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Odisha Minister shot dead

BHUBANESWAR, Jan 29: Odisha's Health and Family Welfare Minister Naba Kishore Das died of bullet injuries today, Apollo Hospital officials said. Earlier in the day, Das, 60, was shot and grievously injured in Jharsuguda district when he got out of his car, allegedly by a police officer who was captured. The Minister was airlifted to Bhubaneswar in an air ambulance and admitted to Apollo

BJP asks Rahul to thank PM for flag hoisting

NEW DELHI, Jan 29: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has created such an atmosphere in Kashmir that any Indian can hoist the national flag with pride at Lal Chowk in Srinagar, the BJP said today and asked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to thank him for the change in the Valley. The comments from BJP spokesperson and former Union Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore came after Gandhi

Petrol, diesel prices up by Rs 35 in Pak

ISLAMABAD, Jan 29: Cash-strapped Pakistan's Government today raised prices of petrol and diesel by Rs 35 each, giving another jolt to the country's inflation-stricken people. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar made the announcement in a televised address this morning, spoiling people's weekly holiday as prices in the past had been adjusted on a fortnightly basis from the first to sixteenth

GOC reviews Rajouri, Poonch situation

JAMMU, Jan 29: Army's 16 Corps Commander Lt Gen Sandeep Jain visited different sectors along the Line of Control in Rajouri and Poonch and reviewed the overall security situation. Lt Gen Jain, the General Officer Commanding of Jammu-based 16 Corps, nicknamed as White Knight Corps, visited Nowshera, Bhimber Gali, Poonch and Krishna Ghati sectors and

HED orders detachments

JAMMU, Jan 29: The Higher Education Department has ordered that all employees/officials attached/ deployed in the Administrative Department from Government Degree Colleges will be detached with immediate effect. All detached employees will report to their respective Colleges for further duties, an order issued by the Higher Education Department, said.

Hurriyat office at Rajbagh attached by NIA

SRINAGAR, Jan 29: A day after the Delhi Court ordered the attachment of the Hurriyat Conference office at Rajbagh, the sleuths of the National



A day after court direction, NIA attaches head office of All Party Hurriyat Conference in Srinagar on Sunday. (UNI)

'J&K pictures, train video in snow captivate hearts' PM calls upon people to visit Kashmir; says there are many things to see, know

JAMMU, Jan 29: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said today that pictures of this winter from Jammu and Kashmir particularly video of the train moving from Banihal to Budgam have captivated hearts in the entire country prompting some to say that the scene looks like a fairy tale. Addressing monthly 'Mann

* Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com

Ki Baat' edition on Radio, his first of this year, Modi called upon the people to visit Kashmir along with friends as there are many more things to see and know.

"This time in our country, especially in North India, there was severe winter. During winters, people also enjoyed snowfall on the mountains. Some pictures came in from Jammu and Kashmir which captivate hearts in the entire country," Modi said.

Asserting that people from all over the world are liking these pictures on social media,

Many Kashmiri youth will win medals, hoist tricolor



he said due to snowfall, Kashmir valley has become very beautiful this time like every year. People are sharing beautiful pictures particularly the video of the train plying on Banihal-Budgam route.

"People are saying that picture of beautiful snowfall, white sheet like snow all around, looks like a fairy tale. They comment that these pictures are not of any foreign nation but that of Kashmir in our own country," the Prime Minister said.

Steps to boost Handloom, Handicraft sectors

QR-Code based mechanism will ensure product quality: LG

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 29: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha launched QR-Code based labels of 13 different GI & Non-GI registered crafts of J&K at Raj Bhawan today.

Congratulating the Artisan community, Handicraft Department and other stakeholders, the Lt Governor said the QR-Code Labels will help to authenticate the origin and quality of the crafts, improve the quality assurance in both national & international markets and benefit craftsmen, traders and exporters.

"This is an important landmark in preserving and promoting priceless artistic and cultural heritage of J&K UT. QR-Code based mechanism would help in



ensuring product quality, genuineness and boost global demand for J&K handmade products", he added. Highlighting the need to make necessary interventions for brand positioning, Sinha said, GI Tag, QR Code based label, packaging etc will make the Handicraft sector more productive, financially attractive

and contribute to the growth of the handicraft industry and earnings of artisans.

The Lt Governor also shared the vision of the Government and the ongoing endeavours to promote local products for greater economic benefits to the artisan and the weaver communities of J&K.

The administration has taken some important steps to boost Handloom & Handicraft sector in J&K UT through integrated development and export promotion. "We are committed to provide all possible support for the development of this important sector," he said.

Sinha directed the Handicrafts department for product diversification, brand promotion and marketing strategy to connect buyers and arti-

BJY culminates with hoisting of tricolor at Lal Chowk

Oppn united against RSS-BJP; yatra had national impact: Rahul

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, Jan 29: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi today said that though Opposition parties may have their differences but they will stand united against the RSS-BJP.

Gandhi told a press conference here this evening after the

* Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com

culmination of Bharat Jodo Yatra (BJY) that Opposition parties will stand united against the RSS-BJP in the 2024 elections.

"There are no fissures as far as the opposition is concerned. Why do you say that?" he asked in reply to a question adding the



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and others salute tricolor after hoisting it at Lal Chowk in Srinagar on Sunday.

Opposition will fight together.

"It's a fight of ideology between the BJP and non-BJP, non-RSS parties," he said.

Gandhi accused the BJP and the RSS of attacking the institutional structure. "What you're seeing in Jammu and Kashmir is the result of that institutional attack. Frankly being a member of Lok Sabha means nothing, want to talk about GST or any other issue - no. We have lost Government after Government. But this is all because of the dispensation," he said.

He said restoration of democratic process and Statehood is imperative and the fundamental right of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"I have come to J&K with

things to see and know in Kashmir," the Prime Minister said.

He also referred to winter games which were organised in Sycadabad (in Pulwama district) of Kashmir. Theme of these games, he added, was snow cricket.

"You might be thinking that snow cricket would be very exciting game and you are absolutely right," Modi said, adding the Kashmiri youth make cricket even more amazing in the snow.

Through snow cricket, there is also a search for young players in Kashmir who will later play as Team India, he said.

In a way, Modi said, this is also an extension of the 'Khelo India Movement'.

"In Kashmir, there is a lot of enthusiasm among the youth regarding sports. In the coming days, many of these youth will win medals for the country and will hoist the tricolor. I would suggest that the next time you plan a trip to Kashmir, take out time to visit

(Contd on page 11 Col 1)



India win inaugural Women's U-19 T20 World Cup trouncing England

POTCHEFSTROOM, Jan 29:

India today won their maiden ICC title in women's cricket as a bunch of sprightly and talented teenagers lifted the inaugural U-19 World Cup with an emphatic seven-wicket victory over England.

The Shafali Verma-led India U-19 squad managed to do what their seniors could not do by clearing the final hurdle in a global event.

India first bundled out England for 68 in 17.1 overs and then returned to knock off the paltry target in 14 overs to lift the coveted trophy.

"It is just a proud moment, it's our first world cup," said Trisha with stumps in hand after the memorable win.

The win on Sunday also reaffirms India's dominance at the U-19 level with the boys winning the world title in the Caribbean last year.

India's bowling attack, led by pacer Titas Sadhu and supported by leg-spinner Parshavi Chopra, set up the comprehensive win on Sunday as they blew England away with a clinical display at Senwes Park.

While Sadhu showed that Indian women pace bowling is in safe hands following the retirement of Jhulan Goswami with impressive figures of 4-0-

6-2, Chopra too continued her dream run as she snapped two for 13.

Archana Devi also scalped 2 for 17, while Mannat Kashyap (1/13), Shafali (1/16) and Sonam Yadav (1/3) accounted for one wicket each as England were all at sea after being asked to take first strike.

Her opening and team's best batter in the tournament, Shweta Sehrawat, also was back in the hut after giving a simple catch to Baker off Grace Scrivens in the fourth over.

Soumya Tiwari (24 not out) and Gongadi Trisha (24) then dug their heels in with a 46-run partnership.

With four runs needed, Trisha was cleaned up by Stonehouse, as Tiwari knocked off the winning runs.

Besides Shafali, Richa Ghosh was the other international cricketer in the U-19 squad.

Earlier, Sadhu bowled 20 dot balls in her quota of four overs. She struck in the fourth ball of the innings with a superb caught and bowled effort to get rid of Liberty Heap (0).

Spinner Archana then cleaned up Niamh Fiona Holland (10), while Gongadi Trisha pulled off a sensational catch to get rid of Grace Scrivens (4) to hand Archana her second wicket.

Sadhu could have added

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Block Officer cautioned against casual approach towards law

CIC seeks explanation from BDO, Dy Secy, DM for delay in providing info under RTI Act

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, Jan 29: Central Information Commission has sought explanation from Block Development Officer (BDO), Deputy Secretary and Divisional Manager (DM) of the Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir for delay in furnishing information sought under the Right to Information Act. Moreover, the Commission has cautioned the Block Officer of the Rural Development Department towards implementation of transparency law.

As per the Second Appeal before the Commission, an application under RTI Act was filed on October 16, 2022 before Block Development Officer, Changa Gandoh in Doda district seeking information about bene-

ficiaries under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Grameen, list of vendors registered on MGNREGA and list of works completed in the area etc.

Having not received a response from the CPIO, the appellant filed a First Appeal dated 28.12.2020 which was not adjudicated by the First Appellate Authority and aggrieved and dissatisfied, the appellant approached the Commission with the Second Appeal.

After examining the facts of the case, Chief Information Commissioner Y K Sinha observed, "though respondent claimed to have furnished the information sought by the appellant yet no documents have been submitted before the Commission", adding "in the absence of the relevant documents, the Commission is unable to accept the contention

or check the veracity of the same".

Accordingly, the Commission has directed the respondent to submit documents before the Commission, which were claimed to have been sent to the appellant. In addition, the Registry has been directed to seek explanation from Amir Ashraf, BDO, Bhalasa for violation of the Act, justifying the delay in furnishing response to the appellant and why no penal action should be initiated for violation of the mandated timeline as provided under the Act.

"The explanation must reach the Commission by 28.02.2023 failing which appropriate action shall be initiated suo motu, in terms of law", read the order of the Commission, the copy of which is available with EXCELSIOR.

(Contd on page 11 Col 3)

Bodies recovered after rescue operation

Two girls killed as avalanche hits village in Kargil

Excelsior Correspondent

KARGIL, Jan 29: Two girls were killed when an avalanche struck at village Tangole in Suru block, about 70 kilometres from here on Kargil-Zaskar National Highway in the Union Territory of Ladakh, this morning.

The girls were walking from one village to another when avalanche struck at Tangole and both of them went missing.

Ladakh Police and activists of Basij-e-Baqiyatullah organization immediately swung into action and launched rescue operation. However, both the girls were killed in the avalanche, official reports said.



Locals engaged in rescue operation after avalanche at Tangole in Kargil on Sunday.

Body of one of the victims was recovered in the afternoon while that of another was traced in the evening.

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