



Meeting Of DGPs, IGPs Begins; New Criminal Laws, Internal Security Issues On Agenda

■ HT News Network

JAIPUR, JAN 5: A three-day conference of DGPs and IGPs began here on Friday to discuss internal security issues such as cyber crime and counterterrorism challenges and the implementation of the recently enacted three criminal laws among others, officials said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with the country's top police officers before addressing them at a formal session, while Union Home Minister Amit Shah is going to be present throughout the conference that will span several sessions.

Technology in policing, left-wing

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Light Snowfall Likely In Some Higher Reaches Of Kashmir

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JAN 4: The minimum temperature across Kashmir rose slightly to provide some respite from the intense cold conditions even as the weather office predicted

the possibility of light snowfall in some higher reaches, officials said here on Friday.

However, the night temperature, which settled several degrees below the freezing point, was still below normal for this

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NEWS BRIEF

LeT militant shot dead in Shopian

SRINAGAR, JAN 5: Security forces shot dead a Lashkar-e-Taiba militant in an encounter that broke out in Jammu and Kashmir's Shopian district on Friday morning, police said.

The slain militant identified as Bilal Ahmed Bhat, a resident of Chek Cholan, was allegedly involved in the series of terror crimes.

Police said as per its records the slain militant was involved in the killing of Lieutenant Umer Fayaz of Sudsan Kulgam in 2017.

Lieutenant Fayaz was abducted by several militants from his relative's house in Shopian on May 9 and his bullet-riddled body was found the next day.

Besides the killing of the young

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Police arrest 2 drug peddlers in Kashmir valley

SRINAGAR, JAN 5: Police on Friday arrested two drug peddlers and recovered contraband substances from them in the Kashmir valley.

A police party at a checkpoint established at Boniyar Market in Baramulla, intercepted a suspected person. During his search, 52 grams of Charas-like contraband substance was recovered from his possession.

The accused was identified as Mudassir Rashid Wani a resident of Gantamulla Bala. He was arrested and shifted to PS Boniyar where he remanded in custody.

Accordingly, a case under relevant

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Rs 21500 fine imposed on erring FBOs at Ganderbal

GANDERBAL, JAN 05: The Court of Adjudicating Officer, Additional District Magistrate Ganderbal, Gulzar Ahmad today imposed a fine of Rs 21,500 on Food Business Operators (FBOs) including manufacturers, wholesale dealers and retailers for violating the Sec. 51 and 52 of FSS Act-2006.

The fine was imposed on the erring traders for miss branded and sub standard food during the proceeding of cases of various blocks of district Ganderbal related to the Food Safety and Standards Act-2006, listed before the Adjudicating Officer.

The Adjudicating Officer also warned them to abide by the legal regulations.

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Hizbul Terrorist Arrest Probe

Larger Conspiracy To Target More J&K Policemen, Say Sources

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, JAN 5: The Delhi Police suspects that the Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist arrested on Thursday is the part of a larger conspiracy to attack more policemen



in Jammu and Kashmir, sources said.

On Thursday, Delhi Police Special Cell arrested "A++" category terrorist Javid Ahmad Matoo, who was wanted in 11

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CS Listens To DDC Chairpersons From Jammu

Assures Them Of Extending Every Possible Help To Strengthen The Institution

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JAN 5: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today while listening to the issues put forth jointly by the District Development Council (DDC) Chairpersons of Jammu division assured them of extending every possible help by the LG Administration to strengthen this democratic institution in the UT.

During this meeting the Principal Secretary Finance

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Srinagar Smart City Electric Bus Service garners 5 lakh passengers in 60 days

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JAN 05: The Srinagar Smart City Electric Bus Service, inaugurated by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, has garnered a positive response from locals, witnessing a remarkable milestone of 5 lakh passengers within

the first 60 days of its launch.

Residents, who spoke to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), expressed relief and appreciated the service's operational hours, which extend into late-night periods, and various amenities provided.

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ACB Arrests BDC Member For Accepting ₹ 10,000 Bribe In Ganderbal

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JAN 5: The anti-corruption Bureau, Jammu and Kashmir on Friday arrested a Block Development Council member while accepting a

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Kathua Likely To Get Largest Hatchery To Increase Chicken Production

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JAN 5: The gateway to Jammu and Kashmir, Kathua district is likely to get the largest poultry and hatchery to increase monthly production of chickens across the Jammu Division.

"Largest chicken hatchery worth Rs 5 crores likely to come up in Kathua district that will be the key producer of chicks through a low-tech system to increase the production of eggs as well as meat in the region," official sources said.



Sources revealed that nearly 25,000 to 30,000 chicks will be produced every

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Devotees Throng Hazratbal Shrine On Urs Of Hazrat Abu Bakr Sidiq (RA)

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JAN 05: Devotees from various parts of the Kashmir thronged to the Dargah Hazratbal shrine in large numbers to participate in the special prayers on the occasion of the Urs of Ameer-ul-Moomineen Hazrat Abu Bakr Sidiq (RA) on Friday.

Amidst a serene ambiance, men, women, elderly and children thronged the shrine, expressing their reverence by offering prayers,

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KPDCL Pledges To Eliminate Power Theft:

Stringent Measures Under Electricity Act Await Violators 'Intensified Night Crackdown Targets Offenders'

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JAN 05: In a decisive move to curb the persistent menace of power pilferage, the Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) has declared a relentless commitment to putting an end to these illicit activities.

This stern stance is reinforced by a clear warning that consumers

engaged in power theft will face severe consequences under the Electricity Act.

News agency KNS reported that the announcement comes as a response to the growing concern over the unauthorized consumption of electricity, negatively impacting the distribution network and burdening honest consumers.



KPDCL has signaled its determination to maintain the integrity of the power supply system by addressing power pilferage head-on.

"We are steadfast in our mission to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of electricity. Power theft not only undermines the reliability of our services but also imposes an undue burden on law-abid-

ing consumers. This will not be tolerated," a top KPDCL official said.

He said that to execute this commitment effectively, KPDCL is set to implement stringent measures, employing advanced technologies and vigilant monitoring systems.

"Surveillance teams are

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

It is pertinent to mention here that the Concerned Enforcement Agency was directed by the Adjudicating Officer under FSS Act-2006, to take stern action against the violators so that consumers can be provided wholesome and safe food.

Kashmir’s ‘Water Warrior’ on mission to spread eco-friendly practices

Ruhail Maqbool honoured with Jal Phahari Samman for water conservation efforts

SRINAGAR, JAN 05: A 34-year-old young researcher from south Kashmir is committed to championing water conservation initiatives and fostering a collective consciousness.

Sheikh Ruhail Maqbool from main town Tral in Pulwama district has taken different initiatives that encourage locals to embrace eco-friendly practices for which he has recently received the Jal Phahari Samman Award at Maharashtra Sadan in New Delhi.

Speaking with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Ruhail said he received his first award from the Ministry of Jal Shakti in 2021 as 'National Water Hero' for "praiseworthy efforts" in water conservation management and water quality.

Ruhail said that for the last several years, he has been organising awareness programmes in different areas to sensitise people about the importance of water and the need to maintain its quality.

"I have also been working to clean the water bodies besides motivating people of the tribal community about the need for water conservation," he said, adding that he has been working on rainwater harvesting and grey water management besides researching about river Jhelum



and Dal Lake along groundwater management.

Sheikh claimed that besides having international publications, he has received over 60 national and international certificates for efforts on water conservation including a certificate from the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Ruhail who has a Masters in Environmental and Occupational Health, a PG in Analytical Chemistry, an MBA in Human Resource Management and a 3-year diploma in computer sciences said he received the Jal Phahari Samman (National Water Warrior Award) on December 13 2023.

This prestigious event was organized by Sarkaritel with the support of the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India, in collaboration with UNOPS, National Jal Jeevan Mission, National Water Mission, CEEW, German GiZ, and NIUA as Knowledge Partners.

He said that over 32 water

conservators mainly IAS, IRS and IFS from across the country were felicitated with the esteemed Jal Prahari honour to acknowledge the tremendous efforts that they have put in over the years.

Expressing gratitude to Sarkaritel and the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti for recognising his work, Ruhail said the honour will encourage him to work with more zeal for water quality, research, management and conservation.

Sheikh has been awarded consecutively for the past many years in recognition of his initiatives and extraordinary efforts taken by him in varied spheres. He has also received many district-level and UT-level awards from the Jal Jeevan Mission J&K and general administration for his "extraordinary performance" and "praiseworthy efforts" to spread awareness on water conservation quality, water quality, management and awareness among various tribal and rural communities including schools, health centres, etc.

Ruhail said climate change and deteriorating water quality are the main issues across the globe and there is more and more need to create awareness and make efforts to save the environment otherwise its repercussions will be very bad.

SMC conducts range of activities under VBSY at Zainakote, Srinagar

SRINAGAR, JAN 05: Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) today organized an event under Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY) at Zainakote in Srinagar, marking a significant milestone in bringing impactful events and essential services to the local communities.

The event featured a range of activities, including 'Meri Kahani Meri Zubani', where beneficiaries of government welfare schemes shared their life-



changing experiences. Additionally, free health check-ups, Aadhar card registrations, Ayushman card generation and sign-ups for various government schemes were made available, ensuring easy access to vital services for those in need.

Moreover, the Government of India's IEC van was on-site to showcase informative short films, highlighting a diverse array of welfare schemes, including the PM Ujjwala Yojana, PM Awas Yojana, PM Svanidhi, and more, aimed at empowering communities and ensuring widespread access to essential government programs. The successful organization of the VBSY reflects the commitment of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation and the Government of India to positively impact local communities and facilitate access to welfare initiatives.

GMC Anantnag gets accreditation for 11 more DNB seats

ANANTNAG, JAN 05: The Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag has made remarkable strides in post-graduate education, securing accreditation for an additional eleven 11 DNB seats from the National Board of Examinations (NBEMS) New Delhi for this session.

This elevates the total accredited seats to 63, an official statement said.

It said that Dr Anjum Farhana, Principal of GMC Anantnag, expressed appreciation for the pivotal roles played by various departments including Orthopedics (3 seats), Pathology (3 seats), Microbiology (3 seats), and Physiology (2 seats).

She emphasized the dual impact of these additions, enriching academic pursuits and enhancing the quality of patient care. Dr Azia Manzoor, DNB Coordinator and Head of the Department of Forensic Medicine, highlighted the significance of this accreditation as it marks the eighteenth department at GMC Anantnag recognized by the National Board of Examinations (NBE), New Delhi. He told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that GMC Anantnag stands as the sole medical college with the highest number of accredited DNB seats among new medical colleges.

"This accreditation underscores the institution's unwavering dedication to delivering advanced education and training in diverse medical fields, reinforcing its role in nurturing skilled healthcare professionals," he said.

Dr Owvass H Dar, the spokesperson for GMC Anantnag said the achievement reflects the Medical College's pursuit of excellence in medical education and its contribution to shaping a robust healthcare landscape, it added.

FCIK regrets industrial under-development in North Kashmir

SRINAGAR, JAN 05: The Federation of Chambers of Industries Kashmir (FCIK) has regretted the sluggish pace in the development of industry in three northern districts of Baramullah, Kupwara and Bandipora in Kashmir region and has urged for an appropriate action plan to ensure balanced and equitable industrial growth in the area.

The grave instances of inequalities and lopsided development was brought to the attention of the Advisory Committee of FCIK in a meeting held at Industrial Estate Baramullah under the Chairmanship of Shakeel Qalander. The meeting, among others, was participated by Javid Ahmad Bhat, Mehraj-ud-Din, Bilal Ahmad, Ghulam Mohammad Shah, Farooq Ahmad, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat, Tariq Ahmad in their capacity of being Presidents/ Office bearers of Industrial estates of Sopore, Baramullah, Branwari Kupwara, Chotipora Handwara, Rudbugh Kupwara, Doabgah, Tulbal besides President of unorganised industrial sector Baramullah Imran Amir. The meeting was also participated by former FCIK President Zahoor Ahmad Bhat, Syed Fazal Illahi, Shahjehan, Dr. Zain-ul-Abideen, Abdul Wahid Chishti and others.

The meeting was informed that while the districts of Baramullah, Kupwara and Bandipora were spread over 6967 square kilometers accounting to 44.89% of the total area of 15520 Square kilometers in Kashmir region, only 12% of the total industrial units in the region existing in these three districts was regretful. The representatives of industry from 7 industrial estates attributed the industrial backwardness in the three districts to the callous approach and lopsided planning by successive governments which had completely ignored these districts for establishing any strong industrial base.

The members informed that the authorities had miserably failed to set up any major industrial estate in the three districts for attracting investments and facilitating the educated youth to take up entrepreneurship as their means of livelihood. While Baramullah district had currently only three functional industrial estates spread over 339 kanals of land (Baramullah: 58 Kanals; Sopore: 80 Kanals; Doabgah: 201 Kanals), Kupwara had only two estates Branwari (16 kanals) and Chotipora (103 kanals). The two estates in Bandipora over 61 kanals of land had mostly remained in use with security forces over past three decades, informed the members. Although the new industrial estates of Rudbugh over 85 kanals of kahcharai land was established in the year 2016, the land was legally transferred by J&K Administrative Council to the industries and commerce department only a month back. The industries and commerce department had received initial deposits and part premium from 12 entrepreneurs after approving their project reports in 2016-17, informed the concerned; adding that the land though demarcated was not being handed over to the concerned unit holders on one or the other pretext.

Javid Ahmad Bhat informed that newly established Tulbal industrial estate over 428 kanals of land was currently facing litigation from villagers despite the fact that allotment of industrial plots in the estate had already been made to 75 units most of which having paid the premium to J&K SIDCO.

State Taxes Department conducts inspection drives across Srinagar, Ganderbal

SRINAGAR, JAN 05: State Taxes Department today continued the inspection drives across district Srinagar and Ganderbal districts to ensure compliance by business establishment to the provisions of J&K Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017, prevent tax evasion and to create awareness among the consumers about their rights under the tax.

Led by Tabassum Shafat Kamili, Deputy Commissioner, Appeals I, Kashmir, the teams conducted inspections in various areas of District Srinagar and Ganderbal. These areas included Zaina Kadal, S.R Gunj, K.K. Mohallah, Bohri Kadal, and other nearby areas falling within the jurisdiction of Circle-C Kashmir. They also inspected areas in Nowgam and adjacent areas falling under Circle I, Kashmir, as well as Nagbal, Malshahi Bagh,

Beehama, Duderhama, and Tawheed Abad areas of District Ganderbal.

During the inspections, several major violations were observed. Some businesses were found to be unregistered taxable entities, while others were found to possess multiple GST numbers in order to evade taxes.

There were also instances of violation of section 122 of the GST Act, 2017, where businesses failed to reflect the GST component on customer invoices. Other violations included the suppression of outward supplies, failure to issue GST invoices to customers, breach of conditions of Section 130 of the GST Act, 2017, and failure to generate e-Way bills. These violations will result in penalties.

The concerned jurisdictional officers were given directions on the spot to take necessary steps as laid down

under the provisions of the GST Act, 2017, and initiate proceedings against the tax evaders. This is to ensure that the state exchequer is protected.

During the inspection, emphasis was placed on GST Compliance and the dealers were acquainted with the provision of the GST Act. Dealers were assured assistance from the department in ensuring hassle free compliance. Awareness regarding violation of the provisions of the act and the rules made thereunder was also carried out. Special focus was on bringing hitherto unregistered traders within the ambit of the act.

The teams involved in inspection comprised jurisdictional STOs including Tahir Mohi-ud-din, Aijaz Chowdhary, Mohammad Sarfaraaz Khan, Parvaiz Ahmad Bhat as well as other officials.

Over 100 Patients Benefit from CT Scan Facility in Bandipora in two months

BANDIPORA, JAN 05: After the introduction of Computed Tomography (CT) scan at District Hospital Bandipora in November of last year, over a hundred patients have utilized this service, besides a notable decrease has been recorded in the overall referral percentage, officials data said here on Friday.

Official data available with news agency—Kashmir News

Observer (KNO) reveals that, since November of last year, over a hundred patients have accessed the CT scan facility for the first time, alleviating challenges previously faced by patients during emergency cases.

Among the patients seeking medical assistance, several presented with severe ailments and injuries, including cases of accidents, and utilized the facility

promptly.

Meanwhile, an official said that the operationalization of the CT scan at District Hospital Bandipora has led to a substantial decrease in the overall referral percentage for these patients. "We used to refer every patient in need of a CT scan facility, which proved challenging for us in some cases," the official said, adding that it now brings considerable

relief to patients across Bandipora district.

"It was a long-standing demand from the people of the district, and hospital authorities consistently prioritized raising this issue with higher authorities. Finally, the district hospital secured this much-needed facility," the official stated. "We achieved this milestone with the support of the UT government

and the higher authorities of the health department," he added.

The official also mentioned that there are a few more governance issues on which the hospital authorities are diligently working to address. "We consistently bring these concerns to higher authorities in each meeting for the benefit of our hospital, and gradually, they are being addressed one by one," he added.

BJP’S KUPWARA UNIT WORKERS PROTEST AGAINST THEIR EXPULSION FROM PARTY

KUPWARA, JAN 05: Scores of political workers Friday assembled in Kupwara saying that they were expelled by Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) unit for 'unknown' reasons.

The BJP workers assembled at Dak Bungalow Kupwara to protest against the decision made by the district president.

Talking to reporters, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), one of the workers Chaudhary Mushtaq said tha they would organize massive gatherings for district president

Javid Qureshi but now they have been expelled from the party.

They raised slogans in favor of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, saying that they have dedicated their entire lives for the good of party.

Another worker said that the BJP's Kupwara unit has taken a wrong decision by expelling them.

Gulzar Ahmad, another worker said that they have taken up the matter with the party's high command saying that they are

against the decision taken by the BJP district president.

He said that a one-sided decision has been taken without considering the sacrifices and dedication of workers of the party over the years.

The members alleged that the party's district body was set up recently but senior workers have been sidelines.

Gulzar also said they have worked for BJP on the ground and encouraged people to join the party. He urged the party top brass to address the issue at the earliest.

VDC member dies by suicide, body found near his home

DODA, JAN 05: A village defense committee member was found dead with bullet injury on his body in Doda district even as police said it was a case of suicide, police said on Friday.

A top police official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the VDC member identified as Balwant Singh son of Prem Nath resident of Kharangal Gandoh was found dead near his home today morning. He said that as per preliminary investigation, the VDC member has died by suicide and a weapon was also found near his body. The official said the body has been sent for post-mortem, while a case has been registered and further investigation is on.

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra triumphs in Dadsara Tral, igniting Community Zeal amid winter chill

■ HT News Network

PULWAMA, JANUARY 05: Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY) after successfully traversing all Panchayats and Municipalities in the district, has now embarked its journey to the village level. The latest chapter unfolded today at Government Higher Secondary School Dadasara, where the program received overwhelming participation despite challenging cold weather conditions. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom graced the event along with ADDC Pulwama, ADC Tral and District and Sectoral officers.

Dr Basharat showcased commend-

able sportsmanship by actively participating in badminton alongside students. The atmosphere was filled with enthusiasm as students engaged in a spirited Tug of War competition.

The event featured informative stalls from various Government departments, illustrating the positive impact of their schemes on the lives of the people. DC conducted a thorough inspection, gaining insights into the schemes contributing to the area's development.

A significant highlight of the program was the playback of a recorded message from Hon'ble Prime Minister, which resonated deeply with the attentive audience. The event continued with the administration of the Sankalp



pledge by the DC, embraced by the community, aligning with the ideals of VBSY. Cultural richness took center stage with a captivating cultural song, showcasing the vibrant traditions of the region. 'Meri Kahani Meri Zubani' provided a platform for beneficiaries to share personal stories of positive transformation brought about by Government interventions. Addressing the gathering, DC commended the community's tenacity, noting that the warmth of their participation in the face of cold adversity mirrors the profound connection between Government initiatives and their aspirations. Together, he stated, they embody the essence of VBSY. The DC, in his remarks, further expressed confidence in the

continued success of VBSY, attributing its achievements to the synergy between the Government's endeavors and the resilient community of Pulwama. He provided insights into the Yatra's significant milestones, having traversed all Panchayats, Municipalities, and now reaching the villages. He emphasized that the core objective remains the saturation of Government schemes and reaching to the last person in the line. The event concluded with the felicitation of beneficiaries under schemes like Ujjwala and Jal Jeevan Mission. Additionally, the cricket and cultural teams were acknowledged for their achievements, further reinforcing the transformative spirit of VBSY.

DC Ganderbal reviews successful implementation of PM Vishwakarma Scheme

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, JANUARY 05: In a meeting held at the VC Room of Mini Secretariat Ganderbal, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shyambir today reviewed the effective implementation of the PM Vishwakarma scheme aimed at uplifting traditional artisans and craftspeople in the district.

The General Manager, District Industries Centre, Ganderbal, provided an updated list of over 3700 artisans who have enrolled on the PM Vishwakarma portal, showcasing a significant response to the scheme.



The DC undertook a thorough evaluation of the progress in artisan registration, verification processes in rural and urban areas, stakeholder capacity building, and the monitoring and evaluation mechanism for artisans.

Discussing the strategy for the second-tier verification of applications, the DC emphasized a swift process, directing line department officers to complete the verification within three days. He urged the importance of creating awareness, involving Panchayati Raj Institutions to maximize the scheme's impact on the socio-economic development of artisans.

The DC said that the PM Vishwakarma scheme is poised to directly benefit thousands of artisans and craftsmen in the district, providing them with essential tools, training, and financial support for their socio-economic development.

DC Kupwara chairs reviews saturation of KCC, AIFC

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, JANUARY 05: The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today chaired a meeting to review the saturation of prestigious Kisan credit cards (KCC) and Agriculture Infrastructure Fund centers (AIFC) in the district. Chief Agriculture Officer, Kupwara apprised the chair that 16000 applications of PM-Kisan beneficiaries who have not availed KCC are being saturated for which special KCC/ PM-Kisan camps are being con-



ducted in all 385 Panchayats of the district for 100% saturation of both the flagship schemes. DDC gave a deadline of January 15 to saturate PM-Kisan beneficiaries with KCC and asked

officers to stick to the timeline as KCC and PM-Kisan saturation are important initiatives. Emphasizing the importance of these initiatives, the DDC impressed upon the Officers to work

with added dedication and close coordination, and speed up the process of registration of beneficiaries. The DDC directed the Chief Agriculture Officer to share the calendar of Special KCC/ PM-Kisan camps with line departments and also submit a report with regard to on-spot registration of KCC beneficiaries to DDC's office on a daily basis. The meeting aimed to strategize and expedite the implementation of these schemes for the benefit of the farming community in Kupwara district.

Gadole on Anantnag Kishtwar Border witnesses spirited progress of VBSY IEC Van

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, JANUARY 05: The transformative Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY) is rapidly advancing in Block Breng Anantnag, witnessing widespread public engagement.

On the occasion, IEC Vans traversed through multiple GPs including Wandevelgam, Develgam, Wangam B, Wangam C, Vailoo, Adhall B, Gadole A, Magraypora, Senzi B, Ahlan, Gadole B and Lohar A.

The event promoted



awareness about various welfare programs, encouraging active "Jan Bhagidari" for achieving 100% saturation. In Anantnag, the Yatra has surpassed expectations, uniting over 2.50 lakh

participants across 335 Gram Panchayats and 138 urban local bodies, transcending mere promises.

So far, Yatra camps were transformed into lively hubs, engaging people

in events and offering on-the-spot services. Health camps played a crucial role, screening 93,347 individuals for prevalent health concerns such as TB, sickle cell anemia, and non-communicable diseases.

Over 16,097 My Bharat volunteers and 2.28 lakh individuals pledged the transformative 'Sankalp Pledge' in District Anantnag. Noteworthy contributors, including 1,288 women, 3,601 students, 396 local artists, and 397 sports personalities, received accolades for their dedication.

DLTC reviews proposed Scale of Finance for Agriculture, allied sectors for 2024-25

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, JANUARY 5: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai today presided over a significant meeting in the Mini Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex to approve the proposed Scale of Finance for Agriculture, Horticulture, and allied sectors for the financial year 2024-25.

Detailed deliberations took place on various aspects of each sector, focusing on the proposed Scale of Finance aligned with the cost of cultivation. The discussion encompassed Kisan Credit Card (KCC) crops, including Horticulture Crops, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, Fisheries, Sericulture, and Floriculture activities in District Udhampur.

The DC emphasized the need to increase the scale of finance, highlighting that setting financial parameters for agricultural and allied activities would facilitate farmers in the district to leverage various forms of free credit effortlessly. The DC underscored the importance of active participation from all stakeholders in determining accurate scales of finance, stressing the necessity of precise field data. Additionally, she urged close coordination among stakeholders to ensure the timely and adequate flow of credit to farmers.

Additionally, she urged close coordination among stakeholders to ensure the timely and adequate flow of credit to farmers.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I informed to general public that my FATHER GHULAM QADIR LONE S/O MOHAMMAD SULTAN LONE R/O KACHWA MUQAM has died on 24/11/2023. Now I am applying for her death certificate. If anybody have any objection in this regard He/she may file his /her objection in the BDO office WAGOORA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name.....GH MOHI UD DIN LONE
S/OLATE GHULAM QADIR LONE
R/O..... KACHWA MUQAM Block ...WAGOORA Distt
BARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I informed to general public that my FATHER ABDUL GAFFER LONE S/O GH MOHD LONE R/O KACHWA MUQAM has died on 25/11/2023. Now I am applying for her death certificate. If anybody have any objection in this regard He/she may file his /her objection in the BDO office WAGOORA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name.....ALI MOHAMMAD LONE
S/OLATE ABDUL GAFFER LONE
R/O..... KACHWA MUQAM Block ...WAGOORA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I informed to general public that my son's Date of birth (DOB) is 20/01/2020.....Now I am applying for his date of birth certificate (DOB) if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file His /her objection in the (BDO) office WAGOORA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name.....TAUSEEF AHMAD KHAN
F/O..... ABDUL REHMAN
R/O..... WAHDINA
Distt.....BARAMULLA

GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR Office Of The Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.

Ground Water Division Srinagar Baghi-Ali-Mardan, Nowshara Srinagar.
E-mail:- phegw@yahoocom, Tel./Fax No:- 0194-2411285

EXTENSION NOTICE 6th. Sub: Construction of Gravel Packed Production Tube at Tokina Old Pulwama

1. Due to "No Response" for the above mentioned work issued vide E. NIT No.36/JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech.of2023-24, issued under No:- JS-PHE/GWDS/Corrs./6439-52 dated:- 07-11-2023 for the work bearing Tender ID No. 2023_PHE_236353_1

Which was scheduled to be downloaded till 04-01-2024 are extended as per the details given below:-

S.No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Period of submission of bids	11-01-2024 up to 02.00PM
2.	Date of opening of tenders	12-01-2024 11.00AM

NOTE: All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid E-NIT issued vide above referred serial nos.

Dated:- 05-01-2024
DIPK-14757/23

Executive
Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.
Ground Water Division Srinagar.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir UT OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION BUDGAM

Engineering Complex Budgam PIN No. 191111
E-mail:- xennrbdivbud@gmail.com, Phone-FAX:- 01951-255208

TENDER NOTICE

E-tendering NIT No:- 143 -MDB of 2023-24/12288-12303 DATED:- 05-01-2024

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Union Territory of J&K, e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on **Percentage basis** from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost	Cost of T/Doc.	Earnest money CDR/FDR / BG	Time of Completion (days)	Class of Contractor	Major Head of account	Project Authority
1	Upgradation of NP road taking off from Mujpathri Sochalpathri road H/O Abdul Hammed Najar and others.	Rs. 2.79 Lacs	Rs.200/-	Rs.5580/-	20 days	DEE	3054- (M&R)	Chief Engineer, PWD (R&B) Central Kashmir
2	Pipe Laying and Manhole construction at Pandith Colony Sheikhpora Budgam	Rs. 0.963 Lacs	Rs.200/-	Rs.1926/-	10 days	DEE	Civic Action Programme 2023-24	Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (M) Jammu
3	Repairs and Renovation of at MS Kanoora Zone Khanshib Budgam	Rs.4.43 Lacs	Rs.200/-	Rs.8860/-	30 days	DEE	District Capex Budget (Elementary & Secondary Education sector)	District Development Commissioner Budgam
4	Repairs and Renovation of at MS Handjan Parnewa Zone Dreygam Budgam	Rs.3.06 Lacs	Rs.200/-	Rs.6120/-	30 days	DEE	District Capex Budget (Elementary & Secondary Education sector)	District Development Commissioner Budgam

Position of AAA = Accorded
Position of TS = Accorded

Project Authority:
Position of Funds:- = Available/Committed,

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of date given below:-

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	05/01/2024
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	05/01/2024
3.	Bid submission Start Date	05/01/2024
4.	Bid Submission End Date	15/01-2024 upto 4.00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids	16 -01-2024 at 11.00A.M in the office of Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Budgam
6.	Submission of Performance Security (PS)	Within 7 days of receipt of LOI. (The bidder as to provide 5% of allotted Cost as Performance Security within 7 days after opening of Financial Bid) in shape of CDR/FDR/BG

DIPK-14749/23
DATED:- 05-01-2024

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
(R&B) Division Budgam,

DC Samba reviews performance of banks at DLRC meeting

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, JANUARY 05: A meeting of District Level Review Committee/District Consultative Committee (DLRC/DCC) for the Quarter ending September 2023 was today held at DC Office Samba to review the performance of Banks in Deposits, Advances, CD Ratio, and achievement under Annual Credit Plan for the FY 2023-24.

The meeting also reviewed the progress under the self-employment and Social Security Schemes of the Government.

The meeting was chaired by Abhishek Sharma, District Development Commissioner and convened by Sanjay Dhar, Lead District Manager (LDM), Samba.

The meeting was also attended by LDO RBI, DDM NABARD, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, District Sheep Husbandry Officer,

AD Fisheries, District Coordinators of J&K Bank, SBI, PNB, JKGB, representatives of other Banks and Officials of other Sponsoring Government Departments/Agencies.

The LDM informed the house that Banks operating in Samba District have recorded Deposits of Rs.7240.62 Cr. and Advances of Rs.4136 Cr. as on 30.09.2023. The C.D. Ratio of the District was 57.12%. The achievement of Banks in the District under Annual Credit Plan 2023-24 stood at Rs.1137 Cr. against Annual Target of Rs.2348 Cr. recording growth of 48% as on 30.09.2023.

Under the Priority Sector the Achievement by Banks stood at Rs.725 Cr. against Annual Target of Rs.1996 Cr. recording growth of 36%, while under the Non-priority Sector the achievement was Rs.413 Cr. against Annual Target of Rs 352 Cr. recording a growth of 117%.

The DDC took an extensive



review of Government Sponsored Schemes with Special focus on PMEGP, JKREGP, KCC, PMAY, NRLM, NULM, etc.

The DDC impressed upon the banks to achieve 100% digitization of Bank accounts. He

advised all Sponsoring Agencies and Banks to spread awareness among people about various Self-employment Schemes launched by the Government and motivate them to avail the benefits of these Schemes for

generating self employment opportunities in the District. He directed all the Banks to clear the pending cases sponsored by different Govt. Departments/Agencies at the earliest and give a boost to lending, particularly

under Agriculture & Allied activities, MSME, Housing and Education Sectors, to achieve a healthy CD ratio. He also directed the Banks to cover all eligible persons under Social Security Schemes viz: PMSBY, PMJJBY & APY.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by the LDM. The meeting also reviewed the progress under the self-employment and Social Security Schemes of the Government.

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Cooperative department organises training cum awareness program in Majalta

■ HT News Network



UDHAMPUR, JANUARY 5: The Department of Cooperatives, in collaboration with IFFCO, conducted a comprehensive training cum awareness program in Block Majalta, elucidating the functioning of cooperatives across various sectors.

The event featured insights from Nigam Pakhetra, the Field Officer of IFFCO, who shared valuable information about the utilization of Nano urea and its accessibility at Fertilizer centers facilitated by cooperatives in Block Majalta. The training garnered participation from secretaries of all the PACS in Block Majalta, PRIs, IFFCO officials, ARCS Block Majalta Neeraj Wadhwa, and staff. Following the informative sessions, officials extended their support by distributing blankets to individuals with disabilities, widows, and other vulnerable members of the community.

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra: Reasi District revolutionizes development initiatives through innovative IEC campaign

■ HT News Network

REASI, JANUARY 5: The ongoing Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra in Reasi district has emerged as a proactive and innovative stride towards advancing the region's development initiatives.

The Panchayats in the district have implemented a pioneering approach by utilizing IEC vans equipped with LCD screens to disseminate crucial messages from Prime Minister Narendra Modi. These screenings serve the purpose of amplifying awareness and fostering engagement regarding the development trajectory of Jammu and Kashmir, while also highlighting various central and Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory government schemes.

The IEC van initiative has emerged as a pivotal tool in reaching every nook and corner of the district, ensuring that essential information about schemes, policies, and messages from the honorable Prime Minister reaches the grassroots level of the community.

BMCs organise environment Awareness Programme at Ramban

■ HT News Network

RAMBAN JANUARY 5: In a major step towards environmental well-being, the Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) of Ramban Forest Division engaged in an insightful online awareness program, partnering with the State Biodiversity Board. The meeting saw active participation from BMC Chairpersons, Secretaries, MFP Depot owners, DFO Ramban Dr Rajan Singh, and DFO State Biodiversity Board Sh. Rakesh Abrol, along with Range and Block Officers of Ramban Forest Division. Rakesh Abrol encouraged BMCs to open bank accounts, streamlining access to benefits outlined in the NTFP policy. Addressing queries, he clarified key aspects of the policy, fostering a deeper understanding among participants. Dr Rajan

Singh, DFO Ramban, shared encouraging updates – 23 BMCs have opened accounts, yielding revenue from NTFP collection. Notably, Rs 63,000 for purchase, Rs 21,000 as collection fees, and Rs 1,850 as benefit sharing were collected in 02 panchayats, focused on the sustainable collection of 420 Kg of Dhoob species. Two NTFP Depots have been established, aligning with the objectives of the NTFP Policy 2022. Taking the initiative further, a meeting with Biodiversity Management Committees of Banihal Range in Banihal, chaired by DFO Dr Rajan Singh, brought together Sarpanches, Chairpersons, and Secretaries of BMCs from different panchayats. The focus was on creating awareness about the recently-notified NTFP policy by the UT Government, emphasizing sustainability in NTFP collection.

VBSY bridges gap between Govt and unreachable population in Reasi District

■ HT News Network

REASI, JANUARY 5: To cover a maximum number of beneficiaries under the Central Government schemes by reaching them directly, Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra Van reached 2 more panchayats of Bharakh and Sildhar of Reasi district.

The Van equipped with the information, education, and communication (IEC) materials like pamphlets, and booklets on the various central government schemes, available for public awareness at various places in the district as per a pre-defined schedule. The Van is equipped with a sound system and digital LED screen to showcase videos of the Prime Minister's address, videos of beneficiaries and some other awareness movies.

During the event, attendees took the Sankalp (pledge) in line with the vision of the Viksit Bharat campaign. Earlier, on its arrival the Yatra was enthusiastically welcomed at these Panchayats. The local People and representatives of Panchayati



Raj Institutions and government officials attended the events at the respective location amid a dynamic mélange of events and initiatives.

As the program unfolded, the functionaries interacted with the locals and provided information about different flagship government schemes and initiatives. Free medical camps were held to provide free health services to the local people at their doorsteps.

The Yatra has been rolled out with the intention to reach out to the unreachable population and make the general masses aware of the multitude of government schemes, including the Jal Jeevan Mission,

tives that enhance the quality of life for residents, ensuring sustainable development. Speaking on the Occasion, a PRI stated, "Witnessing the ripple effect in Kathua is truly heartening. It demonstrates the power of collective action and the shared vision for a prosperous, empowered rural India." Another inhabitant of Panchayat Bhajwal shared, "Our association with VBSY has opened new doors for our Panchayat. Together, we are working towards creating positive change that will benefit generations to come." As the VBSY wave continues to surge through Kathua, the collective efforts of VBSY and participating Panchayats stand as a testament to the transformative.

Prof Nirmohi inaugurates 7- Day NSS Annual Winter Special Camp

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR JANUARY 05: NSS Units of Govt. College for Women (GCW) Udhampur today inaugurated 7 Day Annual Winter Special Camp on the theme Viksit Yuva Viksit Bharat under the aegis of Prime Minister's vision of Viksit Bharat@2047.

The Annual Winter Special Camp was inaugurated by Padamshree Prof. Shiv Dutt Nirmohi in presence of NSS Programme officers Dr. Ajay Kumar Sharma and Prof. Shama Rani including faculty members of the college.

Prof. Shiv Dutt Nirmohi, chief guest of the day, historically elaborated the inception of NSS as a movement in the mid 20th century as a youth participation in nation building via National Service. He also elaborated the then need of the hour to raise such an organisation for the cause of nation which engages the youth in social development. He also appealed to the



NSS Volunteers to take the idea of Viksit Bharat to grassroot level and ignite the same from elementary strata of the country so as to shape it to a movement. He also pioneered the importance of studying the history and culture of our civilization which would complement the initiative and vision of Viksit Bharat. Prof. Anjali Mahajan, Principal of the college in her message, appreciated the efforts of NSS wing of GCW Udhampur for organising such type of programmes to inculcate amongst the students a

sense of community engagement, besides their academic development. She also motivated the students for Swachhta-hi-Sewa and other flagship programmes of NSS (in the campus and adopted village) as a tool for national building. Dr. Ajay Kumar Sharma, NSS Programme officer of the college presented the keynote address wherein he exhorted upon the significance of Annual Camps in NSS. Besides, he also presented a detailed account of different activities to be carried out in the weeklong.

Homage paid to victims of January 5, 1996 terror attack DC Doda attends tribute paying ceremony

■ HT News Network

DODA, JANUARY 5: In a solemn gathering, the families of the nine victims, along with the general public today came together to pay homage to the 15 individuals who fell victim to terrorism on January 5, 1996. The atmosphere was heavy with sorrow as tearful eyes expressed the pain of loss. Among the dignitaries present at the tribute paying ceremony held at Balidaan Sthall Baatkew Barshalla was DCHarvinder Singh, who stood in solidarity with the grieving families. The event also saw the participation of SSP. Former MLA Bhaderwah, Daleep Parihar, presented shawls to the families, offering a gesture of support and empathy.

The homage ceremony unfolded with heartfelt tributes to the departed



souls, as the attendees united to remember and honor those who had been taken away by the senseless act of terrorism. The proceedings were marked by a poignant moment when the national anthem played, symbolizing unity and resilience in the face of tragedy.

As the ceremony concluded, the collective grief and shared remembrance

left an indelible mark on everyone present. The simple yet powerful act of paying homage served as a reminder that the community stands strong together, supporting one another through moments of darkness. The unity exhibited during this event highlighted the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

JMC conducts Animal impounding drive

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 5: A public drive for impounding of animals was conducted today by the Veterinary section of Jammu Municipal Corporation on the directions of Commissioner, JMC, Rahul Yadav.

AMVO section team, under the supervision of Dr. Divya Sharma, conducted the impounding drive along with counselling of the general public regarding management of stray/pet/ large animals during the ongoing winter season. Different areas of Jammu city including Vikram Chowk,

Panama Chowk, Gandhi Nagar, Trikuta Nagar, Narwal, Bhatindi, Channi Himmat, Sainik Colony, Greater Kailash, Kunjwani etc. were covered under the drive.

During the extensive drive, counselling was imparted to the general public regarding management of stray animals during the ongoing winter season. The public was advised not to let loose their animals on roads which cause serious accidents affecting both humans & animals especially in the prevailing foggy & winter season. Moreover, the free roaming animals also cause traffic congestion in different areas of Jammu city.

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra's Ripple Effect: Kathua blossoms as more Panchayats ride VBSY wave

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, JANUARY 5: The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY) has set in motion a transformative ripple effect in Kathua, as an increasing number of Panchayats embrace the VBSY wave. This positive surge signifies a collective commitment towards rural empowerment, community development and a brighter future for Kathua. Today, the IEC Van traversed through Panchayats Goond, Bhajwal in Block Nagri signifying that VBSY's impact has extended beyond its initial footprint, with a growing number of Panchayats in Kathua recognizing the potential for positive change through participation in VBSY ini-



tiatives. The collaboration between VBSY and local Panchayats underscores the importance of community-led development. Together, they strive to address the unique needs and aspirations of residents,

fostering a sense of ownership and pride in local progress. VBSY's wave is not only about awareness but also about empowering grassroots leadership. Panchayats are becoming active partners in driving initia-

EDITORIAL

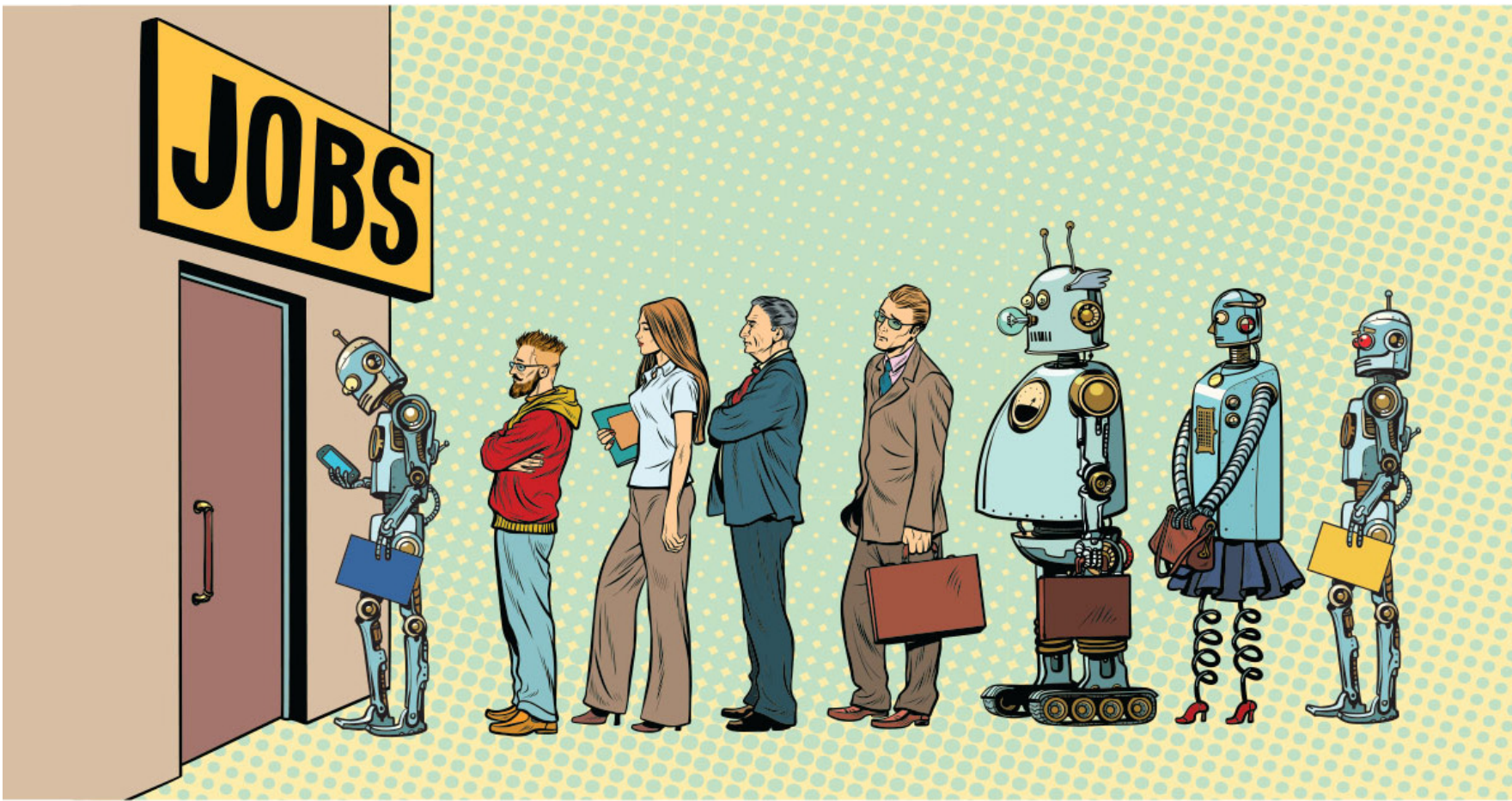
Prioritizing Mental Wellness - A Lesson from Kashmir

In the pursuit of holistic well-being, the emphasis on mental health has become paramount. It is not merely the absence of mental disorders but a state of complete mental well-being that contributes to a fulfilling life. The significance of maintaining mental health is underscored by its symbiotic relationship with physical health. These two aspects of well-being are intrinsically linked, influencing and complementing each other.

Kashmir, amidst its unique challenges, has shown exemplary dedication to mental health. Recognizing the impact of socio-political uncertainties on the psyche, initiatives in the region have focused on destigmatizing mental health concerns and fostering a culture of open dialogue. The community's proactive engagement in mental health education and support services has created a positive ripple effect.

Acknowledging that mental health is not a luxury but a fundamental human right, Kashmir's initiatives emphasize accessibility to mental health resources for all. By integrating mental health care into the broader healthcare framework, Kashmir serves as a model for holistic well-being.

In conclusion, the holistic health paradigm is incomplete without due attention to mental well-being. As we navigate the complexities of life, embracing the lesson from Kashmir becomes imperative: nurturing mental health is an investment in a resilient and thriving society. It's time for the world to take note and prioritize mental wellness alongside physical health for a healthier, happier future.



JOBS IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



■ **Javaid Mansoor**

AI also called machine learning is a kind of software system based on neural networks- A technique that was actually pioneered decades ago but very recently has blossomed. AI has enabled effective voice and image recognition, as well as the ability to generate synthetic images. The age of AI refers to the current era where artificial intelligence technologies are rapidly advancing and playing an increasingly significant role in various aspects of our lives, including healthcare, finance, and technology. It's an evolving field with continuous developments in machine learning, deep learning, and other AI disciplines. How rapidly the world has changed becomes clear by how even quite recent computer technology feels ancient today. Mobile phones in the '90s were big bricks with tiny green displays. Two decades before that, the main storage for computers was punch cards.

In a short period, computers evolved so quickly and became such an integral

part of our daily lives that it is easy to forget how recent this technology is. The first digital computers were only invented about eight decades ago, as the timeline shows. In the ever-changing world of technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is not just a buzzword but a transformative force reshaping various industries. One of the significant impacts of AI is on the job market. This article explores the evolving relationship between jobs and AI, examining both challenges and opportunities.

Jobs and AI

With the rise of AI-driven automation, some traditional jobs may face displacement. Routine and repetitive tasks are increasingly being performed by machines, leading to concerns about job loss in certain sectors. While automation poses challenges, it also creates new opportunities. The demand for AI specialists, data scientists, machine learning engineers, and AI ethicists has surged. The job market is evolving to accommodate roles that leverage AI technologies. Explore how AI is making inroads into various industries such as healthcare, finance, manufacturing, and more. Discuss specific examples of how AI is enhancing efficiency and productivity in these sectors, consequently influencing the types of skills in demand. As the nature of jobs changes, there is

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a growing emphasis on reskilling and upskilling the workforce. Discuss initiatives by governments, businesses, and educational institutions to equip workers with the necessary skills for the AI-driven future. Instead of replacing humans, AI are increasingly seen as a tool that complements human capabilities. Explore the concept of human-AI collaboration, where people work alongside intelligent machines to achieve better outcomes. Different countries including India are adapting to the integration of AI into their job markets. Highlight success stories, challenges, and diverse approaches to addressing the impact of AI on employment. In conclusion, the intersection of jobs and AI is a multifaceted landscape with both challenges and opportunities. While automation may reshape certain roles, the emergence of new job categories and the need for a skilled workforce present a dynamic and evolving future. As we navigate this AI-driven era, a proactive approach to education, upskilling, and ethical considerations will be crucial in shaping a workforce that thrives in collaboration with intelligent technologies.

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Views expressed are personal
and not of the organization author
writes.**

A Remarkable Journey: The Biography of Vijay Garg



■ **Aubaid Ahmad Akhoun**

Vijay Garg, a distinguished individual with a profound commitment to education, has woven a remarkable tapestry of achievements throughout his life.

Born and raised with an innate curiosity, Vijay embarked on his academic journey, culminating in an impressive list of qualifications. Holding degrees in M.Sc., B.Sc., B.Ed., and a Post Graduate Diploma in Statistics, he laid a robust foundation for a career dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge.

Vijay's professional trajectory took a pivotal turn as he transitioned into the realm of education. Serving as a Lecturer in Mathematics before assuming the role of Principal, he became an influential figure in shaping young minds. His impact extended beyond the classroom, reflected in his role as an author of numerous educational books. Titles such as "Make the Right Choice of Your Career," "NTSE," "NMMS," and a myriad of others attest to his commitment to empowering students with valuable insights.

Not content with academic contributions alone, Vijay emerged as a prolific writer, contributing articles in both English and Hindi, as well as Punjabi, to various newspapers. His ability to disseminate knowledge and guidance through the written word marked him as a beacon of inspiration.

Beyond his literary pursuits, Vijay delved into social work with unparalleled dedication. His initiatives included providing free career guidance counseling, distributing PDFs of educational materials, and actively participating in community improvement projects. The impact of his work resonated far and wide, earning him accolades from esteemed authorities such as the Punjab Education Secretary, District Education Officer, and SDM.

One of Vijay's notable contributions lies in the transformation of the Government Girls Senior Secondary School in MHR Malout. Through his leadership, the school witnessed substantial improvements, and students benefited from free science and math books, a testament to his commitment to accessible education.

Vijay Garg's journey is a testament to the transformative power of education and the profound impact one individual can have on a community. As he continues to shape the future through his writings, social initiatives, and educational endeavors, his legacy stands as an inspiration for generations to come.

Vijay Garg's forward legacy shines brightly as his son, Dr. Ankush Garg, makes



significant strides in the field of medicine. Dr. Ankush has successfully secured an MBBS degree from Guru Gobind Singh Medical College, affiliated with Baba Farid

Medical University in Faridkot, Punjab. This accomplishment underscores the family's enduring commitment to academic excellence and the pursuit of knowl-

edge.

Currently, Dr. Ankush Garg is poised for the next phase of his medical journey. With aspirations for specialization, he is diligently preparing for the challenging PG courses, eyeing MD/MS programs. His dedication to furthering his education aligns seamlessly with the family ethos of continuous learning and academic achievement.

The Garg family's commitment to education and community service continues to be exemplified through Dr. Ankush's endeavors. As he prepares for the next chapter in his medical career, he not only upholds the family legacy but also contributes to the broader realm of healthcare and education.

The narrative of the Garg family, rooted in a deep commitment to education, has now extended into the field of medicine through Dr. Ankush Garg. This multi-generational dedication serves as a testament to the enduring impact that a family's values can have on various facets of society. The Garg legacy, encompassing both Vijay Garg's educational contributions and Dr. Ankush Garg's pursuits in medicine, reflects a profound commitment to excellence that resonates across generations.

**Aubaid Ahmad Akhoun is a distinguished Educational Columnist, Motivational Speaker, and Associate Editor of the weekly educational publication 'Education Quill'.
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Russia Offering Technology Knowhow To India To Build Small Modular Reactors

EAM S Jaishankar's Visit Has Concluded A Significant Deal For Nuclear Power Boom

■ [Girish Linganna](#)

The expansion of civilian nuclear cooperation between India and Russia was decided upon during External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's visit to Moscow in December 2023. Moscow is prepared to offer India its technological knowhow to develop a compact modular reactor that can generate power in capacities ranging from 75 MW to 300 MW.

But what are small modular reactors (SMRs) and how are they superior to traditional nuclear power plants? For over a decade now, discussions worldwide have been centered on SMRs, also called mini-Nuclear Power Plants (mini-NPPs). These reactors are considered to be the nuclear power stations of the future. There is nothing new about these stations in—and of—themselves. When it comes to technology, they are comparable to pressurized water reactors, often known as PWRs.

Power units of fewer than 300 MW are considered 'small' by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), whereas power units with up to 700 MW are considered 'medium'. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) collectively refers to them as Small Medium Reactors (SMR). On the other hand, the abbreviation SMR is frequently used to refer to 'small modular reactors', which is intended for building in a serial fashion. In addition, there is a sub-class of very small reactors, which are known as ASMRs—installations that have a power capacity of less than 15 MW and are designed for use in extremely isolated places.

The technology behind low-power nuclear power plants is not a new development. The power of reactor units has increased from 60 MW to more than 1,600 MW since the beginning of nuclear energy. Currently, there is an approach for the development of small nuclear plants. This is partly due to the high capital expenditures of constructing large power reactors that generate energy through

the steam cycle, and partly due to the requirement to service small power grids. The capacity of these installations can be increased as required through modular construction, which uses small reactor blocks.

These installations can be built independently, or as modules inside a larger complex. When it comes to modularity, the savings predicted are projected to come from scalability. Besides, additional smaller-scale reactor installations are being developed for use in isolated places. This type of installation requires relatively minor investments compared to the cost of constructing massive reactors, which is comparable to the capitalization of the utilities interested in acquiring them.

More than 90% of these coal-fired power plants have a capacity of less than 500 MW and some even have a capacity of less than 50 MW. This is another reason why small modular reactors (SMRs) are becoming increasingly popular.

SMRs operate on the same fundamental concept as standard nuclear reactors, generating heat through nuclear fission. This heat is converted into steam, which drives turbines and generates energy. Atoms of uranium fuel are divided into fission, producing energy. SMRs are intended to be both more efficient and safer. Many employ passive safety systems that rely on natural forces—such as gravity, convection and heat resistance to reduce the danger of accidents. Their smaller size enables faster and more flexible deployment and they may be quickly turned off when not in use. SMRs are being developed to work with renewable energy sources to provide consistent, low-carbon power supply.

To fulfil its obligations under the terms of the Paris Agreement, the Indian government has created a roadmap for a switch to carbon-free energy. India intends to implement this approach to shift its energy industry to entirely carbon-free by 2070.

In this strategy, nuclear energy is



given special consideration. India now has seven nuclear power facilities with 22 operational nuclear reactors, while seven more generating units (not including reactors being developed at research centres) are under construction. India is second to China in the world in terms of the total number of nuclear power units being built concurrently.

Speaking at a conference on SMRs organized by the government think-tank, NITI Aayog, in November 2023, Minister of State Jitendra Singh discussed the need to rely on building modular reactors with a maximum

capacity of 300 MW. According to Singh, the primary distinction between these reactors and high-power reactors which are built on-site, is that the reactor for these units is built entirely at the plant and transported to its intended operating location, substantially simplifying construction logistics.

Small reactors have several advantages over large reactors, including their design flexibility and requirement for less space, as well as significant cost savings and shorter construction times, while maintaining a high degree of safety, according

to the minister. He underscored two concerns while emphasizing the necessity for a thorough investigation into creating tiny modular reactors: first, exchanging technologies with businesses that have developed low-power reactors; and, second, resolving the issue of sufficient funding.

Russia has made significant advancements in the design of SMRs. A 50-MW NPP based on the RITM-200 reactor is one of the most intriguing concepts. An SMR of this type is predicted to operate for 60 years using a six-year fuel cycle. Afrikanov OKBM, the developer, intends to con-

struct the first station by 2027. The Suroyamskoye iron ore deposit area in the Chelyabinsk region and the Peschanka gold-copper deposit territory in Chukotka are the two most promising building locations being considered. The station is a component of the national project, 'Nuclear Science: Technology and Technologies', which was started by Rosatom.

There are also smaller nuclear reactors with capacities ranging from 6 MW to 10 MW. These reactors, particularly the 'Shelf' and ABV-6E versions, are intended for use in distant and difficult places. OKBM is in charge of ABV-6E development, whereas NIKIET controls the 'Shelf' reactor.

NIKIET is also working on several projects using tiny power units. A transportable modular nuclear power station with a 1.2-MW gas-cooled ATGOR reactor is among the well-developed ones. This reactor has a 60-year operating life and requires nuclear fuel refilling every 10 years. It is worth noting that the reactor can be started at temperatures as low as -50°C.

Furthermore, the power plant can be launched using gas turbines, removing the requirement for external power sources. On the unit, parallel gas turbine installations can generate energy. This tiny NPP's core equipment, weighing 60 tons, may be accommodated on two-wheeled platforms readily carried by conventional semi-trucks.

Furthermore, Rosatom operates the world's only operational floating nuclear thermal power plant (FNPP) based on the Akademik Lomonosov floating power unit containing two KLT-40S reactors. Reactor installations of the KLT-40 type used as part of floating nuclear power plants have proven themselves in the Russian nuclear icebreaker fleet during many years of accident-free operation. The station's electrical capacity is 70 MW. (IPA Service)

The author is a Defence, Aerospace & Political Analyst based in Bengaluru

Alarming Global Trends In Gender-Based Violence

On November 25, we observed the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. But on the same day, the UN published a report on gender-related killings of women and girls. A chilling reality on the global stage is revealed by the report

■ [Dipankar Chatterjee](#)

On November 25, we observed the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. But on the same day, the UN published a report on gender-related killings of women and girls. A chilling reality on the global stage is revealed by the report. In 2022, 48,800 women and girls became victims of fatal violence at the hands of their intimate partners or family members. On average, more than 133 women or girls lose their lives every day due to familial or personal partner violence.

This alarming statistic, accounting for approximately 55 per cent of the overall 88,900 female homicide victims recorded in 2022, paints a harrowing picture of the extent of gender-based violence worldwide. As the world grappled with various challenges, the scourge of violence against women persisted. While global homicides predominantly target men, constituting 80 per cent of cases in 2022, women bear the disproportionate brunt within the domestic sphere, accounting for 66 per cent of all victims of intimate partner killings. This pervasive gender-based violence transcends geographical boundaries. In a significant shift, Africa surpassed Asia in 2022 as the region with the highest absolute number of girls and women killed, recording an estimated 20,000 victims.

This marked the first time Africa had claimed this dubious distinction since 2013. Moreover, Africa recorded the highest rates of female intimate partner and family-related homicides globally, reaching 2.8 victims per 100,000 female population. Asia followed closely, with an estimated 18,400 women or girls falling victim to such violence in

2022. The Americas recorded 7,900 cases, Europe registered 2,300, and Oceania reported around 200 such killings. Discrepancies in absolute numbers among world regions can be attributed to differences in population size.

Data from populous Asian and African countries with available trend information indicate some reductions in gender-related killings over the past decade, with occasional reversals. For instance, India has seen a gradual decline in violent deaths related to gender-related factors. At the same time, Pakistan has shown long-term reductions in female victims of "honour crimes" that are committed to protecting the reputation of a family by male family members against female family members.

The male relatives of a family set the "honour" code. However, challenges persist in certain regions, such as Eastern Europe, where elevated rates continue despite an overall decline. When a young girl or woman has no right to refuse to enter a marriage, the marriage can be deemed a "servile marriage." A young woman might be given in exchange for money. She is saleable. She is inherited by another person when her husband dies.

Young girls and women are forced to marry wealthy older men to become sexual and domestic slaves. The tradition of servile marriage is still practised in Ethiopia, instrumentalised by the rape of underage girls. Other recorded forms of servile marriage include instances of girls being pledged to priests in Ghana, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria to atone for offences committed by family members; in certain South Asian countries, a young girl is sometimes "bought" by paying a bride price and without the permission of the girl. Girls in servile marriages are often abused physically and

sexually by their rapists, their buyers. The roots of this pervasive violence against women often lie in stereotypical gender norms that grant men perceived entitlement to dominate women.

Controlling behaviours, dictating actions, deciding on sexual activities, and prescribing dress codes are manifestations of this dominance. Individuals harbouring such views are more predisposed to resort to lethal violence against women. Other contributing factors include low educational attainment, experiences of childhood abuse or violence, and problematic alcohol use.

Gender inequality persists in various ways in the digital world despite significant progress in recent decades – the persistence of gender inequalities is attributed to several factors. Gender inequality intersects with various forms of discrimination, exacerbating the challenges faced by women. Deep-seated gender stereotypes and discriminatory social norms limit women's choices, opportunities, and agency while reinforcing traditional gender roles. The role of gender stereotypes and assumptions shape interpersonal interactions and perpetuate gender inequalities.

These stereotypes influence how people perceive and relate to each other personally and professionally. Moreover, the persistence of gender inequalities is reinforced by the slow change of deeply ingrained gender stereotypes compared to material arrangements. While social beliefs eventually respond to material changes, cultural lag occurs, meaning people rely on traditional gender beliefs when confronted with new and uncertain circumstances.

This perpetuates gender imbalances, creating a male chauvinism atmosphere. In patriarchy, men hold primary power

and dominance, both economically and politically. Gender-based hierarchies, sexism, and the subordination of women characterise patriarchy. The patriarchy also perpetuates gender norms and stereotypes, restricting women's agency and limiting their social, political, and economic opportunities. Women are often relegated to unpaid domestic labour and lower-paying, undervalued jobs, while males occupy positions of power and authority. Race, class, and sexuality influence women's experiences of patriarchal exploitation and oppression.

Considering World Economic Forum data, the global gender gap has closed to 68.4 per cent by 2023, indicating progress towards achieving gender parity. However, there are significant disparities in achievement across countries and regions. Only 6.2 per cent of countries have managed to close the gender gap beyond 80 per cent, with most being in Europe, which suggests that there is still much work to be done in other parts of the world. More than half of the countries have achieved closure of the gap between 70 and 79 per cent, which includes countries like the USA, UK, France, UAE, Bangladesh, and Vietnam.

These countries have made significant strides but still have room for improvement. The dominance of countries with democratic institutions in achieving gender parity is notable. Still, it is essential to address the few countries with authoritarian rule that lag in closing the gender gap. Disturbingly, 3.5 per cent of countries have only completed the gender gap of less than 60 per cent, leaving a considerable gender gap.

This category includes countries like Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan, indicating the urgent need for focused efforts to promote gender equality in these regions.

The remaining 40 per cent of countries, including India, China, Nepal, and Bhutan, fall into the category that has achieved gender parity in the 60–69 per cent range. While progress is being made, there is still work to be done to bridge the gap further in these countries.

Considering WEF data, the estimation that it will take 131 years to reach full gender parity is concerning and highlights the need for accelerated efforts to close the gender gap. The prediction that 100 per cent gender parity is expected to be achieved by the middle of the 2100s indicates the long-term nature of this issue. The regional breakdown showing that South Asian countries will take nearly 150 years to close the 100 per cent gender gap is alarming and calls for targeted interventions in this region. The alarming data on gender-based violence against women demands urgent global attention. Efforts to address and eliminate violence against women must be intensified, encompassing comprehensive strategies that challenge societal norms, provide education on healthy relationships, and ensure legal frameworks protect victims.

As the world collectively observes the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, it serves as a poignant reminder that the fight against gender-based violence goes on and requires unwavering commitment and collaboration on a global scale. The sobering statistics of 2022 underscore the imperative for immediate and sustained efforts to create a world where women and girls are free from the pervasive threat of violence within their homes and communities.

The writer is an international economic consultant

Jal Jeevan Mission Crosses Momentous Milestone of Providing Tap Water Connections To 14 Crore (72.71%) Rural Households

■ HT News Network

New Delhi Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) today crossed a momentous milestone of providing tap water connections to 14 Crore (72.71%) rural households. Launched by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi on 15th August 2019, the flagship initiative of the Government of India has demonstrated unparalleled speed and scale, increasing rural tap connection coverage from 3 Crore to an astounding 14 Crore in just four years. This significant achievement marks a paradigm shift in rural development, emphasizing the Mission's commitment to ensuring water quality, empowering communities, and promoting sustainable practices.

Working in collaboration with States/ UTs and various development partners, JJM has achieved several milestones. As of today, six states, namely Goa, Telangana, Haryana, Gujarat, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh and three Union Territories of Puducherry, D&D and D&NH, and A&N Islands have achieved 100% coverage. Mizoram at 98.68%, Arunachal Pradesh at 98.48% and Bihar at 96.42% are on track to achieving saturation in the near future.

The heart of this transformation lies in the combined efforts of the Union and State governments, along with the active participation of



development partners. Every second witnesses the installation of a tap water connection, leading to a paradigm shift in the rural landscape. More than 2 lakh villages and 161 districts are now 'Har Ghar Jal'.

By implementing water purification and treatment methods, JJM has ensured that the water reaching households meets the standards, significantly reducing water-borne diseases and improving overall health in rural communities.

In addition to household connections, the Mission has ensured tap water supply in 9.24 lakh (90.65%) schools and 9.57 lakh (86.63%) anganwadi centres nationwide. In the 112 aspirational districts, tap water access has surged from 21.41 lakh (7.86%) households at the time of launch to 1.96 Crore (72.08%) households today.

The 'Har Ghar Jal' initiative is bringing substantial socio-economic benefits, liberating the rural population, particularly women and young girls, from the arduous

task of fetching water daily. The time saved is now redirected towards income-generating activities, skill development, and supporting children's education.

JJM's sustainable model aims to ensure the longevity of the infrastructure and promotes community-led development. Over 5.29 lakh Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSC)/Pani Samitis have been constituted, along with the preparation of 5.17 lakh Village Action Plans (VAPs) focusing on drinking water source management, greywater treatment, and regular O&M of in-village water supply systems. More than 23.55 lakh women have been trained for testing water samples using Field Testing Kit (FTK) to ensure quality. Rigorous testing of water samples from source and delivery points is conducted regularly. Today, safe drinking water is available in all Arsenic and Fluoride-affected habitations.

Guided by the principle of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas aur Sabka Prayas', Jal Jeevan Mission is steadfastly moving towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 - providing safe and affordable water to all. The mission's commitment to delivering safe water through taps to all households, schools, anganwadis, and public institutions in rural areas perfectly aligns with the objectives of Viksit Bharat.

MoHUA committed to create supportive and empowering environment for street vendors across nation: Minister Hardeep S Puri

■ HT News Network

New Delhi "Grievance Redressal Committees play a very critical role in ensuring

robust Grievance Redressal Committees under the Street Vendors Act 2014, to resolve disputes and conflicts among

IMG_7103.JPG

The seminar on 'Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) for Street Vendors' was organised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on January 04, 2024. The seminar aimed to sensitise all States and Union territories on the importance of robust GRCs and brought together key stakeholders, including GRC members, to enhance their understanding of the legal provisions within the Street Vendors Act 2014. The seminar was attended by officials from the Union and State Government, partner from civil society organisations, member from GRC and other experts. The event served as a platform for capacity building among State officials and GRC members, to address the challenges faced by street vendors and ensure the protection of their rights. Participants also had the opportunity to exchange best practices from States and Union Territories that have successfully constituted and managed effective GRCs under the Street Vendors.



ing fair treatment, resolving disputes, and upholding the rights of street vendors as per the Street Vendors Act, 2014."

"An effective grievance redressal mechanism is crucial for fostering a conducive atmosphere for street vendors to conduct their businesses."

Shri Hardeep S. Puri, Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs

Shri Hardeep S. Puri, Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, and Petroleum and Natural Gas, stressed the significance of establishing and maintain-

street vendors. Speaking while inaugurating a seminar on 'Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) for Street Vendors' yesterday, the Minister congratulated the States/UTs who have constituted GRC and urged remaining States /UTs to expedite the constitution of the Committee at the earliest. He said that street vendors have long played an integral role in the urban informal economy and the Ministry is committed to creating a supportive and empowering environment for street vendors across the nation.

Dawood's Plot With Base Price Of ₹ 15,000 Sold For ₹ 2 Crore In Auction

■ HT News Network

Mumbai: The auction of four properties owned by Dawood Ibrahim concluded today, with two of the land parcels getting no bids and one, which had a reserve price of just 15,000, being sold for an eye-popping 2 crore. Dawood is India's most wanted terrorist and is believed to be hiding in Karachi.

The four tracts of agricultural land which went under the hammer are located in Mumbai village in Maharashtra's Ratnagiri district, and their combined reserve price was just 19.22 lakh. While the two bigger land parcels did not receive any bids, a plot with an area of 1,730 sq m and a reserve price of 1.56 lakh was sold for 3.28 lakh. The smallest land parcel, which has an area of 170.98 sq m and had a reserve price of 15,000, has been sold for 2.01 crore. This was bought by lawyer Ajay Srivastava, who had earlier purchased three of the underworld don's properties, including his childhood home in the same village. Mr Srivastava, who is also a former Shiv Sena leader, had won bids for two shops in Mumbai in 2001 and the home where Dawood was born in 2020. While the shops are stuck in litigation, the lawyer is likely to get the deed for the home soon, and intends to start a Sanatan Pathshala (school) there.

"I had bid for the bungalow in 2020. A Sanatan Dharm Pathshala Trust has been set up and construction of the school will start soon... I had taken part in the auction in 2001 to get the fear of Dawood Ibrahim out of people's hearts, and a few people have come forward after that," he had said on Thursday.

Friday's auction was held under the Smugglers and Foreign Exchange Manipulators (Forfeiture of Property) Act, 1976.

619 Cases Of Covid Sub-Variant JN.1 Reported From 12 States Till January 4

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: The number of cases of COVID-19 sub-variant JN.1 reported from 12 states till January 4 rose to 619, official sources said today.

They said 199 cases have been reported from Karnataka, 148 from Kerala, 110 from Maharashtra, 47 from Goa, 36 from Gujarat, 30 from Andhra Pradesh, 26 from Tamil Nadu, 15 from Delhi, 4 from Rajasthan 2 from Telangana and one each from Odisha and Haryana.

Even though the number of cases is rising and the JN.1 sub-variant has been detected in the country, there is no cause of immediate concern as the majority of those infected are opting for home-based treatment, indicating mild illness, officials said.

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Ms Moitra, 49, was accused of taking bribes, including 2 crore in cash and "luxury gift items", from Mr Hiranandani in exchange for asking questions critical of the government in parliament. She was also accused of surrendering log-in credentials to a confidential account on the parliamentary website, so Mr Hiranandani could post those questions directly. The Centre has already asked states and Union territories to maintain a constant vigil amid an uptick in the number of Covid cases and the detection of the JN.1 sub-variant in the country.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma Keeps 8 Ministries, Diya Kumari Gets Finance

■ HT News Network

Jaipur: Rajasthan's new Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma has taken charge of eight portfolios including Home as the state government finalised who will handle what responsibilities in the new BJP regime.

Most of the leaders are first-time ministers. The portfolios announcement also comes 15 days after the new BJP government was formed after unseating the Congress. There is speculation the BJP went through the list of responsibilities to be given carefully, which is why it took this long to make the much-awaited announcement. Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari, who belongs to the erstwhile royal family of Jaipur, is in charge of Finance, Tourism and Public Works Department (PWD). Ms Kumar represents the Vidhyadhar Nagar seat. During the election, she had said it was quite obvious the public would vote out the "corrupt" Congress government and support her party.

She is the granddaughter of Man Singh II, the last ruling maharaja of the princely state of Jaipur. Her appeal for votes was made as a "daughter of Jaipur" and the "princess who walks on the streets".

The other Deputy Chief Minister Prem



Chand Bairwa has been given six portfolios to handle, which includes Education, Transport, and Ayurveda. Rajyavardhan Rathore, the MLA from Jhotwara, is the Industries Minister. "It is the responsibility of the officers, employees and all of us to serve the people of Rajasthan. The Constitution also says that whatever responsibility you have, fulfil it properly... These five years are very important for Rajasthan," Mr Rathore said in Jaipur, news agency ANI reported. Gajendra Singh Khimsar has been appointed Health Minister. Madan Dilawar, the MLA from Kota who also works very closely with the BJP's ideological mentor Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), will handle Education.

MoU signed between Indian Railways and CII to promote and facilitate green initiatives

■ HT News Network

New Delhi Indian Railways has signed an MoU with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) to reduce energy and water consumption lowering GHG emissions. IR and CII have renewed their MoU for third consecutive term.

The MoU was signed and exchanged on 4th January, 2024 between Shri. Shailendra Singh, Principal Executive Director/ME (EnHM & Project), Rly. Board and Smt. Seema Arora, Deputy Director General, CII in the presence of Smt. Jaya Varma Sinha, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Railway Board, Board Members and other senior officers.

Indian Railways, as a major stakeholder of transportation sector in India shared the responsibility of environment protection. IR, itself has set "Net Zero Carbon Emission" target by the year 2030. Indian Railways have significant number of Railway stations, Production units, major workshops and other estab-



lishments, for which various green initiatives have been taken with the objective of environment protection and reducing the carbon footprints.

CII has been actively partnering with IR since July 2016 to promote and facilitate green initiatives over Indian Railways. First MoU was signed in year 2016 for 03 years and upon its expiry another MoU was signed in year 2019 for further 03 years.

Significant progress has been made so far under above 02 MoUs in achieving:

Energy efficiency in manufacturing facilities and railway workshops: This initiative resulted in energy savings of 210 lakh

kWh, and monetary savings of Rs. 16 crores and resulted in significant GHG emissions reduction of around 18000 tons of CO2.

Green Co-rating: This initiative has been implemented in 75 Railways units (workshops & manufacturing facilities) and has improved their environmental performance substantially.

Green Railway Stations: Around 40 stations have achieved green certificate and have demonstrated significant improvements by saving 22 million KWh energy and 3 billion litres of water annually.

Green Buildings, Hospitals, Schools and Colonies: Over 40 building facilities, including administrative

buildings, hospitals, schools and colonies have been facilitated to achieve green certification.

Capacity building and skill development: More than 20 New technology suppliers have been introduced, with around 150 IR officials have been exposed to the 06 Best energy efficient private sector plants in India. Also, around 900 IR officials trained on different aspects of energy efficiency.

Smt. Jaya Varma Sinha, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Railway Board expressed optimism about the renewed collaboration, stating, "Indian Railways has consistently demonstrated its commitment to sustainable practices. This renewed MoU with CII-GBC marks a significant step towards our collective goal of achieving Net Zero carbon emissions". She emphasized that Green is the most desirable option, incorporated as fundamental in 'Planning, design, development and operations' of Indian Railway.

UP's Reply Sought On Plea Against Ban On Manufacturing Of Food Products With Halal Certification

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday sought responses from the Uttar Pradesh government and others on two separate pleas challenging the notification prohibiting the manufacturing, storage, sale, and distribution of food products with halal certification within the state, except for items produced for export.

The November 18 last year notification was issued by the office of Commissioner, Food Safety and Drug Administration, Uttar Pradesh, under Section 30(2)(a) of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

The petitions came up for hearing before a bench of Justices B R Gavai and Sandeep Mehta, which issued notice to the Uttar Pradesh government, the Centre, and others seeking their responses to the pleas.

Initially, the bench questioned the advocates representing the petitioners as to why the top court should entertain the pleas under Article 32 of the Constitution and why they should not approach the high court first. The lawyer representing one of the petitioners said the issue involved pan-India ramifications and also had an impact on trade and commerce. "Even the high court's order would have a pan-India effect.



If a particular instrument is stayed by the high court, the stay will be applicable throughout the country," the bench observed.

The top court said the issue of inter-state trade and commerce can also be considered by the high court.

The lawyer argued the issue was required to be examined by the top court, and it has to be considered whether such a notification can be issued. He said the issue of public health was also there, along with its impact on trade, commerce, and religious feelings. The counsel said an FIR was lodged in Uttar Pradesh on November 17 last year against them and other entities, alleging they were issuing forged halal certificates for financial gains.

India-Nepal Ties Witnesses Real Transformation In Recent Years: S Jaishankar

■ HT News Network

Kathmandu: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Friday said that bilateral ties between India and Nepal witnessed a real transformation in recent years with significant strides made in various sectors. In his address after joint inauguration of Tribhuvan University Central Library and other post-earthquake reconstruction projects in Kathmandu, Mr Jaishankar said,

"In recent years, we have witnessed the real transformation of the India-Nepal relationship. With significant strides made in a variety of areas, this partnership has expanded multifold and connectivity, be it physical, digital or energy-related, has become a cornerstone of this expanding collaboration, and this has further strengthened the people-to-people linkages between our two countries," Mr Jaishankar said today. The external affairs minister who arrived in Nepal a day ago today jointly inaugurated with his Nepalese counterpart N P Saud the Tribhuvan University Central Library and other reconstruction projects undertaken in Kathmandu after the 2015 earthquake in Nepal. Highlighting the India's efforts in Nepal after the devastating earthquake of 2005, Mr Jaishankar said, "I stand before you today with a sense of satisfaction, even pride as we gather here to celebrate the inauguration of this newly constructed Central Library of the prestigious Tribhuvan University as well as 25 schools, 32 health projects and a Cultural Heritage Sector project which were undertaken as part of a collaborative effort to support the people of Nepal in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake of 2015." He said Nepal's government, after the initial rescue efforts prioritized housing, education, health and cultural heritage as part of its reconstruction drive. Mr Jaishankar stated that India is pleased to be part of Nepal's reconstruction efforts.

Kashmir's 'Water Warrior' on mission to spread eco-friendly practices

Ruhail Maqbool honoured with Jal Phahari Samman for water conservation efforts

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 05 (KNO): A 34-year-old young researcher from south Kashmir is committed to championing water conservation initiatives and fostering a collective consciousness.

Sheikh Ruhail Maqbool from main town Tral in Pulwama district has taken different initiatives that encourage locals to embrace eco-friendly practices for which he has recently received the Jal Phahari Samman Award at Maharashtra Sadan in New Delhi.

Speaking with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Ruhail said he received his first award from the Ministry of Jal Shakti in 2021 as 'National Water Hero' for "praiseworthy efforts" in water conservation management and water quality.

Ruhail said that for the last several years, he has been organising awareness programmes in different areas to sensitise people about the importance of water and the need to maintain its quality.

"I have also been working to clean the water bodies besides motivating people of the tribal community about the need for water conservation," he said, adding that he has been working on rainwater harvest-



ing and grey water management besides researching about river Jhelum and Dal Lake along groundwater management.

Sheikh claimed that besides having international publications, he has received over 60 national and international certificates for efforts on water conservation including a certificate from the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Ruhail who has a Masters in Environmental and Occupational Health, a PG in

Analytical Chemistry, an MBA in Human Resource Management and a 3-year diploma in computer sciences said he received the Jal Phahari Samman (National Water Warrior Award) on December 13 2023.

This prestigious event was organized by Sarkaritel with the support of the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India, in collaboration with UNOPS, National Jal Jeevan Mission, National Water Mission, CEEW, German GiZ, and NIUA as Knowledge Part-

ners.

He said that over 32 water conservators mainly IAS, IRS and IFS from across the country were felicitated with the esteemed Jal Phahari honour to acknowledge the tremendous efforts that they have put in over the years.

Expressing gratitude to Sarkaritel and the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti for recognising his work, Ruhail said the honour will encourage him to work with more zeal for water quality, research, management and conservation.

Sheikh has been awarded consecutively for the past many years in recognition of his initiatives and extraordinary efforts taken by him in varied spheres. He has also received many district-level and UT-level awards from the Jal Jeevan Mission J&K and general administration for his "extraordinary performance" and "praiseworthy efforts" to spread awareness on water conservation quality, water quality, management and awareness among various tribal and rural communities including schools, health centres, etc.

Ruhail said climate change and deteriorating water quality are the main issues across the globe and there is more and more need to create awareness and make efforts to save the environment otherwise its repercussions will be very bad—(KNO)

Div Com Jammu reviews implementation of Financial Assistance Scheme for PoJK DPs, West Pakistani Refugees

■ HT News Network



JAMMU, JANUARY 05: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar chaired a meeting here today to review the implementation of the Financial Assistance Scheme for Displaced Persons and West Pakistani Refugees. Deputy Commissioners of Jammu, Samba, Kathua and Provincial Rehabilitation Officer Jammu were present.

The Div Com took stock of the district wise data of the beneficiaries from the respective Deputy Commissioners in terms of cases sanctioned and pendency.

Exhorting the Deputy Commissioners to saturate the Scheme covering all eligible beneficiaries, the Div Com directed them to personally monitor the implementation process. "Spread mass awareness among the targeted beneficiaries to ensure that the benefits reach to the last person in the

queue" he added. The Div Com asked the DCs to conduct a meeting with all the stakeholders including the representatives

of the DPs and West Pakistani Refugees to remove bottlenecks, if any. The Div Com further directed the DCs to designate senior officers in their office and conduct camps in the areas where the targeted population resides. Deputy Commissioners of Jammu, Samba, Kathua and Provincial Rehabilitation Officer Jammu were present. The Div Com took stock of the district wise data of the beneficiaries from the respective Deputy Commissioners in terms of cases sanctioned and pendency. Exhorting the Deputy Commissioners to saturate the Scheme covering all eligible beneficiaries, the Div Com directed them to personally monitor the implementation process. "Spread mass awareness among the targeted beneficiaries to ensure that the benefits reach to the last person in the queue" he added.

FCIK regrets industrial under-development in North Kashmir

■ HT News Network

Srinagar January 05 The Federation of Chambers of Industries Kashmir (FCIK) has regretted the sluggish pace in the development of industry in three northern districts of Baramullah, Kupwara and Bandipora in Kashmir region and has urged for an appropriate action plan to ensure balanced and equitable industrial growth in the area.

The grave instances of inequalities and lopsided development was brought to the attention of the Advisory Committee of FCIK in a meeting held at Industrial Estate Baramullah under the Chairmanship of Shakeel Qalander. The meeting, among others, was participated by Javaid Ahmad Bhat, Mehraj-ud-Din, Bilal Ahmad, Ghulam Mohammad Shah, Farooq Ahmad, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat, Tariq Ahmad in their capacity of being Presidents/Office bearers of Industrial estates of Sopore, Baramullah, Branwari Kupwara, Chotipora Handwara, Rudbugh Kupwara, Doabgah, Tulbal besides President of unorganised industrial sector Baramullah Imran Amir. The meeting was also participated by former FCIK President Zahoor Ahmad Bhat, Syed Fazal Illahi, Shahjehan, Dr. Zain-ul-Abideen, Abdul Wahid Chishti and others. The meeting was informed that while the districts of Baramullah, Kupwara and Bandipora were spread over 6967 square kilometers accounting to 44.89% of the total area of 15520 Square kilometers in Kashmir region, only 12% of the total industrial units in the region existing in these three districts was regretful. The representatives of industry from 7 industrial estates attributed the industrial backwardness in the three districts



to the callous approach and lopsided planning by successive governments which had completely ignored these districts for establishing any strong industrial base.

The members informed that the authorities had miserably failed to set up any major industrial estate in the three districts for attracting investments and facilitating the educated youth to take up entrepreneurship as their means of livelihood. While Baramullah district had currently only three functional industrial estates spread over 339 kanals of land (Baramullah: 58 Kanals; Sopore: 80 Kanals; Doabgah: 201 Kanals), Kupwara had only two estates Branwari (16 kanals) and Chotipora (103 kanals). The two estates in Bandipora over 61 kanals of land had mostly remained in use with security forces over past three decades, informed the members. Although the new industrial estates of Rudbugh over 85 kanals of kahcharai land was established in the year 2016, the land was legally transferred by J&K Administrative Council to the industries and commerce department only a month back. The industries and commerce department had received initial deposits and part premium from 12 entrepreneurs.

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra marks celebration of development, progress at Panchayat Chak Salarian

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, JANUARY 05: Panchayat Chak Salarian, Block Ramgarh, witnessed a grand spectacle of development and progress today, as the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra made its way to the village.

The Yatra, a nationwide outreach initiative by the Government of India, aims to spread awareness and ensure 100% coverage under the flagship schemes and programs that benefit the common people.

The villagers welcomed the Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) van with open arms and hearts and participated in various activities that showcased the achievements and opportunities of the government schemes. They listened to the inspiring message of Prime Minister, who urged them to join hands in building a new India. They also took the Sankalp pledge, committing themselves to the vision of a self-reliant, developed and prosperous nation.

The event also featured the "Meri Kahani Meri Zubani" initiative, where beneficiaries of schemes such as Ayushman Bharat, Ujjwala Yojana, Jan Dhan Yojana, and others, shared their stories of transformation and empowerment. They expressed their gratitude to the government for providing them access to quality health care, clean cooking fuel, financial inclusion, and other essential services.

Viksit Bharat Yatra in Ramban: 27,000 Women among 70,000 participated in 39 Day

■ HT News Network

RAMBAN, JANUARY 05: Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, led by Deputy Commissioner Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, is making substantial progress in Ramban District.

While the focus is on saturating Centrally Sponsored Schemes, reaching people in Panchayats and Urban areas, the Yatra goes beyond numbers, fostering community engagement and youth participation. Local youth are seen actively joining sports activities, pledging commitment to develop India by 2047. Pertinently in 39 days of Yatra across Ramban, over 70,000 people, including 27,000 women, participated in the Yatra across urban and rural areas of the District. Their keen interest was evident in gaining knowledge about the schemes like PM-JAY Ayushman Card, Poshan ICDS, PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, KCC, PM Kissan Nidhi, and more. Today, the Yatra made its mark in Banihal, where people were urged



to take benefit from the self-employment and job-oriented programs. In Ramban town's Ward No. 5, Municipal Council initiated the Graha Parvesh of two Prime Minister Awas Yojna- Urban beneficiaries.

Additionally, the Municipal Council sanctioned Rs 50,000 each to 5 street vendors under PM SVANidhi

scheme. Awareness messages and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's motivational speeches were screened.

A Viksit Bharat Sankalp pledge was administered, and under the campaign 'Meri Kahani, Meri Zubani,' beneficiaries shared their stories of how they benefited from various government-sponsored schemes.

Awareness Campaign on EVM/VVPAT conducted at Kishtwar

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, JANUARY 05: An impactful awareness campaign on Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) was today organized in the DC Office Complex in Kishtwar under the overall supervision of District Election Officer (DEO) Kishtwar Dr. Devansh Yadav.

The event aimed to educate the public about the operational aspects of EVM/VVPAT systems.

The campaign witnessed active participation from diverse segments of society, offering them a firsthand demonstration of the EVM/VVPAT functionalities.

Attendees engaged in mock voting exercises, expressing overall contentment with the informative session.

The Assembly Level Master Trainers (ALMTs) played a crucial role in the event's success. Present among them were Amresh Kumar, Mohammad Saleem Shah, Daljeet Singh Parihar, Imtiyaz Ahmed Kichloo, Liyaqat Ali, and Sumit Sen.

Their expertise and guidance enhanced the understanding of the electoral processes associated with EVM/VVPAT systems.

The campaign's efforts toward educating the general public about the intricate workings of EVM and VVPAT shall continue. This initiative remains committed to fostering awareness and ensuring informed participation in the electoral process.

BJP's Kupwara unit workers protest against their expulsion from party

■ HT News Network

Kupwara, Jan 05 (KNO): Scores of political workers Friday assembled in Kupwara saying that they were expelled by Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) unit for 'unknown' reasons.

The BJP workers assembled at Dak Bungalow Kupwara to protest against the decision made by the district president.

Talking to reporters, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), one of the workers Chaudhary Mushtaq said that they would organize massive gatherings for district president Javaid Qureshi but now they have been expelled from the party.

They raised slogans in favor of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, saying that they have dedicated their entire lives for the good of party.

Another worker said that the BJP's Kupwara unit has taken a wrong decision by expelling them.

Gulzar Ahmad, another worker said that they have taken up the matter with the party's high command saying that they are against the decision taken by the BJP district president.

He said that a one-sided decision has been taken without considering the sacrifices and dedication of workers of the party over the years.

The members alleged that the party's district body was set up recently but senior workers have been sidelined.

Gulzar also said they have worked for BJP on the ground and encouraged people to join the party.

He urged the party top brass to address the issue at the earliest—(KNO)

Over 100 Patients Benefit from CT Scan Facility in Bandipora in two months

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, Jan 05 (KNO): After the introduction of Computed Tomography (CT) scan at District Hospital Bandipora in November of last year, over a hundred patients have utilized this service, besides a notable decrease has been recorded in the overall referral percentage, officials data said here on Friday.

Official data available with news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) reveals that, since November of last year, over a hundred patients have accessed the CT scan facility for the first time, alleviating challenges previously faced by patients during emergency cases.

Among the patients seeking medical assistance, several presented with severe ailments and injuries, including cases of accidents, and utilized the facility promptly.

Meanwhile, an official said that the operationalization of the CT scan at District Hospital Bandipora has led to a substantial decrease in the overall referral percentage for these patients. "We used to refer every patient in need of a CT scan facility, which proved challenging for us in some cases," the official said, adding that it now brings considerable relief to patients across Bandipora district.

"It was a long-standing demand from the people of the district, and hospital authorities consistently prioritized raising this issue with higher authorities. Finally, the district hospital secured this much-needed facility," the official stated. "We achieved this milestone with the support of the UT government and the higher authorities of the health department," he added. The official also mentioned that there are a few more governance issues on which the hospital authorities are diligently working to address. "We consistently bring these concerns to higher authorities in each meeting for the benefit of our hospital, and gradually, they are being addressed one by one," he added. The official also mentioned that there are a few more governance issues on which the hospital authorities are diligently working to address. "We consistently bring these concerns to higher authorities in each meeting for the benefit of our hospital, and gradually, they are being addressed one by one."

DC Ganderbal chairs DLC meeting on implementation of Bye-Laws for SWM

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, JANUARY 05: District level Committee of SBM (G) 2.0 was held today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal (Chairman District level Committee), Shyambir on implementation of Bye-Laws for Solid Waste Management (SWM) in Panchayat halqas at VC Room of Mini Secretariat, here. At the outset, the DC deliberated upon the importance of SBM (G) being taken as a priority area by the Govt. During the course of the meeting several issues were discussed and decisions were

taken accordingly. The meeting discussed compilation and submission of details of Households, Commercial Establishments, Govt./private institutions, mixed Model of Waste Collection in Rural Areas, operationalization of Segregation sheds and PWMUs, Awareness, collection of usage charges and others. The chair stressed upon the Block Development Officers for submitting the halqa wise list of Households, Commercial Establishments, Govt./private institutions as per the formats so that the halqa wise targets to the sanitation mentoring officers can be set in order to have a hassle-free mechanism for collection of user charges.



The DC after a thorough discussion with the committee decided to adopt the mixed model mechanism of waste collection

in the rural areas. The accessible/motorable areas are to be covered by door-to-door waste collection.

BDOs were directed to carry out a thorough survey in their respective blocks and submit a list of points that are inaccessible/non-motorable along with their latitudes and longitudes so that the same points may be cleared by the EO agencies on a timely basis.

The chair stressed upon the operationalization of Segregation sheds and PWMUs. The Exen PDD was given clear instructions to make the power supply available to the already constructed segregation sheds and PWMUs within a weeks-time. The installation of available machinery shall be done by the concerned vendor/agency in coordination with the KPDC. Instructions were passed to all Block Development Officers for active involvement of their concerned DDCs, BDCs, Sarpanchs

and other stakeholders for creating awareness among common masses by uploading videos regarding the importance of SWM and timely payment of monthly user charges, helping the administration to implement the SWM in real sense. It was also decided that collection user charge drive shall start from 8th of January 2024 under the supervision of BDOs. The DC directed all the Block Development officers to create a whatsapp app group that shall act as a control room/helpline for the common masses. The grievances so received shall be consolidated and disposed-off on a daily basis.

DC Udhampur reviews departmental litigations pending in Courts

Seeks speedy removal of legal obstacles for smooth execution of vital projects

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, JANUARY 5: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai chaired a meeting of the District-Level Standing Committee in the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex to review the progress made in pursuing the pending litigation related to the encroachment of State and Government land. The District-Level Standing Committee focused on addressing legal challenges affecting various departments. Senior Superintendent of Police Joginder Singh, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Joginder Singh Jasrotia, SDM, Ramnagar Shishir Gupta, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Rafiq Ahmed Jaral and the officers of other departments attended the meeting. During the meeting, the DC underscored the importance of resolving legal obstacles



to facilitate the timely completion of vital

projects crucial for the district's develop-

ment. The meeting witnessed active participation from department heads and officers responsible for overseeing different projects. A comprehensive department-wise review of pending cases took place, with DC instructing officers to personally follow up on cases, promptly file necessary replies, and ensure the timely disposal of legal matters. The emphasis was on streamlining processes to accelerate the resolution of lingering issues and promote the overall progress of the district. During the meeting, the DC underscored the importance of resolving legal obstacles to facilitate the timely completion of vital projects crucial for the district's development. The meeting witnessed active participation from department heads and officers responsible for overseeing different projects.

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra PMAY makes Gulab Chand's dream a reality

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, JANUARY 5: Gulab Chand, a resident of Panchayat Goond in Block Nagri, Kathua had been struggling for a long time to provide a proper roof over his family's head. Being a daily wage worker, it was impossible for him to finance the cost of a new House. Thanks to the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (PMAY), his dream to own a decent house saw the light of the Day.

Gulab Chand's success story is a testament to the transformative power of government schemes like PMAY. The scheme had set a target of providing affordable housing to all by 2022. And in Gulab Chand's case, that objective has been fulfilled. The 42-year-old labourer thanked the government and expressed his gratitude during the Meri Kahani Meri Zubani segment of the ongoing Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra.

Gulab Chand's life has been transformed since he received the keys to his new PMAY home. He has a proper roof over his head, and his family now lives with dignity and safety. Today, he is not only a proud homeowner but also an inspiration for many others in his community who are looking to avail of government schemes to upgrade their living conditions.

PMAY has been a game-changer for millions of families across India. It is empowering people like Gulab Chand to take charge of their lives and uplift their standard of living. The scheme has helped to alleviate poverty, provide affordable housing, and generate employment. It is a shining example of how government initiatives can make a real difference in the lives of the people.

Gulab Chand's story sends a message of hope that with hard work and determination, we can achieve our dreams.

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra: IEC Vans illuminate urban Kathua people about Citizen Centric Schemes

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, JANUARY 05: Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY), an innovative initiative aimed at spreading awareness about various Citizen Centric Schemes, successfully illuminated the urban community of Kathua through its Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) vans. The VBSY is a government-led campaign that strives to empower citizens with knowledge regarding welfare schemes and programs designed to uplift their lives.

The IEC vans utilized in this campaign serve as mobile information hubs, equipped with audio-visual aids and knowledgeable personnel who guide and educate citizens about the benefits and importance of these schemes.

Today VBSY launched its IEC vans at Hiranagar in Urban leg of Kathua, where they embarked on a journey to educate and enlighten the



urban population about the various initiatives taken by the government to improve their living standards. The vans covered key areas in Kathua, including busy markets, schools, and community centers, ensuring a wide reach and maximum impact. The IEC vans were equipped with state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment, interactive displays, and informative brochures that highlighted key features of Citizen Centric Schemes. The knowledgeable and friendly staff aboard the

vans engaged with citizens, patiently answering their queries, clarifying doubts, and encouraging active participation in these schemes. Through impactful presentations and personalized interactions, citizens were made aware of the schemes' benefits and how to avail themselves of the opportunities offered. VBSY's IEC vans were received with enthusiasm by the citizens of Hiranagar, who appreciated the efforts undertaken to bring vital information directly to their

doorstep. School children, shop owners, community leaders, and residents at large actively engaged with the initiative, seeking valuable guidance and expressing their interest in leveraging these schemes to enhance their lives. EO MC Hiranagar expressed his satisfaction with the response received during the campaign, stating, "We are delighted to witness the overwhelming support from the citizens of Hiranagar, Kathua. Through this initiative, we aim to empower individuals by raising awareness about the numerous schemes and programs available to enhance their quality of life. We believe that informed citizens make for a stronger and more prosperous nation." VBSY intends to expand its outreach efforts by bringing the IEC vans to additional cities and towns across the country, ensuring no citizen is left uninformed about the incredible opportunities at their disposal.

Om Prakash Bhagat takes over as Deputy Commissioner Rajouri

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, JANUARY 05: Om Prakash Bhagat on Friday took over as Deputy Commissioner Rajouri replacing Vikas Kundal who has been transferred and posted as Managing Director, Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited.

Om Prakash Bhagat has earlier served on different posts including Managing Director, J&K Financial Corporation and other important positions, showcasing his expertise and commitment to public service.

MVD conducts enforcement drive in Reasi

■ HT News Network

REASI, JANUARY 5: An enforcement drive spearheaded by ARTO Reasi, Tara Mani, was today conducted in Reasi town to bolster adherence to road safety regulations. Under the Guidance and directives of District Development Commissioner Reasi, Vishesh Mahajan, the team conducted surprise checking of several Passenger and private vehicles to enforce the Motor Vehicles Act.

During the inspection, 13 vehicles were identified to be plying in violation of the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act. Consequently, fines were imposed in accordance with the law, amounting to cash retrieval of 8000 from compounded challans. Moreover, an anticipated sum exceeding twenty thousand rupees is expected from challans issued for multiple violations as per the MV Act.

While emphasizing the enforcement aspect, the Team also focused on driver awareness and education regarding safe driving practices. Drivers were sensitized on crucial elements such as the usage of seat belts, ensuring vehicle fitness, the dangers associated with mobile phone use while driving, adherence to speed limits, and overall compliance with traffic laws.

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra: IEC Van traverses through panchayats of block Budhal Old, Khawas & Moughla in Rajouri District

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, JANUARY 05: The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra IEC vans today traveled through the panchayats of Swari Kote, Swari Kote-A, Rehana-A, Tralla Gujran, Panglar, Uddhan, Chakmethayani and Treru Lower-A of Budhal Old, Khawas and Moughla blocks to foster the implementation of different government schemes and accelerate development in the district. The initiative aims to transform Rajouri by reaching underserved areas and ensure the effective execution of government programs, thereby improving the lives of its residents. The Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) Van played a crucial role in engaging with local communities and equipping them with the necessary knowledge about the government schemes. The VBSY has achieved remarkable success in implementing various government schemes in Rajouri District.

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra expands reach to 2 Panchayats in Udhampur District

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, JANUARY 05: The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY) dedicated to propel the impact of government schemes to the farthest corners, broadened its outreach to cover 2 more Panchayats in the district, today.

The day witnessed an array of activities across Barmeen Lower & Mali in Ghordi & Panchari Blocks, showcasing vibrant participation from various stakeholders. Highlights included a broadcasted message from the Prime Minister, a VBSY film screening, Sankalp Pledge, Meri Kahani meri Zubani sessions, and the distribution of calendars. The impactful journey of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra persists, fostering community engagement, information dissemination, and cultivating a collective spirit of development and awareness among citizens. The day witnessed an array of activities across Barmeen Lower & Mali in Ghordi & Panchari Blocks, showcasing vibrant participation from various stakeholders. Highlights included a broadcasted message from the Prime Minister, a VBSY film screening, Sankalp Pledge.

DDC Jammu solicits cooperation of NGOs for improving education sector

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 5: District Development Commissioner Sachin Kumar Vaishya today held a meeting with various Non-Governmental Organisations with expertise in the education sector. The meeting was also attended by Chief Education Officer Jagdeep Kumar Padha and Zonal Education Officers from across the district.

The DDC urged the NGOs to come up with a clear and concrete plan to facilitate the augmentation of the education sector in the district. He said that the district administration is keen to collaborate with the NGOs to provide quality education, enhance learning outcomes,



improve infrastructure and build the capacity of the school heads and teachers.

The DDC asked the NGOs to submit their action plan within a week and assured them of all possible support from the district administration. He expressed hope that the NGOs would make a positive and significant impact in the district through their participation and contribution.

The meeting also witnessed a detailed discussion

on various activities and initiatives under SAMAGRA, a centrally sponsored scheme for school education.

The NGOs shared their experiences and feedback on the implementation of the scheme and suggested ways to improve it further. The DDC expressed hope that the NGOs play a significant role in the education sector and urged them to continue their good work.

National Loktantrik Party core committee meet on 12th January, to field parliamentary election candidates

■ Syed Tajamul

In a significant development in politics, National Loktantrik Party regarding the Parliament Elections an important meet would be held on 12th January 2024 of the party core Committee in New Delhi regarding the forthcoming Parliament elections and party will decide and propose the names candidates who will contest in elections. Dr. Suhail Chaudhary National President National Loktantrik Party has made it clear that personalities who are rooted towards grassroots development honesty and high in integrity would be given green signal for contesting during the marathon meet on 12 January at Delhi



Meanwhile, National General Secretary Rubina Akhtar National Loktantrik Party held a press conference in Jammu. In the press conference, She said that the National Loktantrik Party will participate in the upcoming parliamentary elections in Jammu and Kashmir. and will field its candidates on 5 parliamentary constituencies of Jammu and Kashmir. She also

said that on 12 January 2024, the core committee will be formed the meeting is going to be held at our head office in Delhi and propound names of parliamentary candidates of Jammu and Kashmir will be nominated keeping in view those candidates who are honest and dynamic. The Loktantrik Party vowed to make a impact in the upcoming Parliament elections and raise the voices of common masses of India especially inflation and unemployment. Dr. Suhail Chaudhary National President National Loktantrik Party expressed confidence that in entire country Party will field candidates especially J&K, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and in many other States the party will field its candidates.

Benefits of Hydra Facial



Shahnaz Husain

A HydraFacial is one of the most popular non-invasive skin treatment that uses special devices to cleanse and hydrate your skin. It usually uses HydraPeel Tip, a pen-like device with patented technology for cleansing, exfoliating, extracting, and hydrating the skin with serums to get rid of the skin's dead skin cells creating an instant "wow factor" in terms of brightening and firming skin.

This system uses a vortex swirling action to deliver hydration and remove dead skin, dirt, debris, and impurities while cleaning and soothing your skin.

This magical painless treatment tackles everything from dehydration to discoloration, aging to acne, and uneven skin texture.

The treatment starts with loosening and opening the pores and then prepping the skin using a mix of glycolic acid, salicylic acid, and several botanical ingredients for better cleansing.



Once the pores are open enough, the professional uses vacuum-powered extraction equipment that gets rid of the dirt and oils clogged inside the pores. It is a non-invasive procedure and is practically painless

Hydration and Nourishment

As it is renowned for its hydrating properties, this contains hydrating serums

containing antioxidants, peptides, and hyaluronic acid directly into the skin. A powerful moisturizing agent, hyaluronic acid, attracts and retains water, promoting deep hydration and helping to plump the skin.

Pore Refinement

For those struggling with enlarged pores, Hydra Facial offers a solution. The treatment includes a gentle extraction process

that helps clean out pores, reducing their size and minimizing their appearance. Clearing out debris and oil from the pores contributes to a refined and more polished complexion.

Fine Line and Wrinkle Reduction

The hydrating and rejuvenating effects of Hydra Facial extend to addressing fine lines and wrinkles. The treatment helps stimulate collagen production, a key protein responsible for skin elasticity. Improved Skin Texture and Tone

Exfoliation and hydration work well to enhance the overall texture and tone of the skin. By sloughing off dead skin cells and replenishing moisture, Hydra Facial promotes a smoother, softer, and more even skin surface. This dual action contributes to a noticeable improvement in skin texture and tone after just one session.

One of the remarkable aspects of Hydra Facial is its versatility. Also, whether you have sensitive, oily, or combination skin, Hydra Facial is generally safe and effective for various skin types. The customizable nature of the treatment allows skin care professionals to adjust the intensity based on individual skin needs, ensuring a personalized and comfortable experience.

The author is an international fame beauty expert and is called the herbal Queen of India

FOOD

These Healthy Beverages To Stay Warm In Winter



Consuming warm foods and beverages can help increase our body temperature directly. When the temperature outside drops, consuming warm foods or drinks can provide a source of external heat. Certain beverages can have a warming effect on our bodies.

Warm beverages like herbal teas, hot water with lemon, or ginger tea can temporarily raise our body temperature due to their warmth and specific properties. Read on as we list beverages you can add to your winter diet to keep your body warm.

1. Herbal tea

Herbal teas like chamomile, ginger, or peppermint are easy to make by steeping the herbs in boiling water. These teas have warming properties that help increase body temperature, improve digestion, and boost immunity.

2. Golden milk

This traditional Indian drink combines milk (dairy or plant-based) with turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, and honey. Turmeric and ginger have anti-inflammatory properties that can help reduce joint pain and boost overall immunity.

3. Hot water with lemon

Simply squeeze half a lemon into hot water. This drink is hydrating, detoxifying, and rich in Vitamin C, which helps support the immune system and fights cold symptoms.

4. Hot apple cider

Simmer apple juice or cider with cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg on the stove. The spices in this drink provide warmth and help improve circulation, while also providing antioxidants and vitamins.

5. Warm smoothies

Make a creamy smoothie by blending warm almond milk, a ripe banana, spinach, and your choice of protein powder. This nutrient-rich drink provides warmth, energy, and boosts your daily intake of vitamins and minerals.

6. Hot chocolate

Prepare a rich hot chocolate using dark cocoa powder, warm milk, and a touch of honey or stevia for sweetness. Dark cocoa contains antioxidants that support heart health and improve cognitive function.

7. Spiced chai

Brew a cup of black tea with a combination of warming spices like cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, and ginger. Chai helps improve digestion, boosts metabolism, and enhances blood circulation.

8. Warm coconut water

Heat up coconut water and add a squeeze of lime for a refreshing and hydrating warm beverage.

Hearing Aids May Help People Live Longer: Study

According to statistics, nearly 40 million American adults suffer from hearing loss, yet barely one in ten people who require hearing aids use them. Those who don't use hearing aids but should should make it one of their New Year's resolutions, according to a new study published today in The Lancet Healthy Longevity by Keck Medicine of USC.

Researchers found that the almost 25 per cent difference in mortality risk between regular hearing aid users and never-users remained steady, regardless of variables such as the degree of hearing loss (from mild to severe), age, ethnicity, income, education and other demographics; and medical history.

There was no difference in mortality risk between non-regular users and non-users, indicating that occasional hearing aid use may not provide any life-extending benefit. "We found that adults with hearing loss who regularly used hearing aids had a 24 per cent lower risk of mortality than those who never wore them," said Janet Choi, MD, MPH, an otolaryngologist with Keck Medicine and lead researcher of the study.

"These results are exciting because they suggest that hearing aids may play a protective role in people's health and prevent early death." Previous research has shown that untreated hearing loss can result in a reduced life span (as well as other poor outcomes such as social isolation, depression and dementia).

However, until now, there has been very little research examining if the use of hearing aids can reduce the risk of death. The study represents the most comprehensive analysis to date on the relationship between hearing loss, hearing aid use and mortality in the United States, according to Choi.

Choi and her fellow researchers used data compiled



by the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey between 1999-2012 to identify almost 10,000 adults 20 years and older who had completed audiometry evaluations, a test used to measure hearing ability, and who filled out questionnaires about their hearing aid use. Researchers followed their mortality status over an average follow-up period of 10 years after their evaluations. A total of 1,863 adults were identified as having hearing loss. Of these, 237 were regular hearing aid users, which were characterised as those who reported wearing the aids at least once a week, five hours a week or half the time, and 1,483 were identified as never-users of the devices.

Subjects who reported wearing the devices less than once a month or less frequently were categorised as non-regular users. While the study did not examine why hearing aids may help those who need them live longer,

Choi points to recent research linking hearing aid use with lowered levels of depression and dementia. She speculates that the improvements in mental health and cognition that come with improved hearing can promote better overall health, which may improve life span.

Choi hopes this study will encourage more people to wear hearing aids, even though she acknowledges that factors including cost, stigma and difficulty finding devices that fit and function well are barriers to use.

Choi can personally relate to these challenges. She was born with hearing loss in her left ear but did not wear a hearing device until her 30s. It then took her several years to find ones that worked effectively for her.

■ Researchers found that the almost 25 per cent difference in mortality risk between regular hearing aid users and never-users remained steady, regardless of variables.

"These results are exciting because they suggest that hearing aids may play a protective role in people's health and prevent early death." Previous research has shown that untreated hearing loss can result in a reduced life span (as well as other poor outcomes such as social isolation, depression and dementia). However, until now, there has been very little research examining if the use of hearing aids can reduce the risk of death. The study represents the most comprehensive analysis to date on the relationship between hearing loss, hearing aid use and mortality in the United States, according to Choi.

Recreational Activities Are More Than Fun, It's Therapeutic For Elderly

Recreational activities are always important and when it comes to old age, leisure activities become all the more significant. Old age is a time when people typically have a lot of time, what with retirement from a job and reduced household responsibilities, with kids having grown up. This is a reason why remaining engaged becomes so important. Recreational activities are not just fun but therapeutic.

GP Bhagat, Founder of old age home SHEOWS, says, "The recreational and therapeutic activities encompass a diverse range of pursuits crafted to enhance physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Enjoyable either solo or in groups, these activities effortlessly adapt to various interests, abilities, and individual needs. While crucial for everyone, their significance amplifies for older adults, serving as a dynamic defence against age-related diseases and chronic conditions. The magic lies in



preserving mental and cognitive health, paving the way for a notably happier and more fulfilling life. Participation in these activities isn't just a choice but an invitation to unlock myriad benefits for both body and mind."

How Recreational Activities Help The Elderly

Recreational and therapeutic activities add vibrancy and joy to the lives of the elderly, positively impacting their physical, mental, and social well-being in a multitude of ways, says GP Bhagat. He lists the following benefits for elderly people:

Physical Fitness and Combating Decline: Gentle

activities like gardening, yoga or exercise and activities such as walking, dancing, or light aerobics help maintain muscle strength, bone density, and balance, reducing the risk of falls and injuries, keeping seniors sprightly and steady on their feet. Regular physical activity is a potent weapon against chronic foes like heart disease, diabetes, and arthritis, improving overall health and quality of life.

Mental Sharpness: Activities that stimulate the brain like puzzles, games, or learning new skills like mental yoga prevent cognitive decline and memory loss, and keep minds sharp

and agile. Creative activities like painting, drawing, or music can be therapeutic, providing a means of self-expression and reducing stress. Engaging in enjoyable activities releases endorphins, the body's natural mood-boosters, combating stress, anxiety, and depression, and promoting emotional well-being.

Social Connection and Purpose: Participating in group activities provides opportunities for social interaction and connection, vanquishing feelings of loneliness and isolation that can plague older adults. Enhanced physical and mental fitness allows seniors to stay independent and perform daily activities with ease, adding spring to their step and autonomy to their lives.

"Recreational activities act as a superhero cape in old age, sculpting muscles with personalized exercises. Brain-boosting activities enhance memory, and group engagements ward off loneliness and purposelessness," says Bhagat's

Disrupted Sleep In 30s May Increase Memory, Thinking Problems Later: Study

People who have more disrupted sleep in their 30s and 40s may be more likely to have memory and thinking problems a decade later, according to new research. The study, published in the journal Neurology, does not prove that sleep quality causes cognitive decline. It only shows an association.

"Given that signs of Alzheimer's disease start to accumulate in the brain several decades before symptoms begin, understanding the connection between sleep and cognition earlier in life is critical for understanding the role of sleep problems as a risk factor for the disease," said Yue Leng, from the University of California, San Francisco. "Our findings indicate that the quality rather than the quantity of sleep matters most for cognitive health in middle age," Leng added. The study involved 526 people with an average age of 40. They were followed for 11 years. Researchers looked at participants' sleep duration and quality. Participants wore a wrist activity monitor for three consecutive days on two occasions approximately one year apart to calculate their averages. Participants slept for an average of six hours. Participants also reported bedtimes and wake times in a sleep diary and completed a sleep quality survey with scores ranging from zero to 21, with higher scores indicating poorer sleep quality. A total



of 239 people, or 46 per cent, reported poor sleep with a score greater than five. Researchers also looked at sleep fragmentation, which measures repetitive short interruptions of sleep. They looked at both the percentage of time spent moving and the percentage of time spent not moving for one minute or less during sleep.

After adding these two percentages together, researchers found that participants had an average sleep fragmentation of 19 per cent. Researchers then divided participants into three groups based on their sleep fragmentation score. Of the 175 people with the most disrupted sleep, 44 had poor cognitive performance 10

years later, compared to 10 of the 176 people with the least disrupted sleep.

After adjusting for age, gender, race, and education, people who had the most disrupted sleep had more than twice the odds of having poor cognitive performance when compared to those with the least disrupted sleep.

There was no difference in cognitive performance at midlife for those in the middle group compared to the group with the least disrupted sleep. Alzheimer's disease starts to accumulate in the brain several decades before symptoms begin, understanding the connection between sleep and cognition earlier in life is critical for understanding the role of sleep.



Henry, Williamson, Ferguson And Conway Back For Pakistan T20is

Matt Henry and Lockie Ferguson have made successful recoveries from their respective injuries, while Kane Williamson and Devon Conway also return after periods of rest as New Zealand named a full-strength squad for the five-match T20I series against Pakistan at home. Allrounder Rachin Ravindra was rested after being on the road since August last year.

Henry was out for two months after he injured his right hamstring during the World Cup clash against South Africa in Pune. He will return to competitive action for Canterbury in a Super Smash T20 fixture against

Central Districts on January 5 before joining the New Zealand squad of 13 in Auckland next week.

While Henry has been picked for all five T20Is, Ferguson, who suffered an Achilles injury during the World Cup has been included for the last three T20Is. Ferguson will take the field for Auckland for three Super Smash games over the next two weeks before joining the New Zealand squad. Fast bowler Ben Sears has been included for the first two T20Is.

Williamson, who was rested for the Bangladesh ODIs and T20Is, will miss the third T20I against Pakistan as he continues to monitor his knee injury. He will otherwise

take back the captaincy reins for the rest of the four games. Uncapped Central Districts batter Josh Clarkson has been called up as cover for the third T20I with Mitchell Santner set to stand in as captain.

"It's great to be welcoming back Matt, Devon, Lockie and Kane," New Zealand head coach Gary Stead said. "They're four quality players in their own right and their skills and experience will bolster our side. With just three T20I series left before the T20 World Cup, all matches are vitally important for our preparation."

Stead explained why Ravindra was be-

"It's great to be welcoming back Matt, Devon, Lockie and Kane," New Zealand head coach Gary Stead said. "They're four quality players in their own right and their skills and experience will bolster our side."

ing rested, having played in five countries in the last five months. Ravindra was the

fourth-highest run-scorer at the World Cup and was later picked up by CSK at the IPL auction for INR 1.8 crore (US\$ 216,000 approx.).

"Rachin's a young player who has immense value to New Zealand Cricket and we therefore want to look after his well-being," Stead said. "He's the only player or staff member to have been touring non-stop for the past five months across five countries and that's simply not sustainable. He's still very much part of our thinking for the T20 World Cup in June and will come back into the reckoning for the T20 series against Australia in February."

Sri. Faggan Singh Kulaste
Union Minister of State
for Steel and Rural Development
Government of India

Sri. Subir Paul
National President
ICSTWE, New Delhi

Sri. Sujeet Kumar
Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha)

Smt. Hema Ekka
National General Secretary
ICSTWE, New Delhi

Sri. Sanjay Kushram
President
Zilla Panchayat, Mandla(MP)

Sri. Adil Modi
President
ICSTWE, KASHMIR (Div)

The Kashmir Udyami

**Seminar on Promotion of
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**All-round
Maxwell lifts
Stars to third
spot after
derby win over
Renegades**

Glenn Maxwell celebrated his 100th BBL game for Melbourne Stars with all-round excellence in their derby win over Melbourne Renegades.

Everything went right for Player-of-the-Match Maxwell in Tuesday night's rain-shortened game at the MCG as the Stars easily won by eight wickets. They have won their last four games for a 4-3 record, moving up to third place, while Renegades are last on 1-5.

Stars are now 16-9 in Melbourne derbies, and the teams will meet again at Marvel Stadium on January 13. On Tuesday, Stars restricted Renegades to 97 for 7 from 14 overs and then cantered to 98 for 2 with two overs in hand. Maxwell, the first player to reach 100 games

for Stars, won the toss and everything flowed for him from there. He managed the bowlers superbly, claimed 1 for 8 from his three overs, and took two catches. Maxwell then combined with opening batter Thomas Rogers, who top-scored with 42 not out, to close out the match with a typically entertaining knock. He scored 32 from 15 deliveries, including three successive sixes off Adam Zampa.

"It was awesome to watch from the other end - box office," Rogers told Fox Sports after the match.

Renegades could not score a boundary from the fifth to the 11th overs in their innings after they were asked to bat following a lengthy rain delay. Adding to the Renegades' woes, Fox Sports reported that batter Joe Clarke was out

for the rest of the tournament with the quad injury he suffered in Friday's win over Sydney Sixers. They also had to leave out the in-form Mujeeb Ur Rahman because of a contract dispute with the Afghanistan Cricket Board - it is unclear whether Mujeeb will play for Renegades again this season.

Renegades started brightly enough, scoring 33 from their first 2.5 overs, but once Jordan Cox was dismissed for 9 they lost momentum quickly. No. 3 Jake Fraser-McGurk only made 14 from 19 balls before he skied a catch to Maxwell off Beau Webster's bowling.

Fellow opener Quinton de Kock top-scored with 23 from 16 balls before Maxwell dismissed him. Spinner Dan Lawrence claimed 2 for 8 from his two overs.