

FROM PAGE ONE

Cinematic magic draws huge crowds as Dal lake lights up

against the waters of Dal lake. As the screen lights up over the waters of Dal Lake, families, visitors, film enthusiasts from different parts of the country and abroad and curious onlookers have been turning up along the banks, making the screenings a lively public experience. The experience goes beyond conventional film viewing, allowing audiences to watch cinema while surrounded by the very landscapes that have inspired filmmakers for generations. The initiative also reflects IFFJK's effort to take cinema beyond traditional theatre spaces and bring it into public and culturally significant settings. On Wednesday, the Floating Cinema featured the timeless 'Kashmir Ki Kali', bringing to the waters of Dal lake the infectious energy and charisma of Shammi Kapoor at his energetic best, alongside the effortlessly graceful and captivating Sharmila Tagore. The film, remembered for its romance, music and vibrant performances, offered audiences an opportunity to revisit one of the Hindi cinema's most beloved classics in a setting that feels naturally connected to its story. The nostalgia will continue on the concluding day on September 10, with the screening of Yash Chopra's Kabhi Kabhie (1976), another celebrated classic associated with the cinematic tradition of Kashmir. With films being projected over the waters and audiences gathered along the lakefront, Dal lake has become more than a backdrop to the festival-it has become a part of the cinematic experience itself. The Floating Cinema brings together three enduring elements of Kashmir-its landscapes, its association with Hindi cinema and its love for storytelling-creating an experience that is as much about the place as it is about the films being screened.

Justice Bhati sworn in as CJ of J&K, Ladakh HC

of the Central Administrative Tribunal besides Executive Members of the Kashmir Advocates' Association and the J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu; Law Officers of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh; Judicial Officers and officers of the High Court Registry. A sizeable representation of senior advocates, government advocates and other members of the Bar from Rajasthan, besides staff members and other distinguished guests, also attended the event. The Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, issued the notification regarding the appointment of Justice Pushpendra Singh Bhati as Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh on September 5, 2026. Born on September 21, 1970, he enrolled as an advocate in 1992 and practised primarily before the Rajasthan High Court at Jodhpur, acquiring extensive experience in diverse areas of law. These included constitutional and writ jurisdiction, service matters, public interest litigation, election, revenue, mining, education, Panchayati Raj, family and criminal law. Before his elevation as a Judge of the Rajasthan High Court on November 16, 2016, Dr. Justice Bhati served as Additional Advocate General for the State of Rajasthan from October 13, 2008 to December 29, 2008, and again from January 6, 2014. During his distinguished career at the Bar, Justice Bhati was elected as Member of the Bar Council of Rajasthan for the period 2009-2015. He also served as President of the Rajasthan High Court Lawyers' Association from 2011 to 2013 and as General Secretary of the Rajasthan High Court Advocates' Association in 2001. He holds B.A., LL.B. and LL.M. in Mercantile Law besides a Ph.D. He served as Visiting Faculty at the Faculty of Law, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur, for 19 years from 1997 to 2016 and as Visiting Faculty at National Law University, Jodhpur, for one year. He is also a Member of the Executive Committee of the Rajasthan Chapter of the Indian Law Institute.

NC, Cong 'clash over' Vande Mataram rendition

Festival of Jammu and Kashmir (IFFJK) in the presence of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and NC president Farooq Abdullah on Monday. The Congress, which provides outside support to the NC-led government in the Union territory and shares a broader national alignment under the opposition INDIA bloc, publicly expressed strong disapproval over the incident. The Congress has six MLAs in the 90-member Jammu and Kashmir Assembly. Responding to the criticism, NC chief spokesperson Tanveer Sadiq told reporters that government protocol must be separated from party ideology. "The National Conference has a clear stance. When Parliament has adopted it, playing Vande Mataram becomes a statutory obligation and that is what the government did," he said. "Chief ministers in non-BJP states like Telangana and Karnataka have also played the complete version of Vande Mataram at official functions," he said. "As far as the party's stand is concerned, anyone who wants to sing Vande Mataram can do so and no one will

be forced," he added. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah later shared Sadiq's statements on X. On Tuesday, Congress general secretary (Organisation) K C Venugopal posted a video of the IFFJK on X, asserting that the unabridged version of Vande Mataram "sits uneasily with the syncretic and pluralist ethos that our freedom fighters envisioned and nurtured for India". He urged alliance partners to honour the Congress' historical 1937 working committee resolution, which adopted a truncated version of the song to respect India's religious diversity and conscience.

Treasury clerk held in graft case

lowing a complaint regarding the alleged demand for illegal gratification, the ACB laid a trap and apprehended the accused during the transaction. Officials said the accused was taken into custody and booked under relevant sections of law. Further investigation into the case was underway.

2 held for raping class 7 student

September 6. The accused allegedly kept the girl in captivity for three days and repeatedly outraged her modesty, officials said, quoting the complainant. Acting on the complaint, police arrested the accused and booked them under relevant provisions of BNS, including those pertaining to gangrape, kidnapping and wrongful confinement, as well as under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, officials said.

Goods train wagon derails

moved aside, clearing the track for resumption of rail traffic around noon, officials said. No damage to railway property was reported. The incident was being investigated and the exact cause of the derailment was being ascertained, the officials added.

'Hybrid terrorist' held with pistol

hended him, following a meticulous security drill, the officials added. He was identified as Manzoor Ahmad Bhat, a resident of Kruhmura, Handwara. A Chinese pistol, two magazines and 16 rounds of pistol ammunition were recovered from his possession, officials said. "Bhat is an ex-terrorist who was previously arrested in two cases," officials said. A fresh case was registered against him at the Handwara police station and an investigation was underway to establish the full extent of the module, its network and other associated activities, the officials added.

Rs 10,783 cr rly projects will improve connectivity: Modi

net briefing, cover parts of West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh and are planned to be completed by 2029-30. According to a CCEA release, the approved projects include the Kharagpur-Jharsuguda (Bagdehi) fourth line, Katni-Pendra Road fourth line and Bilaspur (Uslapur)-Pendra Road third line."The increased line capacity will significantly enhance mobility, resulting in improved operational efficiency and service reliability for Indian Railways," the release said. It added, "These multi-tracking proposals are poised to streamline operations and alleviate congestion. The projects will cover 14 districts across the five states and are expected to improve rail connectivity for around 4,790 villages with a combined population of about 56 lakh.

A key focus of the projects will be to increase capacity on routes used for moving bulk commodities such as coal, cement, iron and steel. "The proposed projects are essential routes for transportation of commodities such as coal, cement, iron and steel, etc. The capacity augmentation works will result in additional freight traffic of magnitude 27 MTPA (Million Tonnes Per Annum)," the CCEA said.

Ramesh Sippy hopes to shoot films in J&K

also includes "Shaan" and "Saagar" among others, is also looking forward to watch movies at the International Film Festival of Jammu and Kashmir (IFFJK). "I have been coming here since 1964, very often. In between, there were problems, so we couldn't come. But now it has reopened, everything is fine. I hope people will come, tourists will come, filmmakers will also come to shoot films just like they used to. There is also encouragement from the government. So, let's hope for the future, even better than this," he told reporters in Srinagar. Asked if he has plans to shoot in the valley, "right now we have come, observed everything and hope we will do it soon", he said. Sippy expressed his desire to witness the emerging generation of cinematic talent. "I look forward to watching some good films here and, just as nice things were being said about my films, to be able to say about their films that, look, these are good films. And to see other young makers receive encouragement to make

good films," he added. Playing down the critiques of modern filmmaking, Sippy said Indian cinema is in capable hands. "I believe that even today, we have very good talent. People are making good films. Just recently, Imtiaz Ali's film ('Main Vaapas Aaunga') came out. It shows people have started making good cinema and will continue to make it... Today's filmmakers are doing their job, appreciate what they are doing, and encourage people who want to make such kinds of films," he added.

US military destroys 5 Iranian oil tankers; Tehran hits back

staunch US ally that hosts American forces, making the kingdom's military bases a target of repeated Iranian strikes. US Central Command said it had no information to offer. The latest strikes are part of a dual economic and military approach by President Donald Trump as he struggles to bring an end to the war. The Trump administration on Tuesday also imposed sanctions on additional elements of Iran's aviation industry, targeting more than two dozen commercial and private airlines as well as foreign cargo service providers, in its new push to isolate Tehran from its remaining trading partners. Both the US and Iran are seeking to exert control over the Strait of Hormuz, where about one-fifth of the world's oil passed before the war began. Rising energy prices are posing political problems for Trump and his Republican Party ahead of the November midterm elections. A barrel of international standard Brent crude briefly climbed as high as \$99.46 on Tuesday. The US forces also destroyed three Iranian oil tankers on Saturday after Iran's Revolutionary Guards tried to attack a US aircraft carrier and destroyer with ballistic missiles, warning that it would, "if necessary, destroy Iran's limited and exposed oil fleet". Iran later said it planned to announce a new "exclusion zone" near the Strait of Hormuz aimed at vessels intending to transit. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the US will not allow Iran's attacks to go unanswered. "Iran continues to try to hit US naval ships. And for every time they do that or try to do that, they're going to lose tankers. And I think you'll see that again today," Rubio told reporters on Tuesday when asked about the latest attacks in Iran while on a trip to Colombia. Danny Citrinowicz, an Iran expert at Israel's Institute for National Security Studies, warned that such back-and-forth strikes can only risk more retaliation and further impact on the global economy. "There is no kinetic solution to the Strait of Hormuz problem," he said on social media. "Every attempt to impose one only brings Washington and Tehran closer to an escalation that may become increasingly difficult to control."

US Central Command said the military struck the tankers on Tuesday after the Revolutionary Guards targeted a Navy warship with ballistic missiles twice over the past two days. "The US warship successfully evaded the attempted Iranian attacks and continued to patrol regional waters. No American personnel were harmed," it said in a statement. It said the Iranian tankers destroyed on Tuesday were the Kivik, Charminar, Horizon 1 and the Riesco in the Gulf of Oman. The US military also destroyed the vessel Derya, which was located near Kharg Island in the Strait of Hormuz. The statement said the crews of the five vessels were told to abandon ship before the attacks. Iranian state television also reported the US strikes, saying the US forces attacked Iranian oil tankers near the southern port of Jask and near Kharg Island in the Persian Gulf. It said the crews were evacuated. An Iranian state TV reporter in Jask said an Iranian tanker was struck near the coast of Yekbeni. State TV later reported that the US military attacked a second tanker near waters off Jask. Separately, state television reported that another Iranian tanker was attacked in the Kharg Island anchorage area. Iran's Revolutionary Guard Navy on Tuesday had warned crews of oil tankers near ports in Kuwait and Bahrain to immediately leave their vessels, saying the ships could be targeted in retaliation for US attacks on Iranian tankers. It accused Kuwait and Bahrain of hosting US forces and assisting in the attacks. A US blockade of Iranian ports has squeezed the country's economy by limiting its oil exports, while the American military has been helping a limited number of ships transit on a route through the Strait of Hormuz off Oman. Tehran wants ships to follow a route that it chooses through the strait, which was considered an international waterway before the war.

Def Min meets Sri Lanka Prez, commits to work jointly for region's safety

work together for their development and welfare of the people while working jointly to ensure the safety, security, peace and prosperity of the region," the Ministry of Defence said. This is the first visit by an Indian defence minister to Sri Lanka in 38 years. "Had a warm and extremely productive meeting with Anura Kumara Dissanayake, President of Sri Lanka in Colombo, today," Singh posted on X. "I conveyed to him greetings on behalf of PM Narendra Modi and extended felicitations on successful completion of two years of his government," he said. Dissanayake recalled his interactions with PM Modi and reiterated that Sri Lanka would never allow its territory to be used for any activities inimical to India's security interests, the statement said. The Sri Lankan president also expressed his gratitude for the relief assistance provided by India as part of Operation Sagar Bandhu during Cyclone Ditwah and the comprehensive rehabilitation package extended by New Delhi to facilitate reconstruction and rehabilitation work. Singh said that, as a closest friend and neighbour of Sri Lanka, India considered it not a favour, but a responsibility to assist as the first responder and would continue to do so in the future as well, the statement said. Both leaders virtually inaugurated three Bailey Bridges constructed by the Indian defence forces, the Ministry of Defence said. The two sides also exchanged MoUs on upgradation of L70 Guns for the Sri Lankan Air Force and cooperation between the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and National Defence Colleges (NDC) of both countries. The MoU on upgradation of six L70 guns for the Sri Lankan Air Force falls under an Indian government grant. The upgradation of these air defence guns will significantly strengthen the air defence architecture of critical assets in Sri Lanka, the statement said, adding that these air defence guns were earlier provided to the Sri Lanka Air Force by India. The MoU on academic cooperation between NDC, India and NDC, Sri Lanka will facilitate knowledge sharing which will be a significant step in further strengthening the academic bonds between both the sister institutes, the statement said. "The MoU on NCC cooperation will formalise the NCC youth exchange programme between India and Sri Lanka. This exchange programme provides a valuable opportunity for NCC cadets from multiple countries across the world to come to New Delhi every year and participate in NCC events," it added. Singh on Tuesday said that India will always stand firmly with Sri Lanka in times of crisis, underlining that the relationship between the two countries is based on shared history, culture and faith. He made the remarks during an interaction with the Indian diaspora. "India will always stand firmly with Sri Lanka whenever the island nation faces a crisis," Singh said. Singh is leading a high-level delegation comprising senior officials from the ministries of defence and external affairs. Kavinder asks graduates to become creators of opportunities, solutions grees and employment and focus on knowledge, skills, research, innovation, entrepreneurship and character building. He called upon universities to prepare young people not merely as job seekers but as creators of opportunities and solutions. The governor said rapid advances in Artificial Intelligence, digital technology and scientific innovation were transforming the world of work. While technological skills were essential, critical thinking, creativity, empathy, sensitivity and ethical values would remain equally important. He urged the graduating students to use their knowledge and talent not only for personal success but also for the welfare of society and the progress of the nation. He also called upon them to contribute towards environmental protection, sustainable development, a drug-free society and social harmony. He expressed confidence that ICFAI University would continue to contribute to the national vision of a knowledge-driven and developed India. Congratulating the graduating students, Gupta said, "Knowledge will give you direction, character will give you stature, and service will give you life meaning." He wished all the graduates a bright, successful and fulfilling future and expressed hope that their achievements would contribute to the progress of Himachal Pradesh and the nation. Earlier, the governor planted a Rudraksha sapling on the university campus. ProfBNRaj, Chancellor, ICFAI University, welcomed the governor and presented degree certificates and silver medals to the graduates. ProfKeshav Sharma, Vice Chancellor, ICFAI University, also welcomed the governor and presented the university's progress report. Ram Kumar Chaudhary, MLA of Doon Assembly Constituency; Manmohan Sharma, Deputy Commissioner, Solan; Vinod Dhiman, Superintendent of Police, Baddi, and other prominent persons were among those present on the occasion.

Cluster University Srinagar conducts Pilot of Paperless Examination at Government College of Education

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 09: Cluster University Srinagar (CUS) took a significant step towards digital transformation and environmentally sustainable academic administration by successfully conducting a paperless examination at the Government College of Education (IASE), M.A. Road, Srinagar. The initiative marks an important step towards modernizing examination and evaluation practices in higher education institutions across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The pilot examination was conducted for 40 nominated students of the B.Ed. 2nd Semester programme, who participated in the inaugural digital examination drive. The initiative was aimed at streamlining the assessment process, reducing administrative workload, enhancing efficiency, and minimizing paper consumption in university examinations.

As part of the preparatory process, a mock drill for the online examination was conducted during the first session for the participating students. Students were provided comprehensive guidance on all aspects of the online examination process, including accessing the examination platform, navigating the digital interface, attempting and submitting answers, and familiarizing themselves with the overall examination procedure. The mock drill enabled the students to gain hands-on experience and confidence before appearing in the actual examination. A specialized training session was also conducted for 10 teacher evaluators to familiarize them with the digital evaluation mechanism and procedures. A detailed practical guidance on the various aspects of electronic evaluation, including accessing digital answer scripts, navigating the



evaluation interface, applying the prescribed evaluation mechanism, recording marks, and completing the evaluation process in accordance with the stipulated examination protocols was also discussed. The faculty members who participated in the training included Prof. Syed Shabana Shabir, Dr. Shabina, Prof. Ab. Gani Kumar, Prof. Bilquees Aslam, Dr. Showkeen Bilal Gul, Prof. Mehraj ud Din, and Prof. Shazia Siraj. The training equipped the faculty members with the requisite skills to undertake digital evaluation efficiently and accurately. The examination was conducted successfully and con-

cluded without any technical glitches. Both the participating students and teacher evaluators expressed positive feedback regarding the digital examination and evaluation process. The successful mock drill, followed by the smooth conduct of the actual examination and digital evaluation, demonstrated the feasibility and effectiveness of adopting technology-driven examination systems in higher education. The successful completion of the initiative represents an important milestone in Cluster University Srinagar's efforts towards establishing paperless, efficient, transparent, and environmentally responsible examination practices. Based on the experience and feedback received from the pilot programme, the University plans to progressively expand the paperless examination and digital evaluation system to other constituent colleges. The initiative is expected to

contribute significantly towards reducing paper consumption, improving examination management, facilitating faster evaluation, enhancing transparency, and strengthening the digital infrastructure supporting the University's academic and administrative processes. The successful pilot at the Government College of Education marks a significant beginning towards a more technology-driven, efficient, sustainable, and future-ready examination ecosystem in higher education across Jammu and Kashmir. The examination was coordinated by Prof. Syed Altaf, Coordinator Examinations, Government College of Education (IASE), M.A. Road, Srinagar, who supervised the technical arrangements, candidate management, and overall conduct of the examination. Prof. Khurshid Ahmad, Controller of Examinations, Cluster University Srinagar, served