant Singh Mankotia reached village Cherry Swail in Narsoo Mandal of Chenani Constituency.

Trikuta Nagar Mandal President Lucky Puri, along with Mandal General Secretaries Rajinder Koul and Nayan Gupta, flagged off party leaders from party headquarters for different booths of Tri-kuta Nagar Mandal.

"Gaon Chalo Abhiyaan" State Incharge Pawan Khajuria, while speaking on the second day of the Abhiyan, said that the BJP workers are doing a great job during their stay in the allotted villages of the UT.

Co-incharge of the Abhiyan, Sanjay Baru, was also in touch with the party leaders and workers undertaking this exercise and expressed satisfaction over their work.

Reasi Police recovers heroine like narcotics, arrests 02 narco smugglers



J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

To eradicate the menace of Drugs from the society and take stringent action against Drug Peddlers within the district, Reasi Police recovered approx. *49.43 grams of Heroin (Chitta)* like narcotics, 02 Narco- Smugglers arrested as well as narcotic substance got seized on the spot.

During routine naka/patrolling duty in its jurisdictional area at Katra intercepted one Ecco Car bearing Reg. No. JK02BD-1900 being driven by Manish Kumar S/O Prem Kumar R/o Serwad Katra who was alongwith co-passenger namely Prem Kumar S/O Majoru R/o Serwad Katra under suspicious circumstances.

During checking approx. 41.02 grams of Heroin (chitta) like narcotics was recovered from Manish Kumar and 8.41 grams of Heroin was recovered from Prem Kumar. There-

after all the recovered narcotic substance seized and two persons were arrested.

In this regard a case FIR No. 43/2024 U/S 8/21/22/29 NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Katra and further investigation has been started to unearth the backward and forward Linkage.

The whole operation is led by SHO Katra Nishant Gupta under the supervision of SDPO Katra Sh. Surinder Singh-JKPS and SP Katra Sh. Vipran Chandran-JKPS

SSP Reasi Mohita Sharma-IPS while sharing the details said that Reasi police is committed to eradicate the menace of drug abuse and appeal to public to support in its war against drugs for which any information pertaining to drug peddlers be shared with district police on 24x7 helpline number 9070907017 where identity of caller is kept secret.

Strengthen hands of PM Modi in upcoming LS polls: Rakesh



J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

The transformative impact of the Modi Government's actions in Jammu and Kashmir cannot be overstated. By revoking Article 370, the government has not only dismantled barriers to development but also paved the way for unprecedented progress in the Union Territory. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visionary leadership has been instrumental in steering Jammu and Kashmir towards a path of growth and prosperity.

This was stated by Rakesh Mahajan, Incharge All Cells, BJP, J&K, while initiating a Gaon Chalo Abhiyan at Booth No. 132, Mandal Trikuta Nagar of Bahu Constituency. This drive was initiated on the instructions of Party High Command in view of upcoming Lok Sabha Polls. Sandeep Kumar, Shejja Gupta, Mandal President Lucky Puri, Ward President Ajay Jamwal and Rajinder kaul also accompanied with Rakesh Mahajan

During the Gaon Chalo Abhiyan, Rakesh Mahajan interacted with beneficiaries of central sponsored schemes, emphasizing the importance of cleanliness in religious places and community participation. He also held discussions with respectable citizens such as doctors, retired bankers, engineers, and businessmen, recognizing their valuable contribution in the society. Strength-

ening the booth was a focal point of his interactions, as he rallied booth presidents and Panna Parmukh to ensure maximum voter turnout during elections, underscoring the significance of democratic participation in shaping the nation's future.

Throwing light on the achievement of Modi Govt in Jammu and Kashmir, Rakesh Mahajan said that the establishment of prestigious institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Management (IIM) and Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT), along with the introduction of two AIIMS facilities in J&K, represents a significant investment in the region's educational and healthcare infrastructure. Moreover, the development of critical infrastructure projects like the ring road and the Katra-Amritsar-Delhi expressway has not only improved connectivity within Jammu and Kashmir but has also opened up new avenues for trade, tourism, and economic development. This comprehensive approach to infrastructure development under the Modi regime has catalyzed economic growth, created job opportunities, and empowered the people of Jammu and Kashmir to realize their full potential. As a result, the J&K UT is now poised to enter a new era of prosperity and development, with its citizens benefiting from enhanced access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities.

Bali initiates "Gaon Chalo Abhiyan" at Booth-57, Muthi-Paloura Mandal

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Senior BJP leader and former minister, Bali Bhagat today initiated "Gaon Chalo Abhiyan" at Booth No. 57, Muthi Paloura Mandal, in the Jammu North Assembly constituency. This initiative, inspired by the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, aims to

catalyze rural development and community engagement across the region. The "Gaon Chalo Abhiyan" holds immense significance in the BJP's commitment to grassroots empowerment and inclusive growth. Under the stewardship of Prime Minister Modi, this campaign has already witnessed remarkable progress and achieved significant milestones.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) MECH RURAL DIVISION JAMMU NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No 166 to 169 of 2023-24 (JJM)

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of J&K UT, Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Mech. Rural Division Jammu, invites tenders by e-tendering mode from the reputed/registered firms/individuals for the below mentioned work:-

e-NIT No. & Date.	Name of work	Est. cost (in Lakh)	Cost of document / tender fee (in Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit	Bid validity
e-NIT No. 166 of 2023-24 (JJM)	Providing, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of IS reputed make pumping machinery along with other allied electrical and electro-mech. works at WSS Bain Bajaalta under Jal Jeevan Mission.	10.00	500/-	2% of the est. cost	180 days
e-NIT No. 167 of 2023-24 (JJM)	Providing, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of IS reputed make pumping machinery along with other allied electrical and electro-mech. works at WSS Suketar Janakha under Jal Jeevan Mission.	23.50	1000/-	2% of the est. cost	180 days
e-NIT No. 168 of 2023-24 (JJM)	Providing, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of IS reputed make pumping machinery along with other allied electrical and electro-mech. works at WSS Jagti under Jal Jeevan Mission.	11.00	1000/-	2% of the est. cost	180 days
e-NIT No. 169 of 2023-24 (JJM)	Providing, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of IS reputed make pumping machinery along with other allied electrical and electro-mech. works at WSS Aithem under Jal Jeevan Mission.	30.00	1000/-	2% of the est. cost	180 days

Position of funds : Approved Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

Position of AAA : Accorded

Position of T.S : Sanctioned

Date of Publishing: 07/02/2024.

1. Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 07/02/2024 (02:00 PM)

2. Clarifications can be had from 07/02/2024 (04:00 PM) to 09/02/2024 (12:00 PM).

3. The Bids shall be deposited on the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 09/02/2024 (12:00 P.m) to 21/02/2024 (02:00 P.m).

4. The valid bids received shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer PHE (M) Rural Division Jammu Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 4 & 5 of the table and shall be payable at Jammu.

The cost of tender documents should be in form of Treasury challan in favour of Executive Engineer PHE (Mech.) Rural Division Jammu. **No exemption on account of Tender fee will be allowed.**

5. The hard copies of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury challan, Earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR/BG and other relevant documents shall be obtained from the bidder who is declared as L1 after opening of financial cover.

Sd/-
(Er. Tarun Arora)
Executive Engineer

Jal Shakti (PHE) Mech. Rural Division Jammu

DIP/J-14836/23

Date: 9-2-24

Public Information

It is for the information of general public that a residential house situated at Gulshan Nagar Rangoor Sidra Jammu in the name of Gh. Nabi Lone S/o Hibibulla Lone R/o Gulshan Nagar Rangoor Sidra Jammu has been purchased by Bashir Ahmed Lone S/o Haji Gull Mohd Lone R/o AP Gulshan Nagar Rangoor Sidra Jammu have electric meter vide ID No: 0101030019109 which is in line & Gh. Nabi Lone has to be transferred in the name of Bashir Ah Lone S/o Haji Gull Mohd Lone. If any body has any objection should inform the AEE, JPDC Sub Div. II Parade within 7 days.

Chugh, Raina, others thank PM Modi for conferring Bharat Ratna Award to deserving

JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Senior leaders of Bharatiya Janata Party lauded the decision of Modi government for conferring the highest civilian award (Bharat Ratna) to the deserving persons for their eminent services to the nation and society.

Tarun Chugh, BJP National General Secretary & Prabhari of J&K sent his heartfelt thanks to Prime Minister Modi for announcing Bharat Ratna to the former Prime Minister and visionary leader Narasimha Rao ji, former Prime Minister, & tall leader of farmers Chaudhary Charan Singh Ji and father of agricultural revolution M.S. Swaminathan. He said that the contribution of Rao ji in improving our economy, M.S. Swaminathan ji in upliftment of agriculture sector and Choudhary



Charan ji in leading India at critical times is unique. India's highest civilian honor is a true tribute to the work these great men did for the country.

Ravinder Raina, President, J&K BJP, said that the Modi government has recognized the true champions and leaders of this great nation and respected their life's works. He blamed Congress for earlier ignoring the truly deserving candidates and gifting the prestigious award to their own families.

Ashok Koul, General Secretary (organiza-

tion), J&K BJP, thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for taking decisive actions in the people's favour. He lauded the decision adding that the BJP works for the nation, society and the persons without any prejudice and rising above politics.

Sunil Sharma, General Secretary, J&K BJP endorsed the decision of NDA Government to confer Bharat Ratna to these leaders and recounted their contributions in taking the country to new heights.

Vibodh Gupta, General Secretary, J&K BJP

also thanked Prime Minister Modi for conferring Bharat Ratna to these dignitaries for their contribution in the progress and prosperity of the country.

Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, General Secretary, J&K BJP said that today is a big day for the country as these leaders are conferred with the highest civilian award in the country.

Priya Sethi, BJP NEM, stressed that the decision which could have been taken earlier is now boldly taken by the NDA government.

Principal Secretary, Culture inaugurates programme on "Traditional Arts" at IIT Jammu Campus

JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 9

Suresh Kumar Gupta, Principal Secretary, Department of Culture, today inaugurated a day-long programme titled "Understanding Traditional Art of Jammu" at the IIT Jammu campus here today. Organized by the Kala Kendra Society, Jammu, in collaboration with IIT Jammu, the event aimed to delve into the rich heritage of traditional arts in the region.

Medhavi Sharma, a noted artist, was the key speaker who shared her profound experiences in exploring and disseminating the traditional art forms of the region, particularly focusing on the 'Parola' wall paintings of the Duggar region and the Basohli Miniature paintings.

In his presidential address, Suresh Kumar Gupta emphasized the significance of preserving the age-old tradition of Parola, along with other dying arts like 'Ruth Rade' and Basohli Art. He commended Medhavi Sharma for her exceptional dedication to preserving and promot-



ing traditional arts and directed the Kala Kendra Society to conduct regular events in educational institutions to nurture an understanding of art among the youth. He also awarded Medhavi Sharma for her contribution for promoting the Traditional art of Jammu.

Dr. Javaid Rahi, Secretary of Kala Kendra, stated that the primary objective of the programme, was to provide a platform for emerging artist Medhavi Sharma to share her creative journey and experiences as a traditional art promoter. The event aimed to facilitate meaningful interactions between the students and the artist.

Bijral, Faculty at HSS, IIT Jammu, while emphasizing its significance in educating the youth about the arts of the region expressed her enthusiasm about the collaboration between IIT Jammu and Kala Kendra Society.

Dr. Amitash Ojha, Faculty at IIT Jammu, underscored the importance of traditional arts in cultural preservation and identity.

The event was conducted by research scholar Majid Ali, who extended the vote of thanks.

Professors of IIT Jammu, Sanjeev Rana Additional Secretary JKAACL, Research Scholars, students of various faculties attended the programme.

Several people join Congress in presence of Yashpal Kundal

JINNEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, FEB 8

The clan of Congress Party is increasing day by day in district Samba under the Leadership of Jammu and Kashmir Congress Party UT Vice President and former Minister Yashpal Kundal. Every day, leaders, workers and officials of different parties are leaving other parties and joining the Congress Party. While visiting various villages of Rajpura block of Samba district, Kundal listened to the problems of the people. People told Kundal that electricity bills are increased every month. Inflation is skyrocketing and it is becoming difficult to even run the kitchen at home. When we go before the administration with our problems, there is no hearing. In his address, Yashpal Kundal said that the way the party is getting people's support in Jammu and Kashmir, it seems that this time people will give mandate to Congress to create a corruption-free state. He said that due to the absence of an elected government, people are being deprived of their rights. Happy with the ideology of the Congress Party, hundreds of people took part in the program and were members of the Congress Party. Former minister Yashpal Kundal and other colleagues welcomed them into the party by garlanding them with flowers. Kundal said we welcome many prominent leaders joining us today. This is an indication that the people of Jammu and Kashmir want Congress to lead them in addressing their issues and bringing peace and progress."

Shrine Board conferred with 'Sport for Social Good' Award at Sportstar Aces Awards

JINNEWS SERVICE
KATRA, FEB 9

In a major achievement, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) has been conferred with Chairperson's Choice - Sport for Social Good Award at Sportstar Aces Awards-2024 held in Mumbai hosted by the Sportstar in recognition of the significant strides made by the Board for extending its support beyond religious realms.

Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson, the Hindu Group presented the award to Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. This annual event was a celebration of sports and sportspersons which was attended by a galaxy of reputed sportspersons across disciplines.

Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, who received the Award on behalf of the Board, thanked the Hindu Group and dwelt on the aims and objectives of setting up of the Sports Complex, while adding that Shrine Board with a deep-seated commitment to societal betterment has established a comprehensive sports facility in the Katra town in the year 2016 with state-



Award in the categories of the 'Sportstar of the Year (female)' and Popular Choice Award for 'Moment of the Year' in the Award Ceremony in recognition of medals won by her at National and International Sports Arena while shooting using her feet.

Noteworthy is that the World's first armless Archer Sheetal, won a record three medals at her maiden Asian Para Games in Hangzhou in October last year. The impressive haul included two gold medals in mixed doubles and women's individual category, and silver in women's doubles compound. Earlier in the year-2023, Sheetal also bagged a silver medal at the World Para Archery Championships in Pilsen, Czech Republic. The World No. 1 para, who also won the gold medal in the open category of compound section at the inaugural Khelo India Para Games in New Delhi on December 16, is eyeing glory at the upcoming Paris Paralympic Games.

Pertinent to mention here that paraarchers affiliated with the Board besides securing medals in the Para Archery events, also won quota places for the 2024 Paralympics in Paris.

of-the-art sports infrastructure alongwith excellent coaching and training facilities with an aim to identify the talent in the region so that the budding sportspersons can be trained and groomed in the identified key sports to excel and bring laurels in sports events held at various levels.

He further added that this continuous initiative under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor, JK-UT Shri Manoj Sinha has been encouraging the youth and providing them a platform to showcase their talents which reflects the Board's commitment for fostering sportsmanship through competitive physical activities and has played a significant role in developing champions of tomorrow for the country which is being witnessed in the international events

represented by our sports persons.

CEO also highlighted the achievements of Para Archers of Sports Complex, 3 of whom would be representing India at the upcoming Paralympics in Paris. He underlined that glory earned in the games is giving new impetus to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Sports Complex and to around 150 budding sports-persons getting trained in disciplines like Archery, Athletics, Judo and Shooting. The sportspersons trained in the sports complex have been showing promising results in varied competitions winning a rich haul of 80 medals at the National and 12 at the International level in a short span.

Arjuna Awardee Pararcher Sheetal Devi of SMVD Sports Complex won the Sportstar Aces

Dr Varun Padha pays obeisance at Tirupati temple participates in abhishek ceremony

JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU 9-2-2024

Dr Varun Padha Social Activists Along With Subramanyam the Superintendent of temple Today paid obeisance at Tirupati Balaji temple Jammu and participated in the special abhishek of Tirupati. He prayed for the welfare of the country. Every Friday the ceremony of abhishek of Lord Venkateshwar is performed.

Dr Varun Padha expressed happiness over the temple said that it is a feeling of pleasure and proud that the Tirupati Balaji temple is established here for the people of Jammu. With this temple we are able to witness the culture of south India and this feeling is heavenly. HE appealed people to visit the temple and pay obeisance here.



Varun said that is ready for any kind of help to the temple and devotees. He said the temple is beautifully made in the Majeen area. He Said the dedication of Lord Venkateswara temple would give a boost to spiritual tourism and a major fillip to the economic development and

employment opportunities in the Union Territory. On this occasion Subramanyam the Superintendent of temple also appealed transport commissioner to start the bus service for the temple so that devotees can come easily to the temple. He also emphasize to start

the Bharat darshan bus service here so that tourists also came to know about the temple.

Other dignitaries present on the occasion were Sai Krishna, Temple Inspector, Subramanyam, Superintendent Raviteja, Pradhana Pandit, Amit Shukla, Veda Pandit.

Shub Tilak Multispeciality Hospital, Akhnoor marks 2nd Anniversary with Remarkable Milestones

JINNEWS SERVICE
AKHNOOR, FEB 9

Shub Tilak Multispeciality Hospital, located in Akhnoor, joyfully commemorated its second year of dedicated health-care service. In the span of these two years, the hospital has successfully conducted over 2700 surgeries, with a noteworthy 60% falling under the coverage of the Ayushman Bharat scheme.

The anniversary celebration was graced by the presence of the entire hospital staff, including the Managing Director, Mr. Rakesh Malhotra, and Medical Director, Dr. Kulveer Singh. Founder Member, Mrs. Manju Malhotra, and esteemed medical professionals such as Dr. Prince Raina, Dr. Rakesh Kotwal, Dr. Neeraj Gupta, and Dr. Pooja were also in attendance.



Rakesh Malhotra, Managing Director of Shub Tilak Multispeciality Hospital, expressed his gratitude for the community's support and trust over the past two years. He emphasized the hospital's commitment to delivering quality health-care services and affirmed its dedication to the well-being of the community. He

said that hospital is accredited with National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers NABH within two years which is a great milestone for them

Dr. Kulveer Singh, Medical Director, acknowledged the collaborative efforts of the entire medical team and highlighted the hos-

pital's role in contributing to the Ayushman Bharat scheme, ensuring health-care accessibility for a significant portion of the population. The hospital looks forward to continuing its mission of providing excellent health-care services and contributing to the well-being of the community in the years ahead.

PAB sanctions Rs 1665 cr annual plan under SAMAGRA Shiksha for 2024-25; In a first 554 schools approved under Vocational Education

J1 NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

Jammu and Kashmir has got a substantial budget worth Rs 1665 crore under Samagra Shiksha for 2024-25 with formal approval of the plan proposal by the Project Approval Board (PAB), constituted under Samagra Shiksha scheme.

The annual plan has been accorded approval by the PAB during its meeting, held here today under the chairmanship of Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL), Union Ministry of Education, Sanjay Kumar, at New Delhi, to review progress on Samagra Shiksha 2023-24 besides approval of budget for 2024-25.

The meeting was among others attended by Secretary, School Education, Dr. Piyush Singla, along

with Additional Secretary, Vipin Kumar, (Economic Advisor), A Srijia, Joint Secretary, Dr. Preeti Mania, JS Director Finance, MoE Shobit, team of MoE and officers from J&K administration including Project Director Samagra Shiksha, Deep Raj, Director Planning Parshotam Kumar, Deputy Director Planning Bilal Rashid, besides other Coordinator and stakeholders.

During the meeting, the Secretary emphasized improvement of basic indicators and asked for adopting a consolidated approach in providing quality education to the children. He asked the UT administration to expedite the pending approved projects, so that further flow of funds can be made easy. He asked to bridge the infrastructure gaps, at various levels, so that

quality education can be ensured at all levels.

While interacting with the media, Dr Singla informed that the UT has improved the basic indicators of school education in the past 2-3 years and for the year 2024-25, it is the largest budget which has been recommended and approved in the PAB for various interventions since 2018-19.

He further said that, "Funds allocated for UT will accelerate the implementation of NEP 2020, bringing further dividends to the students to make them employable and strengthen our efforts in making J&K a knowledge hub and knowledge based economy," he asserted. The flagship scheme aims at ensuring inclusive and quality education at elementary and secondary level and is funded jointly



by the central and state governments on a 90:10 sharing basis, he added.

Dr. Singla said that, the New Education Policy, 2020 lays greater focus on skilling the youth of the country and linking education with industry and professional spheres, so as to enable students to be ready for future challenges and opportunities. It is for the first time, that

554 schools have been approved under Vocational Education at one stretch with minimum 02 trades in each school, he maintained. The main share of the total allocation has been dedicated to the quality interventions, followed by access to retention for taking new initiatives for future of students of J&K.

For the financial year 2024-25, the Centre has

approved a tentative outlay, of 1665 crore, for elementary, secondary and teacher education. The allocation approved for elementary education is Rs. 1165 crore, Rs. 487 crore for secondary followed by teacher education at Rs. 13.19 crore.

Dr. Singla said that with implementation of the approved interventions, a conducive environment

shall be ensured for the students to enhance their learning outcomes under a robust education system.

Giving break up of approved budget 2024-25, he informed that Rs 142 crore will be utilized for construction of new buildings and strengthening of the existing buildings. The funds shall be utilized to overcome the infrastructure gaps in schools. About 380 works (Major/Minor) under Secondary Education and 966 works under Elementary Education will be taken up including construction of additional classrooms, Art and Craftroom, Headmaster Room, boundary walls, computer labs, resource rooms, vocational rooms etc.

Some key activities under 'Quality Interventions' component including assessment of learning

levels, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and digital initiatives, Learning Enhancement Programmes (LEP), strengthening of libraries and support for pre-nursery level got highest allocation of the recommended budget. More than, 2000 Smart Class rooms, 600 ICT labs shall be established in various Schools across the UT. Virtual Reality Labs, Science Centres, Astro Physics Labs, English Language Labs shall be established under UT Innovations.

Under Teacher Education Strengthening of physical infrastructure in DIETs, training of teacher educators, Programmes and activities including faculty development and annual grants for TEL have been approved for the year 2024-25 to the tune of Rs.13 crore.

Sheetal Nanda spearheads public darbar at Samba Fort; Emphasizes time bound redressal of public issues

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, FEBRUARY 9

Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare, Sheetal Nanda, spearheaded a public darbar at Samba Fort to facilitate direct communication with the local community for resolving their issues and concerns.

The event witnessed the locals actively participating and projecting their developmental issues while seeking speedy redressal of the same.

The delegations, comprising former BDC members, former PRIs, social workers and community representatives, presented a memorandum of demands and grievances, covering a wide range of developmental and infrastructural issues concerning their respective areas.

The issues inter alia included repair of building in Rakh-Ambtali Pan-



chayat, illegal mining, adequate water supply, timely release of land compensation in Chak Jhangli and shortage of line-men and sweepers besides immediate provisioning of tents during rainy season, improved road connectivity in Sumb Block particularly in Goran and Karad areas, installation of transformers in Ghagwal, desilting of canals and upgradation of healthcare facilities in PHC Sumb, Sangwali Mandi, development of Goran as tourist spot and measures to control the

burgeoning stray animal population.

Besides, issues like road construction in Ward 6 Kheri Mandi, construction of road over bridge in Gurha Slathia, parking facilities in Vijaypur, nallah construction in Ward 2 and 11 of Kehli mandi and establishment of essential services such as veterinary offices in Daini area, animal shelters and controlling the drug menace and bovine smuggling in the district.

In response to the public concerns, Sheetal

Nanda issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned officials to ensure a time bound approach towards resolving public issues. She stated that all the genuine demands will be projected to the concerned departments and assured the public of timely resolution of their demands.

Later, the Commissioner Secretary distributed Babycare kits among the newborn girl children.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Vinay Kumar Sharma, Additional District Development Commissioner, Rajinder Singh, PO ICDS, Dr Subhash, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Suresh Chander Sharma, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Kusum Chib, Sub Divisional Magistrate Ghagwal, Sunaina Saini and other senior officers of district administration were present on the occasion.

SARAS AAJEEVIKA Jammu 2.0: Exhibition showcasing Rural Indian Art, Culture starting from February 10

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 9

Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihood Mission (JKRLM) is going to host SARAS AAJEEVIKA Jammu 2.0, an exceptional exhibition highlighting the diverse and vibrant art and culture of rural India. The extraordinary event will take place at the Vibrant Aquaplex crown Bahu Fort from 10th February onwards.

Building upon the success of the previous chapter, this second edition of SARAS AAJEEVIKA promises an even greater celebration of India's rich cultural heritage.

SARAS AAJEEVIKA Jammu 2.0 features an impressive showcase of 60 unique stalls, with participants from outside the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. These stalls will display a fusion of products from

various regions of India, providing visitors with a true representation of the country's artistry and craftsmanship.

With a strong commitment to promoting financial independence, the mela also serves as a platform for empowering self-help group (SHG) members supported by the DAY NRLM from across states such as Rajasthan, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Kerala, UP, Bihar, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and others. These members will exhibit and sell their products, demonstrating their skills and entrepreneurial spirit.

At SARAS AAJEEVIKA Jammu 2.0, visitors can immerse themselves in a plethora of handicrafts, handloom products, and delectable culinary delights from different parts of India. Each stall is meticulously man-

aged by confident and empowered women SHG members, offering a wide range of products that cater to diverse tastes and preferences.

The mela offers a wide range of unique products, including handcraft & handloom items, herbal products, and jewelry from different states. Visitors can also enjoy local delicacies and admire beautifully crafted baskets. The mela will feature an array of local delicacies such as picanuts from Poonch, hygienic dry apricots, saffron, honey, and walnuts from Kashmir, as well as handcrafted and paper machine items from Budgam and Srinagar. SARAS AAJEEVIKA Jammu 2.0 truly encompasses the breadth of India's cultural heritage.

Speaking on the occasion, Additional Mission Director Jammu Mridhu

Slathia said that SARAS provides a powerful platform for rural women artisans to exhibit and sell their products. JKRLM Umeed has remained steadfast in providing marketing avenues for self-help groups, and SARAS stands as a testament to our unwavering commitment to their empowerment. We are confident that SARAS AAJEEVIKA Jammu 2.0 will surpass all expectations and continue to support the financial independence of rural women artisans.

She further added that with renewed enthusiasm and expanded participation from 16 states, SARAS AAJEEVIKA Jammu 2.0 promises to be a joyous celebration of India's cultural diversity and a remarkable showcase of the extraordinary skills and craftsmanship of its rural artisans.

Poonch Administration organises Free Seminar on UPSC/JKAS preparation strategy

J1 NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, FEBRUARY 9

District Administration Poonch, in collaboration with Chanakya IAS Academy, Jammu organised a free seminar aimed at guiding aspirants on how to prepare for the All India Civil Services and Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Services (JKAS) examinations.

The Director of CHANAKYA IAS Academy, extended heartfelt gratitude to Deputy Commissioner Yasin M. Choudhary for extending a gracious invitation to the academy to conduct a seminar in the picturesque district of Poonch.

Principal SKC Degree College Poonch, Dr. Jasbir Singh, Principal Degree College Mendhar, Dr. Mohd. Azam, Prof. Fateh Mohd. Abassi from Degree College surankote, besides other professors from GDC Poonch and students from Degree College Mendhar, Surankote and Poonch attended the seminar.

Principal SKC Degree College Poonch, DR. Jasbir Singh highlighted the achievements of former



student of the Institution Prasenjeet Kour who cracked UPSC, showcasing the remarkable success story as an inspiration to aspiring civil servants.

The proceedings of the program were skillfully conducted by Dr. Shamim Bandy professor from SKC Degree college Poonch.

The event, held at SKC Government Degree College Poonch.

The Deputy Commissioner graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Additionally, Prasenjeet Kour (IAS) and Zahoor Khawaja (JKAS) were also pres-

ent as the distinguished Guests of Honour.

The speakers Prasenjeet Kour (IAS) and Zahoor Khawaja (JKAS) highlight their personal journeys, recounting the opportunities and successes they have experienced in their career. They also delivered informative sessions on effective strategies and techniques for preparing for the IAS and JKAS examinations. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the significance of these prestigious examinations and encouraged the youth to embark on a journey of preparation for

IAS/JKAS and other competitive exams. He emphasized the potential of these examinations to shape a bright and promising future for the aspirants.

The seminar witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, academicians, and individuals aspiring for a career in civil services. The event proved to be an excellent platform for the attendees to gain valuable insights and guidance from the experienced faculties, enabling them to chart a well-informed path towards success in the IAS and JKAS examinations.

Finally, Students and Speakers also engage in dynamic question-answer session. The seminar provided a unique platform for students to interact directly with accomplished speakers from various fields.

The event provided a platform for students to expand their horizons and gain valuable insights beyond the confines of their classrooms.

Secretary YSS conducts Public Darbar; Assesses public grievances, demands

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KULGAM, FEBRUARY 9

Secretary Youth Services & Sports (YSS), Sarmad Hafeez, today visited Kulgam and chaired a public darbar under the ambitious public outreach cum grievances redressal programme of the government.

The public delegations from Devsar, D H Pora, Behibagh, Kund, Qaimoo, Pahloo, Frisal and other areas and blocks participated in the camp and raised their issues and concerns. Their demands and grievances included development of children park at Pahloo, construction of flood protection bund at Pahloo sports stadium, 24x7 operational CT-Scan and USG section at District Hospital Kulgam, widening of Chogalpora Aharbal road, construction of Doori bypass at D.H.Pora, special transport service for students from Laroo to degree college, construction of Aannoo Shurat Road, construction of new bridge at Brazloo and related issues.

A delegation of specially abled persons demanded establishment of Rehabilitation Centres for them.



Other delegations who also participated included Fruit & Traders Association, members from Awkaaf Committee Kulgam who also projected their demands and issues.

While responding to the demands of people with regard to streamlining the power scenario in the district, Sarmad Hafeez instructed the KPDCL to ensure power supply as per schedule. He also urged upon people to pay power dues in time and make judicious use of elec-

tricity. He also stressed upon the officers to make the people aware about the schemes of their departments so that they avail maximum benefit of these schemes.

Sarmad Hafeez assured the participants that all the demands and grievances will be taken up with the concerned quarters for appropriate action. He also encouraged the public for their active participation, emphasizing the dedication and sincerity of officers in addressing

genuine public grievances within specified time frame.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner, Athar Aamir Khan, highlighted the objective of these programmes besides presenting an overview of the district development profile.

ADDC, Showkat Ahmad Rather, DPO, A R Das, ADC, Viqar Ahmed Giri and other officers from district administration besides prominent citizens were present during the camp.