

# Khelo India Winter Games adds glitter to Gulmarg

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SRINAGAR: Amidst the snowflakes hitting the slopes without a break, the preparations for the Khelo India Winter Games continued unabated.

As the preparations for the Night Ski demo, which has been a traditional way all through the previous editions to warm up for the games were completed, the program had to be deferred as many athletes could not reach the venue due to the cancellation of several flights hit by bad weather.

Earlier in the day, despite the heavy snowfall the engineering team of CDK Sports Council after an initial assessment of the situation, meticulously planned for the execution of non-stop work to not affect the schedule. Though due to the heavy snowfall, it was difficult for the vehicles to move, the team made a quick decision and prepared a sledge to transport some of the required material to the inaugural venue without wasting any time. Gulmarg Development Authority on the directions of its CEO Waseem Raja also aided the efforts by



pressing snow groomers into the service despite heavy snowfall to facilitate the efforts of workers on the ground.

The administration also ensured that the roads leading to Gulmarg were cleared of snow and maintained properly for smooth traffic movement.

Meanwhile, Secretary Sports Council, Nuzhat Gull said that this event opens gates of opportunity not only for our athletes to showcase their talent but also to various stakeholders for whom Gulmarg is a source of livelihood. "What Khelo India Winter Games has done is that it has highlighted Gulmarg as

not only one of the best winter sports destinations but also marked it as a much sought after tourist destination and as more and more people reach Gulmarg, the commerce in and around the area will grow manifold, benefiting the hundreds of households in the ensuing process," Gull said.

The Secretary Sports Council also said that in the era of micro specializations, we are fine-tuning Gulmarg as one of the sought-after snow-related winter sports destinations not only in the country but globally as

well. Nuzhat Gull while speaking to one more media outlet at Highland Slopes where she was supervising the preparedness of the venue for the night ski demo said that the Gulmarg is ready to welcome the athletes and guests.

"The games are also expected to boost the tourism and economy of the region," said one of the hoteliers while speaking to the desk on the occasion.

The games are set to be inaugurated tomorrow and the events scheduled for the day include a Nordic sprint for women and a 10 kilometres distance race for men to be held at the Gulmarg Golf Course.

The signages and glow boards erected in and around the Gulmarg bowl and the Upper vat have made the Gulmarg colourful and pleasing to the eye said one of the tourists, Ritika Vaidya from Maharashtra.

The live streaming of the Khelo India Winter Games apart from multiple online platforms shall be also aired on DD Sports.

## Kohli becomes father of a baby boy

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**  
NEW DELHI: Star India batter Virat Kohli on Tuesday announced that he and his actress wife Anushka Sharma were blessed with a baby boy on February 15.

Kohli and Anushka are already proud parents of a three-year-old daughter Vamika.

"With abundant happiness and our hearts full of love, we are pleased to inform everyone that on 15th February, we welcomed our baby boy Akaay & Vamika's little brother into this world," Kohli informed in an instagram post.

"We seek your blessings and good wishes in this beautiful time in our lives. We request you to kindly respect our privacy at this time."

Kohli had opted out of the ongoing Test series against England, citing personal reasons.

India are leading the five-match series 2-1.

## Men's U-23 CK Nayudu Trophy

# Qazi Junaid's knock fails to save J&K from innings defeat

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**  
KANPUR: Opening batter Qazi Junaid Masood's batting brilliance failed to save Jammu and Kashmir from an innings defeat against formidable Uttar Pradesh in the Men's U-23 CK Nayudu Trophy at Green Park Stadium Kanpur on Tuesday.

Earlier, J&K batters, except Junaid and Yawer Hassan failed to apply after Uttar Pradesh declared their innings at the overnight score of 493/9.

After losing opening batter Rhydlham early in the innings, Junaid and Yawer tried to consolidate the innings and made a good partnership of 67 runs to take the score to 83 runs before Yawer was dismissed at his individual score of 40 runs off 45 balls, studded with 8 boundaries.

Then after Kanhaiya Wadhawan's (7) dismissal, Junaid along with skipper Shivansh Sharma again built



t h e innings to take the score to 171 runs b e f o r e Junaid's departure at his individual score of 86 runs off 127 balls studded with delectable 14 boundaries. With Shivansh Sharma (33), Arnab Gupta (23) and Mujtaba Yousef (15) the whole team bundled out for 235, thus lost the match by an innings and 42 runs.

Kritagya KK Singh took 5 wickets by conceding 79 runs in his 25 overs, while Vipraj Nigam bagged 4 wickets by giving away 60 runs in 19 overs.

Earlier, Uttar Pradesh declared at 493/9. Aditya Sharma scored 152 runs off 182 balls, studded with 16

fours and 2 sixes, while Prashant Veer scored 107 runs off 195 balls with 11 fours and one six and skipper Sameer Rizvi contributed 96 runs off 108 balls with 12 fours and one six. Vipraj Nigam was unbeaten on 40 runs at stumps on day-2 today.

For J&K, left-arm spinner Vishal Kumar was the pick of the bowlers, who captured 5 wickets by conceding 105 runs in 39 overs, while Janib Javaid took 2 wickets by giving away 133 runs in 23 overs. Mujtaba Yousef and Basit Bashir claimed one wicket each.

J&K had scored a modest total of 216 runs in their first innings.

Arnab Gupta (62) and Yawer (48) were the main contributors.

For Uttar Pradesh, Prashant Veer and Rohit Dwivedi had bagged 3 wickets each, while Kunal Tyagi and Vipraj Nigam took 2 wickets each.

# Kabaddi Sub-Junior trials on Feb 24

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Amateur Kabaddi Association shall hold selection trials to name probable for the upcoming 33rd Sub Junior National Kabaddi (boys and girls) Championships.

"The trials shall be held at Kabaddi fields, MA Stadium, here from February 24 to 26 from 3 pm onwards", informed general secretary of the Association, Kuldeep Gupta. While the boys championship is scheduled to be held at Motihari East Champaran in Bihar from March 16 to March 19, the girls event shall take place at Patna from March 31 to April three.

Eligibility for both boys and girls remains 55kg and

below weight with under-16 Year age on the last day of the event.

Led by Mir Alam, the selection committee of the Association included Rakesh Sharma (international player) while Sanjeet Kumar (Jammu district secretary) shall assist in the process of trials.

Those eligible players need to bring along two passport size photographs, photocopies of their Aadhar Card, Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India registration card and domicile certificate of J&K. Those who have not registered with the AKFI will not be eligible to participate in the aforesaid trials, the handout mentioned.



Medal winners posing with officials.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**  
LADAKH: Team Ladakh dominated in the 8th National Snowshoe Championship held at Sonamarg in Kashmir securing 18 medals in different events. As per the reports reaching here, led by coach Sajjad Hussain, the team Ladakh showcased their prowess in various categories. Zayidd Khalil and Nasrullah Elya won Silver and Bronze medal respectively in the senior Boys Long Distance event while Ghulam Ali secured a

Silver in the senior boys Short Distance Sprint.

Similarly, Nusrat Sakina displayed exceptional skill, securing Silver in the senior Girls Long Distance, while Zareena Batool and Nusrat Sakina added to the glory with Gold and Silver respectively in the senior girls Short Distance.

Ghulam Haider took home the Gold in the Junior Boys Long Distance and Javed Ahmed secured Silver in the Junior Boys Short Distance Sprint. Fareeda Batool

impressed in the Junior Girls Short Distance Sprint, securing a Bronze Medal. Faizullah also contributed with a Bronze Medal in the Junior Boys Sprint category. Team Ladakh further showcased their teamwork in the Relay 400 meters events, securing an impressive four Gold medals in the Senior Boys category and four Silver in the Senior Girls category.

President Shahnavaz Var of the SnowShoe Association Ladakh commended the team's exceptional performance and recognized Coach Sajjad Hussain's pivotal role in their success. Nasir Hussain Zaidi, the organizing secretary, received accolades for ensuring the seamless execution of the championship.

Meanwhile, the participants expressed their gratitude to the Kargil Administration for their support and dedicated their hard-earned medals to the newly formed Union Territory of Ladakh.



Selected powerlifters posing with officials at Jammu.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: J&K UT Youth Powerlifting Association today selected J&K team for participation in National Powerlifting (men and women, equipped and unequipped) Championships, organised by Indian Powerlifting Federation (IPF) at Surat in Gujarat

from February 23 to February 25.

As per a handout issued by the Association, the teams have been selected in Bench Press, Dead Lift and Powerlifting events on merit basis in the presence of president, Jatinder Singh Lucky. Also present were Iqbal Singh (general secretary),

Vijaypal Singh (senior vice president), Dr Hemant Abrol, Neete Kour, Sahil Anand, Harish Verma and Prince Singh.

The Team: Kunal Verma, Ritesh Gupta, Krishna Verma, Paras Kumar, Sumit Thakyal, Honey Sharma, Krirish Gupta, Ravinder Singh and Sumit Thakyal.

# India's longest transportation tunnel opens in Jammu on Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SRINAGAR: The longest transportation tunnel of the country on the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) was opened by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday as he flagged off the first electrified trains of the Kashmir valley.

"Prime Minister Modi was present in Jammu and he virtually flagged off two electrified trains simultaneously -- one from Srinagar to Sangaldan in the down direction and the other from Sangaldan to Srinagar in the up direction," a railway official said.

Over 100 school children and their teachers took the inaugural trip from each side as special guests.

The official added that the prime minister also inaugurated the 48.1-km-long Banihal-Khari-Sumber-Sangaldan section. "This longest tunnel, which is 12.77 km long and known as T-50, falls between the Khari-Sumber section," the official said.

According to the Northern Railway (NR), trains can now run from Baramulla to Sangaldan via Banihal, which used to be the last or originating station earlier.

T-50 is supposed to be the most challenging of the 11 tunnels in the Banihal-Khari-Sumber-Sangaldan section.

According to railway officials associated with the project, the tunnel survey work started around 1996 but the tender was awarded in December 2013 so it took around 10 years to operationalise it.

"All safety measures have been taken inside the tunnel for emergency situations. An escape tunnel has been constructed parallel to T-50 to evacuate passengers in case of any emergency," an official said.

"At every 375 metres, a connecting passage between the escape tunnel and T-50 has been made so that the passengers can be brought to the escape tunnel and then, carried to their desired destinations in vehicles," he added.

The official told PTI that in order to tackle a fire incident, water pipes have been laid on both sides of the tunnel with an opening valve provided at every 375 metres so that water can be sprayed on a train from both sides to douse the flames.

"Escape tunnels have been created for other bigger tunnels too," he said.

According to NR officials, the opening of the Banihal-Khari-Sumber-Sangaldan section has brought them a step closer to achieving the dream of running a train from the Kasmir valley in the north to Kanyakumari on the southern tip of the country.

"Earlier, eight diesel trains (four each from one side) were operating between Baramulla and Banihal. Today, Prime Minister Modi not only inaugurated the extension of the Banihal route to Sangaldan via Khari and Samber but also flagged off the first electrified trains on the whole route from Baramulla to Sangaldan," the official said.

Now, eight electrified trains have started running between Baramulla and Banihal and four of those have been extended to Sangaldan.

"The four other trains will also be extended up to Sangaldan after a couple of months," the official added.

According to experts associated with the project, the first section of the USBRL -- the Quazigund-Baramulla section -- was operationalised by the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government in 2009. In July 2013, the Banihal-Quazigund section, which included the operationalisation of the 11.2-km-long T-80 Pir Panjal tunnel, was opened.

"Once the complete USBRL opens in the coming months, passengers will enjoy infrastructural marvels, such as the Chenab bridge, the highest railway bridge in the world, and the Anji bridge, which is the first cable-stayed bridge of the Indian Railways," an NR official said, adding that the total length of the USBRL is 272 km and the cost of the project is Rs 41,119 crore.

# Modi seeks support of women to make 3 crore 'lakhpati didis'

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday sought the support of the country's women folk and said he wants to make three crore women in India "lakhpati didis".

The prime minister lauded the beneficiaries of the Centre's major schemes in Jammu and Kashmir for setting an example for the rest of the country. He interacted with the beneficiaries during his visit to Jammu to ascertain how the schemes have transformed the lives of the people in the Union Territory.

During a public rally, the PM encouraged a self-help group (SHG) head Kirti Sharma of Basohli area of Kathua district to leverage the loan scheme under Grameen Aajeevika scheme and contribute to the success of rural women.

Kirti, whose SHG had purchased three cows on a loan of Rs 1 lakh and repaid the loan, has a big cowshed now due to the efforts of several women.

She said, "The lives of women are changing and they are becoming the engines of change in rural India. The credit of the

changes goes to such schemes gifted to us by the prime minister".

Landing Kirti for her contribution, the PM sought support from the country's women folk and said he wants to make three crore women in India "lakhpati didis".

"You have brought a revolution. I have a big dream for sisters like you who work in self-help groups. Among them, I want to make three crore women lakhpati didis. Can you help me with this?" the prime minister asked Kirti. She replied saying she will fully support Modi's mission of "lakhpati didis".

"There are 5,871 women in groups in the district. I will help them become 'lakhpati didis' in order to help you," she said.

Narrating her story, Kirti said that her group is named as Ayaan.

"I had no employment before joining a self-help group. I had no identity of my own. By joining the group, I got an opportunity to depend on self. I was successful in empowering other women. I took a loan of Rs

30,000 and purchased one cow. It has boosted my economy. We took three cows," she said.

She further said her endeavour is to make women of these groups in the district self-dependent and empowered.

From farmers to SHG members, Modi interacted with five beneficiaries - including three from Jammu and two from Kashmir - to learn about the impact of schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), PM Kisan, Jal Jeevan Mission, National Rural Livelihood Mission, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Yojana (PMJAY), Ayushman Bharat, PM Ujjwala and Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) on their lives.

The prime minister acknowledged the exemplary role played by Shaheen Begum, a post-graduate entrepreneur from north Kashmir's Bandipora area.

Shaheen, a beneficiary of the Deendayal Antyodaya scheme, has transformed the lives of rural women in Kashmir by set-

ting up SHGs and various units, including a poultry farm.

She credited the prime minister for her success, stating, "Your schemes have changed our lives. I never dreamt that such a change would take place. It was a difficult life for us but you changed it. We thank you, Sir".

PM Modi praised Shaheen for her entrepreneurship skills and also commended her parents for educating her.

He said, "I bow before your parents for educating you. You are becoming a successful entrepreneur. That shows everything is possible under the Modi rule," he said.

Continuing the engagement, he greeted Lal Mohammad, a Gujjar from Poonch district, who has successfully constructed a house under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G).

Mohammad recited a poem in

praise of Modi and India, expressing his support to them.

The prime minister extended greetings to Riyaz Ahmed Kohli from Pulwama and Veena Parihar from Atholi (Paddar) in Kishtwar district, the first time beneficiaries of the Jal Jeevan Mission and PM Ujjwala schemes which gave them piped water supply and gas connection respectively, in the remotest areas of J&K.

Kohli shared his story about the manner in which his remote village got connected through piped water under Jal Jeevan Mission to provide water supply to their village.

"We have got water connections for the first time since Independence. We got benefited from the forest rights law after the abrogation of Article 370. We thank you, Sir. I never thought about talking to the PM like this. We are fortunate to talk to you," he said.

# LIC of India received refund orders for Rs. 21,740.77 Cr from IT Deptt

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**  
MUMBAI: Life Insurance of India (LIC) of India announced that it received refund orders for Rs 21,740.77 crore from the Income Tax Department.

The country's largest insurer had received refund orders for Assessment Years 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2016-

17, 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20. The total amount of refund was Rs 25,464.46 crore.

"In this regard, the Income tax Department has released Rs 21,740.77 crore on February 15, 2024. The Corporation is pursuing for the balance with the Income Tax Department," said LIC.

## Power shutdown

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDCL Jammu has informed that the power supply to IIT Jagti, Nagrota will remain affected on February 21 from 10 am to 3 pm.

Similarly, the power supply to Satwari, Belicharana, Nai Basti, JIC, Part of Ashok Nagar, Part of Shastri Nagar, M.H. Jawahar Raina, Industry Estate Digiana, Jeevan Nagar, Babliana, Raina Colony, Parts of Gangyal, Military Hospital, Military Cantt., Narwal, Ashok Nagar, Shastri Nagar and adjoining areas will remain affected on February 23 from 10 am to 2 pm.

Likeewise, the power supply to Part of Talab Tillo, Kabir Colony, Basant Vihar, Manorma Vihar, Hazuri Bagh, Col. Colony, Poonch House, PriyaDrashani Lane, Top Paloura and adjoining areas will remain affected on February 23 from 10 am to 12 noon.

Similarly, the power supply to Patoli, Shiv Nagar, Subash Nagar Govt. Quarter Sarwal, Shanti Nagar, Paloura and adjoining areas will remain affected on February 23 from 2 pm to 4 pm.



Aresource person speaking at a camp.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: A medical-cum-awareness camp was organised by the staff of Polyclinic Kaluchak (under Ayush) at Trikuta Degree College on

Tuesday where Dr Sakshi Sharma (Medical Officer) delivered lecture on Ayurveda, yoga and Mental health.

Dr Vikas Koul (Medical

Officer) was also present and made students aware about adoptions of lifestyle in promoting health.

A health check up of students was also conducted along with distribution of medicines.

Principal of the College, Sunita Magotra and Principal of Trikuta College of Paramedical Sciences, Akanksha were present and appreciated the efforts of Directorate of Ayush in creating awareness about Ayurveda way of life.