



Infiltration Still A Challenge, Security Situation is Under Control : R R Swain

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JAN 23: Cross-border infiltration in Jammu and Kashmir remains a challenge for the forces, but the security situation is under control, Director General of Police R R Swain said on Tuesday. "The security situation is under control. The biggest aspect of the security is law and order, and we think that we have been able to control the public order on roads, etc," Swain told reporters on the sidelines of a Public Grievances Redressal Programme at Awantipora in south Kashmir's Pulwama district. The DGP said cross-border infiltration is a challenge for the security forces. "Yes, it is a challenge for us that a few terrorists are coming in from outside. They

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Women, Youths Can Rid Country Of Evils Of Nepotism, Corruption: PM Modi

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, JAN 23: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said nepotism, dynasticism and corruption in politics impeded India's development after independence and called on people, especially women and the youth, to end these "evils". Speaking at a function to celebrate the 127th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Modi said the twin evils of nepotism and dynasticism started dominating India's democracy after independence. "Netaji had said that if we want to make India great, the foundation of political democracy and democratic society should be strong. But unfortunately, after independence, his idea came under severe attack," the prime minister said. Modi said Netaji understood very well the challenges facing the country and warned everyone about them. "After independence, evils like nepotism



and dynasticism started dominating India's democracy. This has also been a major reason why India could not develop at the pace it should have," Modi said.

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NEWS BRIEF

Drug peddler arrested in Bla: Police

SRINAGAR, JAN 23: Jammu & Kashmir Police on Tuesday said to have arrested drug peddler in Baramulla and recovered contraband substance from his possession. "A police party of Police Station Baramulla headed by SHO PS Baramulla at a checkpoint established at Kralhar Baramulla intercepted one suspicious person. During search, 1.5 Kgs of Poppy Straw like substance was recovered from his possession. He has been identified as Syed Asif Hussain son of Syed Sabir Hussain resident of Kamalkote Uri. He has been arrested and shifted to PS Baramulla where he remains in custody," a police spokesman said in a statement issued to the

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Dry weather triggers forest fire in Doda

DODA, JAN 23: Prolonged dry spell in Jammu and Kashmir has triggered a series of forest fire incidents in Doda district of Jammu region. As per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), forest fire incidents have shown a significant surge in Doda, Bhalesa and Bhaderwah area. Tariq Ahmed, an environmentalist, said that forests are one of the largest sources of biodiversity. "When hectares of a forest burns, apart from the dry grass, rare trees and herbs also get destroyed that may not regrow again," he said. "Majority of the animals run away during the fire, many smaller animals, birds, their eggs and insects get killed."

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23 Vehicles Involved In Illegal Mining Seized In Kathua

KATHUA, JAN 23: A team of Geology and Mining department led by District Mineral Officer Kathua Rajinder Singh has seized 23 vehicles at multiple locations during raids conducted in the last 24 hours. Vehicles including 5 dumpers, 8 heavy Punjab based trucks and 10 tractor trolleys were confiscated while carrying raw and finished without due permission. Further, 12 other vehicles moving towards the Punjab side were penalized on the spot for carrying minerals beyond the capacity as per the e-challans and GST bills. During day and night operations,

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Rain, Snow Likely To End Dry Spell This Weekend In J&K: MeT

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JAN 23: The long dry spell is likely to come to an end this weekend with



the possibility of light to moderate rain, snow over many places in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Tuesday.

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Parliament Security Breach 140 CISF Personnel Contingent Deployed Ahead Of Budget Session

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, JAN 23: A contingent of 140 CISF personnel has been deployed at the Parliament complex as part of the new measure to frisk the visitors and their baggage from the Budget Session that commences

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Security Tightened In Kashmir Ahead Of Republic Day

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JAN 23: Security has been tightened in Kashmir ahead of Republic Day to ensure smooth and peaceful celebrations in the valley, with police and other security personnel carrying out sanitisation and area domination exercises, officials said on Tuesday. Police and paramilitary personnel have been deployed in the city and other district head-



quarters, they said. Checkpoints have been established at various places in Srinagar, especially at the entry points of the city and

other districts, they said. Security forces were conducting random checking of vehicles and frisking of people to thwart the movement of subversive elements, they said. While the main Republic Day function will take place in Jammu which will be presided by Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, the biggest function in the valley will be held at Bakshi Stadium

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Dr Jitendra Announces Fellowships For Indian Diaspora, Hails Their Contribution To Global Growth

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, JAN 23: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today announced special Fellowships for the Indian Diaspora living abroad and hailed their contribution to the overall global growth. The Indian Diaspora is playing a key role in overall global economic growth and they are adding value to the countries and societies where they are settled,



though at the same time they continue to be rooted in their motherland,

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“After 5 Years, India’s Criminal Justice System Will Be Most Modern In World”: Amit Shah

■ HT News Network

GUJARAT, JAN 23: Emphasizing the importance of three new criminal laws, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said that after 5 years, India's criminal justice system will be the most modern in the world.

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To fight Californian almond invasion, Pampore farmers introduces Bulgarian variety, scripts success

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JAN 23: Realising that Kashmir almonds were facing a challenge for survival especially after invasion by the Californian almonds, Abdul Aziz Ganie, a farmer from Pampore, decided to end this dominance. As per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), to take up this challenge, Ganie was in search of almond variety, which could win over Californian variety quality-wise. It was then he came across the Bulgarian almond variety,



which he decided to plant on his two kanals of land. To execute his plan, he approached ICAR-Central Institute of Temperate Horticulture (CITH), Srinagar to seek sugges-

tions from the experts in the field. "The CITH authorities were thrilled that I was taking this move to revive the almond crop. They gave me Bulgaria variety almond trees, which are in high demand worldwide. I planted fifty seedlings on two kanals of orchard land in my village," he remarked. Ganie idea has succeeded as he for the last six years has been harvesting the high-quality almonds which fetch him good returns. "The outcome is encouraging

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Security Situation.....

are infiltrating and then along with some people here, they try to vitiate the atmosphere. It is a challenge – one which we see with a different perspective.

“We see it the way that our own boys are not joining them, or a smaller number of them are. A few people can be with them, but a majority of the public is not. We keep that in mind when we say that we have control over the security (situation),” Swain added.

Asked about targeted attacks in the Union Territory, the J&K police chief said “about 90 per cent of the root and origin of the problem is outside”.

“A person sitting outside, not from Jammu and Kashmir, a Pakistani comes here somehow whether by infiltrating or digging up tunnels, and then fights us. It is a challenge. Though their numbers are now less, this is a challenge.

“The cross-border infiltration is a challenge in Poonch-Rajouri and to some extent here as well. We will be able to control it when the atmosphere improves gradually and we are hopeful that the people themselves will hand them over to us,” he said.

It was the DGP’s first Public Grievances Redressal Programme in south Kashmir. He has addressed such programmes in north Kashmir’s Kupwara and Srinagar, apart from Jammu region.

A large number of people turned up for the programme with different kinds of grievances like robbery, domestic violence, and land disputes. (Agencies)

Women, Youths.....

He said India’s youth and women power can free the country’s politics from the evils of nepotism and corruption.

“We will have to show courage to end these evils through politics and defeat them,” the prime minister said.

The birth anniversary of Netaji Bose is celebrated as Parakram Diwas.

Modi also launched ‘Bharat Parv’, which will be held till January 31, to showcase the country’s rich diversity with Republic Day tableaux and cultural exhibits featuring efforts of 26 ministries and departments, highlighting citizen-centric initiatives, vocal for local, diverse tourist attractions, among others.

It will take place at the Ramlila Maidan and the Madhav Das Park in front of the Red Fort.

The programme this year will be a multi-faceted celebration seamlessly weaving together historical reflections and vibrant cultural expressions.

The visitors will get an opportunity to engage with an immersive experience through exhibitions of archives, showcasing rare photographs and documents that chronicle the remarkable journey of Netaji and the Azad Hind Fauj. (Agencies)

Rain, Snow.....

Meteorological Centre Srinagar predicted that the weather will generally remain cloudy with the possibility of light snow at isolated higher reaches from January 25–27.

From January 28–29, the weather will remain generally cloudy with the possibility of light to moderate rain and snow over the lower, middle, and higher reaches of many places in Jammu and Kashmir.

The MeT said there is a possibility of light to moderate rain and snow in widespread places, most likely during January 30-31, while light rain or snow can occur in scattered places on February 1.

The MeT office has also issued an advisory in view of the weather system that may lead to the temporary closure of roads of higher reaches and important passes of Sinthan Pass, Mughal Road, Sadhna and Razdan Pass, Zojila Pass, and other higher routes of Jammu and Kashmir during January 28–31.

Travelers have been advised to plan their trip accordingly in view of the weather forecast.

Night temperatures rose slightly in Kashmir Valley on Tuesday as Srinagar recorded a low of -5.0°C against the -5.3°C recorded the previous night. It was -2.7°C below normal for the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir during this period of the season, the MeT office said.

Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 11.0°C on the previous day, which was 4.7°C above normal against 6.9°C.

Pahalgam remained the coldest place, with a low of -6.2°C against the -6.9°C recorded the previous night. It was still 1.3°C above normal for the tourist hot spot of south Kashmir.

Qazigund on the Srinagar-Jammu national highway had a low of -4.5°C against the 5.2°C recorded a day ago, while the picnic spot in south Kashmir’s Kokernag recorded a low of -1.5°C against the -2.6°C recorded the previous night.

There was a slight rise in the night temperature at Gulmarg, recorded at -4.5°C against -4.0°C on Monday. However, it was 3.7°C above normal for the famous ski resort of north Kashmir.

Kupwara recorded a low of -4.9°C against the -6.0°C recorded the previous day. It was 2.0°C below normal for the frontier Kashmir district during this period of the season, the MeT office said. (UNI)

140 CISF.....

from January 31, official sources said.

The Union Home Ministry has sanctioned the strength after a comprehensive security review of the facility was undertaken in the

wake of a breach by a few people, who entered the Parliament hall filled with MPs and sprayed coloured smoke canisters on December 13 last year.

A total of 140 personnel of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) have taken charge at the Parliament complex from Monday. They will frisk the visitors, their belongings and also provide a fire safety cover to the building, sources told PTI.

An Assistant Commandant (AC) rank officer of the force will head the CISF unit that will have 36 personnel from the fire wing, sources said.

The contingent is undertaking familiarisation of the Parliament complex along with the other security agencies already present there so that they are ready for the task from January 31 when the Budget Session commences, they said.

The CISF will render access control to the new Parliament building in a airport-security like fashion where body frisking of the persons and their belongings will be done through x-ray machines, hand-held detectors with a provision to even scan shoes, heavy jackets and belts by putting them on a tray and passing them through the x-ray scanner, sources said.

The force has also written to the Home Ministry to sanction it this manpower of 140 personnel for Parliament security in a permanent manner.

“The current unit that has been deployed at the Parliament will be regularised under the Government Building Security [GBS] unit of the CISF that secures various government ministries and headquarters of probe agencies like the CBI and the ED,” a senior officer said.

The about 1.70 lakh personnel strong CISF is a central armed police force (CAPF) under the Union home ministry and it guards 68 civil airports of the country apart from vital installations in the aerospace and nuclear energy domain.

Sources had earlier told PTI that both the new and the old Parliament complex and their allied buildings will be brought under a comprehensive security cover of the CISF which will also have the existing elements of Parliament Security Service (PSS), the Delhi Police and the Parliament Duty Group (PDG) of the CRPF.

It was after the 2001 terrorist attack on the Parliament that the CISF GBS came into being and it was entrusted with security of central government buildings in the national capital like the North and South blocks, Cabinet Secretariat, Vigyan Bhawan, UPSC building, the CGO complex and other such buildings.

The charter of the GBS is to “maintain a high level of security, including contingency response, access control and conduct of anti-sabotage checks”.

In a major security breach on the anniversary of the 2001 Parliament terror attack on December 13 last year, two persons jumped into the Lok Sabha chamber from the public gallery during Zero Hour, released yellow smoke from canisters and shouted slogans before being overpowered by the MPs.

Around the same time, two others sprayed coloured smoke from canisters while shouting slogans outside the Parliament premises.

Following this incident, a committee under the chairmanship of CRPF Director General Anish Dayal Singh is looking into the overall security issues of the Parliament complex and will make recommendations to the Union home ministry for improvement.

J&K Govt....

Bidhuri on Tuesday said that all arrangements have been made for the successful conduct of the Republic Day function and urged the people to actively participate in the celebrations.

Robust security measures have been put in place in view of the Republic Day celebration in Kashmir valley, Bidhuri told media persons in Srinagar on Tuesday.

Bidhuri said that the current stability in the situation in Jammu and Kashmir is due to the measures taken by the Lieutenant Governor-led administration and cooperation by the public.

“The requisite security arrangements are already in place. It’s only because of the cooperation of the people and security forces and the able guidance of our LG that we have the situation where there is no need for any curbs. In fact, I would request people to come forward and join the Republic Day celebrations,” he said. (UNI)

Security Tightened.....

here. Similar functions will be held at district headquarters as well.

The security around the venues of Republic Day functions in the valley, including the stadium here, has been beefed up, and a multi-layer security apparatus has been put in place around the venues, the officials said.

Security agencies have been asked to remain alert and not allow anyone to disturb law and order, and vitiate peace, the officials added.

“The arrangements are in place, the necessary measures have been taken. The security has been beefed up and we will ensure smooth celebrations, be it in Srinagar or elsewhere in the valley,” Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, V K Birdi said.

“The field formations are in place and they are taking necessary measures,” Birdi said when asked if there were any specific inputs on potential militant attacks.

Director General of Police (DGP) R R Swain

had on Saturday reviewed security measures across Jammu and Kashmir in a high-level meeting.

“The intentions of the adversary are to be foiled by a proactive approach and by implementing innovative district-level plans,” Swain had said.

A full-dress rehearsal is being carried out at Bakshi Stadium and other venues across the valley on Wednesday. (Agencies)

Dr Jitendra.....

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said today. Today’s India beckons them back with more opportunities and greater ease of world, he said.

At the ceremony, Dr Jitendra Singh announced the results of the first Vaishvik Bharatiya Vaigyanik (VAIBHAV) Fellowship calls and launch of the next cycle of the VAIBHAV call.

Dr Jitendra Singh emphasized that our Indian diaspora in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) are playing a key role in determining the direction in which our society and the world is moving by bringing technological changes and using it in innovative ways, particularly in social and developmental sectors.

“I would like to quote the memorable words of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas event in 2017, where he said, “Hamara toh khoon ka rishta hai, passport ka nahi” and that one phrase, I think captures the entire complexity of a relationship that we have today with over 34 million People of Indian Origin and non-Resident Indians abroad and that is what brings us here,” Dr Jitendra Singh added.

Highlighting the importance of VAIBHAV, Dr Jitendra Singh said that the VAIBHAV Fellows are from topmost institutes of Australia, Canada, Finland, Japan, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, USA and would be engaged to Indian institutes like IITs, IISc and so on during next 3 years working on jointly identified problems. This will certainly lead the way in establishing research capability as an important avenue towards Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

“The Distinguished VAIBHAV fellows would network with Indian academic Institutions and would attempt to create a collaborative network of cutting-edge research programmes in sync with the priority areas of Government of India. The fellows would facilitate an exchange of best practices between the two countries and attempt to address the areas of concern in collaborative research between the two countries,” the Union Minister pointed out.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, “The VAIBHAV Fellows who are coming to India would surely notice the many changes in the last over nine years under the Modi Government, especially a quantum jump in India’s position in the Global Innovation Index. Indian scientists and researchers have been at the forefront of cutting-edge discoveries and advancements across multiple disciplines. Indian minds have pushed the boundaries of scientific understanding and have fostered innovation that benefits humanity as a whole in areas ranging from space exploration to artificial intelligence, from biotechnology to nanotechnology. These achievements highlight India’s commitment to scientific progress and technological innovation. The country’s advancements in various fields hold promise for addressing societal challenges, fostering economic growth, and contributing to global scientific endeavors,” he added.

Prof. Abhay Karandikar, Secretary DST said that as India is a developing country, we still have many scientific areas which need to be strengthened further such as Renewable Energy, Waste to Energy, Electric Vehicles, Cyber Physical Systems, Quantum Technologies, Future Manufacturing, Blue Economy, Affordable Health Care and so on. “We believe that the Indian diaspora working in other countries would be able to expand the horizons of Indian researchers with their knowledge and experiences. They can help and guide our Indian researchers with their unique thought process,” he stressed.

He emphasized that the Indian Diaspora may connect with Indian faculty, researchers and students as well, to give them a new perspective towards research, development and innovation. “Now a days, research is not limited to laboratories of Institutes but going further to develop new technologies, products in collaboration with Industries. Therefore, it is needed that we all may understand the importance of outcome-based research,” he added.

“We expect that the Indian hosts will adapt the best practices on research, development and innovation. There is a need to build strong bond which may last long with fruitful outcomes and welfare of society,” Professor Karandikar pointed out.

The Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, is implementing the Vaishvik Bharatiya Vaigyanik (VAIBHAV) Fellowship Program. A total of 302 applications were received under this call which were evaluated by expert review committees in concerned research domains. The recommendations of ERCs were reviewed by the Apex Committee and 22 VAIBHAV Fellows and 2 Distinguished VAIBHAV Fellows were recommended. The VAIBHAV Fellows would identify an Indian Institution for collaboration and may spend up to two months in a year for a maximum 3 years.

The Distinguished VAIBHAV Fellow would identify an Indian Institution for collaboration and may spend minimum one week and maximum two months in a year for a maximum of 3 years. The Distinguished VAIBHAV fellows would network with Indian academic Institutions and would attempt to create a collaborative network of cutting-edge research programmes in sync with the priority areas of Government of India. The fellows would facilitate an exchange of best practices between the two countries and attempt to address the areas of concern in collaborative research between the two countries.

“After 5 Years.....

Amit Shah, while addressing the 5th International and 44th All India Criminology Conference of National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) said that the inauguration is happening at a time when India’s criminal justice system is entering a new era.

“IPC, CrPc and Evidence Law have been scrapped and new laws have been introduced. I have been piloting these laws and with great courage, we have taken the decision that we have made compulsory the visit of forensic science officers at every crime scene for cases with punishment of 7 years or more. This will make the investigation easier, work of the judges will also get easier. Along with this, we are also trying to modernize the entire process. Right now it will take 5 years because it has different levels. But after 5 years, India’s criminal justice system will be the most modern in the world,” he said.

“If a government remains in power for 50 years, it makes 5–6 changes, but in just 10 years we have made more than 50 changes in every field,” he added.

Union Home Minister asserted that after 5 years, the country will get more than 9,000 scientific officers and forensic science experts every year.

“Our government has brought the new education policy after 40 years. I can say that this education policy is completely built based on India but it will make our children prominent in the world stage also. After 5 years, this country will get more than 9,000 scientific officers and forensic science experts every year, we have made such arrangements in advance. In preventing crime, behavioural science plays as much role as strict administration,” he asserted.

Further, Amit Shah added that the government is finding a technical solution for the police stations of the country which are located on the hills.

“We are also finding a technical solution for the police stations of the country which are located on the hills. Except for 7 police stations, every police station in the country has been connected to the computer and linked to the database. More than 15 crore prosecution data has been made online in the e-court and it speaks in all the languages of India. We have been able to record the data of approximately 2 crore prisoners through e-prison. We have made available 19 lakh results of e-forensic for the last 3 years in online data,” he added.

Amit Shah also said that no matter how many stakeholders there are in the judicial process, there will be no benefit unless we integrate forensic science with them.

“At the time of independence, many people had said that how would India be able to survive without the British. This was a big fear in the world. But in 75 years we have become the world’s largest democracy and the foundation of our democracy is much deeper. August 15, 2047, when the country will complete 100 years of independence, at that time India will be supreme in every sphere of life. It is the vision of 140 crore Indians and it is guiding the future of the country,” he asserted.

“I see some challenges in front of these new three laws like becoming a modern police force equipped with technology while maintaining the principles of basic police. Do not let the importance of human presence diminish with the use of technology. Identifying hybrid and multi-dimensional threats and creating a network to protect the system,” the Union Home Minister said. (Agencies)

Zojila Tunnel.....

and Baltal sides has resulted in approximately 3.3 km of excavation completed within the designated timeframe.

Upon completion, the Zojila Tunnel will be India’s longest road tunnel and Asia’s longest bi-directional tunnel, playing a crucial role in ensuring uninterrupted connectivity between Ladakh and Kashmir. It promises all-weather connectivity, overcoming winter hindrances posed by the snow-covered Zojila pass and avalanches.

An official from Mega Engineering & Infrastructures Limited (MEIL), told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that four tunnels and connecting bridges are nearing completion, with about 90 percent of the work finished. The main Zojila tunnel, spanning 13 kilometres, has seen significant excavation progress, with

3.8 kilometres completed from the Minimarg side and 3.9 kilometres from the Baltal side, he said.

Approximately 1100 workers, including 900 from Jammu and Kashmir, are dedicated to the project despite challenging sub-zero conditions.

Singh said the Zojila Tunnel is expected to be completed in 2027, with the final lining work from the Minamarg side scheduled for June next year.

The cut-and-cover structures, crucial for avalanche protection, are nearly complete, with only 10 percent of the work remaining.

The official also provided updates on the three shafts of the Zojila Tunnel, highlighting significant progress in their construction. “Shaft Number 1, with a depth of 490 metres, is underway, with 23 metres completed so far,” he said.

To fight.....

since I receive a good price for my produce. The plants are still in their early stages, but in the upcoming years, they will provide me with greater profits,” he said.

Irrespective of the native variety, Ganie said his almonds have a huge demand in the market including local as well as national.

“In every way, Bulgarian almonds are extremely rich. The almonds taste well and have an excellent oil content; they are called Kagzi in the local dialect, meaning “easy to break.” The dealers who purchase my almonds have given me positive feedback,” he said.

Encouraged by the yield, Ganie now intends to plant the saplings on three additional kanals of land. “I am going to plant almond seedlings on three more kanals. My goal is to bring this crop back to life because non-native apple varieties have caused a drop in almond production in Kashmir,” he said.

Pertinently, the massive cultivation of apple varieties in Kashmir have cost the valley its native almond variety. Data suggested that the area under almond cultivation has declined by nearly 70 percent in the last 10 years.

Figures reveal that the area under almond cultivation has declined from 16,418 hectares in 2011 to mere 5483 hectares in 2021.

Drug peddler.....

news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

Accordingly, police said that a case under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Baramulla and investigation has been initiated.

“We urge the common masses that if you witness drug peddling or any other crime anywhere near you, feel free to contact nearest police establishment or dial 112. People are requested to cooperate with police in curbing the menace of drugs from the society. We reassure the community members that police will act tough against the criminals as per law,” police said.

Dry weather.....

He said that forest fires contribute to 20 per cent carbon emission. “Forest fire contributes largely to the depletion of the ozone layer,” he said.

Tariq said that in absence of a wet spell there is a threat to flora and fauna in forest areas. Meanwhile, the forest department Bhaderwah has started awareness campaigns in various villages to teach people the steps they should take to prevent forest fires in their areas.

Range officer Chiralla, Bhaderwah, Shephar Iqbal said that forest fire is not a natural incident. “There are always human hands behind this incident. Creating awareness among the people is the only way to prevent forest fires. Special training needs to be imparted to people who go inside forests and carelessly throw cigarettes and other material that cause fire,” he said. “We have also created awareness in small villages located on the forest fringes as some people set afire grass to prevent its overgrowth which later turns into a big forest fire.”

23 Vehicles.....

7 vehicles were seized at lakhanpur Toll post, 05 at Taraf Tajwal, 02 at Bhagtali, 06 at Tarnah Nallah and one each at Raj Bag, Basantpur and other areas of the district besides penalizing all 12 vehicles in Lakhnappur area.

District Mineral Officer informed that the action has been initiated as per the MMDR Act of 1957 and SRO-105 of 2016 wherein powers have been delegated to officers to control illegal transportation and illegal mining activities.

The action was initiated under the guidance of Director Geology and Mining, Rakesh Magotra who has already instructed the field officers to take stern action against persons involved in illegal mining.

All the vehicles after seizure were handed over to Police till the realization of penalty by the geology and mining department.



Heli-Skiing At Gulmarg A New Tourist Attraction, Trial Run Begins

Tourism Dept joins hands with District Admin to woo tourists to skiing resort

SRINAGAR, JAN 23: Taking adventure to another level, the tourism department with the active support of district administration Baramulla is all set to start heli-skiing at Gulmarg.

As per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the service is being introduced by the tourism department in collaboration with the Baramulla district administration to cater to adventure seekers from across the world.

"All approvals are in place and the service will take off soon. Gulmarg has been a favourite skiing destination for skiers from across the world. As such, the introduction of heli-skiing will further promote Gulmarg at an international level," official

sources said.

They said the service is being run by a private player adding the trial runs for the same have already started.

"This service will be run by a private player who will take into consideration every aspect, to come up to the expectations of the adventure seekers. The trial run for the service has already started and the experts as well as tourists are very much satisfied with the service," sources added.

Gulmarg, a high-altitude skiing destination in north Kashmir, is renowned for its breathtaking landscapes and world-class skiing slopes.

With the introduction of heli-skiing, the region's status



will be further elevated as a premier destination for winter sports enthusiasts.

Heli-skiing involves using helicopters to access remote and untouched powder-covered slopes, providing skiers with an unparalleled experience away from traditional ski resorts.

The Tourism Department believes that this venture will not only attract seasoned skiers but also cater to adventure seekers looking for an adrenaline-packed escapade in the heart of the Himalayas.

"The proposed heli-skiing routes will take participants to some of the most challenging and breath-taking terrains, offering a unique opportunity to carve through virgin snow in an untouched alpine environment," official sources said.

Officials said the department has assured that safety measures will be paramount, with experienced guides and rescue teams accompanying participants to ensure a secure and enjoyable adventure.

In the absence of snow, the service provider has started the service by taking tourists to the sunshine peak.

Tourists, who availed the service, expressed their excitement and thrill for the aerial journey to the highest peaks of Gulmarg.

"It is a good idea to start helicopter services at Gulmarg. We were able to visit Sunshine Peak, which is completely snow-clad. It was a joyous trip," said Pooja Kapoor, a tourist.

SKIMS blacklists company for 5 yrs for non-payment of rentals

SRINAGAR, JAN 23: SKIMS, Soura, has taken stringent action against a company for alleged violations related to non-payment of rentals. The company, tasked with managing public car parking slots, faced debarment and, subsequently, a 5-year blacklist following a series of disputes.

Initially, the company sought compensation for tasks beyond the contract, such as macadamization, surface drainage development, and the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. While 21 days of compensation were granted for the first two, the pandemic period wasn't fully considered.

Despite the company's acceptance of compensation for macadamization, it insisted on reviewing



the compensation period for drainage development and the COVID-19 period. The committee, including company representatives, recommended 44 days of compensation, which the company accepted in principle. However, the outstanding rentals were not deposited promptly.

The notice issued to the company highlighted its failure to meet payment obligations and conveyed the decision of immediate blacklisting for five years. The company, initially the highest bidder with a contract valid from October 5, 2021, to October 4, 2022, faced consequences for its reluctance to settle financial matters, leading to a significant impact on its future engagements with SKIMS. The incident serves as a cautionary tale within the contractual landscape, emphasizing the importance of adherence to terms and prompt financial commitments.

Health sector in Kupwara to witness positive transformation, says Admin Secy H&ME

Says collaborative effort needed to overcome challenges

KUPWARA, JAN 23: In a mega public darbar held at Handwara in north Kashmir's Kupwara district, the Administrative Secretary, Health and Medical Education, Dr Syed Aabid Rasheed, assured the public of a forthcoming positive and visible change in the health sector.

Addressing reporters during the event, Dr Abid, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the people of Kupwara have always been "progressive and nationalistic". He praised the residents for their

inclination towards development and their cooperative spirit for the betterment of the region.

During the public event, attendees raised various issues. The Secretary, H&ME said that while some concerns could be redressed immediately, others might require more time for resolution.

"Such public engagements are an indication of hope of aspirations and expectations that people hold for the government," he said, adding that the Union Territory government is committed to addressing these concerns.



Assuring a positive and visible

change in the health sector, Dr Abid said collaborative effort is needed from both the public and authorities to overcome certain challenges.

He announced plans to visit various health centres in the district to assess their functioning and gain a firsthand understanding of challenges faced by the general public. "We will sit together with the health authorities in the district to understand the problems and issues faced by the general public. There would be a lot of solvable issues," he said.

Addressing the gathering, the Secretary Health highlighted the potential of Government Medical College Handwara, saying it would be one of the best in the country.

"Students from the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, as well as from other parts of the country, are enrolled in the college, and it is expected to grow further in the future," he informed.

Dr Abid said the health sector should be run properly. "The staff must be deployed efficiently to cater to the needs of the growing population," he said.

H&ME directs HoDs for timely submission of cases for obtaining approval of competent authority

SRINAGAR, JAN 23: Health and Medical Education Department on Tuesday directed all heads of departments to submit cases for obtaining approval of competent authority in time.

As per circular, a copy of which lies with news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), it has been observed that the case(s) relating to grant of study leave/permission for visiting outside the country on private affairs/ grant of deputation for tenure postings and other issues, where approval of the competent authority is required, are received in the department on or after the date of commencement of the proposed date from the concerned HoDs.

"As a result, the Department is not in a position to examine such case(s) in short span of time for obtaining necessary approval(s) of the competent authority which results for submission of the cases to the competent authority for sanction on post facto basis, against the extant rules/regulations governing the subject. To obviate the chances of such post facto approvals/sanctions, it has been desired to circulate necessary instructions in this regard," it reads.

"Accordingly, it is impressed upon all the Head of the Institutions to submit the case(s) relating to grant of study leave/permission for visiting outside

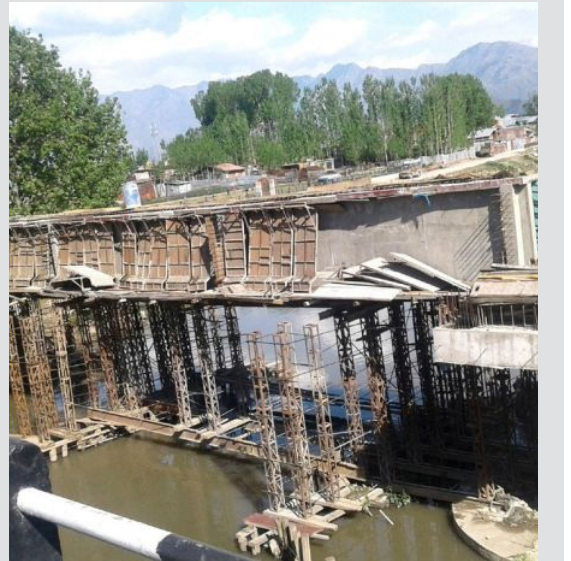
the country on private affairs/ deputation for tenure postings and other issues to the Administrative Department well in advance i.e. 15 days before the commencement of the proposed date for examination and obtaining approval of the competent authority," it said.

"Further, it is also instructed that, henceforth, no such case(s) shall be entertained by the Administrative Department and the concerned HoD(s) shall be responsible for timely submission of such case(s) to the Administrative Department. All the HoDs shall comply with the above instructions in letter and spirit, without fail," it said.

Noorbagh-Qamarwai bridge nearing completion after 13 years

SRINAGAR, JAN 23: The much-awaited Noorbagh-Qamarwai bridge in Srinagar, a project in progress for nearly 13 years, is finally approaching its conclusion, as per officials from the Roads Building and Bridges (R&B) department.

Chief Engineer R&B Kashmir, Sajad Ahmad Naqeeb, informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the project, which was marred by delays, is now expected to be completed by June this year.



Speaking about the project's 13-year timeline, Naqeeb said they faced the primary challenge of rehabilitating shopkeepers in the area, which has now been addressed.

"The construction is in full swing, and we hope the long-awaited project will be completed by June of this year," the Chief Engineer said.

Originally slated for completion within four years, the R&B Department faced multiple deadline extensions.

Locals said they are eagerly waiting for the bridge's completion. They said the bridge will bring many benefits and convenience for them.

People hail DGP's Public Darbar, demand progs in every district

J&K Police Chief's initiative proves effective in addressing public grievances

AWANTIPORA, JAN 23: Public Darbar held by the Director General of Police (DGP) RRSwain is emerging as a beneficial initiative, providing a direct platform for the public to raise concerns, seek assistance and engage with law enforcement. People say this approach promotes transparency and community involvement, and further strengthens the relationship between the police and the public.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), hundreds of people on Tuesday gathered at District Police Lines (DPL) Awantipora to present their issues to DGP J&K and seek resolution.

Approximately 1200 applications were received during the Darbar, with on-the-spot directions given in many cases to address the concerns. DGP assured that for pending cases, a committee would be formed.

A woman from Anantnag district shared her ordeal to KNO, saying that her husband was killed by terrorists two years ago, and her son was also attacked but he survived. "For the last two years, I have been moving from pillar to post, seeking employment for my son under SRO," she said.

Expressing gratitude after meeting DGP, she expressed hope that her matter would be resolved



soon. "The DGP Sahab assured me that my son would get a job," she said.

An elderly man from Budgam raised concerns about an officer unlawfully claiming ownership of his land. He credited DGP's

public Darbars for providing a platform to address such issues.

"DGP Sahab assured me that justice will be done. I'm hopeful that action against the involved person will be taken soon," he said.

Another person from Pulwama said he has been struggling for the last eight months to get his issue resolved. He alleged that an official was asking him to make him a distributor of his company.

"DGP Sahab directed the concerned authorities to take immediate action against the official," he said, adding, "Such Public Darbars must be held in every district as they are crucial for the timely resolution of issues faced by the less privileged."

The attendees of the Darbar said similar redressal programmes must be held in every district so that the issues and concerns of the people are swiftly resolved.

DC Kulgam reviews functioning of RDD, instructs to carry intensified sanitation drives to keep Kulgam clean

Stresses to develop durable assets & ensure time-bound completion of works

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, JANUARY 23: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today chaired a meeting of officers and officials of Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj (RDD&PR) at mini-secretariat, here to review functioning, progress and implementation status of various schemes in the district.

During the meeting, ACD, through a PowerPoint presentation apprised the chair about the progress made under various schemes like MGNREGA,

PMAY-G, District Capex, etc and informed that there are 55000 Job cards and 45800 are verified and active job cards.

The DC instructed concerned to verify the unverified job cards within a few days.

During the meeting the chair was also informed that 4322 works under MGNREGA were completed during current FY, with an expenditure of 67 crore, and against the target of 5845 units under PMAY-G, 3183 units have been completed.

It was also given out that under District Capex, out of 1904, 1756 works



were completed with an expenditure of Rs. 23 crore.

The DC instructed the concerned to expedite the pace of works under District Capex, PMAY (G), MGNREGA and other works. He also instructed ACD to submit a weekly progress report of PMAY-G.

While reviewing progress under SBM, the chair was informed by ACP, that under SBM II, 11671 IHHL were constructed and against the target of 85 Community Sanitary Complexes 64 are completed.

He directed officers to carry intensified sanitation drives in all Panchay-

ats of all 11 blocks of district to remove the legacy waste and clean water bodies, roadsides, markets and other public spaces and stressed to call public participation in making these drives sustainable.

He called for timely completion of all the works with judicious utilization of funds, while ensuring quality of work, in order to create durable assets

The meeting was attended by ADDC, Showkat Ahmad Rather; CPO, Zahid Sajjad; ACP, Shurjeel Ahmad; Exen Rew, BDOs and other officers and officials.

DDC Baramulla chairs District Level Committee meeting on HADP

Accords approval to 1852 applications under HADP

■ **HT News Network**

BARAMULLA, JANUARY 23: In a concerted effort to effectively implement Holistic Agriculture Development Plan (HADP) in the district, the District Development Commissioner (DDC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today chaired a meeting of District Level Committee at the conference hall of the DC office here. Officers from various departments under the HADP, including Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Sericulture, Fisheries, etc presented a thorough update on the current status of program registrations across various individual heads, departmental approvals and project deployments.

During the meeting, the DDC who is also the Chair-



man District Implementation Committee (DLIC), accorded approval to 1852 applications under HADP in favour of beneficiaries of Baramulla district.

Speaking during the meeting, the DC underscored that the HADP is a major step towards creating a sustainable and profitable agricultural ecosystem.

Minga Sherpa further stressed that the pro-

gramme aims to empower farmers with knowledge and tools that can help them enhance their productivity and profitability while also contributing to the overall growth of the agriculture sector. The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Javid Ahmad; General Manager DIC, officers from Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and other con-

cerned departments. Speaking during the meeting, the DC underscored that the HADP is a major step towards creating a sustainable and profitable agricultural ecosystem.

Minga Sherpa further stressed that the programme aims to empower farmers with knowledge and tools that can help them enhance their productivity and profitability.

DC Ganderbal inspects Republic Day arrangements at main function Venue

■ **HT News Network**

GANDERBAL, JANUARY 23: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shyambir Tuesday visited the Qamaria Ground, here to oversee the preparations for the upcoming Republic Day function. The DC along with other officers conducted a thorough review of the arrangements to ensure a seamless celebration of the National Day.

He took a round of the ground and underscored the significance of proper sanitation, cleanliness, decoration and security measures. During the on-site inspection, Shyambir emphasized the importance of close coordination among the departments for successful celebration and directed the concerned authorities to ensure that all arrangements are finalized well before the commencement of full dress rehearsal on 24 January.

The DC directed AE, Jal Shakti to ensure sufficient water tankers are placed on identified spots within the ground besides EO Municipal Council Ganderbal was instructed for proper sanitation at the venue.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Irfan Ahmad Pahalwan S/o Mohammad Yousuf R/o Koker Bagh Zoonimar Srinagar Lost My back side No.plate of my scooty Nitro Xp Bearing no. JK01AQ2120 On 20/1/24 while traveling from Aiwa kadal to soura if found please contact 8899232492..

Name:-Irfan Ahmad Pahalwan
S/o Mohammad Yousuf
R/o Koker Bagh Zoonimar Srinaga

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is certify that I am muzffer Ahmad lone , s/o Bashir Ahmad lone , R/o Kachwarie , Tehsil khansahib, district budgam. I want to apply for renew of Rba certificate . Now I want to convey general public, if any body has objection in this regard . He / she can contact tehsil office khansahib within seven days. After completion of said period , No objection will be accepted.

Name:-Muzffer Ahmad Lone
Bashir Ahmad Lone
R/o , Kachwarie
Tehsil , khansahib
District, BUDGAM

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill) power connection is registered in my Father's name GH AHMAD DAR S/O ...ABDUL JABBAR DAR ...Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040000526 wants to be registered on my name BASHIR AHMAD DAR S/O GH AHMAD DAR R/O KREERI ...If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name....BASHIR AHMAD DAR
S/OGH AHMAD DAR
R/O ..KREERI BARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I informed to general public that my Daughter's Date of birth (DOB) is 04/03/2006...Now I am applying for her 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....NAZIR AHMAD SHAH
F/O.... RIFAT NAZIR
R/O.... TAKIYA WAGOORA
Block.... WAGOORA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I informed to general public that my parental Grand uncle namely AHMAD SOFI S/O LATE LASSI SOFI R/O BANDIPAYEEN has died on 27/01/1972 at home. The other legal heirs have authorised me to process for the same vide Affidavit duly attested by Executive Magistrate Wagoora. Now I am applying for his 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....ALTAF HUSSAIN SOFI
S/O GHULAM NABI SOFI
R/O..... BANDIPAYEEN
Block ..WAGOORA
DisttBARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I informed to general public that my daughter's Date of birth (DOB) is 20/04/1996 born at home. Now I am applying for her 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....ABDUL RASHID MALLAH
F/O.... SHAGUFTA BANO
R/O.... WAGOORA
Distt....BARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Name and Parentage is Wrongly Mentioned on my Driving Licence Bearing License JK 15 2017 0000056 as Faizan Zahoor Dar & Zahoor Ahamd Dar Instead of Faizan Zahoor & Zahoor Ahmad Dar. Now I am applying for its Correction if anybody have any objection in this regard He//She may contact with Concerned authority within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.



Name....Faizan Zahoor
S/O Zahoor Ahmad Dar
R/O ...Sunbal Sonawari Bandipora

PUBLIC NOTICE

I informed to general public that my Daughter's Date of birth (DOB) is 25/10/2004...Now I am applying for her 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....NAZIR AHMAD SHAH
F/O.... MARYAM BANO
R/O.... TAKIYA WAGOORA
Block.... WAGOORA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I informed to general public that my Son's Date of birth (DOB) is 01/11/2013...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....GH NABI DAR
F/O.... MUDASIR NABI DAR
R/O.... DARWAFRESTIWARI Block.... WAGOORA

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR, OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI DEPARTMENT (PHE) MECHANICAL RURAL DIVISION BALGARDEN SRINAGAR

TELE: 0194-2473956. E-Mail: xenphemrtd@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No. PHE/MRD/TS 147 OF 01/2024 Dated: -23-01-2024

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of J&K, Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Rural Division Balgarden Srinagar, invites e-tenders from reputed and resourceful Bidders/ Firms/Companies/Joint Ventures/ Consortia between bidder/firm and Financier of all classes registered in JKPWD/CPWD/Railways or any other state Government or GST Registration for Elect/Mech. Works for **Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Electro-Mechanical works for WSS Paripora Watmagam under JJM**. The bidding process shall be completed online on www.jktenders.gov.in in two covers viz. **Cover 1st** consisting of Pre-Qualification Criteria, General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications and **Cover 2nd** shall consist of Financial Bid on percentage basis, in the prescribed BOQ.

Sr No	Particulars of the work	Estimated Cost (Lacs)	Tender fee (in Rs)	Earnest Money Deposit	Bid Validity	Time of Completion of work (days)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I.	SITC of electro-mechanical works for water supply scheme Paripora Watmagam	Work/scheme wise details given in FORM I of tender document	Rs. 500/-	In the Shape of Bid Security Declaration (enclosed as FORM-XII)	180 days	As per FORM I

Position of funds: Approved Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

Status of AAA : Accorded

The tender inviting authority is Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Rural Division, Balgarden, Srinagar.

The awarding authority is District Jal Jeevan Mission (DJJM) Srinagar.

Critical Dates:

i	Publish Date	23-01-2024 (5.00PM)
ii	Document Download/sale start Date	23-01-2024 (5.00PM)
iii	Date of Pre-bid meeting	26-01-2024 (11.30AM)
iv	Bid submission start date	23-01-2024 (5.00PM)
v	Document Download/sale end Date	30-01-2024 (11.00AM)
vi	Bid submission end date	30-01-2024 (11.00AM)
vii	Date and time of Bid opening	30-01-2024 (12.30PM)

- Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website www.jktenders.gov.in.
- Queries by email if any, should be made at xenphemrtd@gmail.com.

SCHEME WISE LIST OF WORKS OF DISTRICT BUDGAM

Sr No	Name of Water Supply Scheme	Description of work	District	Estimated cost	Tender fee (in Rs.)	Time of completion (Days)	Status of AAA
1.	Paripora Watmagam	SITC of Electro-Mechanical works	Budgam	Rs.35,44,243/-	500/-	45 Days	Accorded

DIPK-15556/23
Date: 23-01-2024

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Jal Shakti (PHE) Mech.
Rural Division, Srinagar.

DC Kathua finalises Republic Day arrangements

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, JANUARY 23: The District Administration Kathua today convened a crucial meeting under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Dr. Rakesh Minhas in the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex to finalize the preparations for the Republic Day celebration in the district.

The meeting, attended by high rank officials including SSP Shivdeep Singh, Jamwal, ADC Ranjeet Singh, RTO Kathua Sunil Kumar, GMDIC Prem Singh Chib, and representatives from the line departments, focused on ensuring a seamless and memorable 75th Republic Day 2024 celebration. It was given out in the meeting that Sports



Stadium Kathua will be given befitting aesthetic look for smooth hosting of National Event where the chief guest would unfurl the National Flag, overseeing a grand March past featuring over 40 contingents from the army, police, forest department, and an enthusiastic participation of students from schools and colleges. To kick off the National Day festivities, 'Shehnai Vadan' will resound

at identified locations across the district, in the wee hours of the National Day - courtesy District Information Centre. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Rakesh Minhas issued comprehensive directives to address various aspects of the event, encompassing security, traffic management, cleanliness, sanitation, seating arrangements, drinking water, power supply, medical facilities, refreshments,

prize distribution, road clearance, fire tender deployment, and distribution of invitation cards. The Chief Education Officer and the District Youth Services & Sports Officer received specific instructions to coordinate and organize a vibrant cultural program for the day. In preparation for the grand celebration, a full dress rehearsal is scheduled for January 24, 2024.

Emphasizing adherence to flag code and other protocols, the Deputy Commissioner provided specific guidance regarding the ceremonial unfurling of the national flag. The district administration, in collaboration with various departments, is committed to delivering a flawless and patriotic Republic Day celebration for the citizens.

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri conducts comprehensive visit to GMC & AH

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, JANUARY 23: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Om Prakash Bhagat today conducted a thorough inspection of the Government Medical College and Associated Hospital (GMC & AH) to assess the healthcare facilities and patient care services available in the premier Health Institution. Accompanied by a team of officers, the Deputy Commissioner assessed different departments and interacted with medical staff, directing them to deliver the best possible services and exhibit empathetic behavior towards patients. During his visit, the Deputy Commissioner paid a visit to the Oxygen generation plant



and directed the concerned officer from the Public Works Department (PWD) to expedite the pending work. Recognizing the urgency, he issued necessary directives and set a deadline for completion of the drainage work by the first week of February.

In his quest to enhance the medical facilities, the DC also inspected the blood

components separation unit. Recognizing the significance of voluntary blood donation, he directed the concerned authorities to promote and encourage individuals to donate blood voluntarily, ensuring a steady supply of blood for patients in need. The Deputy Commissioner further toured multiple departments within the hospital,

including the Emergency Ward, Pathology Laboratory, Resuscitation Unit, Isolation Ward, NICU & PICU, Ayush OPD Unit, Orthopaedics Ward, ECG Section, Dermatology Unit, Surgical OPD, Physiotherapy Unit, Medical OPD, Drug Deaddiction OPD, Gynaec Ward, Paediatric OPD, ENT OPD, Speech and Hearing Centre, Dental OPD, Radiation Oncology Ward, ICU, NCD Clinic and Thalassemia Care Centre. With a focus on patient-centric care, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned authorities to ensure the display of available medicines in the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) store. This initiative aims to provide transparency to patients and their families and facilitate.

Promoting Road Safety: Awareness event held at Paryote Road, Doda

■ HT News Network



DODA, JANUARY 23: As part of the National Road Safety Month, a dedicated event was conducted at Paryote Road in Doda here today. The initiative, orchestrated under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner, Harvinder Singh, and supervised by ARTO Doda, Rajesh Gupta, aimed to heighten awareness regarding road safety practices and regulations to mitigate the occurrence of accidents.

ARTO Doda, Rajesh Gupta, underscored the importance of road safety measures during the event, emphasizing the need for drivers to adhere to traffic rules. The event served as a platform to educate the community about safe driving practices, with the Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) Doda distributing informative pamphlets and facilitating interactive sessions. As part of the safety measures, the MVD Doda conducted an inspection of reflective tapes on vehicles to ensure compliance with safety standards. This proactive step was taken to improve vehicle visibility, particularly during nighttime, thus minimizing the risk of accidents. The focus on reflective tapes aligns with the broader goal of enhancing road safety.

Director Skill Development launches PM Vishwakarma Scheme in District Jammu

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 23: In a significant step by the UT administration, J&K has become the first UT in the country to implement the PM Vishwakarma Yojana (PMVY).

In continuation to its efforts, the Director of Skill Development, Sudershan Kumar today inaugurated the first batch of 30 trainees in Darzi craft being imparted at Government ITI R S Pura. Subsequently, the DSD virtually launched PM Vishwakarma Training at ITI Anantnag, ITI Doda, ITI Udhampur and ITI Kulgam for those who work with their hand tools.

During the event, the Director laid emphasis on the commitment of the government to impart quality skill to the youth. "This scheme will be highly beneficial as it will honour and



empower the artisans who immensely contribute towards the economy. This scheme aims to make stronger entrepreneurs who run small enterprises/business units," said the Director. He further highlighted that the Central Government and LG led Administration is committed towards forecasting a culture of skill environment across the region to create maximum possible avenues for the

youth. The aims and object of the scheme for recognition of artisans and crafts of people through PM Vishwakarma certificate and ID card as well as basic training of 5-7 days with a stipend of Rs 500 per day. The scheme will also provide a modern toolkit of Rs 15000 free of cost to trained Vishwakarma besides linkage with credit based soft loans and marketing support for expansion of their business

will also be provided under the yojna.

G.M Bhatt, Joint Director, Jammu, B. Babu, Joint Director, RDSD Government of India, Ravi Gupta, A.D. DSD, Gurmeet Singh A.D, RDSD Jammu and other senior officers of the Department were present on the occasion. The aims and object of the scheme for recognition of artisans and crafts of people through PM Vishwakarma certificate and ID card as well as basic training of 5-7 days with a stipend of Rs 500 per day. The scheme will also provide a modern toolkit of Rs 15000 free of cost to trained Vishwakarma besides linkage with credit based soft loans and marketing support for expansion of their business will also be provided under the yojna. G.M Bhatt, Joint Director, Jammu, B. Babu, Joint Director, RDSD Government of India, Ravi Gupta, A.D. DSD.

MVD Jammu holds brainstorming workshop for automobile mechanics and Shree Toyota Staff

■ HT News Network



JAMMU, JANUARY 23: As a part of ongoing National Road Safety Month M.V.D Jammu today organized a brainstorming workshop for mechanics and other staff members at Shree Toyota here today. The camp was organized under the supervision of R.T.O Jammu Pankaj Bagotra and on the directions of Transport Commissioner J&K Rajinder Singh Tara in collaboration with Shree Toyota Jammu. As many as 200 mechanics and staff members besides owners of Shree Toyota, Devinder Batra & Bhisham Batra participated in the event. Road safety tips were imparted to the participants by MVI Vikas Srivats besides administering pledge on Road Speaking on the occasion. ARTO Hq. Rehana Tabassam said that such platforms are significant to enhance awareness and understanding of road safety among attendees, contributing to the overarching goal of reducing road accidents and ensuring safer journeys for all road users. Motor Vehicle Inspector Vikas Srivats on the occasion provided safety tips on vehicle maintenance, highlighting the role it plays in preventing breakdowns and accidents.

23 vehicles involved in illegal mining across Kathua in last 24 hours

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, JANUARY 23: A team of Geology and Mining department led by District Mineral Officer Kathua Rajinder Singh has seized 23 vehicles at multiple locations during raids conducted in the last 24 hours.

Vehicles including 5 dumpers, 8 heavy Punjab based trucks and 10 tractor trolleys were confiscated while carrying raw and finished without due permission.

Further, 12 other vehicles moving towards the Punjab side were penalized on the spot for carrying minerals beyond the capacity as per the e-challans and GST bills.

During day and night operations, 7 vehicles were seized at lakhanpur Toll post, 05 at Taraf Tajwal, 02 at Bhagatali, 06 at Tarnah Nallah and one each at Raj Bag, Basantpur and other areas of the district besides penalizing all 12 vehicles in Lakhanpur area.

Govt SPMR College organises awareness program on Traffic Rules and Road Safety

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 23: Government SPMR College of Commerce today organised an awareness program on Traffic rules and road safety. The PG (pursuing M Com) students of commerce participated on the stated theme.

The Principal of the College, Dr Surinder Kumar Sharma took initiative to conduct the program. He fostered among the students the imperativeness of traffic rules while driving and encouraged the students to take vow that from now onwards they will abide by traffic rules and norms. The students of the college were shown via powerpoint presentation the ongoing road safety measures to be adopted while driving and to be a civic driver. The program was aimed to educate the youth regarding the traffic norms and to avoid reckless driving. It even divulged that the youth accidents had boosted because of uncivilized driving and had led to rampant loss of young lives, so just by adopting speed control limits and following the traffic rules the human lives.

Empowering Artisans: Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Yojana launched at ITI Doda

■ HT News Network

DODA, JANUARY 23: In a pivotal move towards skill development, the Department of Skill Development J&K and District Administration Doda collaborated to inaugurate the Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Yojana at ITI Doda today. Deputy Commissioner, Harvinder Singh, graced the event as the Chief Guest. The ITI Doda extended a warm welcome, providing an over-



view of the ongoing and upcoming faculties in the institute.

In his address, the DC encouraged participating artisans to leverage the benefits of the government-sponsored

Vishwakarma Scheme, emphasizing its potential to generate respectable livelihoods. He highlighted the scheme as an optimal avenue for artisans to establish and grow their businesses.

The DC also provided an insightful overview of the Vishwakarma Scheme, urging participants to consider setting up their own businesses by embracing the opportunities afforded by the scheme. The primary objective of organizing this program was the official launch of the Vishwakarma Scheme, designed to support small artisans and workers nationwide. This initiative offers financial assistance, training, advanced techniques.

VBSY: IEC Van Traverses through panchayats of block Dhangri & Manjakote in Rajouri District

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, JANUARY 23: Today, the VBSY IEC vans traversed through the panchayats of Sagote, Dalhori, Dalhori Salyote, Gambhir Upper, Gambhir Muglan-A, Gambhir Muglan-B, Gambhir Muglan-Cand Gambhir Muglan-D panchayats of block Dhangri and Manjakote of Rajouri district. This strategic journey highlights the Yatra's commitment to reaching every corner of the district and ensuring that the benefits of government initiatives are felt at the grassroots level. The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY) has become a reckon-



ing force for the implementation of various government schemes and ushering in comprehensive development throughout the district. This ambitious initiative is strategically crafted to transform Rajouri by extending its reach to underserved areas and ensuring the effective execution of government programs, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for its residents.

Government Polytechnic Bikram Chowk Jammu starts training under PM Vishwakarma Yojana

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 23: Government Polytechnic Jammu today became the first Polytechnic of J&K UT to implement prestigious PM Vishwakarma Scheme (PMV) with the start of training of 60 trainees (Vishwakarmas) in Tailor (Darzi) Craft to enhance their skills and empower them regarding self-employment. The training programme for Vishwakarmas was started under the leadership of UT Administration. The training was inaugurated today by Director Skill Development Department (SDD), Sudershan Kumar in presence of Leena Padha, Mission Director, Skill Mission J&K along with Principal Government



Polytechnic Jammu, Er Arun Bangotra, and other representative of Directorate of Skill Development Department and NSDC, J&K. Director said that PMV is an ambitious

initiative of the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi and it aims to provide recognition, training, tool kits, certification, marketing support and soft loans to empower the

craftsmen and artisans of our country who immensely contribute towards the economy of our nation as a whole. He commended the efforts of Principal Government Polytechnic Jammu and his team for being the first Polytechnic College of J&K UT to implement the PM Vishwakarma Scheme. Leena Padha Mission Director, Skill Mission J&K highlighted the importance of skill development in empowering the youth and contributing to the nation's economic growth. Principal Government Polytechnic Jammu highlighted the basic objectives of the scheme by recognition of artisans through PM Vishwakarma certificate as well as basic training of five to seven days and advanced training of 15 days or more, with a stipend of Rs. 500 per day.

EDITORIAL

With Dry Chellai
Kalaan, Kashmir's
Economy gone
Dry Too...

Kashmir, valley known for thy snow-clad charm, has experienced a disconcerting shift – a decline in winter tourism due to dwindling to negligible snowfall. This departure from the traditional winter wonderland has far-reaching implications for the region's business and economy.

Historically, Kashmir's winter tourism has been a major economic driver, attracting visitors seeking the thrill of snow-covered landscapes and winter sports. However, climate change has disrupted this seasonal rhythm, leading to a noticeable decline in snowfall. As a result, traditional winter activities such as skiing and snowboarding are becoming increasingly unreliable, deterring tourists and impacting the livelihoods of those dependent on the tourism industry.

The economic ramifications are profound. Hotels, restaurants, and local businesses that thrived during the winter season are now grappling with reduced footfall. The decline in tourism not only affects those directly involved in the hospitality sector but also has a cascading effect on other related industries, including transportation and souvenir businesses.

Beyond the immediate economic consequences, the change in climate poses a long-term threat to the region's identity and cultural fabric. The snow-covered landscapes have been integral to Kashmir's image, attracting artists, photographers, and filmmakers. A persistent lack of snow jeopardizes this unique appeal, potentially altering the narrative of Kashmir as a winter paradise.

Addressing this challenge requires concerted efforts on multiple fronts. The local government must invest in alternative tourism initiatives, promoting the region's natural beauty beyond the allure of snow. Simultaneously, there is a pressing need for global cooperation to combat climate change and mitigate its impact on vulnerable regions like Kashmir.

In the face of these challenges, Kashmir stands at a crossroads. Navigating this uncertain terrain demands innovative solutions and a collective commitment to preserving the region's economic vitality and cultural heritage in the face of a changing climate.

Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur; An
Epitome of Simplicity and
Social Justice

A Glowing Tribute to Great Leader, Former CM of Bihar



■ By - Narendra Modi

Today is the birth centenary of Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur Ji, whose relentless pursuit of social justice created a positive impact in the lives of crores of people. I never had the opportunity to meet Karpoori Ji but, I heard a lot about him from Kailashpati Mishra Ji, who worked closely with him. He belonged to one of the most backward sections of society, the Nai Samaj. Overcoming numerous obstacles, he achieved a lot and worked for societal betterment.

Jan Nayak Kapoor Thakur Ji's life revolved around the twin pillars of simplicity and social justice. Till his last breath, his simple lifestyle and humble nature resonated deeply with the common people. There are numerous anecdotes that highlight his simplicity. Those who worked with him recall how he preferred to spend his own money for any personal matter including his daughter's wedding. During his tenure as Chief Minister of Bihar, a decision was taken to build a colony for political leaders but he himself did not take any land or money for the same. When he passed away in 1988, several leaders went to his village to pay tributes. When they saw the condition of his house, they were moved to tears- how can someone so towering have a house so simple!

Another anecdote of his simplicity dates back to 1977 when he just took over as CM of Bihar. The Janata Government was in power in Delhi and Patna. That time, Janata leaders had gathered in Patna to mark Loknayak JP's birthday. Among the galaxy of top leaders walked in Chief Minister Karpoori Thakur Ji, with a torn Kurta. In his own style, Chandrashekhar Ji asked people to donate some money so that Karpoori Ji could purchase a new Kurta. But, Karpoori Ji was Karpoori Ji- he accepted the money but donated it to the CM Relief Fund.

Social justice was most dear to Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur Ji. His political



journey was marked by monumental efforts to create a society where resources were distributed fairly, and everyone, regardless of their social standing, had access to opportunities. He wanted to address the systemic inequalities that plagued Indian society.

Such was his commitment to his ideals that despite living in an era where the Congress Party was omnipresent, he took a distinctly anti-Congress line because he was convinced very early on that the Congress had deviated from its founding principles.

His electoral career began in the early 1950s and since then, he became a force to reckon with in the legislative chambers, powerfully voicing the struggles of the working class, labourers, small farmers and youngsters. Education was a subject very close to his heart. Throughout his political career he worked to improve education facilities for the poor. He was a proponent of education in local languages so that people from small towns and villages can climb the ladder and attain success. As CM, he took many measures for the welfare of senior citizens as well.

Democracy, debate and discussion were integral to Karpoori Ji's personality. This spirit was seen when he immersed himself in the Quit India movement as a youngster and it was again seen when he resisted the Emer-

gency tooth and nail. His unique perspectives were great admired by the likes of JP, Dr. Lohia and Charan Singh Ji.

Perhaps one of Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur Ji's most significant contributions to India was his role in strengthening the affirmative action apparatus for the backward classes, with the hope that they were given the representation and opportunities they deserved. His decision was met with heavy opposition but he did not bow to any pressure. Under his leadership, policies were implemented that laid the groundwork for a more inclusive society, where one's birth did not determine one's fate. He belonged to the most backward strata of society but he worked for all the people. He had no trace of bitterness in him, which is what makes him truly great.

Over the last ten years, our Government has walked on the path of Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur Ji, reflecting in our schemes and policies that have brought transformative empowerment. One of the biggest tragedies of our polity has been that barring a few leaders like Karpoori Ji, the call for social justice was restricted to being a political slogan. Inspired by Karpoori Ji's vision we implemented it as an effective governance model. I can say with confidence and pride that Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur Ji would have been very proud of India's feat of free-

ing 25 crore people from the clutches of poverty in the last few years. These are people from the most backward sections of society, who were denied basic facilities nearly seven decades after freedom from colonial rule. At the same time, our efforts towards saturation- of ensuring every scheme reaches 100% coverage echoes his commitment to social welfare. Today, when people from OBC, SC and ST Communities are becoming entrepreneurs due to MUDRA Loans, it fulfills Karpoori Thakur Ji's vision of economic independence. Likewise, it was our government which had the privilege of extending SC, ST and OBC reservation. We also had the honour of setting up the OBC Commission (which was opposed by Congress, sadly), which is working on the path shown by Karpoori Ji. Our PM-Vishwakarma Scheme will also bring new avenues of prosperity for crores of people belonging to OBC communities across India.

As a person belonging to the backward classes myself, I have much to thank Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur Ji for. Unfortunately, we lost Karpoori Ji at a relatively young age of 64. We lost him when we needed him the most. Yet, he lives on in the heart and minds of crores of people due to his work. He was a true Jan Nayak!

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India

How Journaling Can Help Students



■ Vijay GarG

Self-reflection: Journaling allows students to reflect on their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Writing about their day, successes, challenges, and emotions helps them gain a better understanding of themselves and their growth.

Goal setting: Journaling provides a space for students to set goals and track their progress. They can write down their short-term and long-term goals, break them into smaller tasks, and regularly evaluate their achievements. This helps them stay focused, motivated, and accountable.

Stress relief: Writing in a journal can be a cathartic and therapeutic activity. It provides a safe outlet for students to express their worries, anxieties, and frustrations, helping them release stress and gain a sense of relief. This can lead to improved mental health and overall well-being.

Problem-solving: Journaling allows stu-



dents to brainstorm ideas, explore different perspectives, and evaluate various solutions to problems they may be facing. It encourages critical thinking and helps them devel-

op effective problem-solving skills.

Enhances creativity: Writing in a journal can stimulate creativity. It encourages students to think imaginatively, explore

new ideas, and develop their writing skills. This can enhance their self-expression and foster a deeper appreciation for the arts.

Improves communication skills: Writ-

ing in a journal helps students improve their written communication skills. Through regular writing practice, they can enhance their vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure. Additionally, journaling also helps them organize their thoughts effectively, which can be beneficial for academic writing and expressing themselves verbally.

Boosts self-confidence: As students document their achievements, celebrate their successes, and reflect on their growth, journaling can boost their self-confidence. It serves as a reminder of their capabilities, strengths, and resilience, which can empower them to overcome challenges and take more risks.

Memory retention: Writing down important lessons, experiences, and insights in a journal can aid in memory retention. By summarizing and reflecting on what they have learned, students reinforce their understanding of the topics and are more likely to remember the information in the long term.

Overall, journaling offers students a creative and reflective outlet that supports their personal growth, self-awareness, and emotional well-being.

Vijay GarG Retired Principal
Educational columnist malout

Dr. Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi: Illuminating Minds and Shaping Thoughts



■ Dr Basharat Khan

In the quiet embrace of Doabgah Rafiabadi, the year 1958 unveiled the dawn of intellectual brilliance embodied in Professor Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi. His academic odyssey commenced at Doabgah High School, where the fertile soil of knowledge nurtured his burgeoning intellect.

Venturing into the pursuit of wisdom, he immersed himself in the study of Arabic, Urdu, and Political Science at Government College Sopore, intricately carving the pathways of his scholarly pursuits. The zenith of his educational pilgrimage unfolded as he ascended to the echelons of academic prowess, earning a Master's degree in Theology and Philosophy from AMU Aligarh adorned with Gold medal. The pinnacle of academic accomplishment crowned his journey with a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Guided by the sagacious hands of Prof. Syed Wahiduddin Haidarabadi and Prof. Syed Ausaf Ali, Professor Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi sculpted an insightful treatise on Ghazali and Western Thought, a harbinger of the profound book that would follow.

Moving from Aligarh to Idarai -Tasneef (the Institute of Writing scholarly Studies), his scholarly pursuits flourished under the mentorship of Maulana Syed Jalal-ud-din Ansari Umari, exploring themes that transcended boundaries, such as the Islamic concept of migration.

Professor Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi's academic sojourn traversed borders, gracing countries from the United States to Saudi Arabia, Iran to Bangladesh, and Turkey to Malaysia and Indonesia. His scholarly footprint left an indelible mark on the global academic tapestry.

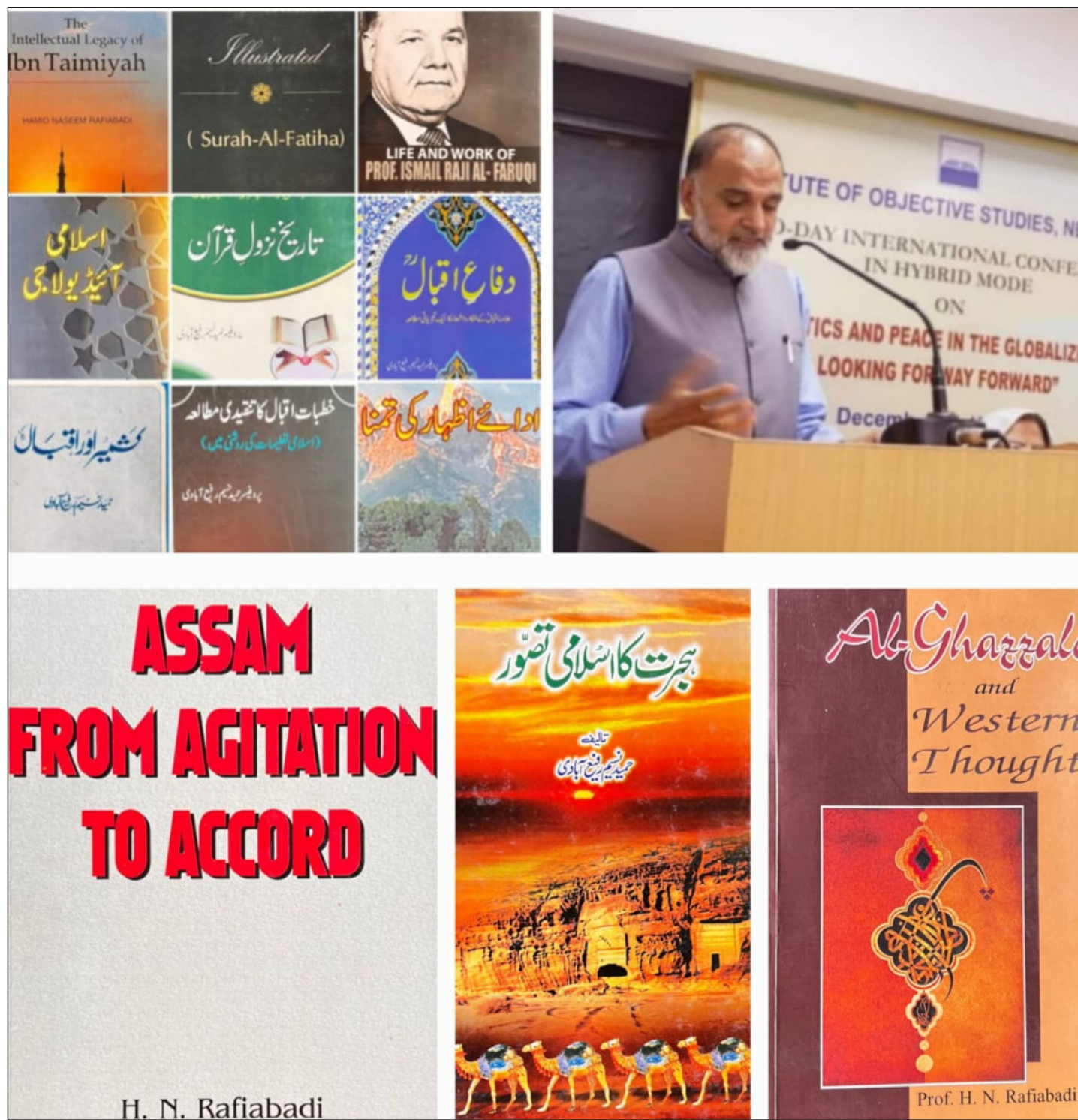
The literary legacy of Professor Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi gleams through a constellation of authored and edited books, illuminating the realms of philosophy, theology, and Islamic studies. His profound understanding harmoniously interweaves Eastern and Western thought, showcasing a rare expertise.

In the realm of education, Professor Rafiabadi dons multifaceted roles--as the Head of the Department of Religious Studies at Central University of Kashmir, Former Dean of the School of Social Sciences, and Former Director of the Shah-i-Hamadan Institute of Islamic Studies at the University of Kashmir, Srinagar. His role as the Director International Center for Spiritual Studies Islamic University of Science and Technology Awantipora JK, Academic Advisor J&K Private School Association Srinagar, and the driving force behind the Forum for Inter-Religious Understanding and the Academic Committee for Philosophy, IOS, New Delhi, positions him as a beacon of enlightenment, shaping the intellectual landscape with profound wisdom and scholarly acumen.

Currently, as a visiting Researcher at ISTAC International Islamic University of Malaysia, Professor Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi stands as a distinguished academician, philosopher, and prolific author. His contributions span diverse genres, including biographies, criticism, interpretation, and history. His books on Philosophy and his translation of Ibn Rushd's book has been teffered. with an annotated bibliography by Prestigious Publisher Brill Netherlands in their Supplement on Muslim Philosophy (2007).

Within the academic realm, Dr Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi has held leadership roles at the Central University of Kashmir, serving as the In-Charge Dean for the School of Media Studies and Former Dean for the School of Social Sciences. His significant role as the Former Director of the Shah-i-Hamadan Institute of Islamic Studies at the University of Kashmir in Srinagar reflects his commitment to fostering academic excellence.

Actively contributing to the education landscape, he served as the Academic Advisor of the Jammu & Kashmir Private School Association Srinagar. His involvement as the Convenor for the Forum for Inter-Religious Understanding at IOS, New



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Delhi, and the Academic Committee for Philosophy at IOS, New Delhi, underscores his dedication to promoting intellectual dialogue and philosophical discourse.

Dr Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi's literary contributions encompass various dimensions of Islamic studies, philosophy, and cultural exploration. Noteworthy publications include Ghazzali and Western Thought (2000), Challenges to Religions and Islam" (3 volumes, 2007), Islam and Sufism in Kashmir: Some Lesser Known Dimensions (2007), Hijrah: A Turning Point in Islamic Movement (editions in 1989,

1996, 2006, 2007, and 2010), A Translation of Ibn Rushd's (Averroes) Famous Treatise Fasul-Al-Maqal (1994), A Brief Introduction to Islamic Epistemology, Ilm Al Kalam & Muslim Philosophy (2010), Sufism In Kashmir: Prominent Sufis and Rishis (2015), Difayi-Iqbal (In the Defence of Iqbal), Muslim Falsafah: Aik Mukhtasar Tarikh (Short history of Muslim Philosophy) (2017), Islami Aqaid aur Shariat wa Thaqafat (Islamic beliefs, Shari'ah and Culture 2017), The Qur'an Illustrated, Islamic Thought, Saints And Saviours Of Islam, Muslim Philosophy Science And Mysticism, Reli-

gions And Islam (A Critical Study), Afkar I Taaza (Translation of the selected muqalat of Syed Jamal Uddin Afghani), Adai Izhar Ki Tamanna (A Poetical Composition), Assam From Agitation To Accord, The Intellectual Legacy Of Ibn Taimiyah.

A forthcoming book titled Woman, the Religions of the World, Feminism, and Islam--A Critical Study further underscores his commitment to exploring contemporary issues through a critical lens.

In Muslim Philosophy: Before & After Al Ghazzali, Dr. Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi critically evaluates the decline of philosophy in the contemporary era, highlighting the impact of social media, AI, and OTT platforms. The book explores the contributions of Muslim philosophers like Al Farabi and Ibn Rushd, challenging the notion that Imam Ghazali solely caused the decline. It delves into Ghazali's nuanced approach, debunking myths and emphasizing his contributions to psychology and political theory. Rafiabadi also examines Shah Waliullah's efforts to align Sufism with Islamic principles and the unique role of intellect in religion. The work concludes with an exploration of Allama Iqbal's thoughts on Prophethood.

The Quran Illustrated: Tafsir of Surah Al-Fatiha' (2009) is a skillfully crafted journey into the deep layers of the Quran. With 604 pages, it explores the Quran's evolution, specifically focusing on the interpretation of Surah Al-Fatiha. What makes this work unique is the author's inclusive approach, avoiding sectarian biases and incorporating insights from various commentators.

Going beyond interpretation, the book covers essential topics like the sciences related to the Quran, its preservation, and global Quranology scholarship. In essence, it offers a comprehensive exploration of Quranic studies, underlining the significance of authentic teachings.

Ada'i Izhar Ki Tamanna, crafted by the skilled pen of Dr. Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi, stands as a poetic masterpiece. Delving into Urdu Naats, Hamd, Ghazals, and Nazams, this collection emerged into the literary spotlight in July 2002 at Kashmir University's Iqbal Auditorium, earning acclaim from luminaries like Prof. Bashir Ahmad Nahvi, Prof. Rahman Rahi and Hakeem Manzoor.

What sets this work apart is its non-sectarian approach, drawing inspiration

DR Muhammad Iqbal, a revered Urdu and Persian poet, is the subject of numerous literary works, with over 2,000 books published about him. Dr. Hamid Nasim

Abadi's book Khutbate-e-Iqbal Ka Tanqidi mutaleya delves into Dr Iqbal's overlooked religious thought, applauding Syed Wahiduddin's work for its fearless exploration of Iqbal's independent voice. The book discusses Allama Iqbal's unique views on God, time, and space, emphasizing his rejection of determinism and the significance of time in human life.

from poetic giants such as Ghalib, Iqbal, and Faiz. The verses traverse diverse emotional landscapes, from anguish and sorrow to aspiration and ecstasy, unveiling a constant tension within Rafiabadi's poetic expression. Amidst this, the poet's serious and sober tone subtly reflects on the challenging conditions in Kashmir.

Critics hailed Dr Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi's for his moral sensibility, free from sectarian biases, and commended his timely thematic choices. Professor V. N. Datta highlighted the poet's sensitivity, expansive interests, and clarity of expression.

R. K. Bharati applauded Rafiabadi's commitment to modernizing the Muslim community and championing the philosophy of universal brotherhood.

In essence, "Ada'i Izhar Ki Tamanna" not only showcases Rafiabadi's profound poetic prowess but also becomes a testament to his ability to gracefully address both personal emotions and societal challenges.

DR Muhammad Iqbal, a revered Urdu and Persian poet, is the subject of numerous literary works, with over 2,000 books published about him. Dr. Hamid Nasim Abadi's book Khutbate-e-Iqbal Ka Tanqidi mutaleya delves into Dr Iqbal's overlooked religious thought, applauding Syed Wahiduddin's work for its fearless exploration of Iqbal's independent voice. The book discusses Allama Iqbal's unique views on God, time, and space, emphasizing his rejection of determinism and the significance of time in human life. Dr Hameed Naseem Rafiabadi's scholarship is lauded for insightful analysis, revealing Iqbal's profound musings on fundamental aspects of existence.

Challenges to Religions and Islam authored by Dr Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi is an extensive work delves into the unexplored realms of the challenges faced by Islam and Muslims in the 20th century. From imperialist pressures to the Ottoman downfall, Israeli occupation, Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, to the recent conflicts, the book reflects on the tumultuous era. Notably, it highlights the emergence of thinkers, reformers, and movements rejuvenating the Islamic spirit. Profiling figures like Jamaluddin Afghani, Iqbal, and others. The voluminous tome serves as a comprehensive exploration of contemporary Islam.

In addition to his authored works, Dr Rafiabadi has edited collections, including "Nigarshat: Collection of Literary Essays" and "Sarmay-I-Hayat: Collection of Essays on Ethics and Moral Teachings."

In conclusion, Dr Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi's profound impact on academia, extensive literary works, and commitment to inter-religious understanding solidify his position as a thought leader and a prominent figure in the academic landscape.

The author is a writer, columnist and critic. He can be reached at chogalwriter76@gmail.com

NHM Mission Director chairs mega public darbar in Kokernag

Highlights opportunities for youth in Anantnag district

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, JANUARY 23: Mission Director, National Health Mission (NHM), Nazim Zia Khan, today chaired a mega public darbar at Kokernag aimed to address public grievances, review development activities and tackle issues affecting the community. Nazim Zia emphasized the pivotal role of such outreach programs in bridging the gap between the administration and the citizens for effective implementation of government schemes. He highlighted the significance of senior government officials engaging directly with the people to address and resolve their concerns besides obtaining feedback on welfare and development programmes being launched in the area. Heads of various departments including Revenue, Police, Power, Health, Education, Public Works, Agriculture, and allied wings were present during the camp to address sector specific concerns of local populace.

Nazim Zia, after hearing grievances and demands of the public, sought on the spot response from the concerned district officers pres-



ent in the grievance redressal camp. He assured the people that all their demands and issues will be looked into on priority for redressal.

He also gave on the spot directions to the officers for ensuring time bound redressal of the public issues. He emphasized on cent percent implementation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes on ground for overall development and welfare of the people while stressing on saturation of Social Security Schemes.

Nazim Zia commended the youth of Anantnag district for venturing into entrepreneurship thus trans-

forming their lives and the lives of those connected with them in their businesses. He said that entrepreneurship has the potential to serve as an incredible source of economic growth, with entrepreneurs evolving into job providers rather than job seekers. Acknowledging Anantnag's place in the tourism world, the Mission Director emphasized the vast opportunities available in other sectors such as sheep farming, dairy farming, and trout fish farming. He pointed out that the district's favorable geographical location makes it conducive for diversifying into these areas.

Nazim Zia urged upon the unemployed youth to take advantage of various government schemes and explore opportunities in these sectors thus contributing towards generation of dignified employment avenues, fostering economic growth in the district. He emphasized the need for the community to utilize government initiatives, ensuring sustainable development and prosperity of the district. Acknowledging Anantnag's place in the tourism world, the Mission Director emphasized the vast opportunities available in other sectors such as sheep farming, dairy farming, and trout fish farming. He pointed out that the district's favorable geographical location makes it conducive for diversifying into these areas.

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Secretary Health chairs public darbar at Handwara; e-inaugurates development projects

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, JANUARY 23: Secretary, Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rashid Shah, today visited Handwara and chaired a mega public darbar at Handwara to take stock of public grievances besides assessing development activities being executed in the area.

Chairman, District Development Council Kupwara, Irfan Sultan Pandit-pori, Deputy Commissioner, Ayushi Sudan, Vice Chairman, District Development Council, Haji Farooq Ahmad Mir, DDC member Rajwar, Salman Mir, DDC member Mawar, Khurshid Ahmad, DDC member, Nutnoosa, Zahoor Ahamd, ADDC, Altaf Ahmad Khan, ADC, Nazir Ahmad Mir, Principal GMC Handwara, Dr. Iffat, Chairman, Traders Federation Handwara Ijaz Sofi, district officers, PRIs besides other representatives and locals attended the programme.

During the public outreach programme, the Secretary had exclusive interaction with all the participants who apprised him of their issues and concerns relating their respective areas. He also sought feedback from them on



implementation of government schemes in their areas while enquiring about the impact of these initiatives on their lives. The Secretary, while responding to the issues raised by the public during the public darbar, assured them that all these will be taken up with the concerned authorities for an early redressal.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that tourist attractions of the district like Lolab, Bungas, Keran and Teetwal have become hotspot tourist destinations in North Kashmir, besides youth of the district is turning to entrepreneurship vigorously which is an encouraging indication of enhanced economic growth in the region.

While highlighting the importance of public darbar, Dr. Abid Rashid said that these public outreach programs act as a bridge

between the administration and the people, paving way for enhanced growth and development in the district. The government functionaries connect with the people directly analyzing their specific development needs and aspirations, he added.

Chairman, District Development Council Kupwara, demanded accelerating pace of work on the GMC building besides addressing shortage of timber in forest depots of Kupwara district.

Vice Chairman, District Development Council Kupwara, expressed hope that the health projects being executed in the district will get special attention from the authorities for timely completion. He also demanded up-gradation of SDH Kupwara to District Hospital besides expeditious execution of works on GMC Handwara.

Talat Parvez presides over public darbar at Sumlar Bandipora; Exhorts officers to prioritize disposal of public grievances

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, JANUARY 23: Commissioner of Enquires, J&K, Talat Parvez Rohella, on Tuesday presided over a public darbar cum grievances redressal camp at Sumlar wherein he took stock of issues and concerns of the people besides reviewing development projects being executed in the area. Chairperson District Development Council, Abdul Gani Bhat, DDC Vice Chairperson, Kowsar Shafeeq, Deputy Commissioner, Shakeel Ur Rehman Rather, DDC Member Arin, Gh Mohiuddin, ADDC, Mohammad Ashraf Bhat, ADC, Umar Shafi and other senior officers besides representatives of various delegations were present on the occasion.

The public darbar witnessed overwhelming participation from all sections of the society who apprised the Commissioner of various developmental and other issues being faced



by them. The DDC Member Arin, on the occasion, presented a detailed overview of Arin block and also detailed charter of demands including enhanced services of power supply, healthcare, education, skill centers, veterinary centers and roads besides others issues. Other demands put forth by the representatives of various delegations included establishment of Girls High School, Degree

College, receiving station, disposal of pending cases under PMAY and pending compensation for households affected by PMGSY. Besides, providing sheep rearing units to unemployed youth, forest timber depo in the area, wavering of KCC loans, bringing Arin Dardpora, Sirander and Kudara areas under tourism map owing to huge tourism potential of the region. While responding to the demands of bringing some areas of the division on tourism map, the Commissioner assured that all possibilities would be explored in this regard. Regarding the issues of PMAY cases, BDO Arin informed that a total of 160 cases have been sanctioned for the current year while more than 150 cases have also been taken up for approval. He said that the first and second installment has already been released in favor of these cases. Talat Parvez, while interacting with line departments, called for adopting time bound.

Thousands watch Ram Temple consecration at Kol Kandoli Temple

■ HT News Network

NAGROTA, JANUARY 22- Thousands of enthusiastic people watched live streaming of the Ram Temple consecration ceremony by Prime Minister Yashasvi Narendra Modi at the historic and heritage Kol Kandoli Temple in Nagrota—the Pratham Darshan of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Cave Shrine on Trikuta Hills. Amid spiritual ambience and chanting of Jai Shree Rama, the devout witnessed the historic moments of the consecration with folded hands—as elderly, young, women and children—attired in traditional attire, had assembled hours before to watch the proceedings on big screen.

The temple precincts wore a festive look with banners, buntings and saffron flags fluttering all around. Senior BJP Leader, Mr Devender Singh Rana also participated in the special prayers held after the consecration ceremony and prayed for peace, tranquility and wellness of all.

Rana also paid obeisance at the



temples at Ram Temple Amb, Baba Jitto Nath Temple at Ranjan, Shree Raghunath Temple at Agore, Shree Vaishno Temple at Nagrota, Shree Ram Temple at Mohalla Slathia, Nagrota, Narsingh Temple at Gharota and Panch Mandir, Gandhi Nagar. Amid spiritual ambience and chanting of Jai Shree Rama, the devout witnessed the historic moments of the consecration with folded hands—as elderly, young, women and children—attired in traditional attire, had assembled hours

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Principal Secretary chairs public darbar at Samba; advocates collaborative efforts for overall growth, development

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, JANUARY 23: Principal Secretary Higher Education, Alok Kumar, today chaired a public darbar at Deputy Commissioner's office here to take stock of public grievances and demands besides assessing development works being executed in the district.

The participants apprised the Principal Secretary about their development issues, seeking timely intervention for redressal of the same.

The issues and concerns raised during the event included updation of ration cards, improvement in condition of roads under PMGSY, rationalisation of teaching staff, culvert construction in unconnected areas, water availability in Padal, Sangwal and Deon villages, land allotment issue for Degree college, power supply challenges, augmentation of public health infrastructure, road connectivity from Goran to Samba, construction of incomplete roads, shortages of doctors, parking facility in Vijaypurpur town and compensation for land acquisition cases.

The Principal Secretary commended the awareness of locals on the welfare and development issues besides responsiveness of officers in redressing public issues. He reassured that genuine matters would be



addressed through the concerned departments, reiterating the government's steadfast commitment towards development of the district. He also emphasized collaborative efforts of all stakeholders for good of the community and development of the district and the UT as well.

The Principal Secretary, on the occasion, felicitated the students who have excelled in literature, academics, sports, and various other exams.

DDC Chairman, Keshav Dutt, in his address, highlighted the accountability and transparency achieved through public darbars.

The event witnessed the participation of notable figures, including DDC Chairman Keshav Dutt Sharma, Vice Chairman Balwan Singh, DC Samba Abhishek Sharma, ADDC Samba Rajinder Singh, ADC Samba Suresh Chander, DDC Members, and various District Officers. The Principal Secretary, on the occasion, felicitated the students who have excelled in literature, academics, sports, and various other exams.

DDC Chairman, Keshav Dutt, in his address, highlighted the accountability and transparency achieved through public darbars.

Vikshit Bharat Sankalp Yatra inspires residents in Banihal Town on 55th day

■ HT News Network

RAMBAN, JANUARY 23: Vikshit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, led by Deputy Commissioner Baseer-UI-Haq Chaudhary in Ramban, is gaining momentum. Witnessing a remarkable participation of 98,500 persons, including 37,600 women, this prestigious journey aims to boost the implementation of beneficiary-oriented schemes in the district by year-end. Today, the Yatra reached Ward No-04 Devanpora Hollin in Banihal town, highlighting its commitment to inclusivity. Covering the entire district over the past 55 days, the Yatra has become a powerful platform to inform people about various government schemes. 'Meri Kahani

Meri Zubani' have allowed beneficiaries to share heart-touching stories of positive change in their lives after benefiting from different Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

Under the Deputy Commissioner's guidance, all departments are actively promoting and extending the benefits of their respective schemes. The Yatra also celebrated Ramban District's diverse heritage through cultural programs, enriching its cultural tapestry. The collective Viksit Bharat Sankalp Pledge-taking ceremony at the heart of the Yatra unified the community, symbolizing shared aspirations. Initiatives like PMAY-G, PMAY-U, PM-JAY Ayushman Card, Poshan ICDS, PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, MUDRA Yojana, KCC, and PM Kissan Nidhi are being widely recognized.

ADC reviews preparations for Basant Panchami Mela at Baba Ballo Ji Shrine

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 23: Additional Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Shishir Gupta visited the Shrine of Baba Ballo ji at Mathwar today and reviewed the arrangements for the upcoming Basant Panchami Mela to be held on February 14 this year. The mela is a popular religious and cultural event that attracts thousands of devotees and tourists every year. The ADC



inspected the facilities and amenities at the shrine premises and directed the concerned officers to ensure adequate supply of water and power. He also reviewed the security arrangements and traffic management plan

for the smooth conduct of the mela. He asked the police and administration to coordinate and work in synergy to maintain law and order and prevent any untoward incident. The ADC also issued special instructions to the mobile network providers to improve the connectivity in the area, as the mela is expected to witness a huge rush of visitors. He said that the district administration is committed to provide all the necessary support and assistance to the shrine management.

Deputy Commissioner reviews functioning of Revenue Department in Rajouri District

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, JANUARY 23: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Om Prakash Bhagat today presided over a crucial meeting to review the efficiency and accessibility of services offered by the Revenue Department.

The focus of the meeting was on key aspects of the functioning of the Revenue Department with a particular emphasis on modernization and the adoption of advanced technology to streamline operations.

One of the primary topics of discussion was the digitization of land records. In this regard, the meeting was informed that the process of digitizing land records has been successfully completed, marking a significant milestone in making land-related information more transparent and accessible to the public.

The meeting also provided a platform to assess the progress made in providing online revenue services. The officers reported



ed that a multitude of services offered by the Revenue Department are now accessible online, making it easier for the public to avail themselves of these essential services. This transition to online services not only enhances convenience but also pro-

motes transparency and accountability in the operations of the department.

Deputy Commissioner expressed satisfaction with the progress made thus far and emphasized the dedication of the department to continue pursuing excel-

lence in its services. He recognized the collaborative efforts of all officers and stakeholders who have contributed to these significant achievements.

Deputy Commissioner also directed the officers to work with added zeal and ensure prompt and hassle-free services to the general public. This commitment to improving services and making them more accessible reflects the dedication of the administration to serving the community and ensuring efficient delivery of essential services.

The transformation of the Revenue Department promises a brighter and more accessible future for the residents of the region. The use of technology, transparency, and a strong commitment to providing essential services are at the heart of this transformation.

Among the others the meeting was attended by ADC Rajouri, Rajiv Kumar Khajuria; ACR, Imran Rashid Kataria; Tehsildars and Naib Tehsildars and other revenue officials.

SMC expands VBSY reach to 02 more Additional Locations

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 23: The Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) has successfully extended the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY) by hosting events at two new locations within the SMC Jurisdiction – Soura and Habak Zakura.

The gatherings provided a valuable platform for officers and officials from various departments to interact with the local community, promoting a spirit of collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Representatives from diverse departments took the opportunity to elucidate the core objectives and procedural intricacies of their respective Centrally Sponsored schemes, with the aim of bridging information gaps and ensuring that citizens are well-informed about the numerous benefits and assistance programs available to them.

National Road Safety Month 2024: RTO Kashmir Visits Pahalgam sub-division

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, JANUARY 23: Pahalgam sub-division today witnessed celebration of multiple road safety events under the banner of Road Safety Month, 2024 being organised by Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) Anantnag in collaboration with local administration of Pahalgam Sub Division.

RTO Kashmir, Syed Shanawaz Bukhari, who was Chief Guest on the occasion flagged-off Maxi Cab Rally.

The main function was held at Town Hall Pahalgam where RASTA Initiative was launched by the RTO Kashmir.

Addressing the media, Bukhari lauded the efforts of District Administration's unique initiative viz a viz Road Side Traffic Assistance (RASTA) where in the administration will impart the Basic Life Support Training to the Shopkeepers and commercial drivers so that in case of crash the trained person can come to Assistance for the injured persons.

Addressing the commercial drivers, RTO Kashmir appealed them to desist from over speeding and not to indulge in rash and negligent driving. He directed ARTO Anantnag to take strict action against those who violate traffic laws.

Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag, Dr Mohammad Zubair Lattoo highlighted the importance of disciplined driving on roads so that fatalities can be minimised. He said that the objective behind RASTA initiative is to give basic training on first aid to first responders on roads (Passerby, Onlookers, Shopkeepers) so that life of a crash victim can be saved during the Golden Hour.

He said that it is not always possible to provide medical care to the victims, however many deaths and disabilities can be prevented due to timely First Aid. At the conclusion of the event First Aid Kits were distributed among the trainees.

Yasha Mudgal joins Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra at Bijbehara

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, JANUARY 23: Commissioner Secretary, Tourism, Yasha Mudgal, today joined the "Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra" in the historic chinar town of Bijbehara, Anantnag.

As part of ongoing yatra, Yasha Mudgal engaged with local residents, evaluating the progress on various Centrally Sponsored Schemes being implemented in the area. She sought feedback from them regarding the impact of these initiatives on their lives besides asking about their development needs and aspirations.

Commissioner Secretary emphasized Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's, vision behind Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, which focusses on widespread awareness, reaching the unreached, facilitating utilization of government welfare schemes, and saturation of schemes. The yatra has played a pivotal role in fostering development, promoting engagement with government schemes, and achieving saturation under citizen-centric programs, she added.

Under the initiative, IEC mobile van created awareness among the people about central government schemes and screened videos of Prime Minister's addresses, testimonials from beneficiaries and informative clips and a special message from Prime Minister, in which he encouraged people to pledge to work for progress and prosperity of the country.

On the occasion, the enthusiastic participants lauded the Central Government for directly delivering the benefits of flagship schemes to the people. Through several events, the tangible impact of key initiatives like Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Ayushman Bharat, Kisan Samman Nidhi, and others were showcased. Besides, individuals shared their success stories under "Meri Kahani Meri Zabani" initiative illustrating the real impact of schemes like PMAY, UMEED, PMJAY, KCC, PM Kisan, Poshan Abhiyan, Old Pension on their lives. The event captivated the audience with a vibrant display of mesmerising cultural presentations showcasing theme based performances including 'Dharti Kahe Pukar Ke', Nukkad Natak and songs by the school students at the venue.

Commissioner Secretary interacted with the beneficiaries, felicitating and handing over certificates for several centrally sponsored schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (G) and PM Awas Yojana (U). Appreciation letters were presented for achievements under Jal Jeevan Mission, PMeGP, and Swachh Bharat Mission.

Labour Commissioner visits several establishments, construction sites in Jammu

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 23: Labour Commissioner, Charandeep Singh Tuesday visited several establishments and construction sites in Jammu district including Tawi Riverfront Project and Amar Flour Mills at Gangyal.

During the visit, the Labour Commissioner interacted with the workers and the management to get a firsthand appraisal of the implementation of Labour welfare Laws and social security schemes. He enquired about difficulties, if any, being faced by the workers in availing benefits of the Government welfare schemes meant for them. He also touched upon the subject of wages, hours of work, overtime, leave including sick leave, welfare, health and the basic amenities provided to the workers at the work sites.

The Labour Commissioner emphasized on ensuring compliance to the Labour Laws in letter and spirit and urged the management to ensure appropriate measures for safety and health of the workers.

"Government is committed to enhance the welfare and well-being of workers in



both the organised and unorganised sectors and also harmonize the needs of workers and industry" he reiterated and added that a check list of labour welfare provisions under different Labour Laws will be provided to the establishments for convenience. The workers thanked the Labour Commissioner for interacting and listening to them. Earlier, the Labour Commissioner handed over a cheque of Rs 15.74 Lakh, under Employees Compensation Act-1923, to the legal heirs of a deceased worker, hailing from Deoli, Bamblaya District Rajouri who met with a fatal accident during the course of his employment on the Delhi-Katra Expressway.

District Election Department Ramban organises series of events ahead of NVD

■ HT News Network

RAMBAN, JANUARY 23: To celebrate the 14th National Voters' Day (NVD), the Election Department, Ramban, under the aegis of District Election Officer, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, organized a series of competitions at Government Model Higher Secondary School, Ramban.

The theme for the event, "Nothing Like Voting, I Vote For Sure," underscores the Election Commission of India's (ECI) commitment to maximize awareness among the voters especially before Lok Sabha elections this year.

Students from several Educational and Vocational institutions enthusiastically participated in Debate, Painting, and Quiz competitions held under the guidance of Programme Officer, ICDS, (Nodal Officer, SVEEP)



Jahangir Hashmi, besides cultural programmes showcasing their awareness and engagement in the democratic process.

Emphasizing the significance of National Voters' Day, the speakers articulated that the primary objective of the celebration is to encourage, facilitate, and maximize voter enrollment, massive participation of new voters in upcoming elections. The day, dedicated to the voters of the

country, serves as an opportunity to raise awareness and promote informed participation in the electoral process.

Highlighting the importance of National Voters' Day, Deputy District Election Officer Lal Chand said that it is observed nationwide on January 25 every year since 2011, saying that this date marks the Foundation day of the Election Commission of India, established on January 25, 1950.

My School My Pride" Initiative Transforms Kishtwar's Government Schools

Collaboration of School Management Committees and Parents Reshapes Learning Spaces

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, JANUARY 23: In a transformative move, the "My School My Pride" initiative is leaving an indelible mark on government schools across Kishtwar district.

Spearheaded by Deputy Commissioner Dr. Devansh Yadav, this initiative is a joint effort of the District Administration and the School Education Department.

The core objective of "My School My Pride" is to activate School Management Committees (SMCs) that have remained inactive in government schools for several years. These committees, comprising parents, teachers, and a PRI Member, play a



pivotal role in overseeing and enhancing the learning environment in government schools.

Dr. Devansh Yadav emphasized the proactive role of SMCs in beautifying

the school walls with "Building as Learning Aids" (BALA) paintings. These paintings, funded voluntarily by parents, depict the learning journey of students in these schools. The initiative has gained momentum, with more than 800 government schools in the district set to benefit.

The DC praised the commitment of parents, highlighting their voluntary contributions to transforming government schools into vibrant learning spaces. The "My School My Pride" initiative, a year-long collaboration between the district administration, education department Kishtwar, and India Education Collective (an NGO), aims to cover all elementary, primary, and middle schools in the district.

DDC Shopian reviews progress on RIDF projects of NABARD

■ HT News Network

SHOPIAN, JANUARY 23: The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Shopian, Fazlul Haseeb today chaired a meeting to review the status of projects funded under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) of NABARD in the district. DDM NABARD, Rouf Ahmed Zargar informed that 66 projects with total outlay of Rs. 266.46 Cr under different sectors are under execution in the district. The projects funded under RIDF of NABARD in the district include rural roads, bridges, water supply schemes, primary health centres, irrigation and flood control works, fruit mandis and works under Sheep/Animal Husbandry among others. DDC was also apprised on various issues related to fund flow, timely submission of Project Completion Certificates and Utilization Certificates.

The DDC, while reviewing the physical and financial progress of the taken up works, laid thrust on the executing agencies to complete the projects under timelines fixed by NABARD. He also directed the line departments for forwarding of DPRs of at least two projects under new 137 project activities of NABARD.

DC Kishtwar review implementation of Road Safety Plan at DRSC meeting

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, JANUARY 23: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Dr. Devansh Yadav today underscored the need for a proactive approach towards enhancing road safety in the district. He was chairing a meeting of the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC) to review implementation of the Road Safety measures.

Dr. Devansh Yadav, who is also the Chairman of DRSC, evaluated the progress of Road Safety measures implemented by the stakeholder departments to make travelling safe on District Roads.

A key focus of the meeting was assessing the status of installation of critical safety infrastructure such as Crash Barriers, Dividers, and Speed Breakers at vulnerable locations.



The Deputy Commissioner also took stock of initiatives aimed at rectifying black spots and accident sites by NHIDCL, BRO,

PMGSY and PWD, as well as the fitting of safety equipment including GPS, CCTV Camera, VLTD in vehicles.

During the proceedings, the DC emphasized the need for swift corrective actions to address black spots and advocated for the initiation of large-scale awareness campaigns.

Concerned departments, NHIDCL, BRO, PMGSY and PWD authorities were directed to rectify black spots, install crash barriers, Road Signages and other Traffic regulating measures especially in accident-prone areas which shall be identified and focused upon, to minimize accidents.

He specifically urged the Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) to conduct surprise check nakas and enforce traffic violation fines rigorously.

Highlighting the pivotal role of awareness in road safety, Dr. Yadav urged the MVD to intensify awareness programs in schools, bus stands, and hydroelectric power project sites.

ISHTH campaign launched under National AIDS Control Programme

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 23: To provide comprehensive in-house health care services to the Jail inmates and populations residing in other closed settings across the UT of J&K, a special campaign namely ISHTH (Integrated STI, HIV, TB and Hepatitis) was launched today in the premises of the Central Jail Kot Bhalwal, Jammu with collaborative efforts of J&K AIDS Control Society (JKACS), NHM, RNTCP, WCD and the Prisons department J&K.



The launch function was inaugurated by Vikas Gupta, DIG Prisons & Corrective Services, J&K in presence of Dr. Manu Bhatnagar, Additional Director, JKACS; Dr. Monika Wali, I/c Medical Officer (IEC), JKACS and

other officials from the related departments. In his address, the DIG Prisons emphasized that the success of the ISHTH campaign depends solely upon the support provided by all the stakeholders involved,

especially the health functionaries dealing in such diseases. He further appreciated the efforts put in by all the departments in the launch of this campaign and commitment shown by the organizations in dealing with such important issues. Later Dr. Manu Bhatnagar, Additional Director, JKACS, in her key address, explained in detail the importance of the campaign and the need for interventions in prisons and other closed settings and about the integrated services being provided by the government for the welfare of the masses.

DC Baramulla chairs Revenue Officers meeting to enhance Service Delivery

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA, JANUARY 23: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa convened a comprehensive Revenue Officers meeting at the DC office Conference Hall, here addressing key issues related to digitization, quality checks, and timely completion of Jambabandies. The focus extended to the Geo-referencing of Cadastral maps, SVAMITVA, PM Kisan mutations, and online service delivery under PSGA. ADC Baramulla, Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Raina, briefed the chair on the revenue department's functioning. The DC stressed the importance of 100% error-free digitized Jamabandies and urged



officers to meet the timelines for various processes. Reviewing the status of court cases, Minga Sherpa directed Revenue officers to prioritize Revenue Court Cases, ensuring their timely upload on

the RCCMS Portal. Emphasizing adherence to rules, DC urged officers to dispose-off PSGA cases promptly. The meeting aimed at enhancing overall efficiency and service delivery within the revenue department, promoting a culture of accountability and timely execution. Assistant Commissioner Revenue Baramulla, Peerzada Mumtaz Ahmad, all the Tehsildars of District and other Revenue officers and Officials were present in the meeting. Emphasizing adherence to rules, DC urged officers to dispose-off PSGA cases promptly. The meeting aimed at enhancing overall efficiency and service delivery within the revenue department, promoting a culture of accountability and timely execution.

Ganderbal's 'Mashal-e-Gaash' shines bright; CIPS Awards Recognize Trailblazing Innovations

■ HT News Network

PGANDERBAL, JANUARY 23: In a landmark event dedicated to fostering innovation in Northeastern India, Union Territories, and Hill States, the Centre for Innovations in Public Systems (CIPS) organized its first-ever award ceremony in collaboration with the Government Innovation Lab (GIL), Government of Meghalaya. The ceremony, held in Shillong, aimed to acknowledge and celebrate outstanding innovations in Education, Health, Information Technology, and Rural Development. The spotlight of the event was on Ganderbal's innovative project 'Mashal-e-Gaash', which garnered significant recognition. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shyambir received accolades for this people-driven initiative aimed at promoting literacy. The awards encompassed diverse fields, showcasing



innovations in healthcare, information technology, education, and rural development, with remarkable projects and individuals being honored.

Distinguished personalities from various sectors graced the occasion, including Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma, who served as the Chief Guest; and Guest of Honour Dr. V.K Paul, Member of NITI Ayog; Sampath Kumar, Development Commissioner & Principal Secretary Health & Family Welfare Department, Government of Meghalaya; Dr. Nirmalya Bagchi, Chairman of the Steering Committee at CIPS, and Dr. Anjali Hazarika, Chairperson of the formulation of the Awards, added to the prestigious panel. The event featured insightful panel sessions moderated by experts in the fields of health, information technology, education, and environment/rural development. The vibrant cultural tapestry of the region was showcased through a captivating Khasi folk dance performance, adding a touch of local flair to the ceremony. The celebration culminated with the release of a significant publication titled 'Celebrating Inclusive Innovations,' underscoring the importance of inclusive development.

VBSY propels progress across Pulwama

■ HT News Network

PULWAMA, JANUARY 23: Embarking on a transformative journey, the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra is making significant strides throughout Pulwama District. Initiated to cover every nook of the district, the Yatra has seamlessly navigated through Panchayats, Municipalities, and is presently weaving through the fabric of every village in Pulwama. Its primary goal is to embody a commitment to inclusivity, delivering the vision for a Developed India by 2047 without leaving any segment of the community behind. Leveraging Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) vans, the Yatra effectively conveys the essence of the Hon'ble Prime Minister's message directly to the people of Pulwama, fostering widespread awareness and active engagement. The Yatra's resonance within the community reflects the genuine intent behind this transformative expedition. A defining aspect of the Yatra has been the proactive approach of Government departments in the district, providing on-the-spot services to ensure that citizens in Pulwama are not only informed about various schemes but can also readily avail themselves of the benefits. As the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra unfolds its chapters in Pulwama, it leaves an indelible mark on the District, firmly anchoring the vision of a Developed India in the hearts of the people. Leveraging Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) vans, the Yatra effectively conveys the essence of the Hon'ble Prime Minister's message directly to the people of Pulwama, fostering widespread awareness and active engagement. The Yatra's resonance within the community reflects the genuine intent behind this transformative expedition.

Sheetal Nanda presided over a mega public darbar at Dinga Amb; meets delegations

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, JANUARY 23: Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare Department, Sheetal Nanda, presided over a mega public darbar at Mangloor panchayat in Dinga Amb block and took stock of grievances and demands of people of the area. Deputy Commissioner, Dr Rakesh Minhas, Additional District Development Commissioner, Ankur Mahajan, Sub Divisional Magistrate Hiranagar and district officers besides DDC member, Nagrota Gujroo, Narayan Dutt Tripathi and scores of delegations were present on the occasion. The event witnessed overwhelming public response during which the people apprised the Commissioner Secretary of their developmental issues and demands seeking his intervention in redressing the same. A delegation of for-



mer BDC Chairman Barnoti, Brijeshwar Singh and other several delegations also attended the public darbar and submitted memorandum of their demands. The delegations expressed satisfaction over the conduct of outreach programmes saying that this provides people an opportunity to voice their grievances besides enabling the administration to expedite disposal of public issues and concerns through appropriate channels. Commissioner Secretary, while responding to

public delegations, issued on spot directions to the concerned officers to address all the grievances put forth by the delegations during public darbar in a time bound manner. Sheetal Nanda assured all individuals and delegations that the issues and demands projected by them would be redressed on merit basis. Commissioner Secretary directed the concerned officers to personally visit their respective areas to assess problems of the public for speedy dis-

posal. She emphasized that the top priority of the government is to ensure that basic facilities and services are delivered to the general public in an efficient and timely manner. Earlier, Deputy Commissioner welcomed the participants and briefed about the district profile. During the public darbar, DDC member Nagrota Gujroo raised the issues of adding Ramkote area in the PWD Billawar sub division besides provision of DDC, BDC and panchayat buildings, protection crates for flood prone areas, promotion of solar panels and early allotment of proposed roads. Another delegation of former BDC Chairman Barnoti demanded early completion of 10 km stretch of Dinga Amb-Barnoti road, initiation of work Chadwal-Mangloor road under NABARD, connecting Juthana-Lahri-Bohra through road link, early completion of Juthana Bridge.

HDFC Bank Crosses Landmark Milestone of 2 Crore Credit Cards in Force

■ HT News Network

Srinagar: HDFC Bank, India's largest private sector bank, announced that it has achieved the historical milestone of 2 crore Credit Cards in Force (CIF). With this, the Bank has become the first and currently the only Bank in the country to achieve this feat. HDFC Bank started the credit card business in 2001 with the launch of its first credit card. The Bank reached the milestone of 1 crore CIF in 2017, a journey that has spanned approximately 16 years. HDFC Bank doubled this CIF count to 2 crore in exactly 6 years and 1 month. Parag Rao, Group Head - Payments, Consumer Finance, Marketing, Liability Product Group, TPP, ABCP, Non-Resident Products, GIB and Gig Banking - HDFC Bank said, "As we achieve this remarkable milestone of issuing 2 crore credit cards, we extend our gratitude to our valued customers for their trust and loyalty. This achievement reflects the enduring partnership between our Bank and the community we serve. Every issued card represents our commitment and our shared journey towards financial empowerment, and we are dedicated to continuing this legacy of excellence in banking services." (KNT)

NIT Srinagar mourns sudden demise of ECE student

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 23: The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Tuesday condoled the sudden demise of Samridhi Gupta, a student of the Electronics and Communication Engineering Department, who left for heavenly abode on Monday. Hailing from Bakshi Nagar area of Jammu, Samridhi was a 7th Semester student from the ECE 2020 Batch and was in her final year. As per the family, she succumbed due to cardiac arrest. Describing Samridhi's passing away as both untimely and sorrowful, Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. A. Ravinder Nath conveyed his deep grief and offered prayers for peace and mercy for the departed soul. He extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for them to find the strength and forbearance to cope with the loss. "During this difficult period, may the family.

Islamia College Srinagar organizes Induction Sessions for Students of Design Your Degree (DYD) programme

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 23: A five days induction programme/sessions for the first batch of students admitted to the four years programme, Design Your Degree (DYD) commenced at Islamia College Srinagar. The programme was chaired by the Principal of the College, Professor (Dr.) Khurshid Ahmad Khan. Speaking on the occasion Prof. Khan welcomed the first batch of DYD students to the campus and said that under DYD students will have the freedom to customize their academic paths based on their potential and interests. He further congratulated the enrolled students of DYD and talked about the holistic approach that DYD promises at Islamia College campus. Coordinator of the programme, Prof. Qayoom said that Islamia College is the first Valley College to introduce an innovative four-year undergraduate degree programme called 'Design Your Degree' (DYD). He added that this exceptional initiative is set to transform higher education and revolutionize the way students pursue their academic aspirations. Coordinator of DYD at ICSC Prof. Sajad Sarvar said that (DYD) program is conceptualized to foster an environment of self-discovery and exploration so that the students can identify their true calling and build a fulfilling career to contribute towards knowledge economy and in this direction Islamia College is the first college to start this course. First batch students of DYD visited different facilities available at ICSC and engaged in hands-on sessions with the mentors of the DYD course. Speaking on the occasion, mentors of the DYD course in the College said that DYD shall provide students with a chance to craft a personalized. First batch students of DYD visited different facilities available at ICSC and engaged in hands-on sessions with the mentors of the DYD course. Speaking on the occasion, mentors of the DYD course in the College said that DYD shall provide students with a chance to craft a personalized.

Secretary reviews functioning of district level offices of PD&MD

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 23: Secretary Planning Development and Monitoring Department (PD&MD), Aijaz Asad, today convened a meeting to review functioning of district level offices of the department. The meeting was attended by Director General E&S, Director General (PMCE), Director General (PFD), Regional Directors (E&S) from Jammu and Kashmir besides district level Planning officers, among other officials from PD&MD. The Secretary interacted with each district level planning officer and reviewed functioning of their respective offices. He assessed the status of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) being implemented at the district level, including updates on physical verifications, surveys and evaluation reports. Emphasizing the pivotal role of CSSs in holistic growth and development of Jammu



and Kashmir, Secretary underscored the need of achieving 100 per cent saturation of these vital schemes at the grassroots level. He instructed the Chief Planning Officers to ensure timely completion of all the schemes being directly implemented by the district authorities. The Secretary impressed upon all District Statistics and Evaluation Officers to accomplish all work assignments promptly including 100 per cent completion of Physical Verifications, Evaluation Studies, Surveys, etc., within stipulated timelines.

Successful completion of 3-month Tally & Excel Skill Development Course in Kishtwar by DECC Kishtwar

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, JANUARY 23: The 3-month skill development course in Tally & Excel organized by District Employment and Counselling Centre (DECC), Kishtwar concluded today with a grand valedictory ceremony, held at TRC Kishtwar. As many as 30 candidates have benefited by gaining crucial skills during the training course. The chief guest for the event, Dr. Khalid Hussain Malik, Joint Director Employment, Jammu addressed the gathering and highlighted the vast employability scope of the Tally & Excel course. He urged the candidates to actively participate in upcoming job fairs, emphasizing the importance of networking and showcasing their newly acquired skills to potential employers. The AD Employment Shafqat Ali Keen highlighted the significance of the training program, and encouraged the candidates to actively participate in counseling sessions, job fairs, and the AVSAR Scheme.



Dr. Vinod Kumar, District Nodal Officer (DNO) of JKEDI, Kishtwar provided insights into the details of the skill development course. He also elaborated on the future prospects that the skill development course offers in Tally & Excel to the candidates in terms of employability and entrepreneurship. Emphasizing the importance of staying abreast of industry trends, he provided guidance on how the newly acquired skills align with the evolving needs of the job market, fostering a sense of preparedness among the participants.

Why Fruit Juice Without Added Sugar is Still Linked to Weight Gain

A new systematic review and meta-analysis found a link between drinking 100% fruit juice and weight gain among children and adults.

One of the reasons fruit juice contributes to weight gain is that it does not make us feel full, which leads to consuming more calories. The healthiest beverage swap for both children and adults is water. And if you do drink fruit juice, cut it with water or seltzer.

High in sugar and calories, health experts are finding more evidence that 100% fruit juice may cause weight gain.

In a recent systematic review Trusted Source and meta-analysis, researchers looked at 42 studies, which included 17 that focused on children and 25 on adults.

They discovered a link between consumption of 100% fruit juice and weight gain in children. For adults, they also found a positive association.

"This comprehensive review is the first to evaluate 100% fruit juice consumption and body weight in children and adults using both prospective cohort studies (which follow large groups of people over time to assess relationships between exposures such as diet and lifestyle with health outcomes) and RCTs (which assign groups of people to an intervention or control and examine differences in outcomes between the group)," Michelle Nguyen, lead author of the study, PhD Candidate at the Department of Nutritional Sciences Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto, told Healthline. "The use of both these study designs are critical to evaluate the totality of evidence."

Whether 100% fruit juice is a healthy beverage is a question of great interest from clinicians, the general public, parents and caregivers, and policy makers.

The evidence on 100% fruit juice and weight gain has yielded mixed findings from both observational studies (prospective cohort studies) and clinical trials,



Nguyen explained. Study findings indicate that 100% fruit juice consumption was associated with weight gain in children, especially among younger children. Among prospective cohort studies in adults, they found that 100% fruit juice was associated with weight gain among studies that did not account for intake of calories in their statistical analyses (unadjusted for calories), suggesting that excess calories play a role in this association. "Ultimately, these findings support public health guidance to limit the consumption of 100% fruit juice, especially in young children – to consume whole fruit rather than fruit juices. Our findings are in support of the AAP guidelines on 100% fruit juice consumption in children. We hope these findings will inform clinical practice guidelines and public health strategies to reduce overweight and obesity," Nguyen stated.

The reason for weight gain is mainly due to the high sugar content.

"I find that most people have an easy time understanding how soda can lead to weight gain. But sometimes we forget how similar soda and fruit juice are," Dr. Nate

Wood, physician at the Yale School of Medicine and culinary school graduate, stated. "Although fruit juice originally comes from a whole fruit (and we know whole fruits are healthy), soda is made in a factory. Otherwise, the two drinks are largely the same: they are both very sugary water." Wood continued: "Although sugary water is high in calories, drinking it does not make us feel full. For this reason, the calories in sugary beverages like fruit juice are sometimes called 'empty calories.' Drinking these calories frequently is one common way that we end up consuming more energy than our bodies need. This extra energy is then converted to body fat, which leads to weight gain."

However, it is important to note there are other factors that need to be taken into consideration to know what's causing the increase in BMI. "The authors of this study looked at studies that compared fruit juice to a non-caloric beverage, so it makes sense that the drink that has calories will be linked with a higher BMI," said Natalie Rizzo, MS, RD, author of Planted Performance. "And correlation doesn't equal

causation. This means that just because kids who drink fruit juice tend to gain BMI, it's impossible to know if it's from the fruit juice alone."

In addition, the consumption of liquid calories has been shown to result in greater weight gain compared to the consumption of solid calories, Nguyen explained.

Furthermore, "the lack of dietary fiber in fruit juice compared to its whole fruit form can result in decreased satiety and overconsumption of these beverages. In children specifically, studies have indicated that early introduction of fruit juice may lead to increased risk of overweight and obesity due to increased preference for sweet food," said Nguyen. "Thus, delaying the introduction of 100% fruit juice in young children, moderating serving sizes, and choosing whole fruit rather than fruit juice is recommended."

This raises the question: "is it advisable to have the actual fruit and skip on the juice?"

"The answer is nuanced because some kids refuse fruit, but they will accept 100% fruit juice. And 100% fruit juice is made from fruit and has no added sugar, so a kid who drinks it is still getting plenty of vitamins and minerals from drinking the juice," Rizzo explained. "As a matter of fact, older research Trusted Source states that kids who drink 100% fruit juice have higher intake and adequacy of dietary fiber, vitamin C, magnesium, and potassium. But, if a kid is willing to eat fruit instead of drinking juice, then it's a good idea to have them do so." Children under 12 months of age should not be given any fruit juice, Wood explained. For children and adults above 12 months of age, it's reasonable to occasionally consume fruit juice as a sweet treat. "The key way to look at fruit juice is a sweet treat, not a health food," said Wood. "It's not the same as eating a serving of whole fruit. Fruit juice is not essential for children in the same way that it's not essential for adults."

FOOD

What Is Bulletproof Coffee?



Bulletproof coffee is a beverage that combines coffee, grass-fed butter, and medium-chain triglyceride (MCT) oil or coconut oil. It was popularised by Dave Asprey, the creator of the Bulletproof Diet. Proponents claim that bulletproof coffee provides sustained energy, mental clarity, and aids in weight loss. The idea behind it is that the combination of caffeine from coffee, healthy fats from the grass-fed butter, and MCT oil provides a longer-lasting energy boost and promotes a sense of satiety. There are both positive and negative opinions about the health benefits of bulletproof coffee. On one hand, it can be a source of healthy fats, especially if using grass-fed butter and MCT oil. The fats may provide some satiety and help reduce cravings. In this article, we discuss how incorporating bulletproof coffee in your diet can help boost your health.

1. Increased energy and mental clarity

The combination of caffeine from coffee and MCT oil provides a steady release of energy, enhancing focus and concentration.

2. Enhanced fat burning and weight loss

MCT oil in bulletproof coffee helps increase metabolism and fat oxidation, promoting weight loss and aiding in reducing body fat.

3. Improved cognitive function

The healthy fats present in grass-fed butter and MCT oil provide fuel for the brain, supporting memory, mental processing, and overall cognitive health.

4. Balanced blood sugar levels

The healthy fats in bulletproof coffee slow down the absorption of caffeine, preventing blood sugar spikes and crashes, making it suitable for individuals on low-carb or ketogenic diets.

5. Reduced food cravings

The combination of healthy fats and caffeine in bulletproof coffee helps suppress appetite and curb cravings, making it beneficial for weight management.

6. Increased antioxidant intake

Coffee contains various antioxidants that protect against free radicals, reducing the risk of chronic diseases.

7. Improved gut health

MCT oil in bulletproof coffee acts as a prebiotic, promoting the growth of beneficial gut bacteria, improving digestion, and aiding in nutrient absorption.

Bay leaf can lower cholesterol, treat digestive issues

Bay leaf, the popular flavouring agent in Indian cuisine has been trusted since ancient times to treat digestive disorders, lower cholesterol levels and ward off evil. Even today, the age-old spice retains its popularity and is used widely across cuisines for its distinct taste. Dry bay leaves are used to flavour curries, soups and rice to add flavour and aroma. Bay leaves are dried before use as the fresh ones can be bitter and astringent. Bay leaf or bay laurel is obtained from small evergreen tree *Laurus nobilis* L. Bay leaves are full of antioxidants and are a good source of minerals and fibre. Bay leaf has been in use since ancient times in traditional and folk medicines. The spice was used to treat respiratory disorders, infections, digestive issues, diarrhoea, amenorrhoea and as a diuretic. However not many studies have proven the health benefits of bay leaves. Bay leaves helps treat stomach ache, clear up mucus in the lungs, cold, and sore throat. It is also effective in



treating rheumatism and neuralgia. Keeping bay leaf in a nostril or under the head bands is believed to treat headache. Above all, Bay provides an amazing flavour and cuisines across the world uses it in some way or the other.

In ancient times, bay leaf was a symbol of prosperity, fame, and victory and was believed to possess protective powers. Ancient Mediterraneans believed the tree could protect them from misfortune and used to plant it near their homes to prevent lightning strikes. Bay leaves have anti-inflammatory, anti-diarrheal and antidiabetic properties and can strengthen immune system. It also helps in lowering blood cholesterol, control blood sugar and uric acid level.

Nutritionist Apurva Agarwal shares amazing benefits of the herb:

Lowers cholesterol: Bay leaves contribute to the regulation of cholesterol levels, which lowers the risk of heart disease and improves cardiovascular health in general.

Treats stomach upsets: The chemical compounds in bay leaves have been shown to be highly beneficial in treating upset stomachs, relieving irritable bowel syndrome, and even facilitating easy food digestion.

Taking a Daily Multivitamin May Help Slow Cognitive Aging and Boost Memory

A new study finds that taking a daily multivitamin may help your cognition and memory.

Researchers found individuals who were given multivitamin had a modest benefit in their memory and cognitive function over two years.

The vitamin may help with cognitive aging.

New research finds that a multivitamin may help you maintain both your cognition and memory.

The new study published online on January 18, 2024, in The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, reports that daily multivitamin supplementation was beneficial for both global cognition and episodic memory.

Global cognition Trusted Source refers to the overall status of our cognition while episodic memory deals with our recollection of past events and experiences.

The study is the third in a series of studies that are part of the COcoa Supplement and Multivitamin Outcomes Study (COSMOS).

The purpose of COSMOS is to determine whether cocoa flavanols or multivitamins have the ability to reduce the risk for certain health conditions including cognitive decline, heart disease, stroke, and cancer.

Multivitamins linked to better memory and cognition



In the two previous COSMOS studies, the researchers assessed people's cognition via telephone and the Internet. For the present study, COSMOS-Clinic, they gave a subset of 573 people in-clinic cognitive assessments.

After analyzing their data, the team saw a "modest" benefit from the multivitamin in these individuals over a period of two years. They also saw a significant improvement in the participants' episodic memory.

When the data from all three studies was combined, it was found that there was strong evidence that both global cognition and episodic memory had improved.

The study authors estimated that

daily supplementation had delayed cognitive aging by about two years in comparison to those who had received a placebo rather than a multivitamin.

Why these findings matter

These findings are important, according to Kelsey Costa, MS, RDN, a registered dietitian and nutrition consultant for the National Coalition on Healthcare because "[m]ild cognitive impairment (MCI) and Alzheimer's disease (AD) pose significant health challenges in the US, especially in the aging population."

Costa noted that those who have MCI are about three to five times Trusted Source more likely to develop some form of dementia.

Children's Health: What Is Somatic Stress Disorder?

Children's well-being is a paramount concern for parents, caregivers, and society at large. In recent years, there has been a growing awareness of somatic stress disorders affecting children. Somatic stress disorders involve physical symptoms that manifest in response to psychological distress. While commonly associated with adults, these disorders are increasingly observed in the pediatric population, raising concerns about the impact on children's overall health.

Experts emphasize the role of a supportive environment, open communication, and early intervention in managing somatic stress disorders among children. Moreover, understanding the root causes, which can range from academic pressure to family dynamics, is crucial for effective prevention and intervention strategies.

According to Dr Sushma Gopalan, Child Psychologist - Child Life Specialist,



Pediatrics & Neonatology, Aster CMI Hospital, Bangalore, "Post-pandemic, heightened screen time in children has resulted in increased anxiety and suppressed emotions, this condition causes physical distress, and it can affect any part of your child's body such as the head, chest, arms, and joints. These symptoms are biological and aren't voluntary or 'fake.'"

Some of the concerning causes, symptoms and treatment of SSD as shared by Dr Sushma can be:

Symptoms of Somatic Stress Disorder in Kids
Unexplained Physical

Pain: Frequent complaints of stomachaches or headaches without clear medical cause.

Sleep Disturbances: Disrupted sleep patterns or insomnia due to emotional distress.

Nutritional Changes: Altered eating habits, either excessive or insufficient, linked to emotional struggles.

Hydration Fluctuations: Inconsistent fluid intake associated with emotional stress.

Anxiety and Stress: Experiencing excessive worry, fear, or tension contributing to physical symptoms.

Causes of Somatic Stress Disorder in Children

- Major changes like divorce, family conflict, bullying, or academic pressure can overwhelm children, manifesting in physical complaints.

- Children who struggle to verbalize their feelings may unconsciously express them through bodily symptoms like stomach aches or headaches.

- Some children are naturally more aware of their physical sensations, and stress can amplify these perceptions, leading to perceived illness.

- Anxiety, depression, or trauma can co-occur with SSD, further complicating the picture.

- Excessive use of screen time in children can lead them to bottle up their emotions and isolate themselves from everyone.

Treatment for Somatic Stress Disorder

- Establish age-appropriate screen time limits to promote real-world engagement.



Maxwell Embarrassed, But Set To Avoid Sanction After Adelaide Incident

ADELAIDE: Glenn Maxwell is set to avoid sanction from Cricket Australia's integrity unit, with the allrounder embarrassed but back at training after being hospitalised following a night out in Adelaide. Maxwell will on Wednesday be named in Australia's T20 squad to face West Indies after being "managed" out of the three-match ODI series that precedes it.

Australian team staff are still looking into Maxwell's hospitalisation, but at this stage there is no plan for the integrity unit to become involved.

Instead, high-performance staff are

concerned over any potential of a concussion to determine if protocols must be entered into, along with how the night has impacted Maxwell's fitness and his mental wellbeing.

AAP has been told Maxwell played a round of golf through the heat of Friday, before attending the gig where he was drinking. He passed out when in the green room after the show and he was taken to the emergency room of a hospital via ambulance and was later released without being admitted.

Maxwell informed chief selector George Bailey of the situation on Mon-

day, and his manager Ben Tippet spoke with high-performance boss Ben Oliver on Tuesday.

"He's okay. I think a little bit embarrassed but that is fine," Tippet told AAP. "Maxi has spoken to George Bailey yesterday. We've spoken to them, they've spoken to us and it's done. It's more like 'you were in hospital and are you okay'?"

"He's back in training yesterday. He had time off for about a week after the BBL and he is back into training doing some specific stuff on his leg which he needs to do." CA also remain adamant the decision to rest Maxwell from the

ODIs was made after the BBL, thus freeing him to travel to Adelaide to play in the golf event.

There remain some concerns over Maxwell's fitness following his broken leg last summer, with rods still in the 35-year-old's leg. Questions will no doubt be asked by team staff why Maxwell was out drinking when he should be managing the injury. Australia captain Pat Cummins said Maxwell "potentially" had to look at his habits and actions.

But he said overall the behaviour of the team was impressive since a player-led approach had been installed.

"In terms of performance on the field you can't ask much more from how we have performed but also how we have gone about it," Cummins said. The team has shown incredible discipline and I think we have made a lot of people proud with the way we have gone about it. "We are all adults and part of being adults is that you make your own decisions. "In terms of this incident [Maxwell] wasn't on tour with Australia. He was over there for a private event so it was a little bit different but absolutely, any decision you make you have to own it and be comfortable with it."

Dravid expects Hyderabad pitch for England Test to offer turn



NEW DELHI: India are expecting the pitch for the first Test against England in Hyderabad to offer turn, but the question is how much? Two days out from the start of the game, it looked like the good length area for the spinners at either end was drier than the other parts of the surface. "Hard one to say," head coach Rahul Dravid said on Tuesday. "Just have a look once it starts and figure it out. It looks a good one from what I've seen. May spin a little bit. How quickly and how fast, I'm not sure. But might spin a little bit certainly as the game goes on."

It is in response to the way pitches in the subcontinent might play that India will be opting for a specialist keeper for

all five Tests. "[KL] Rahul will not be playing as a wicketkeeper in this series," Dravid said. "I think we were quite clear about that with the selection itself. We had picked two other wicketkeepers. Obviously Rahul did a fantastic job for us in South Africa and really played a big part in us drawing that series. But considering it's five Test matches and playing in these conditions, we felt we would go with another keeping option, considering the weather, considering the conditions. So obviously it's a selection toss-up between the two other keepers that we have."

That's KS Bharat, who kept in all four Tests of India's most recent home series, against Australia in February and March 2023, and Dhruv Jurel, the uncapped 22-year old from Uttar Pradesh. On Tuesday afternoon, Jurel was at the ground, paired with the slip cordon - Rahul, Shubman Gill, Yasir Jaiswal and Shreyas Iyer - taking catching drills for the best part of half an hour. At the same time, off to the right of the entrance to the stadium, Bharat was in the nets being tested by R Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja. Rohit Sharma was at the adjacent one and was seen helping Bharat out over the course of the session.

England arrive on the back of a handsome Test record under Ben Stokes and Brendon McCullum, with 13 wins in their last 18 matches, playing attack-first-ask-questions-later kind of cricket. And there is a lot of interest around whether the Bazball method will work against India in India.

Sports Association Tarzoo (SAT) Elects New Body

- Aashiq Hussain
- HT SPORTS DESK



SOPORE, JAN 23: The Support Association Tarzoo (SAT) held a meeting under the chair of Patron today, during which several important decisions were made. The Wular Premier League (WPL) Session 7th concluded recently, with the ex-chairman and his team receiving high praise for their exceptional work. We love them all. Members agreed on the need for a new setup to ensure the smooth functioning of SAT moving forward.

New leadership was elected, including Mohd Subhan Rather as the new chairman of Sports Association Tarzoo for a two-year term, Mohd Ashraf Mir as General Secretary, Shabir Ahmad Bhat as Treasurer/Account, and Tariq Ahmad Kanjwal as Publicity Secretary.

The meeting ended with a heartfelt vote of thanks to the chair.

Gen secretary SAT
Mohd Ashraf Mir

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