

India, UK Finance Ministers agree to make further progress on FTA

LONDON, Feb 26:

India and the UK have agreed to make further progress on the ongoing negotiations for a free trade agreement (FTA) and also to swiftly organise the next bilateral Economic and Financial Dialogue soon, the British Government has said.

India has recently concluded the seventh round of talks with the UK. At the conclusion of UK Chancellor Jeremy Hunt's India visit for the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting, held under India's 2023 Presidency, the UK's Treasury department said the Finance Minister held talks with Indian counterpart Nirmala Sitharaman with a focus on deepening bilateral economic and financial ties.

"At a meeting with Indian Finance Minister Sitharaman, both sides agreed to make further progress on the UK-India Free Trade Agreement and deepen bilateral economic and financial ties," the Treasury department said in a statement on Saturday.

"They agreed to make swift progress on setting up the next UK-India Economic and Financial Dialogue," it said.

Hunt, on his first international visit as UK Chancellor, also met with business leaders in Bengaluru and visited the offices of tech multinational Wipro which employs over 4,000 people in the UK.

"Meeting fellow Finance Ministers face to face is an excellent opportunity to make real progress on the key global economic issues of our time," said Hunt.

Balwant Thakur's Dogri play 'GATT' staged at Amar Mahal

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 26: As part of Natrang's 'Sunday Theatre' series, renowned theatre personality Balwant Thakur's popular Dogri play 'GATT' was staged here at Amar Mahal today.



Natrang actors staging Balwant Thakur's Dogri play 'Gatt' at Amar Mahal in Jammu on Sunday.

As per a statement, the play was presented in connection with the ongoing Tawi Festival organised by Hari Tara Charitable Trust at Amar Mahal museum.

Based on Krishna Chander's famous Urdu classic short story 'Khadda', the play is a hard hitting satire on the decay of human values.

The statement said that Balwant Thakur adapted it in such a contemporary manner that the audience instantly identifies itself with the play.

The play 'GATT' shows that one and all tend to shirk their own responsibilities and work and pass it on to others. Instead they indulge in high sloganism, claiming to be the redeemers of the suffering masses.

This is symbolized by a person falling into a ditch whose pleas to help him come out unanswered by one and all. Different people pass by him like surveyors, young men, religious leaders, cops, political leaders in power and a foreigner. The person in distress is given different excuses and pleas for their inability in extending help to him.

The unemployed youth are unable to find time out of their fixed schedule of hunting for girls. The lady enquired about his choice between India and Pakistan, which side he would like to take? The situation becomes more dramatic when a minister, after a complaint from the public about the worsening of the road condition, makes a round of the area. The workers of the Public Works Department instead of taking out the man from the ditch put wooden planks over the ditch and create a stage for the Minister's public speech.

Here the Minister lists his development revolution and lashes at his opponents for cursing their government for political gains. The public meeting is over, the wooden planks are removed but no one pays any heed to the fallen-man in the ditch. The slogan of the up-liftment of the poor fades away with the flowing dusty wind. Finally a man from the audience appears and appeals to everyone to render a helping hand to this common man who is still in the ditch despite having celebrated sixty-four years of India's Independence. The play reflects the plight of the poor masses who continue to suffer for want of help from those at the helm of affairs.

Neeraj Kant, Gopi Sharma, Mohammad Yaseen, Brijesh Avtaar Sharma among other actors acted in the play.

Moulvi arrested for kidnapping minor girl

Excelsior Correspondent

SAMBA, Feb 26: Police have arrested Madrasa Moulvi of Gandoh, Doda for bluffing and kidnapping a minor girl, who was pursuing Arabic studies in Madrasa at Chak Dayala situated in the border area of Samba district.

Police said, another accused who provided abetment to kidnapper has also been arrested. Police said the father of the minor girl had lodged a written report at Police Post (PP) Rakh Amb Talli that his 16 year old girl had been kidnapped by one Madrasa Moulvi, who hails from Gandoh area of Doda district and had been staying at Madrasa in the guise of Moulvi at border village Chak Dayala, Samba for the last five months.

Acting upon the complaint of father, police registered FIR U/S 363 IPC at PS Samba and recovered kidnapped girl and arrested kidnapper Madrasa Moulvi from Ramsoo, district Ramban.

Another accused, who provided abetment to kidnapper, has also been arrested by police. Arrested Madrasa Moulvi has been identified as Bilal Ahmed, son of Abdul Qayoom of village Bathari, district Doda and another arrested accused namely Riaz Ahmed, son of Din Mohammed of village Bathari, district Doda, who provided abetment to kidnapper, has also been arrested by police from Gandoh Doda. Further investigation in the case is going on.

Arrests were made by in charge PP, Rakh Amb Talli, Ravinder Singh and SHO Police Station, Samba Rajeshwar Singh under the supervision of DySP Headquarters Samba, Mohammad Usman and Additional SP, Samba, Surinder Choudhary.

Senior Superintendent of Police Samba Benam Tosh said that Police is conducting investigations in sincere & sensitive manner in all cases pertaining to kidnappings of minors and kidnappers & abettors are being arrested under law.

5 injured as car fell into deep gorge on Samba-Mansar road

Excelsior Correspondent

SAMBA, Feb 26: Five people were seriously injured when a car fell into a deep gorge at Jamoda village near Mansar area of Samba district, today.

According to police, the accident took place this afternoon. Six people were travelling in the car bearing Registration Number JK21J-0572 which was on way from Samba to Mansar. As soon as the car reached in Jamoda area, the driver while negotiating a sharp curve lost control of the steering, due to which the vehicle fell into a deep gorge, resulting in injuries to five persons while one was unhurt. The car was also badly damaged in the accident.

All the youth in the car were working in the industrial area of Bari Brahmana and were going for a picnic to Mansar. Immediately after the accident, the local people rushed to the spot for rescue and they also informed the police. Police and

progress on the key global economic issues of our time," said Hunt. "I first visited India 38 years ago, and it's been fascinating to see how much the country has changed in this time - there are positive lessons to be learnt from their successful rapid development."

"It's been great to hear from Indian technology business leaders here in Bengaluru how they are pushing the country's economy forward, and I look forward to further collaboration between India and the UK as we continue to trade and create jobs - delivering on the Government's plan to grow the economy," he said.

The Chancellor, alongside Bank of England Governor Andrew Bailey, attended a meeting of G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors on Thursday. They were joined virtually by Ukrainian Finance Minister Serhiy Marchenko.

"Their statement sent a strong message of condemnation for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, announced an increase of financial support for the Ukrainian Government to a total of USD 39 billion in 2023 and committed to continue supporting vulnerable countries hardest hit by the economic impact of the war," the Treasury said.

On Friday, the UK announced a fresh wave of internationally coordinated sanctions and trade measures, to "further restrict Russia's capability to wage war in Ukraine both now and in the future."

At the first G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting under the Indian Presidency, Hunt condemned "Russia's brutal acts" in the strongest terms, emphasising that securing peace was the most important action for global growth. (PTI)

The Punjab Government has been "forced" to move the Supreme Court over the issue of summoning the budget session of the state assembly as the governor is not responding to the cabinet's decision in this regard, Aam Aadmi Party MP Raghav Chadha said on Sunday.

The AAP leader said the matter will be mentioned in the apex court on Monday morning.

The standoff between Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit and the AAP government led by Bhagwant Mann had intensified on Thursday with Purohit indicating he is in no hurry to summon the session and reminding the chief minister about his "derogatory" response to a letter from Raj Bhavan.

Purohit's letter to CM Mann had come two days after the Punjab Cabinet decided to call the assembly session from March 3 and requested the governor to summon the House.

"Settled law that Governor has to summon assembly as per the advice of Cabinet We have been forced to move Supreme Court on something as basic as summoning budget session of Punjab Assembly. Matter will be mentioned tomorrow morning in SC," Chadha said on Twitter.

"On 22nd Feb 2023, the Punjab Cabinet asks the Punjab Governor to summon the budget session of the assembly from 3rd March 2023."

"On 23rd Feb 2023, Punjab Governor says he needs to take legal advice on that. Till date Governor not reverted on this issue," the Rajya Sabha MP tweeted. (PTI)

Punjab Govt moves SC over convening Assembly session: AAP

Excelsior Correspondent

CHANDIGARH, Feb 26:

On the other out, Superintendent Engineer Hydraulic Circle, Er Rajinder K Sharma, gave a detailed report of all the works proposed under Jal Jeevan Mission and other ongoing works/schemes undertaken for providing safe drinking water to the public in the District.

Further, the District Development Commissioner expressed his serious concern over the water leakages in the pipelines/distribution networks and illegal connections tapped on rising main/gravity main supply lines leading to wastage of drinking water and its contamination. He directed the Executive Engineer and the Field Engineers to take immediate measures to plug the leakages besides removing all illegal connections from the rising mains/gravity main supply lines to ensure equitable distribution of the safe drinking water facilities to the public.

Er. Ashaq Hussain Rather AEE Poonch, Er. Sajad Chowdhary AEE Mendhar, Er. Shakeel Ahmad AEE Surankote and S. Amarpreet Singh AEE PHE Mech. Poonch besides all AEs and Junior Engineers of PHE Civil/ Mech of PHE division Poonch.

The District Development Commissioner further directed all the Field Engineers /Junior Engineers of the PHE Department to hold public grievance camps in their respective sections every Wednesday as per the circular issued by the SE Hydraulic Circle and ensure participation of the PRIs, general public and the Pani samities in each camp and submit the record of all

DC Poonch reviews functioning of Jal Shakti schemes

Excelsior Correspondent

POONCH, Feb 26: District Development Commissioner Poonch, Inder Jeet today chaired a meeting to review the functioning of Jal Shakti (PHE) Department.

At the outset, Superintendent Engineer Hydraulic Circle, Er Rajinder K Sharma, gave a detailed report of all the works proposed under Jal Jeevan Mission and other ongoing works/schemes undertaken for providing safe drinking water to the public in the District.

Further, the District Development Commissioner expressed his serious concern over the water leakages in the pipelines/distribution networks and illegal connections tapped on rising main/gravity main supply lines leading to wastage of drinking water and its contamination. He directed the Executive Engineer and the Field Engineers to take immediate measures to plug the leakages besides removing all illegal connections from the rising mains/gravity main supply lines to ensure equitable distribution of the safe drinking water facilities to the public.

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such meetings/grievance camps to the division office. He further directed the field Engineers (AEs/JEs) to remain stationed at their respective section Headquarters and perform their legitimate duties sincerely. He said any lapse on their part shall be viewed seriously, inviting strict disciplinary action against the erring/non performing officers of the department. All the deadlines for submission of the information sought from time to time shall be strictly adhered to and any delay or lapse shall warrant strict action against the erring officers.

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Three sessions held on third day of Dogri Literary & Cultural Festival

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 26: On third day of ongoing Dogri Literary and Cultural Festival, three sessions were held at K L Saigal Hall, Jammu.

The first session of the third day was Dogri poetry session, which was presided over by Dr Naseeb Singh Manhas, Dr Sunita Bhandwal and Raj Rahi. Poets who presented their poetry in this session, included Dr Krishan Lal, Kuldeep Kippi, Narender Singh Chhib, Sheikh Fiaz, Dr Sarita Khajuria, Rakesh Verma, Susheel Begana, Naseeb Singh Manhas, Mohan Singh Jamwal, Dr Ashok Khajuria, Diksha Kaluria, Rattan Bhardwaj,

Dogri writer Krishan Sharma. Besides that Prof Lalit Magotra, Sudesh Raj, Nirmal Vikram, Krishan Sharma and Saroj Bala presented their Short Stories on the contemporary subjects.

The third and last session was a Dogri cultural program in which Om Parkash Sharma & Party and Vijay Kumar & Party presented Geetru folk songs along with dance performance.

The eminent writers and intellectuals present in the program, were Dr Om Vidhyarthi, Dr Krishan Lal (MLA Khour), Vijay Verma, Mona Singh, Dr Chanchal Bhasin, Khajur Singh, Bishan Singh Dardi, Dr Neelam Sareen, Nirmal Vinod, Roshan Bral, Raghuvir Sharma, P L Parihar, Indu Bhushan Bali,

Balwan Singh Jamoria, Yashpal Yash and Captain Lalit Sharma. The second session was Short Story session, which was presided over by former HoD Dogri, Jammu University and Dean Jammu University Prof Archana Kesar and eminent

Randhir Raipuria, Ajay Kumar, Heena Mahajan and others. The program was conducted by Dr Rattan Basotra, Editor Dogri, JKAACL. Vote of thanks was presented by Yashpal Nirmal, Assistant Editor Dogri, JKAACL.

As per a statement, the celebration event was organised under the chairmanship of Ayudhya Kumar Manawa, President of the Sabha while as Jugal Kishore Sharma, Member Parliament; former Minister Priya Sethi, J&K BJP Vice-President, Yuvvir Sethi and Jammu Mayor Rajinder Kumar Sharma, were the Guests of the Honour.

The statement said that the checkup camp in its premises at Bahu Plaza, Jammu. During the camp, Dr Shafika Bano (MS Gynaecologist and Obstetrician) Laparoscopic Surgeon rendered her services. Around 60 patients were examined in the camp and free medication was distributed among the needy.

Prajapati Sabha celebrates Prakash Utsav of Sant Gora Ji Maharaj

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 26: Jammu and Kashmir Prajapati Sabha on Sunday celebrated the 699th Prakash Utsav of Sant Sri Gora Ji Maharaj at Prajapati Bhawan, Jammu.

As per a statement, the celebration event was organised under the chairmanship of Ayudhya Kumar Manawa, President of the Sabha while as Jugal Kishore Sharma, Member Parliament; former Minister Priya Sethi, J&K BJP Vice-President, Yuvvir Sethi and Jammu Mayor Rajinder Kumar Sharma, were the Guests of the Honour.

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Gynae checkup camp held

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 26: Sure Diagnostic Specialized Lab today

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B'day of Guru Ravi Dass celebrated

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 26: The 646th birth anniversary of Guru Ravi Dass Ji Maharaj was celebrated with religious fervor and enthusiasm at Paloura in Jammu.

President of All J&K Guru Ravi Dass Sabha Purn Ditta and Corporator of Ward number 60 Rajni Bala were the special invitees to the function. A large number of devotees from various parts of Jammu participated in the function.

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Shiv Jayanti celebrated at Bantalab

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 26: The 87th Shiv Jayanti was celebrated here today at Rajinder Nagar Bantalab with the collaboration of Meditation Center, Brahma Kumaris.

All the connecting centres like Talab Tilloo, Vijaypur, Bishnah, Chak Shama, Poonch, Vaishno Devi Katra and Bhadra were also participated with Incharge Brahma Kumari teachers.

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Senior NC leader, Javed Rana addressing party workers meeting at Mendhar on Sunday.

Govt trying to divert attention of public from basic issues: Rana

Excelsior Correspondent

MENDHAR, Feb 26: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, president for Pirpanjal Zone and former MLA, Javed Ahmed Rana today strongly condemned the imposition of property tax on the people of Jammu and Kashmir who are already being crushed by the highest inflation and skyrocketing prices of essential commodities.

people. "Due to wrong policies of the government at the Centre, the people of Jammu and Kashmir are completely feeling alienated," he added.

He said the decision of imposing property tax has been taken in a hurry. The people in J&K are not so well off economically yet. He said the J&K Administration which is running BJP's proxy government here has been thrusting only anti-people policies on the people.

"Unemployment is at its peak, the prices of essentials are sky rocketing and the farmers continue to be the worst sufferers due to the wrong policies of government and amid such a grim situation the Govt has been resorting to demolition and eviction drives leaving the common and poor people shelterless," he said, adding that the people of J&K have suffered during the past 32-years of militancy.

Rana claimed that LG can not impose the property tax on the general public and only an elected government can decide it. He asserted that continuation of eviction drive, imposition of property tax, issuing of eviction notice to evicuee property tenants are creating fear among people. Such anti-people decisions are diverting attention of people here due to which the government is not holding elections in the state.

Addressing special delegate session at Mendhar Rana projected several issues faced by the general public. The recent decision of Government to impose property tax on the people of J&K was raised on the occasion. Some resolutions were passed including Restoration of Art 370 and 35-A, social security, revoking of anti-people decision like eviction drive, property tax, etc.

Rana asserted that the present dispensation is trying to create a wedge between various segments of society in order to divert attention from current crisis. "We have to foil all these attempts collectively by ensuring amity and tranquillity," he maintained.

NC leader said mis-governance of the past eight years has pushed Jammu and Kashmir decades back in respect of development and welfare of the

The third and last session was a Dogri cultural program in which Om Parkash Sharma & Party and Vijay Kumar & Party presented Geetru folk songs along with dance performance.

The eminent writers and intellectuals present in the program, were Dr Om Vidhyarthi, Dr Krishan Lal (MLA Khour), Vijay Verma, Mona Singh, Dr Chanchal Bhasin, Khajur Singh, Bishan Singh Dardi, Dr Neelam Sareen, Nirmal Vinod, Roshan Bral, Raghuvir Sharma, P L Parihar, Indu Bhushan Bali,

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Property Tax like rubbing salt on people's wounds: Lal Singh

Excelsior Correspondent

KATHUA, Feb 26: Former Member Parliament and Chairman DSSP, Ch Lal Singh today said that Property Tax is just like rubbing salt on the wounds of J&K people by the present Government at the Centre.

the valley, speaks of hollow claims of the Government. Sanjay Sharma an innocent was on his way to a local market, in yet another targeted killing of a minority community member in the Valley.

The Government tries to divert the attention of the people to hide its failure by bringing arbitrary and draconian orders. DSSP is firmly standing for the interests of Dogras and therefore, the party stand on separate Jammu State is very clear. The people of Jammu are capable of handling internal security of its land.

While addressing series of meetings on second day of Jan Samparak Abhiyan in Basohli constituency today, Ch Lal Singh lambasted the Government and the 'so called' leaders of Jammu defending its arbitrary decisions and said that the proposed property tax on the people of JKUT is just like rubbing salt on the wounds of the gullible people of Jammu who are already passing through a critical situation of unemployment and poverty. The government instead of giving relief to the people is playing in the hands of bureaucrats and ignoring the ground reality.

While condemning the killing of Sanjay Sharma in Pulwama district today, Ch Lal Singh said

DSSP on its second day of Jan Samparak Abhiyan held meetings in the villages Batadi, Chumud, Khaddi, Kashmir, Saroga, Dramman and Jamna of Basohli constituency.

Prominent those accompanied Ch Lal Singh includes Jatinder Pappu, Parambir Singh, Vijyant Pathania, Rahul Dogra, Sandeep Sambyal and all office bearers of Basohli constituency of DSSP.

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