



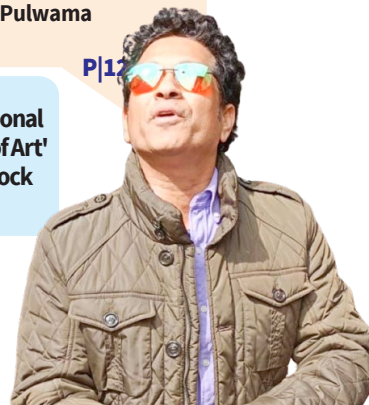
Srinagar  
Sunday  
February 18 | 2024  
07 Shaban 1445  
Issue No: 42  
Volume: 14

Sachin Tendulkar Visits Bat  
Manufacturing Unit In  
Pulwama

Div Com Inspects Operational  
Readiness Of New 'State of Art'  
Bone & Joint Hospital Block

P/12

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# Police Adopts New Approach To Tackle Terrorism, Narcotics: DGP

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, FEB 17: Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police RR Swain on Saturday said those who get involved in terrorism are victims to us and those who actually mislead them are the real culprits.

Swain said police has adopted a new approach to tackle the terrorism and narcotics in Jammu and Kashmir.

"We want our youth to save themselves from narcotics and terrorism. Civil society and masjid Ulmas have a responsibility. The ones who get involved in terrorism are victims to us, but those who supply weapons, provide money, and mislead them are the real culprits and not the young one who does have a moustache or a beard. That is why we will have a new approach. We will reward the police accordingly," DGP told reporters after a Public Darbar in Baramulla district in North Kashmir.



"We believe prevention is better than cure," he said.

Swain said the police want to make a difference and those who want to return, we want to make a room for them.

"When terrorism and violence erupt, it makes the police job even tougher. In the past 30 years, police work has become very tough. But we believe in the philosophy that we want to make a difference, that those who want to return, we want to make a room for them," he added.

On the drug issue, the DGP said we will hold special meetings with the Chief Secretary and Health Secretary.

"I thought a drug addict is a victim but he also becomes a kind of peddler. The police department does not have these kinds of resources to have de-addiction centres. De-addiction is the job of the medical and health

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

PM Modi will be in Jammu on Feb 20, Defense Minister to Visit Jammu on feb 24

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEB 17: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be visiting Jammu on February 20 while Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will meet army officers including the northern army commander at



army's Northern Command Headquarters at Udhampur on February 24.

Sources told the news agency—Kashmir News

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

## NEWS BRIEF

### Kashmir Braces For Major Spell Of Snow

SRINAGAR, FEB 17: The Kashmir region is bracing for a major spell of snowfall even as night temperatures rose above sub-zero levels, officials said on Saturday.

The meteorological centre in Srinagar said an extended wet spell is likely to begin over J&K and adjoining areas from Saturday night and will continue till the afternoon of February 21.

This year, J&K witnessed an extended dry spell, with just two spells of light to moderate snowfall between January 28 and February 3.

The wet weather forecast this time is expected to be intense as compared to the previous spells.

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

### Of total enrolment, only 15 Percent students enrolled in Pvt Colleges of JK

SRINAGAR, FEB 17: In Jammu and Kashmir only 15 percent of higher education students prefer to study in private unaided and aided colleges.

According to the official documents, available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that reveal enrolment of private and government colleges based on actual response in a survey states that there were a total of 2,13,213 students enrolled in private and government colleges of Jammu and Kashmir. Among the total number of enrolled students, 23,580 were enrolled in private unaided colleges, 4038 in private aided.

However, in comparison to the

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

### Cancer Institute of Jammu's OPD witnesses nearly 7,000 patients in a year

SRINAGAR, FEB 17: The Cancer Institute of Jammu has witnessed around seven thousand patients in its outpatient department since it started services in February last year.

According to details obtained by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the institute has conducted 3600 chemotherapy sessions until January 31, 2024.

A senior official from the Cancer Institute Jammu informed KNO that outpatient services in cancer-specific departments, including Medical

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

### Non-Payment Of Dues: KPDCL Disconnects Power Supply To 26,476 Consumers In January

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, FEB 17: Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) has disconnected power supply to 26,476 consumers in January, for non-payment of electricity dues.

The KPDCL also collected Rs.7.50 crore on account of penalties imposed on those consumers who were stealing power by unauthorised means.

This was disclosed during a meeting chaired by KPDCL Managing Director Mussarat Islam with all Sub Divisional Officers to review the feeder-wise AT&C (Aggregate Technical and Commercial) losses in Kashmir Division.

An official spokesman said during the review meeting, Islam

TURN ON.....PAGE 02



## Media Plays Role Of Watchdog For Fair, Transparent Elections: CEO Pole

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, FEB 17: The Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu and Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole on Saturday said that the media plays a role of watchdog for fair and transparent elections.

Pole during a training programme organized here for the media persons today highlighted the need for a check on fake news and the role of media in ensuring a



civil discourse both during and after the election processes.

In preparation for the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections 2024, a one day workshop for media personnel was organised at the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Darul-Intikhab here.

The program was attended by representatives of major news outlets of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

## Centre Sanctions Rs 152.30 Crore PMGSY Package For Upgradation Of Roads In J&K

■ HT News Network

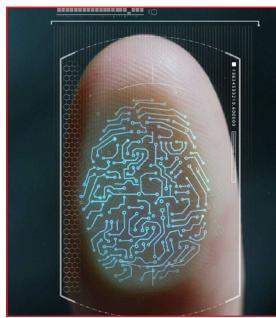
JAMMU, FEB 17: The Centre has sanctioned a Rs 152.30-crore package for upgrading 12 roads having a total length of 134 km and a bridge project in Jammu and

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

## J&K Police Initiates NAFIS Labs At District Levels For Fingerprint Data Collection Of Criminals

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEB 17: Following the footsteps of rest of the states in the country, the Jammu and Kashmir Police have also initiated National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS) labs at district levels across the Jammu region for data collection of criminals through fingerprints.



Notably, NAFIS plays a crucial role in criminal

investigations and helps to identify suspects, link crimes to specific individuals, and provide important evidence in court cases.

"Likewise other states of the country, now Jammu and Kashmir Police are also collecting the fingerprints data of criminals along with their photographs to ease out their tracking

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

## Banihal-Sangaldan Section Of Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link To Open On Feb 20

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEB 17: The Indian Railways will start train services on the Banihal-Khari-Sumber-Sangaldan section, a 48.1-kilometre-long significant segment of the country's most ambitious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link project, on February 20.

"We will get a step closure to realise our dream to connect Srinagar with Kanyakumari," a source in the

TURN ON.....PAGE 02



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# DE&CC, District Administration organise one-day Job Fair at Beerwah

4.Job fairs held in past few months with hundreds of local youth shortlisted for next round of interview: DC Budgam

■ HT News Network

BUDGAM, FEBRUARY 17: The District Employment and Counseling Centre (DE&CC), Budgam in collaboration with District Administration Budgam today organized a daylong Job Fair at Town Hall, Beerwah.

The event was inaugurated by Chairman District Development Council (DDC), Nazir Ahmad Khan along with the Deputy Commissioner (DC), Budgam, Akshay Labroo.

The Job Fair witnessed a significant turnout with 763 participants and 17 companies offering over 1000 vacancies.

302 candidates were shortlisted for the second round. The event also focused on



promoting self-employment schemes and skill development, with 527 offline registrations and 207 candidates registering for skill development courses.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that this is fourth in row such a job fair organised under the directions of Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of J&K in the past few

months, facilitating students and youth of the district seeking employment to avail job opportunities.

The DC said that hundreds of local youth have been shortlisted by various private companies for the next round of interviews in four job fairs held in the district.

He highlighted the government's commitment to employment generation and encouraged more such events to bridge the gap between job seekers and employers.

The DC while addressing the participating aspirants appealed to them to actively participate in such job fairs and take maximum benefits out of these placement drives.

## DDC inaugurates 1st Batch of PM Vishwakarma Training at ITI Baramulla

■ HT News Network



BARAMULLA, FEBRUARY 17: The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today inaugurated the commencement of training sessions for artisans and craftspeople under PM Vishwakarma scheme at the Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Baramulla.

The initiative aims to equip participants with the necessary skills for self-employment and entrepreneurial success. The ceremony, held in the presence of Chief Planning Officer Baramulla, Principal ITI and enthusiastic trainees, underscored the administration's commitment to fostering skill development and economic empowerment in the region. Speaking on the occasion, DDC urged the trainees to seize the opportunity provided by the PM Vishwakarma scheme to upgrade their skills and harness their potential for self-employment opportunities. He also emphasized the transformative potential of skill development initiatives like PM Vishwakarma in unlocking opportunities for economic growth and social empowerment. He reaffirmed the administration's commitment to supporting the holistic development of local artisans and ensuring their meaningful integration.

## DC Shopian reviews preparations for snow clearance in view of inclement weather predictions

■ HT News Network

SHOPIAN, FEBRUARY 17: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Faz Lul Haseeb today chaired a meeting of officers of different departments at Mini-Secretariat, here to take stock of arrangements put in place for snow clearance mechanism in the district. During the meeting, the DC reviewed availability of snow clearance machines, stock position of essentials, action plans prepared by the concerned departments to prevent interruption in services during snowfall. He directed officers of R&B, PMGSY and Mechanical Engineering to ensure that main roads and inner links are cleared of snow immediately to facilitate the people of the district, and exhorted upon the concerned that no road should remain closed due to snow accumulation. Haseeb asked the concerned officers to prepare a comprehensive and meticulous snow clearance plan to avoid any inconvenience to the people by extending a prompt response. He also called for better coordination in dealing with snow clearance operations by setting up control room.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I have Lost the Registration Certificate (RC) of my vehicle (Scooty) Bearing Registration No:JK01AB9869, Engine No: JF21E81096333, Chassis No: ME-J4F219DG8052604 from Badshah Nagar Natipora To Jahangir Chock.

Now I have applied for its duplicate if anybody have any objection in this regard he/she may contact to the RTO office Srinagar within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

NAME: PARVAIZ AHMAD SHAWL

S/O: HABIBULLAH SHAWL

R/O: KHANDA BAWAN NAWAKADAL SRINAGAR

### PUBLIC NOTICE

My Son's name in school record has been wrongly written as ZUHAIB AHMAD KHAN while his correct name is MOHAMMAD AATIF KHAN under registration no B-2023-1-05261-000 253 date of issue 20/03/2023 and his date of birth (DOB) is 22/03/2018 which needs to be corrected..if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the (B D O) office WAGOORA within a period of seven days from the date publication of this notice After that no objection shall be entertained.

NAME ....ZUBAIR AHMAD KHAN

F/O. MOHAMMAD AATIF KHAN

R/O ...SALOOSA BLOCK...WAGOORA

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I informed to general public that my husband namely ABDUL SALAM BHAT S/O ALI MOHAMMAD BHST R/O KACHWA MUQAM has died on 28/12/2023.. 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....SARA BEGUM

D/O...LATE ABDUL SALAM BHAT

R/O..... KUCHWA MUQAM BLOCK...WAGOORA

#### GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of SALMAN -IBN BASHEER MIR S/O BASHIR AHMAD MIR R/O RESHIPORA AT-HOORA Tehsil Kreeri Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth, as 12/08/2021and event has been shown to be occurred at S.D.H Kreeeri for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE

1ST CLASS KREERI

#### GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE

1ST CLASS KREERI

#### GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of FAHEEM ASHRAF SHAH S/O ASHRAF ALI SHAH R/O JAHANGIR SHRAKWARA Tehsil Wagoora Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth, as 24/01/2020and event has been shown to be occurred at S.D.H Kreeeri for issuance of delay order .In this connection .

if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE

1ST CLASS KREERI

#### GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of ZAMIN SHAKEEL S/O SHAKEEL AHMAD HAJAM R/O BANDIPAYEEN Tehsil Wagoora Distt. Wagoora having verified the date of Birth, as 29/12/2021and event has been shown to be occurred at S.D.H Kreeeri for issuance of delay order .In this connection .

if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE

1ST CLASS KREERI

## Office of the Principal Government Degree College Uttersoo UTTERSOO-SHANGUS - 192201 - (DISTT. ANANTNAG) - KASHMIR TENDER NOTICE

On behalf of the Hon'ble lieutent Governor UT of J&K Sealed Quotation/Tenders affixed with revenue stamp for Rs/-10 are invited from the experienced and registered caterer or restaurant/Tea Stall owners for running of the college canteen w.e.f 01-03-2024 to 31-03-2025.

The tender documents along with the detailed terms and conditions in form of Annexures A', B', and C can be had from the establishment section against cash payments of Rs- 50 under proper receipt during all working days upto 24-02-2024.

The quotations/Tenders complete in all respects along with earnest money in the shape of CDR worth Rs/- 500 pledged to the principal of the college payable at any J&K bank should reach to the office of the undersigned by or before 28-02-2024.

The tenders must attach the registration /Licences certificate from the concerned agencies in the trade.

The successful caterer/Tenderer will have to pay rent charges amounting to Rs/-10000 (Ten Thousand only)in lump sum, rent for the whole session for occupation of the college canteen before taking its possession. The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason.

DIPK-16616/23  
DATE: FEB 17 2024

PRINCIPAL  
GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGE  
UTTERSOO ANANTNAG

## Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir Office of the Manager Frozen Semen Project (Ranbir-bagh)

Email :- [jdfsp@jkanimalhusbandry.net](mailto:jdfsp@jkanimalhusbandry.net) Ph. No:- 0194-2950074

ISO 9001- 2015 & CMU (DAHD Gol) certified

Sub:- Calibration and Validation of Laboratory Equipments of Frozen Semen Laboratory Ranbirbagh.

#### SHORT TERM QUOTATION NOTICE

For and behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of Jammu & Kashmir, sealed quotations duly affixed with Revenue Stamps of Rs. Five are invited by this office from registered/authorized/reputed agencies (NABL certified) for carrying out the Calibration and Validation of below mentioned Laboratory equipments at Semen Processing Laboratory FSP Ranbirbagh on company approved rates within a period of five (05) days from the date of Publication of this notice.

The quotations shall be opened in presence of the committee of officers constituted for the purpose on next working day after the last date of receipt of quotation.

S. No.	Name of the Equipment	No of Equipments
1	Hot Air Oven	4 Nos
2	Incubator	4 Nos
3	Water bath	3 Nos
4	Autoclave	3 Nos
5	Laminar Air Flow	6 Nos
6	Digital Weighing Balance	3 Nos
7	Mercury Thermometer	3 Nos
8	Collection Tube	3 Nos
9	Thermal plate	2 Nos
10	Slide warming table	2 Nos
11	Micro Pipette	1No
12	PH meter	2 Nos
13	Measuring cylinder	4 Nos
14	Thawing unit	1 No

#### Terms and Conditions :-

- The rates should be quoted inclusive of all taxes/duties, transportation/ Lodging/ boarding etc.
- The rates should be quoted FOR Manager FSP Ranbirbagh Lar Ganderbal.
- The executing agency for the said work should be NABL certified.
- No subletting will be allowed.
- The quotation will be opened by the purchase committee of this office after the stipulated perios is over.

Date: Feb 17 2024  
DIPK-16585/23

Sd/-  
Manager,  
Frozen Semen Project  
Ranbirbagh.

## DC Kathua chairs District Task Force meeting to finalize action plan for Pulse Polio mmunization-2024

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, FEBRUARY 17: The District Task Force on Pulse Polio Immunization met here today to discuss and review the preparations for the upcoming National Immunization Day (Pulse Polio) to be observed on March 3, 2024.

The meeting was chaired by Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rakesh Minhas,

At the outset, the Chief Medical Officer informed the meeting that the anti-polio drive will be carried out in the district on 03 March 2024 in which 101534 children upto 5 years of age will be administered polio vaccine. It was also informed that 580 vaccine booths have been established across 5 medical blocks of the district with deployment of 2320



officials, besides 7 mobile teams, 20 transit sites, 129 supervisory staff and collaboration of teachers and 23 mobile team members will be utilized for proper execution and monitoring of the immunization process.

During the meeting, DC emphasized the significance of administering the Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) to every child under the age of 5. He highlighted the

responsibility of all stakeholders in maintaining a polio-free status and stressed the importance of effective implementation of the pulse polio immunization program in safeguarding future generations from this disease.

The DC directed the health department to take proactive measures and to administer the OPV to all children in the age group of 0-5 at the designated

booths throughout the district on March 3. It was also informed that this will be followed by house-to-house activity on March 4 and 5, ensuring comprehensive coverage in all areas. Transit sites and High Risk Areas will also be covered throughout the three days of the immunization program.

In order to ensure a successful immunization program, the DC thoroughly reviewed the operational plans and logistical arrangements for the Pulse Polio Immunization campaign. Emphasizing the importance of reaching every child with the polio vaccine, DC underscored the significance of community engagement and urged all stakeholders to mobilize resources effectively to achieve maximum coverage.

## PM Vishwakarma: Skill Dev Department Starts Training in two more Trades at ITI Doda

■ HT News Network

DODA, FEBRUARY 17: The prestigious PM Vishwakarma Scheme was launched in Government ITI Doda on 23rd of January 2024 with the inauguration of Training for first batch of 27 trainees (Vishwakarma) in Darzi (Tailor) Trade by the District Development Commissioner Harvinder Singh. As per directions from JKUT Administration, Skill Development Department & District Administration Doda, today started Training in two more Trades viz. Mason (Raajmistri) & Carpenter (Suthar) in view of huge applications received in the district. The Programme launched virtually by the Director Skill Development J&K Sudarshan Kumar, was



also attended by Joint Director Skill Development Jammu Er. G.M Bhatt, Er. Ravi Gupta Assistant Director, Directorate of Skill Development, Ex-MC Councilor Ramesh Kumar, Representative of GM DIC Doda, Superintendent and staff of ITI Doda among other dignitaries.

The welcome address was delivered by Superintendent ITI Doda Naresh Singh, who thanked the

Director Skill Development for starting the 5-day Basic Skill Training in two more trades in Govt. ITI Doda. He briefed that till date two batches of 62 candidates have successfully completed training and two more batches of 80 candidates are undergoing training in Tailor (Darzi) Trade besides fresh Training course in Mason (16 Candidates) and Carpenter (32 Candidates). He assured the

Director Skill Development to impart best Skill training to the eligible beneficiaries in the courses identified for Govt. ITI Doda as Training Center (TC).

Ramesh Kumar, Member District level Implementation Committee advised the beneficiaries present to take maximum benefit of the Scheme launched by the Prime Minister of India. He stressed upon all Traditional Craftsmen who are working in 18 identified trades in their respective areas to immediately register on PM Vishwakarma portal and take the help of BDO/Panchayat Secretary concerned for any type of assistance required so that the young generation become village entrepreneurs & participate in the economic growth of the country.

## DIC Jammu hosts awareness programme on PM Vishwakarma scheme

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 16: District Industries Centre Jammu, in collaboration with the District Administration today hosted an awareness programme on PM Vishwakarma scheme here in Teachers Bhavan for the stakeholders. The awareness event was chaired by Joint Director IEDS, MSME DFO, G Velladurai. The PM Vishwakarma scheme has been launched on Sep 17, 2023 by the Prime Minister. Under the scheme 18 categories of artisans have been covered. After successful registration at CSC and due step wise verifications by the authorities, the artisans will be eligible for a toolkit of Rs. 15000; A Collateral free loan up to Rs. 300000 at just 5% interest rate. For more details of the scheme the artisans can contact Gram Panchayat/Panchayat Secy./GRS/BDO/DIC Office/DC Office. At the outset, Rajesh Kumar, IEDS Assistant Director delivered welcome address and a brief about the seminar. Detailed presentation and clarifications regarding the registrations process of the scheme was given by D K Tyagi, IEDS Assistant Director Officer from MSME DFO, Jammu.

Representatives of CSC Centre, Ministry of Skill Development Government of India and Lead District Manager gave presentations on the role of their respective Department in PM Vishwakarma verification & execution. Guest of honour, Shehzada, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Jammu motivated the participants and officers of district administration to bring maximum number of potential beneficiaries on the platform.

## DC Rajouri approves 83 Cases under Holistic Agriculture Development Program

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, FEBRUARY 17: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Om Prakash Bhagat today presided over a significant meeting where 83 cases were approved under the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP).

The cases pertained to the Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry and Horticulture P&M Departments.

The meeting focused on evaluating the progress made in achieving the objectives of the program and generation of awareness among farmers about the innovative interventions under the HADP.

The HADP is an ambitious initiative aimed at establishing a sustainable and profitable agricultural ecosystem.

Deputy Commissioner



Om Prakash Bhagat emphasized the goal of the program which is to empower local farmers by equipping them with knowledge and tools that can significantly enhance their productivity and profitability. Simultaneously, the HADP seeks to contribute to the overall growth of the agricultural sector.

With the approval of 83 cases, the HADP is progressing towards its objective of

transforming the agricultural landscape in Rajouri.

Meanwhile, the DC also approved 12 cases under the Prime Minister's Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) scheme.

Among the others who attended the meeting were the ADDC, Pawan Kumar; ADC Rajouri, Rajeev Kumar Khajuria; ACR, Mohd Jahangir Khan; DSHO, PPSagotra; CAHO, Dr Khalid Hus-

sain; DHO, Shafqat Khan; LDM, Sanjeev Bhasin; Dy Registrar CS, Adnan Rather; AD Fisheries, Bodh Raj and other concerned officers. The cases pertained to the Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry and Horticulture P&M Departments.

The meeting focused on evaluating the progress made in achieving the objectives of the program and generation of awareness among farmers about the innovative interventions under the HADP.

The HADP is an ambitious initiative aimed at establishing a sustainable and profitable agricultural ecosystem.

Deputy Commissioner Om Prakash Bhagat emphasized the goal of the program which is to empower local farmers by equipping them with knowledge and tools that can significantly enhance their productivity and profitability.

## Doda: District Task Force firms up Plan for National Immunization Day

■ HT News Network

DODA, FEBRUARY 17: Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh chaired a meeting of the District Task Force to review the Action plan for the National Pulse Polio Immunization scheduled on March 3, 2024. The meeting discussed the activities planned for National Immunization Day, emphasizing the theme "Vaccines Work for All" for India's National Vaccination.

The health department officials were asked to ensure maximum publicity and awareness for the ahead of the scheduled Day. He assured full support from the district administration and urged SDMs to coordinate with the health department to make all necessary arrangements for the event. Emphasizing targeted publicity from this day, he instructed the Chief Education Officer Doda to prepare teaching staff and students for the upcoming Pulse Polio day celebration. The meeting revealed that 507 block-level booths, 11 transit points, 20 at booths at religious places and 35 centers at hard-to-reach areas are being established for the Pulse Polio event. Attendees included ACD, CEO, District Nodal Officer ISM, Medical Superintendent AH GMC Doda, Deputy Chief Medical Officer Doda, SDM Thathri and Gandoh, District Medical Officer, District Immunization Officer, BMOs, and representatives from concerned departments.

### Environment Building Programme organised at GHSS Sunderbani

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, FEBRUARY 17: A special awareness programme under "Environment Building" was today organised by the office of the Chief Education Officer in the premises of Government Girls Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Sunderbani. The awareness event focused on different schemes like Inclusive Education (IE), Foundational Literacy & Numeracy (FLN), ULLAS and Continuous & Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE). More than 150 parents, PRIs, Heads of Institutions and teachers were present in the programme. The programme was chaired by Principal of the School R C Sharma as the Chief Guest. Sanjeev Kumar Suri, Principal BHSS Sunderbani and Subash Chander Sharma, Zonal Education Officer.

## DC Rajouri reviews preparedness for National Immunization Day

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, FEBRUARY 17: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Om Prakash Bhagat today presided over a crucial meeting of the District Level Task Force to assess and discuss the preparations for the upcoming National Immunization Day. The comprehensive immunization campaign will be conducted in a single phase over a period of three days



from 3rd of March onwards.

In this regard, a detailed action plan has been compiled. A Total of 647 vaccination booths, 12 transit points and 32 centres in high-

risk areas have been set up in the district. As many as 90,390 children between 0 to 5 years age group are to be covered.

To ensure the effective implementation of the program, the Depu-

ty Commissioner instructed the Additional Deputy Commissioners and Sub-Divisional Magistrate Thanamandi to conduct similar meetings at the block level.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the significance of the vaccination drive and directed the officers to exert their sincere efforts to ensure that no child in the targeted age group was left out in the process.

## RERA instrumental in curbing malpractices in real estate, enhancing consumer confidence

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 17: The Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, a significant milestone in evolution of India's real estate sector, has made a considerable impact on the real estate landscape of Jammu and Kashmir with enhanced transparency and accountability. The historic initiative is contributing towards a more balanced and accountable real estate ecosystem besides instilling greater confidence among the homebuyers, leading to a more vibrant and sustainable real estate

market across the Union Territory. J&K, like other states and union territories of India, established the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) to regulate the real estate sector in the UT. Former IAS officer, Satish Chandra, is Chairperson of JKRE-RRA and in case of any query or assistance, one can mail at email-id:jkrerachairperson@gmail.com. The Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act is successfully addressing the longstanding issues, promoting transparency and establishing mechanisms for dispute resolution, RERA has ushered in a new era.

## Rare Surgery Sets New Standard of Excellence at MedStar Nowgam Srinagar

### Dr. Mir Sammiullah Leads Innovative Surgery, Establishing New Healthcare Benchmark

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 17: MedStar Medical Centre in Nowgam, Srinagar, has achieved a remarkable milestone in the field of surgical gastroenterology. Dr. Mir Sammiullah, Renowned Doctor, Chairman & Senior Consultant of Surgical Gastroenterology, has successfully performed a rare case of Synchronous Resection of Colon and Liver for Carcinoma Colon with Liver Metastasis on an elderly patient. This ground-breaking surgery signifies a significant advancement in the healthcare sector and exemplifies MedStar's unwavering commitment to pushing the boundaries of medical innovation.

The procedure, which involves the simultaneous removal of both the primary tumor



in the colon and the metastatic lesions in the liver, is considered highly complex and is rarely undertaken in advanced medical institutions worldwide. Dr. Mir Sammiullah and the expert medical team at MedStar Nowgam Srinagar have demonstrated

unparalleled skill, dedication, and expertise in executing this intricate surgery, showcasing their commitment to providing the highest standard of care to patients.

The operation, lasting almost 7 hours and requiring 10 units of blood, underscores

the complexity and magnitude of this ground-breaking procedure. Despite the challenges, Dr. Sammiullah and his team persevered, delivering exceptional care to the patient.

Dr. Mir Sammiullah, reflecting on the achievement, remarked, "This surgery represents a triumph of medical skill and innovation, and it is a testament to the dedication of our team at MedStar Medical Centre, Nowgam Srinagar. We are proud to be at the forefront of advancing surgical techniques and improving patient outcomes."

The successful completion of this rare surgery reaffirms MedStar Nowgam Srinagar's position as a leader in the healthcare sector of the region and underscores its commitment to excellence in patient care. (KNT)

EDITORIAL

Amidst Power Drought, Need for Viable Power Generation Methodology

The ongoing wet spell in Kashmir has not only parched the land but has also cast a shadow over the region's electricity supply. As hydroelectric power remains a primary source of energy in the valley, the prolonged dry period has severely impacted power generation, exacerbating an already strained situation.

Kashmir's picturesque landscape belies the challenges it faces in sustaining its power needs. With hydroelectric projects contributing significantly to the region's energy grid, the scanty rainfall and reduced snowfall have crippled power generation capacities. As rivers shrink and reservoir levels dwindle, the specter of prolonged blackouts looms large over the valley.

The situation demands urgent intervention. Establishing more power generation projects becomes imperative to mitigate the effects of climatic fluctuations and ensure uninterrupted electricity supply. While hydroelectricity remains integral, diversification into alternative energy sources such as solar and wind power can bolster resilience against erratic weather patterns.

The repercussions of inadequate power supply extend beyond mere inconvenience. Industries suffer, businesses falter, and households struggle to meet their basic needs. Education, healthcare, and communication sectors bear the brunt of power shortages, hampering progress and development across the region.

In the pursuit of expanded power generation, environmental sustainability must remain a paramount consideration. Balancing energy demands with ecological preservation is essential to safeguarding Kashmir's natural heritage for future generations.

The current predicament underscores the urgent need for strategic investments in diversified power generation infrastructure. As Kashmir grapples with the fallout of a diminished wet spell, concerted efforts towards energy security and environmental stewardship can pave the way for a brighter, more resilient future. It is time to act decisively to power the paradise amidst adversity.

Wetlands The Heart And Soul Of Jammu And Kashmir



By Mool Raj

World Wetlands Day is an annual celebration that takes place on February 2nd to raise awareness about the importance of wetlands and the need to conserve them. On this day, the Convention on Wetlands, which was ratified as a global agreement in 1971, also celebrates its birthday. Wetlands are defined as areas of land that are saturated with water, either permanently or seasonally, and are critical habitats for many species of plants and animals. They also play a crucial role in maintaining the health of the planet's ecosystems, providing important benefits to humans, and mitigating the impacts of climate change. The theme for World Wetlands Day 2024 is "Wet-

lands and Human Wellbeing" which highlights the interdependence between wetlands and water and the need to protect and manage these important ecosystems. The theme is particularly relevant this year as the world faces increasing pressure from growing populations, urbanization, and climate change. These factors have led to the widespread degradation of wetlands and the loss of many of these important ecosystems, putting at risk the many benefits they provide.

The other Ramsar sites in the UT of J&K are Mansar-Surinsar, Hokersar, Wullar, Hygam, and Shallbugh. The Gharana Wetland, which was declared in 1981, typically hosts migrating birds from Central Asia, Mongolia, Russia, China, and other nations throughout the world. It is important to note that this water body draws tens of thousands of birds from other continents, providing bird watchers with a wonderful opportunity to observe them up close. The primary draws are purple swamp hens, bar-headed geese, common teals, Indian moorhens, gadwalls, flocks of greenshanks, etc. He emphasized the importance of educating the local population about the potential

of such natural treasures and the advantages they offer to humanity. He placed a major emphasis on utilizing local resources and people for management and conservation in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir to provide sanctuary for both local and migratory birds and to ensure the health of the food chain. Unfortunately, over the past few decades, wetlands have been drained, filled, and converted into urban, industrial, or agricultural land at an alarming rate, leading to a loss of biodiversity and degradation of ecosystem services. In addition to habitat loss, wetlands face multiple threats, including climate change, pollution, and the introduction of non-native species. It is imperative that we take action to protect and conserve wetlands. To do this, we need to better understand the value of wetlands and the services they provide. For example, wetlands play a critical role in water management, filtering and purifying water, and reducing the risk of floods and droughts. They also provide crucial habitats for countless species, including migratory birds, fish, and reptiles, and support local communities through fishing, agriculture, and tourism.

To celebrate World Wetlands Day, it is important to raise awareness of the importance of wetlands and the need for their protection. Governments, NGOs, and local communities can work together to protect wetlands by implementing policies and management plans that prioritize conservation and restoration. In addition, education and public engagement programs can be developed to raise awareness of the value of wetlands and encourage their protection. Certainly, there is an absolute need to secure the future of wetlands and the benefits they provide. World Wetlands Day is an opportunity to reflect on the important role that wetlands play in our world and the need for their protection. While much has been done to protect wetlands, there is still much work to be done. By raising awareness, supporting conservation efforts, and taking steps to mitigate the impacts of climate change, we can ensure that wetlands continue to provide critical services and support biodiversity for generations to come.

The author is a columnist and freelance writer

By Practicing Again And Again, We Can Learn Things In A Very Effective And Better Way



Sahil Manzoor

In fact, this universe is full of mysteries, full of sorrows, full of entertainments, and full of great minds and scholars. That may be the reason we still think we have achieved very little, as this universe has no end point where we can go and stop our search or thirst we have had for thousands of years. Nature has bestowed on humans' great minds, and humans are the most intelligent creation on this earth. Every discovery, innovation, greatness, and saying is behind the hands of humans. Whatever development the world has achieved, like giant spaceships, aeroplanes, and incredible bridges that connect kilometres of distance across water bodies, humans have achieved great achievements in the medical sciences, from major caesareans to minor surgeries. It is very unfor-



fortunate that we are struggling with lethal diseases like AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome), which is caused by intercourse with an effective partner, and diseases like cancer, which has now been called CA as people even do not want to

pronounce it as this is very dreadful and lethal disease has full potential to take one's life. Medical science is not so advanced to fight with it completely. I hope, in the end, we will get enough grip to control it completely.

As per scientific studies, the formation of the earth happened. 4.54 billion years ago means crores of years have passed so far. So, can we imagine this world before 3000 years ago? How people were living, what their lifestyle was, how they treated sick people, and how they made their day-to-day demands possible? We are getting clues from historians but are not sure of their actual way of living, one thing is fortunate that every day the world is getting great and small innovations and discoveries. It is well said that necessity is the mother of innovation. Like that, we are taking things into consideration and want solutions from different agencies, institutes.

Today in this article, I am going to share with you what came to my mind when I was having lunch at home at 3 p.m. today, November 30, 2023. Actually, I have realised that by practicing again and again, we can learn things in a very effective and better way. Professional personalities like teachers, doctors, engineers, scientists, journalists, and even every profession have great importance in our day-to-day lives because we are all the creation of the almighty. We have potential, and we can beat whatever challenges are in front of us, but one thing is clear and true: it is not possible that every individual can hold the nation's best position, so we say whatever we are, this is our fate. Where we are, this is our destiny, and

we should keep satisfied with what we have achieved.

First of all, we have to fix our goals. We should know our prime interests, like we should have knowledge about our weaknesses and about our strengths. One more thing we have to do is be passionate (passion can be defined as the strongest will). Some are passionate about their professions, and some are related to their hobbies, like musicians, singers, actors, sportsmen, etc. Being passionate is never final. If you want to go for any big achievements, you have to learn it by practicing again and again, which will make you successful to a good extent. Repeating things boosts your level of confidence and keeps you relaxed. Knowing things in great depth always makes us good and effective professionals. So never let the things you are passionate about get involved in them for a longer period of time. Always take your time, be patient, try to learn them for a longer period of time, and hope we will get good results.

While shooting for a movie, actors and other staff are taking hundreds of shots for a single short or for a 5-minute scene. They are taking a number of takes because they believe that they will get what they need and what makes their work great.

Raiyar-Ich, sahilmanzoor0401@gmail.com

# The Himalayas-Global Treasure At Risk

Overall, protecting the fragile Himalayan mountain system requires a multifaceted approach that addresses the various threats facing the region. The local government must take a leadership role in this effort, working with communities, NGOs, and other stakeholders to implement effective conservation and sustainable development strategies. With such efforts, the Himalayas will continue to be a source of wonder, inspiration, and life for generations to come.

# The Transformative Power of Pretend Play For Children



In addition to its cognitive and social benefits, pretend play also plays a crucial role in promoting physical development and motor skills. Whether they're building elaborate forts with blankets and pillows or engaging in imaginative play outdoors, children are constantly refining their gross and fine motor skills through active play. By engaging in physical activities such as running, jumping, climbing, and balancing, children develop strength, coordination, and spatial awareness – skills that are essential for overall physical health and

In conclusion, pretend play is not just child's play – it is a powerful catalyst for learning, growth, and self-discovery. By embracing the magic of imagination, we can unlock the full potential of our children and inspire them to dream big, think creatively, and shape a brighter future for themselves and generations to come. As the poet Pablo Picasso once said, "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up." Let us nurture the artist within each child and celebrate the transformative power of pretend play in shaping the human experience.

**The author is a regular columnist  
and freelance writer**

# Naughty boy GSLV, is now a disciplined boy : ISRO Scientists

■ HT News Network

Sriharikota (Andhra Pradesh) Feb 17 (UNI) From Naughty boy, GSLV has now become a matured and disciplined boy.

That's the jubilant reaction of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) scientists after the success of Saturday's Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) mission.

The GSLV Rocket was nicknamed Naughty Boy for its spotty performance in the past.

After a majestic lift off from the Second Launch Pad at 1735 hrs today evening, the 51.7 m tall

three-stage heavy rocket GSLV-F14, with a lift off mass of 420 tonnes, successfully injected the latest and advanced weather satellite 2,274 kg INSAT-3DS into the intended Gerosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO), which the scientists described it as a perfect mission as it has boosted the confidence about GSLV for the future missions.

"GSLV-F14/INSAT-3DS Mission accomplished. The vehicle has successfully placed the satellite, which has a mission life of 10 years, into the intended geosynchronous transfer orbit", ISRO said.

Thanks to the precise orbit achieved, the lifespan of the Satellite was now extended by three



months. After today's stupendous success, the 'Naughty boy' came in for a lot of praise from the scientists, including ISRO Chairman S. Somanath.

Addressing the scientists at the Mission Control Centre after the successful launch, Mr Somanath, who is also the Secretary of Department of Space, said "the confidence on the GSLV rocket is now high".

The vehicle performed very very well, he said.

The success of today's Mission was all the more significant and important as the same GSLV will be used for the launch of NISAR Mission (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar satellite) later this

year." "The next GSLV Mission will be the launch of Indo-US collaboration NISAR Mission", Mr Somanath said.

GSLV-F14/INSAT-3DS Mission Director Tomy Joseph said the naughty boy has matured and has now become a disciplined boy.

In its 16th flight, 10th with indigenous cryo stage and the 7th operation flight with indigenous cryo stage, the GSLV vehicle, which had carried 50 kg more weight when compared to the earlier mission after the payload carrying was increased in stages over the years, injected the satellite precisely in the intended orbit.

The GSLV's payload capacity has

been increased from about 1,500 kg first to 2,274 kg now.

Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) Director S. Unnikrishnan said the 'naughty boy' has now become smart. After a majestic lift off from the Second Launch Pad at 1735 hrs today evening, the 51.7 m tall

three-stage heavy rocket GSLV-F14, with a lift off mass of 420 tonnes, successfully injected the latest and advanced weather satellite 2,274 kg INSAT-3DS into the intended Gerosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO), which the scientists described it as a perfect mission as it has boosted the confidence about GSLV for the future missions.

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■ HT News Network

Munich: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held a meeting with Canadian counterpart Melanie Joly on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference on Friday (local time). The talks between the two leaders focused on the present state of bilateral ties.

Mr Jaishankar and Melanie Joly also exchanged views on the global situation. The talks between the two leaders come amid strained ties between India and Canada after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made allegations that the Indian government was involved in the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Surrey in June 2023. India has denied the allegations, calling them "absurd" and "motivated."

Met my Canadian counterpart FM @melaniejoly on sidelines of #MSC2024.

Our conversation understandably focused on the present state of our bilateral ties. Was also useful to exchange views on the



global situation. pic.twitter.com/g1G1VhS3vn

The 60th Munich Security Conference (MSC) got underway an in-person event from February 16-18, at its traditional venue, the Hotel Bayerischer Hof in Munich, according to an official statement. This year's conference is being held under the chairmanship of the German Ambassador to the US, Christoph Heusgen.

Earlier, S Jaishankar held a meeting with his German counterpart Annalena Baerbock and discussed global challenges and the pathway ahead. The two leaders reviewed preparations for the next meeting of India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consulta-

tions. Taken to X, S Jaishankar stated, "Sogood to meet my German colleague FM @BAerbock on #MSC2024 sidelines. A wide-ranging conversation on global challenges and the pathway ahead. Appreciated her insights and assessments. Also reviewed preparations for the next meeting of our Inter-Governmental Consultations." He also held a meeting with Argentina's counterpart, Diana Mondino and discussed economic and political cooperation between the two nations. In a post on X, Mr Jaishankar wrote, "Pleasure to meet FM @DianaMondino of Argentina this evening. Discussed our economic and political cooperation."

## Kamal Nath Considering Joining BJP, Told Congress He's "Unhappy": Sources

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: Amid a strong buzz of him quitting the Congress and joining the BJP, sources close to Kamal Nath have told NDTV that while he has not resigned yet, he is unhappy with what is happening in the party and feels that it isn't the same organisation that he had joined over five decades ago.

The sources said the former Madhya Pradesh chief minister, who arrived in Delhi on Saturday, has not met Union Home Minister Amit Shah or Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and has only heard leaders like BJP Madhya Pradesh President VD Sharma saying that he is welcome to join the party. Citing that people in Madhya Pradesh's Chhindwara - a constituency he represented as an MP for nine terms - want him to join the BJP to fast-track development, the senior Congress leader has said that the matter is under his consideration, the sources said. Kamal Nath's son, Nakul Nath, is the MP from Chhindwara now and speculation is rife that he will



also join the BJP along with his father.

"Kamal Nath has conveyed his unhappiness to the Congress leadership. He feels that Rahul Gandhi is busy with the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra and the party is now being run by the likes of senior leaders Jairam Ramesh, KC Venugopal and Randeep Surjewala," he said. When the sources were asked whether the cause of Mr Nath's unhappiness was that he was not nominated for the Rajya Sabha polls, they said that was not true. The former chief minister, they claimed, had pushed for Ashok Singh's nomination from Madhya Pradesh and did

not want senior leader Meenakshi Natarajan, who was reportedly Rahul Gandhi's pick for the Upper House. They said senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh has requested Mr Nath not to leave the party. Rumours of the former chief minister quitting the party and joining the BJP had intensified on Saturday after Nakul Nath removed 'Congress' from his social media bio. The sources, however, claimed Kamal Nath has said that his son never had the party's name in his bio to begin with.

The Congress has denied reports of Mr Nath leaving the party, citing his long association with it and

stressing on the fact that Indira Gandhi had called him her "third son" while campaigning for him in Chhindwara in 1979.

Jitu Patwari, who had replaced Mr Nath as the Madhya Pradesh Congress president after the party's huge defeat in the Assembly elections last year, said, "When Jyotiraditya Scindia had quit the party (in 2020) and our government had fallen, every Congress worker had taken Kamal Nath's ideology and leadership to heart and worked with him. The reports doing the rounds are baseless."

"Can you think even in a dream that Indira Gandhi's 'third son' will quit the Congress? Can he think of leaving the workers who fought the Assembly elections under his leadership and worked tirelessly to try and make him the chief minister," he asked.

If Kamal Nath does leave the Congress, it will be a huge setback for the party, which is reeling from a string of high-profile exits, including that of former Maharashtra chief minister Ashok Chavan earlier this week. The 77-year-old

## Objectives, Eligibility Criteria For PM Vishwakarma Scheme

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the PM Vishwakarma Scheme on September 17 last year to provide end-to-end support to artisans and craftspeople nationwide and empower them.

Further, this scheme is aimed at improving the quality and reach of products and services of the 'Vishwakarma', ensuring their integration with the domestic and global value chains. It provides support to them in both rural and urban areas.

In August last year, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the scheme with a financial outlay of 13,000 crore over five years, starting from FY 2023-24 to FY 2027-28. It will strengthen and nurture the 'Guru-Shishya Parampara' or family-based practice of traditional skills by artisans and craftspeople working with their hands and tools, an official statement said.

This scheme is designed to benefit artisans and craftspeople involved in 18 designated trades, including carpenter, boat maker, armourer, blacksmith, hammer and tool kit maker, locksmith, goldsmith, potter, sculptor, stone breaker, cobbler/shoemaker/footwear artisan, mason basket/mat/broom maker/coir weaver, doll and toy maker, barber, garland maker, washerman, tailor and fishing net maker.

It is jointly implemented by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises; Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship; and the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance.

PM Vishwakarma Scheme: Objectives

Recognising artisans and craftspeople as 'Vishwakarma', thereby making them eligible to avail several benefits under the scheme.

Providing skill upgradation to hone their skills and introduce them to relevant and suitable training opportunities.

Provide them easy access to collateral-free credit and reduce the cost of credit by providing interest subvention, as per the official website.

It also provides a platform for brand promotion and market linkages to help 'Vishwakarma' in accessing new growth opportunities.

PM Vishwakarma Scheme: Benefits  
The holistic scheme envisages to provide end-to-end support to the artisans and craftspeople around the country through various means:

1. PM Vishwakarma Certificate and ID Card

Once they become a member of



the scheme, the 'Vishwakarma' will be provided with a PM Vishwakarma Certificate and PM Vishwakarma ID Card, which will be having a unique digital number. It will enable the applicant's recognition as a 'Vishwakarma', making the person eligible for all the benefits. This is available in both digital as well as physical form.

2. Upgrading the skills

The scheme's skilling intervention aims to improve the skills of traditional artisans and crafters, who have been using traditional tools for generations. As per the official website of PM Vishwakarma, this consists of three components: skill assessment, basic training and advanced training.

3. Skill Assessment  
To ascertain the existing skill levels of all registered beneficiaries, a skill assessment will be done.

Basic Training: This will be held for around 40 hours (over 5-7 days) and will include formalisation of acquired skills and upgradation.

Advanced Training: Those eligible beneficiaries interested in further skill upgrades will have the opportunity to enrol for advanced training, which will be held for 15 days (120 hours) or more at the designated training centres.

Training Stipend: All the beneficiaries will be given a training stipend of 500 per day while undergoing both Basic and Advanced Training programmes.

4. Toolkit Incentive  
At the start of the basic training, all the beneficiaries will receive a toolkit incentive of up to R 15,000. The money will be disbursed via e-RUPI/e-vouchers which can be utilized at the designated centres to procure improved toolkits.

5. Loan support  
Financial support will be provided to the beneficiaries under the scheme

in the form of collateral-free "Enterprise Development Loans", at a concessional interest rate of 5 per cent.

"The total amount of loan assistance would be 3 lakhs wherein, the beneficiaries can avail the first loan tranche up to 1 lakh and second loan tranche up to 2 lakh," the official website states.

PM Vishwakarma Scheme: Eligibility criteria

An artisan or craftsperson, above the age of 18 years, who has been working with hands and tools in family-based traditional trades within the unorganised or informal sector is eligible for registration under this scheme.

The beneficiary should not have availed loans under similar credit-based schemes of the Centre or any state government for self-employment or business purposes in the last five years. However, MUDRA and SVANidhi beneficiaries, who have fully repaid their loan, are eligible under PM Vishwakarma.

The benefits of this scheme are restricted to one member in each household.

Those in government service and their family members will not be considered eligible under the scheme. The beneficiary should not have availed loans under similar credit-based schemes of the Centre or any state government for self-employment or business purposes in the last five years. However, MUDRA and SVANidhi beneficiaries, who have fully repaid their loan, are eligible under PM Vishwakarma.

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## Spy Cam, Phones In Separatist Amritpal Singh's Cell In Major Assam Jail Breach

■ HT News Network

Guwahati: A major security breach was reported from Dibrugarh Central Jail in Assam where separatist leader and "Waris Punjab De" chief Amritpal Singh and his nine associates are currently lodged.

Aspy camera, a smartphone, a keypad phone, pen drives, Bluetooth headphones and speakers, a smartwatch, and several other things were recovered today from the cell where the separatist leader and his nine associates were kept.

Taking to X, Assam top cop GP Singh said, "Reference NSA detainees at Dibrugarh Jail, Assam - On receipt of information about unauthorised activities taking place in NSA cell, additional CCTV cameras were installed in the public area of NSA Block. Inputs received confirmed



unauthorised activities, based on which jail staff searched the premise of NSA Cell early this morning, leading to the recovery of a smartphone with SIM, a keypad phone, TV remote with keyboard, spy-cam pen, pen drives, Bluetooth headphones, and speakers and smartwatch which were lawfully seized by the jail staff. The source of these unauthorised articles and the mode of induction is being

ascertained. Further lawful action is being taken and steps being taken to prevent recurrence." On April 23, 2023, Amritpal Singh was brought to the Dibrugarh Central Jail after the Punjab Police arrested him from the state's Moga district after several weeks of manhunt. The radical Sikh preacher was charged under the stringent National Security Act, or NSA. His nine associates have also been charged under the NSA. A spy camera, a smartphone, a keypad phone, pen drives, Bluetooth headphones, and several other things were recovered from the cell, the police said. Taking to X, Assam top cop GP Singh said, "Reference NSA detainees at Dibrugarh Jail, Assam - On receipt of information about unauthorised activities taking place in NSA cell, additional CCTV cameras were installed in the public area of NSA Block.

# Russian emigres gather across Europe to mourn Navalny, denounce Putin

■ HT News Network

Hundreds of protesters, many of them Russian emigres, gathered in cities across Europe and beyond on Friday to express their outrage over the death of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

Often gathering outside Russian embassies, they chanted slogans critical of Russian President Vladimir Putin, whom they blamed for the activist's death, holding up signs calling him a "killer" and demanding accountability.

A man holds a placard that reads "Not death, but murder" at a vigil held in front of the Russian embassy in Berlin, Germany, February 16.—Reuters

Putin's most formidable domestic opponent, Navalny fell unconscious and died on Friday after a walk at the Arctic penal colony where he was serving a three-decade sentence, prison authorities said.

In Berlin, a crowd of 500 to 600 people, according to police estimates, gathered on the city's Unter den Linden boulevard, chanting in a mixture of Russian, German and English.

Some chanted "Putin to the Hague", referring to the



international criminal court investigating possible war crimes committed in Ukraine. Police used barriers to close off the road between the Russian embassy and the crowd.

"Alexei Navalny is the leader of the Russian opposition and we always kept hope in his name," said a Russian man draped in a blue-and-white anti-war flag, giving his name only as Ilya.

Russians Anna and Anastasia and Scotland's Alison pay their respects to Alexei Navalny outside the Russian

embassy in London, Britain, February 16.—Reuters/Hollie Adams

In Lithuania, formerly run from Moscow but now a member of NATO and the European Union and home to a sizeable community of emigres, protesters placed flowers and candles by a portrait of Navalny.

"He was always with us, so it is all surreal," said Lyusya Shtein, 26, a Pussy Riot activist who has lived in Vilnius since leaving Russia in 2022. "None of us yet understand what happened".

In Russia itself, prosecutors warned Russians against participating in any mass protest in Moscow. Police watched as some Russians came to lay roses and carnations at a monument to victims of Soviet repression in the shadow of the former KGB headquarters.

A woman holds a portrait of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny as people gather near the Russian embassy in Paris, France, February 16.—Reuters

Rights group OVD-Info, which reports on freedom of assembly in Russia, said that more than 100 people had been detained at rallies in memory of Navalny. Reuters could not immediately verify the report. Groups also gathered in Rome, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Sofia, Geneva and The Hague, among others.

## Trump fined \$355m, barred from New York business in fraud trial

■ HT News Network

NEW YORK: A judge ruled on Friday that Donald Trump must pay \$354.9 million in penalties for fraudulently overstating his net worth to dupe lenders, handing the former US president another legal setback in a civil case that imperils his real estate empire.

Justice Arthur Engoron also banned Trump from serving as an officer or director of any New York corporation for three years.

Engoron cancelled his prior ruling from September ordering the "dissolution" of companies that control pillars of Trump's real estate empire, saying on Friday that this was no longer necessary because he is appointing an independent monitor and compliance director to oversee Trump's businesses.



In the ruling, Engoron wrote that Trump and the other defendants in the case "are incapable of admitting the error of their ways".

"Their complete lack of contrition and remorse borders on pathological," Engoron wrote. "Instead, they adopt a 'See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil' posture that the evidence belies."

The lawsuit brought by New York Attorney General Letitia James accused Trump and his family businesses of overstating his net

worth by as much \$3.6 billion a year over a decade to fool bankers into giving him better loan terms. Trump's lawyer Alina Habba said in a statement that the ruling was a "manifest injustice" and "culmination of a multi-year, politically fuelled witch hunt" against him.

"This is not just about Donald Trump—if this decision stands, it will serve as a signal to every single American that New York is no longer open for business," Habba said, adding that she plans to appeal.

## Berlin, Paris ink 'historic' security pacts with Kyiv

■ HT News Network

BERLIN: Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky signed a security deal with Germany on Friday in Berlin, hailed by Chancellor Olaf Scholz as a "historic step" anchoring sustained support for Kyiv in its raging battles against Russia.

Hours later, Zelensky and his French counterpart, Emmanuel Macron also signed a similar security pact calling for French military and civilian aid for Kyiv in its war against Russia, officials said. The deal covers aid pledge for up to three billion euros (\$3.2bn) for 2024, after 1.7bn in 2022 and 2.1bn last year.

With the Ukraine war about to enter a third year, the president was set to make a new plea for sustained help with financing and armaments at the



Munich Security Conference, where leaders like US Vice President Kamala Harris are to gather.

Zelensky's European tour comes at a critical time with Ukraine facing mounting pressure on the eastern frontlines because of ammunition shortages and fresh Russian attacks.

Fierce fighting raged around beleaguered Avdiivka, on the eastern frontline, which has become a main Russian target, ahead of the Feb 24 invasion anni-

versary.

The long-term future of billions of dollars of Western aid is meanwhile in doubt, with the biggest contributor, the US, in the throes of an election year. A possible \$60-billion package of military aid has been held up in Washington since last year because of wrangling in Congress. The EU has also admitted that it will only be able to make good on half of the one million artillery shells it promised to send by March.

# Pakistan, Turkiye resolve to boost security ties

■ HT News Network

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Turkiye on Friday concluded the 18th edition of their High-Level Military Dialogue Group, reaffirming the commitment to enhancing bilateral defence and security cooperation.

The discussions, hosted at the Ministry of Defence in Rawalpindi from Feb 13 to 16, covered a broad spectrum of defence cooperation areas, including training exercises, exchange programmes, and co-pro-



duction of military equipment. Progress from decisions made during the last meeting in Turkiye was also evaluated. The Pakistani delegation was led by

Defence Secretary retired Lt Gen Hamooduz Zaman Khan, while the Turkish delegation was steered by Gen Irfan Ozsert, the deputy chief of General Staff.

The meeting focused on pivotal issues such as security challenges, counterterrorism efforts, and the current regional and geopolitical climate. Both delegations expressed satisfaction with the existing momentum of defence cooperation and agreed to further enhance their partnership, the ministry said in a statement. A preliminary meeting between Gen Ozsert and Mr Khan set the groundwork for the detailed discussions that followed during the 18th edition of the high-level military.

## 1.4bn kids at risk of diseases and poverty globally: UN

■ HT News Network

ISLAMABAD: Globally, 1.4 billion children aged under 16 lack any form of social protection, leaving them vulnerable to diseases, poor nutrition and poverty, according to new data released by the International Labour Organisation, Save the Children and Unicef.

In low-income countries, less than one in 10 children have access to child benefits, highlighting a significant disparity compared to the coverage enjoyed by children in high-income countries. In South Asia, child benefits coverage has increased from 9.2 per cent to 24.3pc between 2009 and 2023, says the data released on Wednesday. Child benefits are a critical form of social protection, intended to promote the long-term well-being of children.

Paid in cash or tax credits, child benefits are essential for reducing poverty, as well as accessing healthcare, nutrition, quality education and water and sanitation. Additionally, these benefits support socio-economic development, particularly in times of crisis.

## Israel "Will Pay" In Blood For Killing Civilians, Says Hezbollah

■ HT News Network

Beirut: The Iran-backed Hezbollah signalled on Friday it would escalate attacks on Israel in response to the deaths of 10 Lebanese civilians killed in Israeli attacks this week, saying Israel would pay a price "in blood". Hezbollah and Israel have been trading fire across the Lebanese-Israeli border since the Gaza war erupted in October, in their deadliest confrontation in nearly 20 years.

In a televised speech on Friday, Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah accused Israel of deliberately targeting civilians in this week's attacks, saying Israel could have avoided killing civilians.

"The response to the massacre should be continuing resistance work at the front and escalating resistance work at the front," Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said in a televised speech. "Our women and our children who were killed in these days, the enemy will pay the price of spilling their blood in blood," he said.

## Egypt building 'walled enclosure' for Gazans in Sinai, says WSJ

■ HT News Network

CAIRO: Egypt is constructing a walled camp in the Sinai Peninsula to receive displaced Palestinian civilians from the Gaza Strip, a US media report and an Egyptian human rights monitor said on Friday.

But Israel said it had no plans to move civilians there, as it prepares an offensive in Rafah, in Gaza's far south.

The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) said an eight-square-mile "walled enclosure" was under construction on the Egyptian side of the border.

The compound was part of "contingency plans" if ceasefire talks in Cairo failed and could accommodate more than 100,000 people, it added.

The Sinai Foundation for Human Rights, an Egyptian NGO, released a report this week that it said showed construction of the compound to receive Palestinian refugees "in the case of a mass exodus".

Journalists reviewed satellite pictures taken on Thursday of the area in northern Sinai, showing machinery building a wall along the Egypt-Gaza border. The area is highly secure and closed to journalists. A comparison of satellite photos taken on Feb 10 and Feb 15 shows land having been graded.

North Sinai governor Mohamed Shousha has denied Egypt is preparing "an isolated area in Sinai" to receive refugees. The construction work was to assess houses destroyed "during upheaval in recent years to "properly compensate" owners, he said.

The Sinai Foundation for Human Rights said two contractors told it construction firms had been tasked with building the gated area, "surrounded by seven-metre-high walls".

The site lies on the "rubble" of Egyptian homes "demolished" during the state's war against Islamists in northern Sinai over the past decade, it said.

Sources in Sinai said the area was being prepared in case of a breach of the Gaza border, which Egypt has fortified with additional walls and buffer zones since Israel's war with Hamas began.

"The area will be readied with tents" and humanitarian assistance would be delivered inside, said one source. Egypt, which controls the Rafah border crossing from Gaza, has repeatedly warned against any "forced displacement" of Palestinians from Gaza into the Sinai desert. President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has said if that happened it could jeopardise the peace treaty Egypt signed with Israel in 1979. UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi expressed understanding for Egypt's opposition to any mass exodus. "It would be catastrophic for Palestinians... to be displaced again," Grandi told the BBC on Friday.

## With half votes in, Prabowo leads Indonesia race

■ HT News Network

JAKARTA: Indonesian Defence Minister Prabowo Subianto was on course to win the presidential election by a wide margin, election commission results showed Friday, with 50 percent of votes counted.

The official result is not expected until late March but early indications all point to the 72-year-old ex-general being anointed successor to popular outgoing leader Joko Widodo.

But both of his rivals said they would wait for the official result and have not conceded.

With half the ballots now counted, Prabowo holds a commanding 56.89 percent of votes, more than double his nearest rival and enough for a first-round majority, the election commission's website showed.

Former Jakarta governor Anies Baswedan stood at 25.27 percent on Friday morning and former Central Java governor Ganjar Pranowo had 17.84 percent of the vote.

Prabowo needs more than 50 per cent of the overall vote and at least a fifth of ballots cast in over half the country's 38 provinces to officially secure the presidency. Analysts say his win is almost assured.

The former general said Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese had called to congratulate him, as well as the leaders of Singapore, Malaysia and Sri Lanka in his Instagram post, which showed him with a phone held to his ear.

But the United States has been more cautious, only congratulating the Indonesian people on the election's "robust turnout" in a statement that did not mention Prabowo's name.

Jokowi, as the incumbent leader is popularly known, told reporters Thursday he had met with Prabowo the previous evening to offer his "congratulations".

# Putin "Responsible" For Kremlin Critic Alexei Navalny's Death, Says Joe Biden

■ HT News Network

Washington: US President Joe Biden on Friday said he was "not surprised" but "outraged" after the reported death of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

"He bravely stood up to the corruption, the violence and all the bad things the Putin government was doing," Biden said at the White House of Russian President Vladimir Putin. "Putin is responsible for Navalny's death." The White House was seeking more information about Navalny's death at a Russian penal colony north of the Arctic

Circle, where he was dispatched less than two months ago. The development has put a further chill into already bitter US-Russian relations. The 47-year-old Navalny had been a leading critic of Putin, and Biden had said after meeting Putin in Geneva in June 2021 that Navalny's death would risk devastating consequences for Putin. Biden and Putin remain deeply at odds over Russia's invasion of Ukraine two years ago, and Biden is urging Republican hardliners in the US Congress to support additional funding to pay for more weaponry for Ukraine's military. Russia has figured prominently on



the campaign trail as Biden seeks reelection in November. His expected Republican opponent, former President Donald Trump, triggered bipartisan outrage last week by saying he would do nothing to defend NATO allies from Russia unless they paid a greater share for the common defenses. The top Republican in Congress, House of Representatives Speaker Mike Johnson has not put a Senate bill for new funding for Ukraine up to a vote. After Navalny's death, he said the US and its allies should use "every means available to cut off Putin's ability to fund his unprovoked war in Ukraine.

## Anil Koul holds public darbar at Qazigund; emphasises time bound redressal of public issues

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, FEBRUARY 17: As a sequel to government's initiatives of addressing the public issues and grievances at their doorstep, Secretary Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, Anil Koul, today convened a mega public darbar here at Qazigund. During the event, the Secretary emphasized the pivotal role of such public outreach programs in bridging gap between the administration and the citizens. He



highlighted the significance of senior government officials engaging directly with the people to assess and address their issues and concerns. The initiative aims to provide a platform for the local residents to voice their concerns, share feedback, and

seek resolutions to various issues affecting the community. Anil Koul, along with other officials from the department, actively engaged with the attendees to understand their needs and challenges. Heads of various govern-

ment departments including Revenue, Police, Power, Health, Education, Public Works, Agriculture, and allied departments, were present to address sector specific concerns of the people present during the public darbar. The Secretary, after listening to grievances and demands of the public, sought on the spot response from the concerned district officers present in the grievance redressal camp. He assured the public that all genuine demands and issues projected by them will be looked into on priority for redressal.

## DDC Baramulla chairs DLRC meet, reviews performance of banks

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA, FEBRUARY 17: The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today chaired a District Level Review Committee (DLRC) meeting to review the overall performance of banks and other financial institutions under Annual Credit Plan and Govt Schemes for 3rd Quarter of the financial year 2023-24. During the meeting, Lead District Manager Baramulla apprised the chair that for the current financial year



deposits worth Rs. 6721.72 Crore were made in the banks while advance credits issued amounted to 7016.62 Crore with a credit ratio of 104.39%. The meeting was also informed that as part of the District Credit Plan, Rs. 3533 Crore have

been disbursed for both priority and non-priority sectors, marking an achievement of 81% against the targeted amount of Rs. 4376 Crore for the current fiscal year. Providing an update about performance of banks under GSS/EGS financial

support schemes like PMEGP, PMEGP-DIC, JK-REGP, NULM, KCC etc, it was reported that an achievement of Rs. 196.7 crore has been reached, against the target of Rs. 144.8 crore with disbursement of 12,760 cases. During the sector-wise review, the DDC emphasized the need for banks to enhance credit disbursements in priority sectors such as agriculture and education. Furthermore, the concerned officers were instructed to streamline credit accessibility, making it easier for individuals to avail themselves.

## Secretary RDD distributes Rs 76.57 lakhs to JKRLM SHGs for livelihood initiatives

■ HT News Network

CHENANI, FEBRUARY 17: In a significant move towards fostering economic independence and sustainable development among rural women, Secretary Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary distributed sanction letters worth Rs 76.57 lakhs to Self-Help Groups (SHGs) associated with the Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihood Mission (JKRLM) in Chenani.

The allocated funds are specifically designated for various livelihood initiatives, aimed at providing crucial support to enhance their economic prospects.

Among the initiatives, the establishment of a Farm Machinery Bank, with a total cost of Rs 10 Lakh and an 80% subsidy sanctioned by the Agriculture Department,



two Masala Processing Units, costing around 13 lakhs with a 60% subsidy sanctioned by the Horticulture Department. The sanction of a Poly House, with a cost of Rs 2.15 lakh and a 95% subsidy sanctioned by the Agriculture Department, will provide an ideal environment for cul-

tivating high-value crops.

Furthermore, the Micro Enterprises Development Programme (MEDP) on Chir-Pine Needles, costing Rs 1.17 lakh and sanctioned by NABARD, along with the NOC provided by the Forest Department for Chir-Pine Collection, will create opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and promote forest conservation.

Additionally, a Bank Credit Linkage of Rs 50 lakhs has been allocated to SHGs for various livelihood initiatives initiated by the members, further demonstrating the government's commitment to supporting rural women in their entrepreneurial endeavors.

Dr. Shahid emphasized JKRLM's dedicated efforts in implementing these initiatives across rural areas of District Udhampur, providing crucial last-mile support to empower rural women and elevate their status within their families and communities.

## CRPF Organises Free Medical Camp in Asham Sonawari

■ HT News Network



Bandipora: Under its civic action program, a free medical camp was organized by 45 Battalion Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) at Asham village of Hajin Tehsil in North Kashmir's Bandipora district on Saturday. The camp was inaugurated by PRI Nisar Ahmad in presence of Apoorwa, commandant of 45bn CRPF. He was accompanied by Rajiv Ranjan Adjudant, other officers and local eminent personalities were present during the camp. Commanding Officer 45 BN CRPF, Apoorwa, said that 45 Bn CRPF assured the local public that CRPF has always been helping the Kashmiri people and putting all out efforts for peace, prosperity and development of the society. He added that they will continue to conduct such a civic programme for the benefit of the local public in future. Our aim to organise this free medical camp is to reach out to the general public. We are providing treatment for common diseases, seasonal illnesses, and also if there is a need to involve expert and we are providing that, he added. A local resident namely Mohammad Sultan of Asham after getting a check-up said that they are very thankful for this camp. The medicines are quite expensive outside. We have to spend Rs 1000-2000 on them in the market. The doctors are also very good. People are getting check-ups done quite smoothly. A large number of people gathered to the health camp organised by 45 battalion CRPF.

## Awareness programme on PM-FME held at Fruit Mandi, Kupwara

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 17: As part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, the Department of Horticulture Planning and Marketing (HP&M), District Kupwara today organized a day long awareness programme regarding Pradhan Mantri Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprise Scheme (PM-FME) at Kupwara. At the outset, Nodal Officer PM-FME/Area Marketing Officer Kupwara, Mushtaq Ahmad Kumar highlighted the importance of spreading awareness among the public for motivating them.

## Group of 60 progressive orchardists flagged-off to CoE Zawoora under ATMA at Ganderbal

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, FEBRUARY 17: A significant milestone was marked in the agricultural sector of Ganderbal today as a group of 60 progressive orchardists embarked on a journey to the Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Zawoora, Srinagar, under the Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) 2023-24 program.

The flag-off ceremony, graced by the Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Ganderbal, Mushtaq Ahmad Simnani and Additional Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Gulzar Ahmad, along with senior officers from the Horticulture and allied departments, took place at the Mini-Secretariat Ganderbal.

Speaking on the occasion, the ADDC said that the core objective of the tour is to acquaint orchardists with the latest advancements in the horticulture sector. Through exposure to technologies such as the production of Designer High-Density Plants, rootstock, nursery growing, and protected cultivation, the aim is to foster meaningful employability within the sector, benefitting both seasoned orchardists and aspiring youth.

This initiative underscores the commitment of the administration to empower and equip stakeholders in the agricultural domain with the knowledge and tools necessary to thrive in an ever-evolving landscape.

By bridging the gap between traditional practices and modern innovations, the tour promises to catalyze growth, sustainability, and prosperity in the orchard industry of Ganderbal.

## Director Sericulture kick-starts 05 days Skill Development Training programme at Pulwama

■ HT News Network

PULWAMA, JANUARY 17: Director Sericulture J&K, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat today kick-started 05 days Skill Development Training programme at Town Hall here under Capacity Building Activities for Silkworm Rearing/ Farmers under HADP 2023-24.

Addressing a huge gathering, the Director underscored the need for skill up-gradation of Silkworm Rearing to undertake silkworm rearing on scientific lines. He also added that among other initiatives of the department, emphasis is being laid to organize regular capacity building programmes for Silkworm Rearing and youth across J&K.

The department is also aiming to further strengthen the capacity building activities to organize exposure visits for Silkworm Rearing and youth in collaboration with Central Silk Board to differ-



ent states of India to sensitize them about the latest Sericulture techniques being practiced by the Silkworm Rearing outside J&K. On the occasion, the Director Sericulture felicitated Silkworm rearers with tool kits.

He emphasized that people in general and the unemployed youth in particular need to be made aware regarding the potential of the Sericulture sector and various schemes of the department to increase their income generation capacity.

The Director Sericulture directed the officers that utmost priority must

be given for wide publicity and awareness about the facilities/incentives being provided by the department to the Silkworm Rearing and to those who intend to adopt Silkworm rearing as a means to earn dignified livelihood. He stressed upon the Officers and field functionaries of the department to extend their full cooperation to the Silkworm Rearing community and share their expertise to prevent any prevalence of disease during ensuing silkworm rearing. Moreover, the department of Sericulture is devising a robust disease prevention mechanism by framing Technical

Committees/ Teams in South, Central and North areas for prompt response to control and contain prevalence of various diseases of silkworms in order to bolster quality cocoon production and save the silkworm rearers from crop loss.

The Director Sericulture also emphasized that the department also aims to undertake extensive mulberry plantation across J&K and in this regard various institutes and vacant retrieved land will be covered under the plantation programme so that the abundant leaf reserve will be provided to the Silkworm Rearing in coming rearing seasons. Speaking on the occasion Dr. N.K. Bhatia, Director Central Sericulture Research & Training Institute, CSB, Pampore also shared his valuable inputs and assured that his organization will extend full cooperation in capacity building and Skill development up-gradation of the farmers.

## DC Kupwara reviews preparations for upcoming 'Viksit Bharat, Viksit Jammu Kashmir' programme

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 17: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan on Saturday chaired a review-cum-preparedness meeting to assess the ground-work for the upcoming 'Viksit Bharat: Viksit Jammu Kashmir' programme, scheduled to be held on 20th, February 2024 at 24 locations across the district.

The meeting reviewed the action plan and preparations for ensuring the seamless and successful conduct of 'Viksit Bharat, Viksit Jammu Kashmir' at all venues including MC Hall Kupwara, MC Hall Handwara, Teetwal, Keran, Machil and other block headquarters where VCs are scheduled to be held.

During the meeting, the DC directed officers to make fool-proof arrangements for the upcoming events and ensure utmost coordination at different levels for the smooth and successful conduct of the programme in Kupwara district.

She further directed concerned officers



to ensure seamless connectivity during the main function as connectivity is the key.

BDOs were directed to keep ready the venues by 17 February and ensure installation of TV Screens, web cameras, Power back up, uniform seating arrangements, proper decorum and discipline during the programme, and also ensure readiness of the venues in every respect by 19th February.

She also directed BDOs and CDPOs to conduct the rehearsals on 18th and 19th February.

DC asked officers to identify alternative locations for open venues in case of expected snowfall.

## Handicrafts & Handloom deptt organizes day-long Exhibition/ Awareness camp at Kupwara

DDC exhorts trainees to avail benefits of Govt. schemes, utilize online marketplaces, e-Commerce

■ Syed Nazakat Khaleefa

KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 17: The Department of Handicrafts and Handloom today organized a day long exhibition cum awareness camp at Town Hall Kupwara.

The programme, presided over by the District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan, was also attended by CO Lt. Col Rajiv; AD Handicrafts & Handloom, Kupwara, Mohammad Yousaf Lone; Handicrafts Training Officer, Reyaz Ahmad Yatoo, besides a huge number of artisans, weavers and trainees.

The DDC enjoined upon the departments to take on board the interested women folk so that they can avail benefits of various govern-



ment schemes. She also encouraged the participants to come forward and take benefits of the schemes.

DC said that Kashmiri handicrafts are known for their beauty, intricate designs, high quality and craftsmanship, which results in strong

demand both domestically and internationally. The demand for them speaks to their quality and unique cultural appeal. Additionally, tourism plays a significant role in driving demand as visitors often seek out these handmade items as

souvenirs or gifts, she added.

She said that it is good to see young educated entrepreneurs are turning up to this sector who are making efforts to bridge the access gap with the help of technology, but due to increasing demand, physical as well as online access gap still exists.

DDC urged the women artisans and entrepreneurs to increasingly incorporate technology into handicrafts and use online marketplaces and e-Commerce.

She exhorted upon the trainees to take advantage of the government sponsored schemes meant for handicraft and handloom development, so that they can earn livelihood by making self help groups to establish self income generating units.

# District Level Committee reviews Child Protection measures in Rajouri district

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, FEBRUARY 17: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Om Prakash Bhagat today chaired a crucial meeting of the District Level Child Protection Committee with the aim to ensure the effective welfare and protection of children in the district. The meeting witnessed an in-depth and comprehensive discussion on various key points to enhance the functioning of the district-level child welfare committee.

The primary focus of the meeting was to deliberate on the Juvenile Justice Act, Mission Vatsalya and other initiatives of the Government meant for the welfare of the children.

Furthermore, the meeting emphasized the importance of enrolling children residing in slums in educational institutions. The CEO Education, was directed to take immediate action to ensure that every child in slum areas has access to quality education, thereby empowering them with knowl-



edge and opportunities for a brighter future.

The health and well-being of children were also given paramount attention during the discussions. The CMO was directed to conduct thorough check-ups of children living in slum areas, assessing and addressing their health parameters. This step reflects the commitment of the committee to providing comprehensive healthcare services to

children in need.

Moreover, the Deputy Commissioner also directed the concerned members of the district child welfare committee to undertake meticulous mapping of children requiring care and support. The aim is to identify children who are vulnerable or in need of targeted interventions, ensuring that their specific needs are addressed promptly and effectively.

The meeting concluded with a

commitment from all members of the District Level Child Protection Committee to work collaboratively and diligently towards the welfare and protection of children in the district. The committee recognized the significance of a holistic approach, encompassing education, healthcare, and social welfare, to create an environment where children can thrive and realize their full potential.

Among the others, ADDC Rajouri, Pawan Kumar; ADC Rajouri, Rajeev Kumar Khajuria; ASP, Musadiq Majid Basu; PO ICDS, Shoket Mehmood Malik; DSWO, Abdul Raheem; CMO, Dr Rajinder Sharma; CEO Education, Bishamber Dass and other concerned officers and President NGO, Rajiv Khajuria. Among the others, ADDC Rajouri, Pawan Kumar; ADC Rajouri, Rajeev Kumar Khajuria; ASP, Musadiq Majid Basu; PO ICDS, Shoket Mehmood Malik; DSWO, Abdul Raheem; CMO, Dr Rajinder Sharma; CEO Education, Bishamber Dass and other concerned officers and President NGO, Rajiv Khajuria.

## NCORD: DC Bandipora chairs District Level Committee meeting

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, FEBRUARY 17: To review ongoing efforts and to address the challenges posed by substance abuse and illicit drug trafficking, a meeting of the District Level Committee under Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) was today held at Mini secretariat Bandipora.

The meeting chaired by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Shakeel Ul Rehman discussed in detail emerging trends, trafficking, patterns of drug abuse, access to treatment and rehabilitation services, and enforcement measures besides other key issues. The meeting also discussed threadbare preventive strategies, including public awareness campaigns, community-based initiatives, and school programs aimed at deterring drug use and promoting healthy life-



styles. The DC, on the occasion, asked the concerned to frame an advance calendar of activities to educate more people regarding the ill effects of drug abuse and to reach out to the vulnerable sections of the society. He emphasized upon coordination of different departments and NGOs and asked the concerned agencies to conduct more effective awareness programs regarding ill effects of substance abuse and preventive measures

in close coordination and involvement of PRIs.

Rather said that District Development Council Members and other public representatives have an active role to play to spread awareness at the grass-roots level. The DC impressed upon the Tehsildars and other concerned agencies to ensure that no Tobacco product is sold near schools. He asked all the concerned stakeholders, including social welfare, health, education.

# DC Bandipora chairs District Task Force meeting on Pulse Polio immunization-2024

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, FEBRUARY 17: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Shakeel Ul Rehman on Saturday chaired a meeting of District Task Force (DTF) on Pulse Polio Immunization 2024.

The meeting was aimed to discuss the planning and implementation of activities for pulse polio immunization-2024 scheduled to be held on 3rd March 2024 across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting discussed various parameters, including human resources planning, vaccine and cold chain planning, logistics and transport planning, transit points, hard to reach areas, and social mobilization plan.

It was given out in the meeting that Bandipora has 61528 estimated population of children below 5 years, which require 68296



OPV doses and 790 vaccine carriers.

It was informed that 05 transit points have been identified in the district, including Gulshan Chowk, Nowpora Chowk, Bus Stand Nusso,

Hajin Market, and Sumbal Bridge.

The meeting was informed that staff has been deputed to Tulail and other higher reaches in advance and a vaccine will be dis-

patched in next week.

It was given out that the department has taken advance measures to cover the hard to reach areas besides plans have been formulated to start house to house immunization in Gurez from day one keeping in view its scattered population.

The DC emphasized on beforehand planning for the success of all welfare programmes. He stressed upon all the stakeholders to work as a team and ensure that no children below the age of 5 are left without pulse polio immunization.

The DC assured assistance and support from the District Administration at every level for more improvement in the health sector.

The meeting was attended by ADDC/PO ICDS Mohd Ashraf, ADC Umar Shafi Pandit, Chief Education Officer, Chief Medical Officer, Dy CMO, BMO and other concerned.

# Director Agriculture convenes review meeting at Anantnag,

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, FEBRUARY 17: The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal today convened a meeting of officers of the department at Anantnag and took stock of the progress under HADP projects, regular CAPEX and CSSs, scope of convergence between MGNREGA and HADP and issues related to PM-KISAN, PMFBY and Soil Health Card scheme in Anantnag Kulgam and Shopian districts of south Kashmir.

During the meeting, different centrally sponsored schemes being implemented by the department including RKVY, MIDH, ATMA, NFSM, PM KISAN, Soil Health Card Scheme, KCC scheme etc were also discussed in detail.



The implementation of projects under the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP) was discussed threadbare.

Addressing the meeting, Director Agriculture highlighted the importance of expedi-

tious and judicious expenditure of funds under different centrally sponsored schemes (CSSs), projects under HADP and CAPEX. He asked the officers that funds allocated under different components of CSSs must be expended in a time bound manner.

He also reiterated the importance of maintaining the highest level of transparency and accountability during all the expenditures.

Director Agriculture directed the officers to reach out to the farmers of every area and make them aware regarding latest farmer friendly technologies in the agriculture sector. He also asked them to work in collaboration with the representatives of local communities for the successful implementation of different schemes at grass roots level.

## DLSA Kathua organises Special Lok Adalat for Cheque Bounce cases

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, FEBRUARY 17: As per the Action Plan issued by J&K Legal Services Authority for the month of February, 2024 and also under the radiant guidance of Chairman District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Kathua (also Pr. District & Sessions Judge, Kathua) Ashok Kumar Shavan, a Special Lok Adalat on Cheque Bounce cases was organised by District Legal Services Authority Kathua in the District Court Complex today.

The Special Lok Adalat started with the ceremonial lighting of lamp by



Chairman, DLSA Kathua who in his address to the mammoth gathering threw light on the purpose of holding the Special Lok Adalat.

Four Benches for settling the referred Cheque Bounce cases were constituted in which Bench No. 1 was composed of Swati Gupta, Ld.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Kathua and Neena Thakur, Ld. Distt Mobile Magistrate.

Bench No.2 consisted of Jeevan Kumar Sharma, Munsiff JMJC, Basohli, and Advocate Shub Kumar, President, Bar Association Basohli, while Bench No. 3 comprised Poonam Gupta, Additional Special Mobile Magistrate Billawar and Jyoti Bhagat, Munsiff JMJC, Billawar and Bench No. 4 was chaired by Rajni Bhagat.

A total number of 30 cases were taken up for amicable settlement out of which 09 were settled and an amount of Rs 30,43,119/- was realized as settlement amount.

# GCET organises Entrepreneurship Outreach Program at GMHSS Kot Bhalwal

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 17: The Innovation Council (IIC) of Government College of Engineering and Technology (GCET) Jammu today organised an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Outreach Program at Government Model Higher Secondary School, Kot Bhalwal Jammu under the patronage of Dr. Sameru Sharma, Principal GCET.

The outreach program aimed to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, encouraging students to explore their entrepreneurial potential.

The proceedings commenced with a warm welcome by Reeya Rehan, a student from



GCET, setting the tone for an enriching day. Er. Sanjeev Gupta, Associate Professor, GCET Jammu addressed the gathering, highlighting the paramount importance of innovation in today's fast-evolving world. His words resonated with the audience, emphasizing the

need for students to cultivate a mindset that embraces creativity and forward-thinking. Power Point presentations delving into the essence of innovation & entrepreneurship and critical process of idea generation, underlining its significance in the entrepreneurial journey were given by Reeya Rehan and Pratiksha Kalsotra.

The attendees were treated to engaging discussions, interactive sessions, and hands-on activities with amazing games and rewards, creating an environment conducive to idea exchange and collaboration. The program underscored the importance of nurturing a mindset that embraces innovation and entrepreneurship as essential elements of academic and professional growth.

## MGNREGA Convergence Plan 2024-25 discussed at Reasi

■ HT News Network

REASI, FEBRUARY 17: District Development Commissioner, Reasi, Vishesh Mahajan, chaired a meeting to discuss the formulation of a convergence plan under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) with schemes of other departments for the financial year 2024-25. During the meeting, Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) Pardeep Kumar outlined the features, modes, methods, and permissible activities to be undertaken under convergence with MGNREGA. He also discussed specifications and focal areas to be considered while formulating the convergence plan for the district. DDC Vishesh Mahajan asked the ACD to prepare

a comprehensive plan in consultation with Agriculture, Fisheries, Horticulture, and ICDS. He stressed on the importance of exchanging technical expertise to propose and adopt best practices under the convergence plan for the district.

The DDC highlighted the inclusion of works such as construction of kitchen sheds, plantation, desilting of khuls, fish ponds, etc., under the convergence mode. He directed the line departments to work together in a coordinated manner to ensure the formulation of economic development oriented convergence plan in the district.

Later, he asked all concerned departments to effectively implement the convergence plan and achieve sustainable development in the district.



# SACHIN TENDULKAR VISITS BAT MANUFACTURING UNIT IN PULWAMA

**SRINAGAR:** Cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar, on Saturday visited a bat manufacturing unit in south Kashmir, which is likely to give a major boost to the industry. Tendulkar, his wife Anjali and daughter Sara visited a M/J Sports bat manufacturing unit in Charsoo Awantipora and spent nearly an hour there.

The batting legend was on the way with his family from Srinagar to the tourist resort of Pahalgam when they

stopped at Chersoo. Tendulkar is staying at Pahalgam resort for two nights.

"The visit of Tendulkar to our unit is a dream come true for all of us. This visit is going to give a major boost to Kashmir willow bats which are in high demand," the co-owner of the M/J Sports Mohammad Shaheen Parrey told UNI.

"The cricket legend had a lot of knowledge about Kashmir cricket bats and had some queries also. He was highly impressed

with the quality of our cricket bats."

He said Tendulkar expressed his admiration for the craftsmanship involved in creating the cricket bat.

A video clip showed Tendulkar saying "very good," after returning the bat and ball to the co-owner.

The master blaster was also seen sipping tea at the bat manufacturing owner's house in a traditional Kashmiri way. Tendulkar stayed for at least an hour

at the bat maker's unit. The family also paid obeisance at Martand temple in Anantnag.

District Magistrate Pulwama Basharat Qayoom called the visit of Tendulkar "Golden Day for Kashmir Willow Bats."

"Master Blaster, the god of cricket, Sachin Tendulkar Blessed Cricket Bat factory Chersoo Awantipora Pulwama (M/S M/J Sports) with a Visit. Inspiration par excellence. Golden day for Kashmir Willow Bats,"

Basharat Qayoom said in a post on X.

There are over 300 bat manufacturing units in south Kashmir who supply around four million cricket bats within and outside the country.

In the 2022 T20 cricket world cup, the longest six of the tournament was hit by United Arab Emirates (UAE) batter Junaid Siddique using a Kashmir willow bat manufactured by GR8 sports based in Anantnag district. (UNI)

## Stoinis ruled out of NZ tour, Hardie called up



**LONDON:** Marcus Stoinis has been ruled out of Australia's three-match T20I series in New Zealand due to a back issue with fellow West Australian allrounder Aaron Hardie called in for Australia's last series before the T20 World Cup in June.

Australia vice-captain and wicketkeeper Matthew Wade is also set to miss game one of the series on Wednesday in Wellington due to the impending birth of his third child but is expected to be available for the final two games in Auckland on Friday and Sunday. Stoinis tweaked his back in the warm-up of the second T20I against West Indies in Adelaide last Sunday but was still able to play. He made 16 off 15 with the bat but played a role in feeding the strike to Glenn Maxwell in an 80-run stand before picking up 3 for 36 to continue his excellent bowling form.

But after the long flight to Perth, he missed Tuesday's third match against West Indies and has subsequently been ruled out of the T20I series against New Zealand having not

fully resolved the back complaint. Stoinis is expected to be fit for the IPL which begins in late March.

Hardie is currently playing for Western Australia in a Sheffield Shield match against Tasmania in Hobart and did not travel with the squad on Saturday but will join the squad before the opening match.

Stoinis remains a key figure in Australia's T20I set-up despite losing his place in the ODI side for the World Cup semi and final last year. He was one of Australia's most important players in the T20 World Cup triumph in 2021, playing match-winning hands against South Africa and then Pakistan in the semi-final. He also made a stunning half-century against Sri Lanka in the 2022 T20 World Cup in Australia. His bowling has been important for Australia as well, having become a key wicket-taker over the past year in both the powerplay and middle overs.

But his injury issues remain a concern for both he and Australia's hierarchy. Australia have been reluctant to bowl him in back-to-back games

due to his history and he missed games in the lead-up to and during the ODI World Cup because of several different soft tissue injuries.

Australia's other allrounders also have their bespoke injury concerns with captain Mitchell Marsh's ankle requiring ongoing management as does Maxwell's previously broken leg.

Spin bowling allrounder Matthew Short also has an injury cloud heading to New Zealand after suffering a low-grade hamstring injury in the ODI series against West Indies which forced him to miss the T20Is.

Hardie gets his chance to put forth a case for the T20 World Cup as a back-up allrounder who can bat in the middle-order if Stoinis has more injury trouble at the tournament proper. Cameron Green was not considered to be called into the New Zealand series with Australia's selectors preferring him to remain red-ball focussed ahead of the New Zealand Test tour. Green will then play a full IPL with Royal Challengers Bangalore to push his case for the World Cup squad.

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