



# Parliamentary Panel Adopts Report On Waqf Bill By Majority; Opposition Slams Move



**HT News Network**  
**NEW DELHI**: A parliamentary panel examining the Waqf Amendment Bill on Wednesday adopted by a majority vote its report that contained changes suggested by ruling BJP members, prompting the opposition to dub the exercise as an attempt to destroy the Waqf

boards. The Joint Committee of Parliament (JCP) on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, chaired by BJP member Jagdambika Pal, adopted the report on the draft legislation by a 15-11 majority vote. Opposition members were submitting dissent notes to the report. BJP members insisted that the bill, introduced in Lok Sabha in August last year, seeks to bring

modernity, transparency and accountability in the management of Waqf properties, while the opposition termed it as an attack on the constitutional rights of the Muslim community and interference in the functioning of the Waqfboards. Speaking to reporters after the 38th sitting of the committee, Pal said the report will be presented to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla

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# Intensive preventive care continues for Village Badhal residents

No new illness case reported since January 24: Govt

**HT News Network**

**RAJOURI, JANUARY 29**: Showing encouraging mitigation signs, no new illness case has been reported among the residents of health crisis hit Village Badhal since January 24, 2025, while the District Administration Rajouri, under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma, is continuing with the intensive preventive care for their well being.



To mitigate the situation and prevent further casualties, 87 families comprising 364 individuals were shifted from Badhal to Rajouri. These families are currently housed at Government Nursing College Government Boys Higher Secondary School and GMC & AH and are under observation. Comprehensive arrangements

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# Kashmir parts receive light snowfall as feeble WD affects J&K

**HT News Network**

**Srinagar, Jan 29**: After a prolonged dry spell in Jammu and Kashmir, the light snowfall was experienced at multiple places, especially in the higher reaches of the Valley on Wednesday, bringing down the mercury across Kashmir. As per the reports received by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the light snowfall

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# Work in tandem, neutralize terrorists: DGP Prabhat tells security forces

Appreciates special teams for their proactive approach, determination

**HT News Network**

Jammu, Jan 29: Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin

Prabhat on Wednesday asked the security forces to work in tandem. The DGP while interacting with top officers of Army, CRPF and J&K Police during his visit to Kathua, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "The need of the hour is operational alertness, focused execution of tasks, and resolute will." He directed all security forces to work in coordination and make all efforts to neutralise terrorists whose presence has



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# Central govt plans ropeway to enhance accessibility for Amarnath pilgrims

11.6 km ropeway from Baltal aims to ease journey for pilgrims

**HT News Network**

**Srinagar, Jan 29**: The Central government has announced plans to establish ropeway connectivity at 18 major religious and tourist destinations across India, including a ropeway connecting Baltal to the Amarnath shrine in Jammu and Kashmir.



The news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) has learnt that the government is seeking proposals from consultants to prepare detailed project reports (DPRs) for these developments. The proposed 11.6-kilometre ropeway will link Baltal with the Amarnath shrine.

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# J&K finance dept approves additional fund releases for 2024-25

'Budget allocations based on utilization, spending patterns'

**HT News Network**

**Srinagar, Jan 29**: Jammu and Kashmir Finance department has authorized the further release of funds under the Revenue Budget for the Financial Year 2024-25. The authorization follows



Government Order No. 268-F of 2024, dated August 16, 2024, and an earlier order

issued on January 9, 2024. According to the order, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the funds have been released to the extent of 100% of the Budget Estimates (BE) 2024-25 or as per the reworked

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# MP Aga Ruhullah meets Mirwaiz in Delhi, discusses Waqf Bill issue among others

**HT News Network**

**Delhi, Jan 29**: Member of Parliament Syed Aga Ruhullah Mehdi called on Mirwaiz Umar Farooq in Delhi on Wednesday, sources said. The duo discussed Waqf Amendment Bill and several other issues during the meeting. Sources told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that it was a courtesy call as

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## NEWS BRIEF

### Ganderbal: Jal Shakti Dept tests waters, finds 37 out of 40 springs contaminated

**HT News Network**

**Srinagar, Jan 29**: Authorities on Wednesday declared 37 out of 40 springs contaminated in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal District and advised people not to use water from these water sources for drinking purposes. A public notice issued by the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Department Rural Water supply division, Ganderbal which is in possession of the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), reads: "Jal Shakti (PHE) Rural Water Supply Division

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### Govt orders transfer of 4 senior officers

**HT News Network**

**Srinagar, Jan 29**: The Jammu and Kashmir government has ordered the transfer and posting of four senior officers, including two IAS officers and one JKAS officer in the interest of administration. According to an order, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Shantmanu, IAS (AGMUT:1991), currently serving as the Financial Commissioner (Additional Chief Secretary) of the Higher Education Department, will now hold the additional charge of Administrative Secretary, School Education Department. Suresh Kumar Gupta, IAS (AGMUT:1991), Principal

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### Sorry state of rural Govt schools:

In JK, over 52% 8th class students cannot read text of 2nd standard

**HT News Network**

**Srinagar, Jan 29**: In rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir, the education system at middle class level is showing a decline trend among the 8th class where in less than 50 percent of government schools students are not able to read the texts of 2nd standard level.

Besides, more than 70 percent of students in government schools in the rural areas are not able to do the division tasks in mathematics.

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) of 2024 report released on Tuesday states

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# CS reaffirms commitment for complete digitisation of land records

**HT News Network**

**JAMMU**: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a meeting to review progress on digitisation of land records of revenue villages of J&K under Digital India Land Record Modernisation Program (DILRMP).

The meeting besides Financial Commissioner (ACS), Revenue was attended by Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD; Secretary, Revenue; Director, Land Records; SIO, NIC besides other concerned officers.

While chairing the meeting,

Atal Dulloo reaffirmed the commitment of UT government towards boosting digitisation and maintenance of land records under DILRMP. He impressed upon the officers to ensure completion of the same within the set timelines.

Highlighting the importance of quality land records, the CS stated that digitally updated and transparent land records facilitate optimisation of land resources and sharing of information with various agencies for assisting in policy and planning. He maintained that integration of digitised records with



geo-referenced cadastral maps is essential to ensure seamless access to land records for enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of public service deliv-

ery. The Chief Secretary further impressed upon the Department to constitute teams of revenue experts who would visit

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# Omar govt freed us from the clutches of bureaucratic rule: Dr Farooq Abdullah

Says people are no longer seen as subjects, but as citizens to whom government is accountable



**HT News Network**

**Srinagar Jan 29**: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah Wednesday

stated that the restoration of a democratic government under the leadership of Omar Abdullah has liberated the people from bureaucratic red tape and brought an end to the era of unaccount-

ability. He said this while addressing party functionaries at an event held to felicitate Syed Tauqeer, the recently appointed Provincial Secretary of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. The meeting was organised by Provincial President Adv. Showkat Ahmad Mir and attended by MLAs Shameem Firdous, Ahsan Pardesi, Salman Sagar, Mushtaq Guroo, former

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# UCC Implementation Premature, India's Diversity Must Be Respected: PDP Leader Waheed Para

**HT News Network**

**Srinagar, Jan 29**: Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader and MLA from Pulwama, Waheed Ur Rehman Para, has raised serious concerns over the proposed implementation of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), emphasizing that India's diversity must be respected. Para described the move as premature, warning that a hasty rollout of the UCC could undermine the country's multicultural fabric. Speaking to reporters in Sonamarg, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) Para highlighted that

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# J&K Congress seeks coordination committee to address sensitive governance issues: Tariq Karra

**HT News Network**

**Srinagar, Jan 29**: The Jammu & Kashmir Congress, an alliance partner in the Union Territory's government, has proposed the formation of a coordination committee to facilitate discussions on key governance issues.

Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), JKPC president Tariq Karra called for a structured platform that would help resolve serious concerns, ensure smooth governance and



allow for an exchange of ideas among alliance partners. Karra clarified that the committee would not just be about addressing political disagreements, but also about pooling collective

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**CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....**

**WAQF BILL**

on Thursday and tabled in both Houses of Parliament during the Budget Session beginning Friday.

A key concern of the opposition was the appointment of non-Muslims on the Waqf Board, which they claimed was violative of Article 26 of the Constitution that granted citizens freedom to manage their religious affairs, including establishment and maintenance of institutions for religious and charitable purposes.

"You have violated our rights granted under Article 26 of the Constitution. You talked about Uniform Civil Code, but there are Hindu Endowment Board, Sikh Boards, Christian boards which do not have non-Hindus, non-Sikhs, and non-Christians as members. But why does this not extend to Muslims? This is an attempt to destroy the Waqf Boards," Congress member Imran Masood told reporters here.

At its meeting on Monday, the committee had adopted 14 amendments to the bill, all proposed by BJP members and rejected every change suggested by the opposition members, including Congress, DMK, TMC, AAP, Shiv Sena-UBT and the AIMIM.

Trinamool leader Kalyan Banerjee claimed the observations and recommendations of the committee were "wholly perverse".

The BJP members contended that the amendments suggested by the opposition were intended to uphold the 1995 law and negate the spirit of the Waqf Amendment Bill-2024.

"All these amendments are not in the interest of the Waqf. These will destroy the Waqf board and increase interference of the central government in their functioning," AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi said.

He said the evacuee properties could also be taken over by the government.

"This will not be acceptable to the masses, especially the Muslim community. We reject this Waqf amendment. Muslims will lose their masjids," Owaisi said.

According to the amendments accepted by the committee, the state Waqf boards will now include one member from the Muslim OBC community, ensuring broader representation.

It also has provisions that allow the state government to establish separate Waqf boards for Aghakhani and Bohra communities and safeguard women's inheritance rights in Waqf Alal Aulad (family waqfs).

The amendments also allow the income from Waqf Alal Aulad to support widows, divorced women, and orphans, if specified by the waqf (creator of the waqf).

Pal claimed that many of the amendments approved by the committee have addressed several concerns of opposition members as well, adding the Bill once enacted will help Waqf board in discharging its duties transparently and more effectively.

For the first time, "pasmanda" (backward) Muslims, the poor, women and orphans have been included among beneficiaries of the Waqf, an endowment made by Muslims for charitable religious purposes, he said.

The committee held 38 meetings in the national capital since its constitution on August 8 last year and toured several state capitals to consult stake holders.

"This report is a significant document that empowers the Muslim community," BJP member Tejasvi Surya said.

DMK's A Raja said that the draft report was circulated among the 31-member committee late Tuesday night and members got very little time to peruse the voluminous document.

While the adopted bill accepts the government's stand of removing the "Waqf by user" clause in the existing law, it has added that no cases will be reopened against such properties on a retrospective basis provided these are not in dispute or belong to the government.

The report made it clear that the provisions to omit the 'Waqf by user' definition of a Waqf property will be with prospective effect.

It has also endorsed the government's move to include non-Muslims in Waqf boards, saying they can be "beneficiaries, parties to disputes, or otherwise interested in Waqf matters".

It, however, does away with the enquiry power vested with the district collector concerned in cases of disputes with the government, giving the authority to the state government to designate an officer senior to the collector to probe the matter.

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 was referred to the JPC on August 8, 2024, following its introduction in Lok Sabha by Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju.

The Bill aims to amend the Waqf Act, 1995, to address issues and challenges in regulating and managing Waqf properties. (Agencies)

**RAJOURI**

have been made to ensure the comfort and safety of the affected families.

Families are being provided with meals, water, baby food, sanitary items, medicines, clothing and other daily necessities under close monitoring of the doctors and district administration.

For comfortable stay of the families, the district administration has provided 240 beds, 490 blankets, and 303 mattresses, while keeping 176 beds, 300 blankets and 240 mattresses reserved.

On-site medical team, comprising three doctors and six paramedics, has been put on duty round the clock. Critical care ambulances are

stationed at the venues.

Meals are prepared in kitchens under CCTV surveillance, with food samples sent for testing at NFL Ghaziabad and Patoli Food Testing Lab, Jammu.

Anganwadi workers and Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs) are deployed to take care of below six children. Temporary schooling arrangements are in place for school-going children.

Craft teachers and ITI instructors are providing training to individuals in tailoring and other trades. Sewing machines have been supplied by the Social Welfare Department.

Officials from Agriculture, Horticulture and Labour Departments are educating families about government schemes such as PMEGP, Daksh Kissan, e-SHRAM, PMJJBY, and PMSBY.

To ensure the safety of the remaining 808 households (3,700 individuals) in Badhal, the village has been divided into 14 clusters monitored by multi-departmental teams of 182 officials.

All shops and establishments have been sealed, and ration is being provided under strict supervision. Teams are feeding 424 domestic animals and 168 poultry birds belonging to shifted families.

Daily sampling of food and consumables is underway and 167 blood, urine and nasal swab samples have been collected for testing at GMC Rajouri.

A control room under the supervision of the Additional District Development Commissioner has been established to coordinate efforts, address public queries, and provide updates to prevent panic.

The District Administration is addressing the situation comprehensively and ensuring the well-being of all affected families.

**WEATHER**

was recorded in Pir Panjal areas, Zojila, Razdan Pass, Sinthan Top, Sadhna Top and other areas today.

The fresh snowfall was recorded under the influence of feeble Western Disturbance, which started affecting J&K this afternoon.

The gusty winds were reported from Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir as well as the other areas of the Valley since this afternoon.

Earlier, the weatherman had predicted light snow and rain at scattered places from this afternoon.

"Fresh spell of light rain and snow is expected at scattered places during 29th night and 30th morning & at isolated places during 31st January," Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said, adding that the weather would remain generally cloudy on February 01 and 02 with the possibility of light rain and snow at scattered to fairly widespread places during the period.

Sharing further details, the Director stated that generally cloudy weather is expected on February 03 with the possibility of light snow at isolated higher reaches.

Also, on February 04 and 05, there is a possibility of light rain and snow at scattered places, he said—(KNO)

**AMARNATH**

The initiative, as per the government, aims to improve accessibility and provide a convenient travel option for visitors to these sites.

Currently, pilgrims undertake a lengthy trek from Baltal or Pahalgam or rely on helicopter rides, which may not always be available.

The new ropeway will reduce travel time and offer an alternative route, allowing visitors to enjoy views of the surrounding landscape.

This project is expected to ease the journey for a wider range of pilgrims, including children, the elderly, and those with mobility issues, making the annual Amarnath Yatra more accessible to thousands of devotees.

In 2024, the Amarnath Yatra commenced on June 29 and concluded on August 19, spanning 52 days. The pilgrimage attracted over 350,000 registered pilgrims, marking a significant increase from the previous year.

Notably, helicopter services were available for those preferring a quicker journey, providing access to the Panjarni base camp, located about 6 kilometres from the cave—(KNO)

**FINANCE**

Revised Estimates (RE) 2024-25, whichever is lower.

This applies to all detailed heads, including "Salary" and similar expenditure categories, where at least 70% of the released funds have already been utilised.

For detailed heads where expenditure is below 70%, the funds have been released up to 85% of BE 2024-25 or as per reworked RE 2024-25, whichever is lower.

Additionally, the specific expenditure categories such as travel expenses (TE), telephone charges, office expenses, fuel (POL), camps, seminars, hospitality allowances, and advertisement & publicity have been allocated up to 90% of BE 2024-25 or as per RE 2024-25, if the expenditure level exceeds 55% of previously released funds.

"If the expenditure in these heads is below 55%, further funds of 10% have been authorised, ensuring an aggregate release of up to 85%," the order said.

"Full fund authorisation has been granted for

detailed heads involving contra-credit, such as electricity charges, as per the BE 2024-25 or reworked RE 2024-25, whichever is lower," the order said.

"Certain categories, including Leave Travel Concession (LTC), vehicle purchase, furniture procurement, interest payments, power purchases, food grain costs, snow clearance, UT Share under the Revenue component, and the Disaster Response Fund (DRF), will be considered for fund release on a case-by-case basis upon proposal submission by the respective departments," it added.

"The utilization of the authorized funds will be subject to conditions outlined in Government Order No. 268-F of 2024 and adherence to austerity measures specified in Government Order No. 10-F of 2025, issued on January 11, 2025," it added—(KNO)

**MP**

is in the capital for the upcoming Budget session. Mirwaiz is also in Delhi after he led a delegation of Mutahida Majlis Ulema (MMU) to meet Jagdambika Pal, chairman Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on Waqf Amendment Bill last week.

Sources added that several issues, including the contentious Waqf Amendment Bill issue came up for discussion during Aga Ruhullah's meeting Mirwaiz today. The meeting assumes significance amid the ongoing row between the opposition and the ruling BJP over the Waqf Amendment Bill.

On Friday, the MMU delegation led by Mirwaiz presented a detailed memorandum to the JPC about its stand on the proposed amendments.

The meeting marked the first engagement of Mirwaiz Umar Farooq with MPs after the abrogation of Article 370 and bifurcation of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories - Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh - in August 2019.

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 8, 2024, was referred to the Joint Committee of Parliament for examination following objections by the Opposition over its clauses.

The bill faces opposition due to changes in the composition of the Central Waqf Council and Waqf Boards, restrictions on the power of Waqf boards, and the mandatory registration of Waqf properties with the district collector's office. Notably, the JPC on Monday voted in favour of 14 alterations to the draft version of the Waqf Amendment Bill, which includes distinguishing between the mandatory two non-Muslim members - as specified in the original draft of the bill - and nominated ex-officio members (Muslim or non-Muslim).

These changes, and the 12 others, were proposed by members from the ruling BJP, including Lok Sabha MPs Nishikant Dubey, Tejasvi Surya and Aparajita Sarangi. The JPC has 16 MPs from the BJP or allied parties and only 10 from the opposition.

The opposition's proposals were rejected by a 10:16 vote after committee members voted on party lines. The JPC today adopted the draft report after a 16-10 majority vote. The report will be presented to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla tomorrow—(KNO)

**CS**

the districts to gauge the accuracy of the digitised records. He made out that it is pivotal to check the quality and accuracy of these records and people themselves should take lead in scrutinising their respective records for any discrepancies so that these are timely rectified.

Maintaining that most of the services rendered by the Revenue department are guaranteed under Public Service Guarantee Act (PSGA), the Chief Secretary called for effective monitoring service delivery at different levels. He asked for keeping check on last-minute reverting or cancellation of applications maintaining that it defeats the purpose of PSGA.

Regarding National Geospatial Knowledge based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA), the Chief Secretary emphasised on giving significant importance to this program as it will provide clarity on ownership of land and solve land related disputes in urban areas. He said that completion of programme will ensure that urban land records are accurate and up-to-date empowering urban citizens, improving ease of living and enabling better urban planning.

During the meeting, a detailed presentation was made highlighting the progress achieved under DILRMS, so far, and the future steps to be taken up. It was given out that substantial progress has been achieved with respect to DILRMP and digitization of jamabandis has been completed in 6839 out of 6850 villages.

Regarding vectorised village maps, it was given out that the number of vectorised maps and geo referenced villages is 6518 and 6261 respectively. It was revealed that the Department is currently engaged in verification process to ensure quality and accuracy of these records.

**CLASSN 8TH**

that during the survey it found only 47.2 percent students in Jammu and Kashmir were able to read 2nd standard level text.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the survey further suggests that the reading of the books of junior classes was in decline trend because at least 55.5 percent students were able to read 2nd standard level text in 2018 that reduced to 50.2 percent in 2022 and 47.2 percent in 2024.

The survey further reveals that only 28 percent of students in 8th standard were able to do the tasks of division in Mathematics.

The ASER report also states that 25.3 percent of students studying in government schools of Jammu and Kashmir in 2018 were able to do the task of division followed by 26.3 percent in 2022 and 28 percent in the year 2024.

Besides, the report said that the out of school figures for boys and girls was low in Jammu and Kashmir even in the age group of 15-16.

"Data from ASER show that even those in the age group beyond 6-14 have high enrollment levels," it reads.

Pertinently, the sampling of the survey is based on selection of 30 random villages in each district, 20 households in each village. It also surveyed all children of age 3-16 in household and assessed all children of age 5-16 in household. The sampling method has remained consistent over time—(KNO)

**UCC**

various communities in India follow distinct laws, traditions, and customs. He argued that implementing the UCC without extensive consultation would disregard the unique needs and concerns of different groups. "The implementation of the UCC at this stage is not appropriate. India is a diverse country where every community follows its own customs and laws. Any move in this regard must ensure that the voices of all concerned communities, especially Muslims, are heard and considered," he said. Para also expressed specific concerns regarding the Muslim community, particularly in relation to Waqf and Muslim personal laws. He stressed that any legal or policy changes affecting these areas must involve active participation from Muslim representatives. He further mentioned that a delegation, led by prominent religious leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, had recently visited New Delhi to discuss the issue, urging a comprehensive review of the UCC proposal before any final decision is made—(KNO)

**DR FAROOQ**

minister Mohammad Khalil Bandh, State Spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar and SM Head Ifra Jan. The leaders extended congratulations to Syed Tauqeer on assuming his office.

Referring to the changes following the formation of the democratically elected government led by Omar Abdullah, Dr. Farooq emphasized that the era of red tape and bureaucratic rule is now a thing of the past. "People are no longer seen as subjects, but as citizens to whom the elected government is accountable. The days when the power corridors were off-limits to the common people are long gone. Nowadays, individuals from all walks of life are flocking to the secretariat to have their issues addressed," he said.

He further said that the people have breathed a sigh of relief knowing that they have their own elected representatives in the legislature and government. "The elected government is fully aware of its responsibility to meet the expectations of its constituents and is actively working towards the restoration of statehood. Numerous initiatives have already been implemented, with many more in the pipeline that will provide reprieve to the people from the suffering inflicted upon them by the successive non NC governments."

"All the promises outlined in our manifesto will be fulfilled without compromise. The government, under the leadership of Omar Abdullah, is operating on multiple fronts, striving to restore our dignity and address the developmental setbacks of the past decade. The commitment to progress and accountability is unwavering, ensuring a brighter future for all citizens," he added.

He further highlighted that the party's strength lies in its unity and the sacrifices made by its members over the years. He also called upon party functionaries to actively prepare for the upcoming Urban Local Bodies and Panchayat elections. Emphasizing the need to field educated youth and women candidates, particularly in light of women's reservations, he said, "It is crucial for women and youth to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our region through active participation in the democratic process." "All the promises outlined in our manifesto will be fulfilled without compromise. The government, under the leadership of Omar Abdullah, is operating on multiple fronts, striving to restore our dignity and address the developmental setbacks of the past decade. The commitment to progress and

accountability is unwavering, ensuring a brighter future for all citizens," he added.

He further highlighted that the party's strength lies in its unity and the sacrifices made by its members over the years. He also called upon party functionaries to actively prepare for the upcoming Urban Local Bodies and Panchayat elections.

**KARRA**

wisdom to enhance governance. A major agenda item for this proposed committee would be deliberations on the restoration of Jammu & Kashmir's statehood, a demand that remains at the forefront of Congress's political stance, he said.

Expressing his frustration over the prolonged delay in statehood restoration, Karra questioned the commitment of the Central government, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, to fulfilling their promises.

"What is stopping them from restoring statehood to J&K? Why is it being delayed? I doubt their intentions," he said.

The JKPC chief's remarks come in response to Omar Abdullah's recent statement urging patience on the matter. Karra, however, rejected the idea of waiting indefinitely, saying the Congress Party had fought the elections on the promise of swift statehood restoration.

"Delaying it further does not reflect good intentions toward the people of Jammu & Kashmir," he added.

Karra, who is also the MLA from Central Shalteng, said that forming a coordination committee would help streamline communication within the alliance and improve engagement with the Central government, especially on sensitive political matters like statehood.

While rumours were circulating on social media that Congress was planning to pull out of the alliance, Karra categorically dismissed these reports, calling them malicious, concocted and baseless.

He reaffirmed that Congress remains a committed partner in the alliance but clarified that the party will not participate in the cabinet until statehood is restored—(KNO)

**GANDARBAL**

Ganderbal/Sgr carried out a massive drive of random sampling & testing of various springs across Ganderbal District, wherein it has been found that 37 out of 40 samples collected are bacteriologically positive. As such, rendering those springs unfit for human consumption."

"Now, through the medium of this notice, general public of District Ganderbal and rural Srinagar where spring water is used for drinking purposes by locals at their own level, are requested to refrain from using spring water for drinking purposes and instead use tap water only till further instructions, please," the notice reads, adding, "However, if at all spring water is to be used, it is advised to use it only after prolonged boiling."—(KNO)

**TRANSFAR**

Secretary to the Government, Culture Department, has been relieved of his additional duties.

Saurabh Bhagat, IAS (AGMUT:2002), who is currently serving as the Commissioner/Secretary to the Government in the Science and Technology Department, has been entrusted with the additional role of Administrative Secretary for the Information Technology Department.

**DGP**

been sighted in the area. The DGP stressed the importance of intelligence generation and operations on the ground. He appreciated the special teams for their proactive approach and determination. Meanwhile, a police spokesman in a statement said that the DGP visited various locations in the Kathua district along with top police, Army, and CRPF officers. He visited Machedi, Badnota, Sadrota, and Dugaini Police Posts and interacted with jawans and officers of the Special Operations Group (SOG) Kathua and Billawar. ADGP (Jammu zone) Anand Jain, according to the statement, briefed the DGP on the ongoing anti-terrorist operations in these areas.

DIG (JKS Range) Shiv Kumar, DDIB (Jammu), Kathua SSP Shobit Saxena, SP (Operations) Amir, Dy SP (Operations) Malhar Sukhvair Singh, and the Billawar SHO accompanied the DGP, the statement added.



# Kashmir fruit growers association urges FM to include horticulture provisions in upcoming budget

**Demands crop insurance, MIS, tax reductions, waiving of KCC loans, rejuvenation of orchards to boost region's horti industry**

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 29 (KNO): The Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers Cum Dealers Union, the apex body representing all major fruit growers' associations of the valley, has written to Union Finance Minister Nirjala Sitharaman urging the inclusion of key provisions for the promotion of the horticulture industry in the upcoming Budget 2025-26.

In the letter, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the association said that horticulture is a major contributor to the economy of Jammu and Kashmir, directly or indirectly supporting over seven lakh families. The growers expressed concern over the lack of a Crop Insurance Scheme, which, despite being announced, has not been implemented. They urged the government to allocate budgetary provisions for its execution so that fruit growers, who frequently suffer losses due to natural disasters, can receive financial protection.

The letter also called for the reintroduction of the Market Intervention Scheme



(MIS), which was previously launched to help fruit growers manage their produce. Every season, around 40% of the apple crop in Kashmir falls into Grade C (low-quality or fallen apples), leading to financial losses. Under the MIS, the Horticulture Planning and Marketing Department used to purchase these apples at govern-

ment-fixed rates, providing relief to farmers. However, the scheme was discontinued several years ago. The association strongly urged the government to bring it back in Budget 2025-26 to support growers and stabilise the market.

Apart from these demands, the growers called for specialised horticulture estates

on the pattern of industrial estates. They proposed that these estates should include Cold Storage (CA-Stores), Canning Factories, Juice Processing Units and other allied facilities under a single-window system to make it easier for farmers and dealers to store and process their produce efficiently. Such infrastructure would modernise the horticulture sector and significantly reduce post-harvest losses, they said.

A major concern highlighted in the letter was the 12% GST levied on cardboard boxes, insecticides, pesticides, and fertilisers, which has substantially increased production costs for fruit growers. Since wooden crates, once commonly used for packaging, have become expensive, growers said they have had no choice but to switch to cardboard boxes.

However, the high GST rate on packaging materials has added to their financial burden, the association said. It urged the government to either exempt these essential materials from GST or significantly reduce the tax rate to make transportation and production more affordable for small-scale farmers.

## Information Department condoles demise of cousin of Bilal Ahmad Rather

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, January 29: The Officers and officials of Information Department have condoled the demise of cousin of Bilal Ahmad Rather, Field Publicity Assistant who passed away today after a brief illness.

In this regard, a condolence meeting was held under the chairmanship of Joint Director Information Kashmir, Syed Shah Nawaz Bukhari at the Divisional Office Exchange Road, Kothibagh.

Deputy Director (PR), Dr Ahsanul Haq Chishti; Cultural Officer, Burhan Hussain, other officers and officials of the department attended the condolence meet.

On the occasion, officers & officials expressed solidarity and deepest condolences with Bilal Ahmad Rather and the bereaved family.

They prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and courage to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

## CUK's DCJ commemorates 'Indian Newspaper Day'

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 29 (KNO): The Department of Communication & Journalism, Central University of Kashmir, on Wednesday commemorated Indian Newspaper Day by organizing an insightful online lecture featuring Prof. Sanjeev Bhanawat, a renowned academician and former Head & Professor of Journalism, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. The event commenced with a welcome address by Dr Arif Nazir, Head, Department of Communication & Journalism, who set the tone for the session, encouraging students to actively engage in the session, reads a statement, issued to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO). Dr Arif also expressed gratitude to the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Prof. A. Ravinder Nath for unwavering support. "We are grateful to Hon'ble VC for his guidance and encouragement in making such initiatives successful", he said. The keynote speaker, Prof. Sanjeev Bhanawat, delivered an engaging lecture covering the evolution of newspapers in India, their contemporary relevance and the transformative impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the media industry. He highlighted both opportunities and challenges posed by AI in journalism.

Prof. Bhanawat also discussed the challenges newspapers are currently facing, including Declining Print Readership, Fake News and Credibility Crisis, Technological Adaptation etc. Expressing gratitude, Prof. Shahid Rasool, Dean, School of Media Studies, thanked the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor for his continued support in fostering academic discussions on crucial media-related themes. "We deeply appreciate the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor's vision and encouragement in organizing such intellectual engagements, which help students and scholars." In a time when the media industry is undergoing rapid information, such discussions help students understand the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, he said. Prof. Shahid stated "Newspapers are not just sources of information but powerful instruments of societal change". Further, Prof. Shahid cautioned about decreasing credibility of media amid increasing trivialisation, commercialization and commodification of news. Meanwhile, in his message to students, scholars and alumni, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Prof. A. Ravinder Nath, stressed on understanding the historical significance of this day which marks the beginning of newspapers in the press history of the country. In his message, VC urged students to recognize their responsibility as future journalists in upholding ethical and fact-based journalism.

## J&K NHM cautions against fake recruitment notification

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JAMMU 29: The National Health Mission (NHM), Jammu and Kashmir, has issued an urgent alert regarding circulation of fake job advertisements on social media, specifically concerning claims about the JKNHM CHO Recruitment 2024. This misinformation has been propagated by the online portal www.bika.co.in, leading to significant confusion among the job seekers.

The NHM J&K has informed the public that currently no advertisement has been issued for recruitment of Community Health Officers (CHO) or any other category of staff by the State Health Society, NHM, J&K. Any notifications claiming otherwise are entirely false and misleading. The Mission has urged upon the candidates to disregard false announcements and ignore any unverified claims regarding JKNHM CHO recruitment circulating on social media or through unofficial websites. For accurate information regarding job openings, candidates should refer exclusively to the official NHM J&K website (<https://jknhm.jk.gov.in/>). The NHM J&K emphasizes the importance of relying on verified sources to avoid falling victim to misinformation or defrauds. Job seekers should remain vigilant and consult official announcements for any updates regarding recruitment processes.

For further information on this account, the NHM J&K office can be contacted directly through the official website or Centralised Health Helpline 104.

## DLSA Srinagar conducts review meeting of Legal Aid Defence Counsels

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, January 29: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar today conducted a review meeting of Legal Aid Defence Counsels in the chamber of the Secretary, DLSA Srinagar.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Jaffer Hussain Beg, Chairman DLSA Srinagar and Principal District & Sessions Judge, Srinagar, and under the supervision of Nusrat Ali Hakak, Secretary DLSA Srinagar.

The meeting to assess the performance of Legal Aid Defence Counsel and ensure they are meeting the standards of Service delivery.

The meeting was attended by Chief Legal Aid Defence Counsel, Saad Ganaie, Assistant Legal Aid Defense Counsels, Urba Rashid and Sehar Nazir who shared their experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improving the delivery of legal aid. Discussions focused on ensuring quality legal representation, expediting pending cases, and enhancing coordination among counsels to



strengthen access to justice.

The Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, emphasized the importance of efficient and accessible legal aid services and reiterated the commitment of DLSA to providing free and effective legal assistance to those in need. The meeting concluded with a collective resolve to further streamline legal aid mechanisms and enhance the efficiency of legal services in the

district. The meeting to assess the performance of Legal Aid Defence Counsel and ensure they are meeting the standards of Service delivery.

The meeting was attended by Chief Legal Aid Defence Counsel, Saad Ganaie, Assistant Legal Aid Defense Counsels, Urba Rashid and Sehar Nazir who shared their experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improving the delivery of legal aid.

# Post 2019, Apni Party Showed Courage In Testing Times, Protected Jobs, Land For People of J&K: Altaf Bukhari Lauds CM Omar's Non-Confronting Approach Against New Delhi

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR 29, ANB: Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari today said that his party's unparalleled contribution after the August 5, 2019, occurrence was to open up negotiations with the central government to ensure the protection of land and jobs for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

He emphasized that, "We need to keep negotiations going on with the Centre for our rights, rather than entering into any confrontations."

The Apni Party leader was speaking at the Conclave organized by Gulistan News Channel in Jammu.

Several prominent political leaders were interviewed during this Conclave. The event was centered on the theme, 'Badalta Jammu Kashmir, Nai Raho Ka Safar.'

According to the Associated News Bureau, responding to a question about the Apni Party's emergence at a time when Jammu and Kashmir was grappling with unusual situations, Altaf Bukhari said, "Apni Party was established post August 5, 2019. It was the time when Jammu and Kashmir and its people had been robbed of their rights. Ours was a 200-year-old state, which was reduced to a Union Territory and bifurcated. Post-August 5, there was chaos everywhere in Jammu and Kashmir. The routine life was paralysed in the entire J&K. Shops and transport were shut down. Thousands of people, including some political leaders, were kept in jails. Some leaders remained in their homes but chose to stay silent, rather than coming out in support of the people during that difficult time," he said.



Bukhari went on to say, "In those difficult times, we, some like-minded friends, met and had a thorough discussion about the situation. We were disappointed to see that the leaders whom people needed most during that challenging period had

chosen to remain silent. It was then that we decided to step forward to help our people. At that time, Jammu and Kashmir's land and jobs were open to being taken by outsiders, and we wanted to protect both for the residents of J&K, ensuring their

exclusive rights to land and employment in the region. For that, we had to talk to New Delhi and we decided to go for it."

Bukhari said that engaging with the central government at a time when people in J&K were very upset with the ruling party in Delhi was a tough decision, which he and his colleagues took for the benefit of J&K and its people. He said, "It was not an easy decision, and we knew the complications. We understood that coming forward to engage with New Delhi at that time was risky. By doing so, we were staking our honour, our image, and our political legacy. It required courage. Thank God we mustered it and demonstrated our resolve. As a result of our talks with the central government, we secured the protection of land and jobs for J&K people. Also, we ensured the release of 3,100 detainees, including

some political leaders."

"We too could have remained silent at that time or hidden ourselves, as some leaders did. These leaders formed the PAGD—which is now deceased—as a smokescreen to avoid shouldering responsibility when the people needed them the most. But we choose to come forward to shoulder our responsibility," he added. However, Bukhari said that the Apni Party's significant contribution could not fetch its electoral dividends, but that's okay," he said. Asked about his recent statement that the Apni Party will work to get statehood restored. He further explained his point, saying, "We believe that negotiations are an important part of politics, and we must continue negotiations with New Delhi to resolve our issues."



# Nomadic Life: An Exploration of Natural Beauty



BY MOOL RAJ

The allure of a nomadic lifestyle lies in its ability to immerse individuals in the natural wonders of the world. By embracing a life on the move, nomads have the unique opportunity to discover and appreciate the stunning beauty that nature has to offer. In this article, we will delve into the various aspects of nomadic life and how it enables individuals to forge a deep connection with the natural world, from the mesmerizing landscapes to the diverse wildlife. Join us on this journey as we explore the art of living nomadically and embracing the extraordinary natural beauty that surrounds us.



- 1. The Call of the Open Road:
  - a. Wanderlust and the desire for freedom
  - b. Choosing a nomadic lifestyle
- 2. Connecting with Nature:
  - a. A deeper appreciation for the environment
  - b. Rediscovering simplicity and minimalism
- 3. The Magic of Landscape Diversity:
  - a. Vast deserts and their rugged beauty
  - b. Majestic mountains and their allure
  - c. Mesmerizing coastal vistas and marine wonders
  - d. Lush forests and their serene charm
- 4. Wildlife Encounters:
  - a. The thrill of encountering elusive species
  - b. Marine life wonders witnessed firsthand
  - c. Birdwatching in diverse habitats
- 5. Sustainable Travel and Nomadic Life:
  - a. Ecotourism and responsible exploration
  - b. Supporting local communities and conservation efforts
- 6. Nomadic Arts and Crafts:
  - a. Indigenous cultures and their artistic expressions
  - b. Preserving traditional craftsmanship
- 7. Capturing the Beauty:
  - a. Photography tips for nomads
  - b. Creating artwork inspired by nature
- 8. Challenges and Adaptability:
  - a. Overcoming obstacles on the road
  - b. Developing resilience and adaptability
- 9. Nomadic Community and Sharing Experiences:
  - a. Connecting with fellow travelers
  - b. Sharing stories and creating lifelong memories
- 10. The Nomadic Spirit:
  - a. Embracing the unknown with open arms
  - b. Living in harmony with nature

The nomadic lifestyle offers us an incredible opportunity to experience the natural beauty of our planet in ways that sedentary life often fails to provide. Through embracing this way of life, we unlock the door to a world filled with diverse landscapes, enchanting wildlife encounters, and unforgettable experiences. By becoming more mindful of our surroundings and promoting sustainable travel, we can ensure that these treasures remain intact for future generations to explore and cherish. So, let us embark on this journey together, embracing the nomadic spirit and reveling in the wonders of our natural world.

**THE AUTHOR IS A REGULAR COLUMNIST AND FREELANCE WRITER**

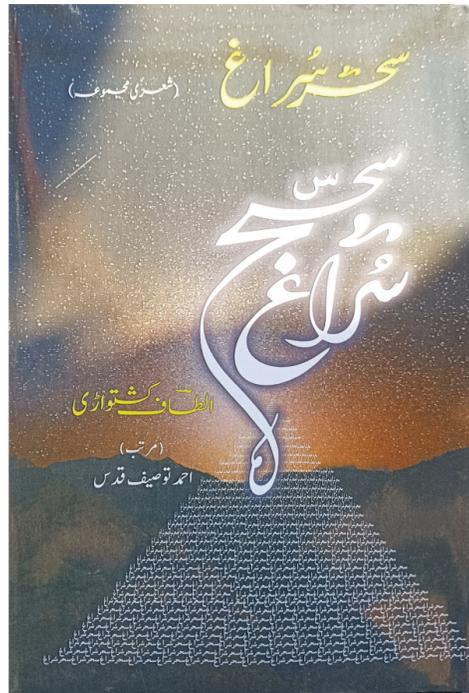
# Seher Surag (Poetry collection) by Altaf Kishtwari



RAYEES AHMAD KUMAR

Whenab valley of Jammu Kashmir is nestled amidst towering mountains, pristine vast meadows and crystal clear water bodies. It's beauty is resplendent, enticing both local and nonlocal populace. The literary brilliance of this region has been radiating since ages. Having produced legendary poets, litterateurs, artists, vocalists and intellectuals, it is indubitably evident that this fertile land has been divinely blessed. Rasa Jawdani, Gh Nabi Dolwal, Bashir Bhadarwahi, Raashid Jahangir and Wali Mohd Aseer Kishtwari are some of it's literary giants, whose pen has been painting emotional and cultural themes for decades. In contemporary times also, we see newer faces depicting literary prowess through their poetry and prose writings. Among such decent literary figures stands one Altaf Kishtwari. Born in 1963 to an illiterate but humble father who had been an ironsmith by profession, Altaf Kishtwari has served as a police cop and during his service tenure, he has composed hundreds of poems, Ghazals etc which came to limelight in the form of collection "Seher

Surag" only after his superannuation in 2023. This poetry collection spanning 364 pages is published by Tafheem Publications Rajouri. It's cover is adorably designed and dedicated by the author to his mother, spouse, three sons and the lone daughter. While writing a detailed note on the Ghazals of Altaf Kishtwari, Prof Kawzar Mazhari of Jamia Millia Islamia university, commends the literary adeptness of poet. According to him, Altaf Kishtwari uses beautiful imagery to uncover what he has felt and endured in life through his poetry. Ahmad Tawseef, the beloved son of Altaf has written an insightful essay about the literary brilliance of his father. He has enumerated the virtues of a litterateur, from being a farsighted human to the one influencing reader's mind and heart. According to Tawseef, a writer's focal point never remains an individual rather he always intends to address the society. He further reiterates that a litterateur unlike other people, feels societal ills and evils intensely and he aspires to revolutionize the downtrodden society through his writings. He proclaims that his father isn't lacking any skill or virtue, which a seasoned or well versed poet is owning. Despite frail and infirm family background, he hasn't let his literary works to get spoiled. Altaf Kishtwari while deliberating upon his literary journey, reveals his initial interests towards drawings



and paintings followed by writing poetry to give vent to his thoughts and emotions. Initially he would receive mandatory and requisite tips about poetry from accomplished and adept poets of Pirpanchal region while being posted there. In his note, he has expressed his gratitude to all who assisted him in one or the other way to compile this collection. As a devoted Muslim, Altaf Kishtwari has firstly written the two poems praising God (Hamud) and Prophet saw(Naat) in this book followed by a manqabat about Baba Fariddudin ra. It reflects his faith and

devotion towards Allah, Prophet saw and sufi saints like Baba Farid ra. Altaf Kishtwari's style of composing poetic items is unique and his word usage is a testament to his memory power and poetic prowess. It seems that he thinks multiple times before incorporating a word or phrase in couplets. Lafzoon ko tolne ke tu awzan hai alag, Naswar kaise tulain wo samaan hai alag. Through this handsome couplet, he tries to make a reader understand that words which a speaker speaks during interaction aren't like things which we utilize in daily lives.

In fact their weighting and measures too are different. Dour hu ye hu jab se tum is duniya se, Har pal bas mere hi saye lagte hu. This one of a prettiest ghazal has been meticulously and arduously crafted to eulogize poet's beloved. According to poet his beloved, who no more now is accompanying him seems to entice his flower garden, acting like a shadow to relieve him from scorching heat, garnishing the flower vases of his room and even gossiping with him as he always stays closer to his heart. Dil idhar hai magar udhar tu hai, Aankh meri hai nazar tu hai. This couplet of a seductively composed and bewitchingly crafted ghazal reflects the pain of poet as he is vehemently missing his beloved. Gaza main aaj bi safak amun ka dushman, Diye hayat ke har roz hi bujata hai. From last many months we have been witnessing the devastation of Gaza at the hands of Israel and no one caring about the agony of these depressed people, acting merely as mute spectators. Poet has deeply felt the pain and painted on paper. Aag main phir se utar kar kya karon, Shahar se tere guzar kar kya karon. Using simplest words, the poet has prioritised his message and thought to be easily comprehended by a reader. Ye koyal kaisa nagma ga rahi hai, Mere dil ko buhat tadpa rahi hai. Through the imageries of

dove, birds, roofs etc poet has skillfully composed the verses of ghazal. Pathar zamane bar ke yahan seh raha hoon main, Ik sach hi hai ki jisko abi keh raha hoon main. In this egocentric world, finding an altruistic person is quite arduous. One who always speaks truth and is a candour often endures the pain and sufferings caused by the society. Same has been elegantly pictured in this couplet. Hai azil se hi yahan likhi hui hijrat apni, Ik nagar se hame ab aur nagar jana hai. Death is an ultimate reality and no one even atheists can't deny this universal truth. This world is mortal and we are dwelling temporarily here but our everlasting abode lies somewhere else. Tir mara galat nishane par, Wo shikari shikar hi kab tha. This couplet reflects the poetic adroitness and deftness of poet to weave adorable compositions. While going through the poetry of Altaf Kishtwari, it is evident that he has exhibited agony, melancholy, sadness, loneliness, pain and helplessness in his poetry. This collection of a Hamud, Naat, Manqabat and 200 Ghazals is full of imageries. Kashmir's culture and unique ways of living too have been mentioned through the poetry. I congratulate the author for this splendid collection and suggest urdu enthusiasts to go through the pages of this book as it will enhance their poetic prowess and knowledge.

**Writer is a columnist hailing from Qazigund Kashmir.**

# Chingus Fort: A neglected gem of Mughal history in Rajouri

BY M S NAZKI

Chingus Fort, an important historical site deeply tied to the Mughal era, remains tragically neglected by the tourism department despite its significant heritage. Located in the picturesque Rajouri district, Chingus Fort (or Chingus Sarai) is an ancient edifice that dates back to the 16th century, during the reign of the Mughal Empire.

This fort was used as a rest stop or transit camp by the Mughal emperors on their annual journey to Kashmir. It holds deep historical significance as part of the Mughal emperors' meticulously planned

travel routes between Delhi and Kashmir. Chingus Fort is a prime example of Mughal architecture, with its carefully designed structure featuring two distinct apartments that reflect the grandeur and sophistication of the era.

The name "Chingus" itself carries an intriguing story from Mughal history. Derived from the Persian word 'Chingus', which means "intestines," the fort is more than just a resting place. It is linked to one of the most poignant events in Mughal history—the death of Emperor Jahangir. As per historical accounts, the emperor passed away during his journey from Kashmir to



Delhi. His body was transported for burial, but in an act of strategic foresight to avoid a potential

succession war, his wife, Queen Noor Jahan, had the emperor's abdominal organs, including his intestines, buried in the premises of Chingus Sarai. This was done to preserve his body from decay and protect his empire from political instability. The emperor's remains were later interred in Lahore, Pakistan, where the final grave of Jahangir lies.

Despite its fascinating historical and architectural significance, Chingus Fort has long been ignored by the tourism department, leaving it in a state of neglect. This remarkable site, which offers a glimpse into the Mughal Empire's rich history,

deserves attention and preservation. The fort is not only an important cultural heritage site but also a potential beacon for tourism, capable of drawing visitors interested in history, architecture, and the legacy of the Mughal era.

It is high time that the authorities recognize the value of Chingus Fort and take steps to conserve and promote it, allowing it to receive the recognition it truly deserves. The fort stands as a silent witness to history, waiting for the spotlight to be cast upon it so that future generations can connect with and appreciate the richness of the Mughal past.

# The World Health Organization is becoming sick due to the US funding being stopped

PRIYANKA SAURABH

The U.S. withdrawal has strained the World Health Organization's finances. The U.S. was the largest donor to the World Health Organization's budget, accounting for 13% of voluntary contributions and 22.5% of assessed contributions in 2023. The sudden stop of funding created a huge resource gap, threatening critical health initiatives, especially in low- and middle-income countries (L&M). The U.S. played a key role in contributing scientific knowledge to World Health Organization committees through organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(CDC). The withdrawal severed partnerships essential to global surveillance and pandemic preparedness. U.S. efforts to create a single worldwide framework for pandemic preparedness, fair vaccine distribution, and response coordination were hampered by its decision to exit the World Health Organization-led pandemic treaty negotiations. Because the withdrawal put national interests ahead of international solidarity, it undermined multilateralism. Other countries may do the same, undermining trust in global organizations such as the World Health Organization. The first impact on global health governance is a shift in the balance of power.

The US exit gave China and the global South an opportunity to fill the gap. As China expanded its resources and influence, countries like India became more vocal about low- and middle-income countries and promoted fair health policies. Vulnerable populations in low- and middle-income countries were disproportionately affected by the World Health Organization's reduced capacity to support vaccination programs and disease elimination initiatives. The end of the U.S.-World Health Organization partnership delayed the dissemination of critical research and innovations and interfered with international epidemic surveillance networks. There

is an opportunity for India and other global South countries to have greater influence on the restructuring of global health governance. India is positioned as a key player due to its leadership in vaccine diplomacy and overall health initiatives. However, its ability to assume the leadership role left by the United States is hampered by a lack of resources and conflicting priorities, such as regional conflicts.

As long as the government allows, the World Health Organization participates in national health initiatives. Additionally, it collaborates with and supports many health initiatives run by the Indian government, including those on HIV,

malaria, tuberculosis, neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), antimicrobial resistance, and more. The World Health Organization is vital to India's vaccination program; WHO teams also monitor vaccine coverage. If US funding stops, the World Health Organization will be unable to carry out these initiatives, including in India. The US will no longer play a key role in influencing international health policy. Today, the United States uses public health diplomacy to influence how the rest of the world responds to and protects people's health. Many Eastern European countries, including Albania, Bulgaria, Belarus, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and

Ukraine, as well as the Soviet Union, declared their intention to withdraw from the World Health Organization in 1949. These countries expressed their displeasure with the World Health Organization's efforts and the US's influence over them. A critical moment in the governance of global health was marked by Trump's withdrawal from the World Health Organization. To guarantee health security and resilience globally, countries like India and other members of the Global South must take the initiative to address these issues and promote a fair and collaborative framework. Bringing the US back in. Restoring stability and trust in the governance

of global health still depends on partnerships.

Why is it important for the United States to bid farewell? First, Trump is right: The United States is the largest financial supporter of the World Health Organization (WHO), providing about 18% of its total funding. Withdrawing these funds would have a significant impact on many global health initiatives, such as efforts to eradicate tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and certain infectious diseases. The WHO also works to prevent and detect disease outbreaks, build strong health systems, and guarantee that everyone in the world has fair access to lifesaving medicines. Trump's annoyance makes it

clear that strict postures and physical boundaries cannot keep germs out of one's territory and that global health efforts do not work in a vacuum. The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that no one is safe until everyone is safe. The World Health Organization has approached the US in the hopes that he will change his mind and join them again. As amazing as this may sound, scientific miracles have also impacted the medical field, and the medical community is hopeful that another miracle will reconnect the United States with the World Health Organization.

**Priyanka Saurabh is a Research Scholar in Political Science,**

# Union Minister reviews construction of ESIC Hospital at Budgam

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 29: Union Minister of State (MoS) for Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME), Labour and Employment, Shobha Karandlaje, today chaired a meeting to review construction of 100-bedded Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) Hospital at SIDCO Industrial Complex, Ompora, Budgam.

The hospital being constructed at a cost of Rs 160 crore would be equipped with modern healthcare facilities and will have OPD, IPD, ICU, Wards, Diagnostic Laboratories, Operation Theater, Disaster manage-

ment facilities, in addition to an independent sub-station. Besides, Surgery and Psychiatric departments would be established in which specialist doctors and well trained staff will be made available round the clock.

The Union Minister termed the hospital as yet another step to boost healthcare infrastructure in J&K. He said the hospital is being constructed to provide world class healthcare facilities under ESIC to strengthen the preventive, primary and secondary health care ecosystem in J&K.

She directed the authorities to complete the project before the deadline while cautioning against any breach in set completion timelines. She visited all the health facilities



under construction planned for 23 specialties in the hospital.

Shobha Karandlaje informed that there are more than 6000 industries and establishments in Jammu and Kashmir, under ESIC Act and more than

hospital will serve considerable population registered under ESIC Act.

She added that the hospital would improve the healthcare facilities in the entire area with facility of surgery and psychiatric experts available round the clock.

The hospital is expected to benefit thousands of insured industrial workers and their families associated with around 600 factories and institutions designated under the ESIC Act. The ESIC system will cover all medical and hospital expenses, including referrals to a territory care hospital, along with a range of insurance coverages for death and disability.

"The hospital is planned to be built in the same style as hospitals in

metro cities to provide better treatment to the locals. The goal is to deliver better healthcare services to the disadvantaged elements of society at an affordable price," another official highlighted. He added that treatment costs would be capped to ensure accessibility for those in need.

The official mentioned that SIDCO has acquired 40 kanal of land, which will be leased for the hospital's construction. "The facility is strategically designed to ensure efficient patient care during emergencies, equipped with the necessary personnel, equipment and an ample number of operating rooms. Around 23 specialists will be available in the hospital," the official said.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my registration certificate (RC) of My vehicle (SCOOTY ) bearing registration no JK05L0358 .Now I am applying for its duplicate if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She contact with (ARTO) SOPORE within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name.....ISHFAQ MOHI UD DIN BHAT  
S/O... GHULAM MOHI UD DIN BHAT  
R/O ...WANIGAM PAYEEN Distt ...BARAMULLA

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for issuance of Pesticides License in this connection if anybody has any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the office of concerned PLANT PROTECTION OFFICER LAL MANDI SRINAGAR (PPO) within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

NAME.....MUSHTAQ AHMAD MIR  
S/O.....MOHD MAQBOOL MIR  
R/O KREERI

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my registration certificate (RC) of My vehicle (SCOOTY ) bearing registration no JK0510358. Now I am applying for its duplicate if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She contact with (ARTO) srinagar within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name.....ISHFAQ MOHI UD DIN BHAT  
S/O... GHULAM MOHI UD DIN BHAT  
R/O ...WANIGAM PAYEEN  
Distt ...BARAMULLA

## Government of Jammu & Kashmir

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DEPARTMENT RURAL WATER SUPPLY DIVISION, GANDERBAL/ SRINAGAR.

H.Q: CHEKI-DUDERHAMA GANDERBAL.

e-mail: pherwsd@gmail.com

Phone/Fax: 0194 - 2416292

## Public Notice.

Jal Shakti (PHE) Rural Water Supply Division Ganderbal/Sgr carried out a massive drive of random sampling & testing of various springs across Ganderbal District, wherein it has been found that 37 out of 40 samples collected are Bacteriologically positive. As such, rendering those springs unfit for human consumption.

Now, through the medium of this notice, general public of District Ganderbal and Rural Srinagar where spring water is used for drinking purposes by locals at their own level, are requested to refrain from using spring water for drinking purposes and instead use tap water only till further instructions, please.

However, if at all spring water is to be used, it is advised to use it only after prolonged boiling.

DIPK-11368/24  
Date: Jan 29 2025

SD  
(Er. Samiullah Beigh)  
Executive Engineer JS-PHE  
RWSD Ganderbal/Sgr

## Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION SUMBAL

#### NOTICE INVITING TENDERS FRESH NIT No.74 of 2024-25/R&B Division Sumbal (Single Cover System)

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

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money (In Rupees)	Time of Completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Providing and fixing of Aluminum/Glass Partitioning at CHC Hajin.	1.25	200/-	2500/-	15Days	NHM 2024-25	DEE
2	Construction of aluminum Cabins for NCD Clinic at CHC Sumbal.	0.46	200/-	920/-	10Days	NHM 2024-25	DEE

Position of AA/Ts: - Available  
The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates given below:-  
Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document (as mentioned above) in the shape of Treasury Receipt/e-Challan in

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	
2 <td>Period of downloading of bidding documents</td> <td>29-01-2025 from 2.00P.M</td>	Period of downloading of bidding documents	29-01-2025 from 2.00P.M
3 <td>Bid submission Start Date</td> <td>29-01-2025 from 2.00P.M</td>	Bid submission Start Date	29-01-2025 from 2.00P.M
4 <td>Bid Submission End Date</td> <td>03-02-2025 upto 4.00P.M.</td>	Bid Submission End Date	03-02-2025 upto 4.00P.M.
5 <td>Date &amp; time of opening of Bids (Online)</td> <td>04-02-2025 at 11.00A.M in the office of Executive Engineer R&amp;B Division Sumbal.</td>	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	04-02-2025 at 11.00A.M in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sumbal.

favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sumbal.(The Date of Treasury Challan and CDR must be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End Date.The Treasury Challan must clearly depict the NIT No., S.No of work and Name of work against which the T.C has been deposited. The T.C should be deposited to the M.H 0059-Rev.

Any deviation shall render the bidder as Non-responsive.  
The successful Bidder has to produce Performance Security Deposit @5% of contract value in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG within 02 days after opening of Bids, which shall be released after successful completion of work with DLP. This will replace the EMD @ 2% of the Advertised cost uploaded by the Bidder.

The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sumbal (tender receiving authority).

The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids  
For drawing of agreement of the contract and memorandum of an agreement relating to sake of bill of exchange one rupee for Rs.10,000/- or part thereof shall have to be realized/deposited by the Contractor at his own to revenue Head of Accts.0030/Stamp of Deputy Commissioner Stamps J&K UT.

The Bidder emerging as 1st Lowest (Successful Bidder) has to complete the work & if he fails in completion of the work allotted to him, the bill deposit, unpaid work done and the EMD submitted by him shall be forfeited & the Agency shall be debarred to participate in the future tenders of this Division for one year.

DIPK-11352/24  
Date: Jan 29 2025

SD,  
Executive Engineer  
R&B Division Sumbal

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my registration certificate (RC) of My vehicle (SCOOTY ) bearing registration no JK05L0358 .Now I am applying for its duplicate if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She contact with (ARTO) SOPORE within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name.....ISHFAQ MOHI UD DIN BHAT  
S/O... GHULAM MOHI UD DIN BHAT  
R/O ...WANIGAM PAYEEN Distt ...BARAMULLA

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for Pesticides License the name and style RAIES PESTICIDES AND FERTILIZERS at (WATERGAM WAGORA ) if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of PLANT PROTECTION OFFICER ( PPO) LAL MANDI SRINAGAR within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

NAME .....RAIES AHMAD SHAH  
S/O .....ABDUL RASHID SHAH  
R/O WATERGAM WAGORA BARAMULLA

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for issuance of Pesticides License in this connection if anybody has any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the office of concerned PLANT PROTECTION OFFICER LAL MANDI SRINAGAR (PPO) within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

NAME.....NADEEM AHMAD MIR  
S/O.....LATIEF AHMAD MIR  
R/O KREERI

## اطلاع عام

میری بجلی بل زیر id نمبر 0209020006590 جو کہ  
عبدل صدوید ولد غلام نبی وید کے نام پر درج ہے اب تبدیل کر کے فاروق احمد وید ولد عبدل صدوید کے نام پر درج کرنی مطلوب ہے کسی کو کوئی عذر ہو تو وہ سات یوم کے اندر اندر pdd سب ڈیو جن عسقمقام کے دفتر میں پیش کرے بعد از معاد کوئی عذر قبول نہیں ہوگا

المستہر

فاروق احمد وید ولد عبدل صدوید  
ساکن ہر دو کھتل صوفی پورا تحصیل سار پھلگام

## اطلاع عام

میری بجلی بل زیر id نمبر 0207010018388 جو کہ  
محمد رمضان نجار ولد خضر محمد کے نام پر درج ہے اب تبدیل کر کے علی محمد نجار ولد محمد رمضان نجار کے نام پر درج کرنی مطلوب ہے اس بارے میں کسی کو کوئی عذر ہو تو وہ سات یوم کے اندر اندر pdd سب ڈیو جن اننت کے دفتر میں پیش کرے بعد از معاد کوئی عذر قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

المستہر

علی محمد نجار ولد محمد رمضان نجار

کواریگام اچہ بل اننت ناگ کسمیر

Subject: Grant of registration of the proposed travel unit under the name and style " Royal Planner Tour & Travel." Situated at Moominabad Batamaloo Srinagar.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Where I Moomin Farooq S/o: Farooq Ahmad R/o: Moominabad Batamaloo Srinagar. Intends to apply in the Department of Tourism for registration of my proposed travel unit under Name and style "Royal Planner Tour & Travel." Situated at Moominabad Batamaloo Srinagar. under Tourist trade Act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas I will, submit State Subject/ Domicile Certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan Card, Experience Certificate (Minimum of 5 years), Character Certificate (Police Department) Bank Statement (Minimum Balance 10,000), Site plan, Affidavit, Rent deed duly attested by Sub-Registrar, Printing Material (letter Head/visiting Card), photographs of the unit (Indoor and Outdoor) and Two passport size photograph to the Department of Tourism as per prescribed checklist prior to Registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency.

Now as per J&K Registration of Tourism Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12, before my case is processed for registration by the competent Authority the matter is nearby notified for information of the General public/ Financial Institutions Bank/ Organization, etc for objection. If any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director Tourism Registration (email id: dtreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this Notice in leading local newspaper of the valley. No objection beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I Shabir Ahmad Dar F/O: Murtaza Shabir and Uzma Shabir R/O: Hardutooru Anantnag have updated my Wife's name as Kowsar Bano instead of Kowsar Jabeen. Now I want to update the same in the school records of my children namely Murtaza Shabir and Uzma Shabir. If any body having any objection he/she can contact Principal Evergreen Public institute kawarigam Anantnag within 7 days time. No objection will be accepted after the expiry of stipulated time.

Shabir Ahmad Dar  
S/O: Ab Salam Dar  
R/O: Hardutooru Anantnag.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for issuance of Pesticides License in this connection if anybody has any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the office of concerned PLANT PROTECTION OFFICER LAL MANDI SRINAGAR (PPO) within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

NAME.....MUSHTAQ AHMAD MIR  
S/O.....MOHD MAQBOOL MIR  
R/O KREERI

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for issuance of Pesticides License in this connection if anybody has any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the office of concerned PLANT PROTECTION OFFICER LAL MANDI SRINAGAR (PPO) within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

NAME.....NADEEM AHMAD MIR  
S/O.....LATIEF AHMAD MIR  
R/O KREERI

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for Pesticides License the name and style RAIES PESTICIDES AND FERTILIZERS at (WATERGAM WAGORA ) if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of PLANT PROTECTION OFFICER ( PPO) LAL MANDI SRINAGAR within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

NAME .....RAIES AHMAD BHAT  
S/O .....ABDUL RASHID SHAH  
R/O WATERGAM WAGORA BARAMULLA

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Mohammad Akram Mir, S/o Haji Habibullah Mir, residing at S K Colony, Anchidora, Anantnag, hereby inform the public that my wife, Late Misra Begum, W/o Mohammad Akram Mir, passed away on 15th December 2024. The deceased is survived by me, Mohammad Akram Mir, and our two daughters, Abida Jan and Aasifa Akram, both of whom are married. I am in need of a legal heir certificate from the concerned authority. If anyone has any objections regarding this matter, please contact me or the relevant department within seven days of the publication of this notice. After this period, no objections will be entertained.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Mohammad Akram Mir  
Mobile No: +917006495445  
Date: 30-January-2025

## 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 hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of FAIZAN MAJEED MIR S/O AB MAJEED MIR R/O SALOOSA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 05/105/2017 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order. In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine

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 hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of ABIHA SHOWKAT S/O SHOWKAT AHMAD LONE R/O THINDIMA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 20/10/2021 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order. In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine

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 hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of MOHAMMAD AHMAD BHAT S/O JAVAD AHMAD BHAT R/O HAIL JAGIR Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 20/04/2022 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order. In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine

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 hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of MOHAMMAD USMAN CHOPAN S/O FAROOQ AHMAD CHOPAN R/O HARNOW KAWACHECK Tehsil TANGMARG Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 05/07/2021 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order. In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine

Executive Magistrate  
1st Class KREERI

# CS review functioning of JKPCCC

## Directs to take strict enforcement measures to stop violations

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 29: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a meeting to review working and functioning of J&K Pollution Control Committee (JKPCC) here.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary Forest, Ecology and Environment, Department, Sheetal Nanda; Chairman, J&K Pollution Control Committee; Member J&K Pollution Control Committee and other concerned officers of the Department.

The meeting focused on identifying challenges and formulating actionable strategies to safeguard the region's environment while ensuring sustainable development.

Implementation of the provisions of Water and Air Act by the operating industrial units, Chief Secretary directed that closure orders issued by the J&K PCC under Water Act 1974 and

Air Act 1981 against the Stone Crushers units and brick kiln units are implemented in letter and spirit on the ground.

On this occasion Dulloo directed JKPCCC to check and share the list of those units against which closure orders have been issued by the JKPCCC but closure orders have not been implemented on ground to the Secretary FEE, who shall appropriately escalate the matter with the concerned DCs for implementation of the orders. He stressed that consents should be renewed strictly in accordance with the law.

Further he directed to ensure that operating stone crushers units and brick kiln units strictly adhere to the provisions of the law and environmental standards laid down under EPA 1986. He stressed for zero tolerance for violation of environmental laws by the industrial units.

Regarding air quality monitoring, he urged that the oper-



ationalization of the newly proposed AQM stations at Jammu and Srinagar must be expedited. He asked for regular water quality monitoring of polluted river stretches and wetlands by JKPCCC to gauge its status for dovetailing of efforts to mitigate this menace. He also suggested for devising an action plan for improving the quality of water of these river stretch-

es. Chief Secretary stressed upon them to focus on tourist spots for implementation of the non-biodegradable Waste Management Rules and seizure of the Single Use Plastic and other polybags if not conforming to the prescribed standards/specifications. Teams to be constituted in each district under the supervision of the concerned

DCs for implementation of these Rules.

Strict implementation of the Bio-Medical Waste Management Rules and Monitoring of the Health Care Facilities (HCFs) to check whether they are complying with the Bio-Medical Waste Management.

The Chief Secretary directed that meetings of DLMC under the Biomedical Waste Manage-

ment Rules should be held by the DCs in regular intervals. He directed the Commissioner Secret, FEE to hold a meeting with concerned DCs of 7 districts where such meetings have not been held yet and ensure that meetings are held.

While reviewing the functioning of the existing STPs by JKPCCC he asked for strict implementation of the J&K Non-Biodegradable Waste Management Rules to safeguard the water bodies from getting polluted here.

The Commissioner Secretary, FEE, Sheetal Nanda apprised the meeting that instructions have been issued to all the DCs and the issue shall be reviewed regularly. He also made out that JKPCCC would intensify the enforcement activities and must make earnest efforts to check and seize branded polythene shopping bags, if found to be not in conformity with the existing rules.

Finally JKPCCC was suggested

to coordinate with the concerned stakeholder departments and ensure that revised action plan under NCAP is firm up and approved. He suggested the to hold a meeting with concerned departments for early finalization of revised action plan under NCAP for its early submission to the CPCB. Chief Secretary stressed upon them to focus on tourist spots for implementation of the non-biodegradable Waste Management Rules and seizure of the Single Use Plastic and other polybags if not conforming to the prescribed standards/specifications. Teams to be constituted in each district under the supervision of the concerned DCs for implementation of these Rules.

Strict implementation of the Bio-Medical Waste Management Rules and Monitoring of the Health Care Facilities (HCFs) to check whether they are complying with the Bio-Medical Waste Management.

### BJP Baramulla Welcomes Union Minister, Seeks Boost for Industrialization

■ HT News Network



Baramulla, Jan 29, KNT: BJP District President Raja Waqar, along with party leaders, welcomed Union Minister for Industries, Smt. Shobha Karandlaje, during her visit to Baramulla. The delegation raised concerns over youth struggling to secure soft loans under PMEGP for setting up industrial units, alleging that banks are reluctant to provide financial support. They also highlighted the availability of vast land for industrial development but lamented the lack of industrial growth in the district. A key demand was the establishment of an industrial estate in the Uri Assembly Constituency, to which Smt. Karandlaje assured necessary action. She also stressed the need for effective implementation of central schemes for youth empowerment in Baramulla. The Minister listened to all concerns and pledged her full support. [KNT]

### Fisheries department Shines Again Receives F1 hybrid Pure strain (Brown Trout) from Denmark.

■ Farooq Rather.

Kulgam January 29: In order to become the feeding channel for the brown trout in valley Kulgam district has become the first district to receive the much awaited & most popular staking of Rain bow trout & Brown trout from Denmark today at Tschanser Trout Hatchery. This was revealed by Assistant Director Fisheries Shabir Ahmad Shabir. The Department of Fisheries Kulgam who Procured genetically improved germplasm of Rainbow trout and brown trout from Denmark he added. On the occasion the AD Fisheries Fisheries Apprised the DDC Kulgam Athar Aamir Khan that the said procurement is genetically improved strains of brown trout from Denmark and successfully implanted them in Trout Fish Farm Tschanser for the first time in a century. The germplasm will be reared in the hatchery house chanser under controlled conditions and stocked in the freshwater streams of the district and elsewhere in every nook and corner of the UT he added. District Development Commissioner Athar Aamir Khan (IAS) on the occasion said that we envisage that District Kulgam should be pioneering in Trout Angling as we have picturesque fresh water streams like Ahrabal stream and Veshow stream and its tributaries.

### DLIC in Kupwara approves 27 loan cases under Mumkin scheme

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, JANUARY 29: A meeting of District Level Implementation Committee members for implementation of Mission Youth Framework in District Kupwara was convened under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan, here today.

At the outset, the Assistant Director Employment Kupwara, Arshid Qadir Bhat who is the member secretary of the committee provided a brief introduction and achievement ensured under the Mission Youth Framework.

After threadbare discussion and deliberations, 27 loan application under Mumkin Scheme and 01 loan application under Tejaswini



were approved by the committee. 06 applicants under SEI were interviewed and their business plan was approved for feasible amount by the committee.

Besides, Assistant Director Employment Kupwara, ARTO Kupwara, Nodal Officer JKEDI Kupwara, Representatives from Lead Bank Manager Kupwara, General Manager DIC Kupwara, DSWO Kupwara and Employment Officer Kupwara participated in the meeting.

### DC Kulgam reviews HADP, credit linked schemes in District

Kulgam, January 29: Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today held a comprehensive review of agriculture and entrepreneurship oriented schemes including HADP, Kisan Credit Scheme, PMFME & Agriculture Infrastructure Fund.

On the occasion, DC directed all the concerned departments and banks to reach out to every farmer and farmer family in the district and ensure full coverage of beneficiaries under the said schemes in the district.

## CUKashmir to launch coaching-cum-counselling for CUET, NET aspirants

■ HT News Network

Srinagar: Central University of Kashmir (CUK) has announced the launch of a dedicated coaching-cum-counselling initiative for aspirants preparing for the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) and the National Eligibility Test (NET), starting from the academic session 2025. This initiative, unveiled by Vice-Chancellor Prof. A. Ravinder Nath, during a press conference, underscores the university's commitment to enhancing student success.

The coaching programme will be conducted in three phases: the first phase will cater to CUET PG aspirants, the second phase will focus on CUET UG aspirants, and the third phase will be dedicated to NET aspirants.

Registration for the programme will be conducted online with a nominal fee of 200, and the notification along with the registration link will be issued in the first week of February 2025. The one-week online coaching programme is scheduled to commence in the second week of February 2025. The sessions will be led by CUET toppers and experienced faculty members from various departments, equipping students



with the necessary strategies and skills to excel in the admission tests conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA). The media persons were also informed about the ongoing PG admission process through the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA). "For the 2025-26 academic session, CUKashmir is part of CUET (PG) - 2025, offering admissions to 18 postgraduate courses. The admission process for these programmes is currently underway, with the last date for submission of applications set for 1st February 2025," CUKashmir Vice Chancellor, said, adding the CUET

platform provides students the opportunity to seek admission in higher education institutions across India, for the test in their respective locations. The coaching programme will be conducted in three phases: the first phase will cater to CUET PG aspirants, the second phase will focus on CUET UG aspirants, and the third phase will be dedicated to NET aspirants. Registration for the programme will be conducted online with a nominal fee of 200, and the notification along with the registration link will be issued in the first week of February 2025. The one-week online coaching programme is scheduled to commence.

## DC Bandipora chairs Vidyalaya Management Committee meeting

■ HT News Network

Bandipora, January 29: The Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Manzoor Ahmad Qadri Wednesday chaired a meeting of the Vidyalaya Management Committee (VMC) and DLMC at the Mini Secretariat, Bandipora. The meeting discussed various measures for operationalization of the new building of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) Bandipora including construction of a link road at JNV Madar and road construction at JNV Brar, alongside addressing various infrastructure issues that need urgent attention. The Deputy Commissioner directed the Chief Medical Officer to arrange counselors to provide guidance to adolescent students ahead of their examinations aimed to offer emotional and psychological support to the students, ensuring they are well-prepared and confident. On the occasion, the



Deputy Commissioner M. A. Qadri instructed the concerned from Jal Shakti Department and Power Development Department (PDD), to facilitate water and electricity connections for the new JNV school building, once all required formalities are completed by the institution.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of ensuring quality education and the

welfare of students in the district and reiterated the District Administration's commitment to improving educational infrastructure and facilities across the district. The meeting was attended by ADC Zaffar Husson Shawl, Chief Education Officer Bandipora Kishore Kumar, Chief Medical Officer Rafi Ahmad Salathi, Assistant Director FCS&CA, Dr. Naseer Ahmad, Executive Engineer R&B

Mohammad Hussain, Executive Engineer PDD, Principal JNV Bandipora (Member Secretary), Mohammad Parvaiz, Officers from PHE and other concerned. The meeting discussed various measures for operationalization of the new building of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) Bandipora including construction of a link road at JNV Madar and road construction at JNV Brar, alongside addressing various infrastructure issues that need urgent attention. The Deputy Commissioner directed the Chief Medical Officer to arrange counselors to provide guidance to adolescent students ahead of their examinations aimed to offer emotional and psychological support to the students, ensuring they are well-prepared and confident. On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner M. A. Qadri instructed the concerned from Jal Shakti Department.

## JK Bank, JKPICCA Forge Partnership to Strengthen Agro-Processing, Cold Chain Infrastructure

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, January 29 : In a significant move to bolster Jammu and Kashmir's fruit and vegetable processing sector, the Jammu Kashmir Fruits & Vegetables Processing & Integrated Cold Chain Association (JKPICCA) has joined hands with JK Bank to enhance financial accessibility and infrastructure development. The first high-level meeting between the two stakeholders took place at the bank's headquarters in Jammu, where JKPICCA leaders engaged with the newly appointed Managing Director of JK Bank, Amitava Chatterjee. JKPICCA President Bashir Ahmad Naik, while welcoming the new leadership, expressed confidence in a productive collaboration to uplift the region's agro-processing industry. Key issues discussed included a proposal to lower interest rates on loans for the sector, with JKPICCA advocating for a uniform rate below 9% to ease financial burdens on businesses. The association also called for the removal of compliance-related hurdles that often delay loan approvals. The meeting further

underscored the need for crop insurance for farmers under the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme, ensuring financial protection against unpredictable agricultural risks. Additionally, concerns regarding operational inefficiencies at the Lassipora branch were raised, with requests for increased staffing and extended working hours to facilitate faster cheque clearances. Responding positively, MD Amitava Chatterjee assured that these concerns would be addressed on priority, reaffirming the bank's commitment to supporting local industries and driving economic growth in the region.

"This collaboration has the potential to bring significant improvements to the agro-processing sector. We look forward to prompt action from the bank's leadership," said JKPICCA President Bashir Ahmad Naik.

The alliance between JKPICCA and JK Bank is expected to streamline financial services, expand cold chain infrastructure, and provide critical support to the fruit and vegetable processing industry, ultimately benefiting the entire agricultural ecosystem of Jammu and Kashmir.

## Deputy Chief Minister holds public outreach programme at Kangri

HT News Network

KANGRI, (RAJOURI) JANUARY 29: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today conducted a public outreach programme at Punna Khetar, Kangri, in Beripattan Tehsil, Rajouri, where he interacted with the local residents and listened to their grievances. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation, with people expressing gratitude for the government's outreach initiatives. During the programme, the public raised various issues including relocation of tehsil office at Beripattan, establishment of a veterinary sub centre at Tanda, installation of electricity poles and



addressing frequent power cuts, upgradation of Gurbak Singh to Shamshanghat, Gurudwara Singh to main road, and main road to Bachan Singh roads, requisition of transformers at Pyari Gala, Tanda (Ward No. 5) and Punna Khetar, Kangri, expediting work on Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) schemes in the region, opening of J&K Bank branch at Kangri, setting up of a medical sub-centre and repairing of hand pumps at

different locations.

The Deputy Chief Minister listened patiently to the concerns and issues projected by the people. He directed the district administration and concerned departments to address the grievances on priority basis. He reaffirmed the government's commitment towards public welfare, stating, "Our government is taking administration to people's doorsteps to ensure effective redressal of their grievances. We are fully accountable and committed to rapid development of every nook and corner of the region." The Deputy Chief Minister stressed that the benefits of all government schemes must reach genuine beneficiaries and warned against any misuse of subsidy schemes. He further directed the Chief Agriculture Officer to cancel the licenses of fertiliser dealers who are charging higher-than-approved rates to ensure that farmers are not exploited. To enhance administrative accessibility, he also directed that the office of Tehsildar Beripattan be made functional in the Panchayat Ghar Kangri, ensuring ease of access.

## CS emphasises result oriented action plan to prevent drug abuse

HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 29: Reiterating Government's commitment towards complete eradication of drug abuse, Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today emphasised the need to devise a result oriented action plan to prevent and eliminate drug menace from the society through massive awareness.

The Chief Secretary was addressing a high level meeting held in this regard at the Civil Secretariat.

Among others the meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Home; Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare; Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD; Commissioner Secretary, GAD; ADGP, Jammu; Divi-



sional Commissioner, Kashmir/Jammu; Secretary RDD; Director, Information; Drug Controller; Deputy Commissioners and other concerned officers.

The Chief Secretary directed the Information Department to collaborate with other departments in raising awareness about the ill effects of substance abuse. He emphasized the importance of public

awareness campaigns, including posters, slogans, advertisements on social media, public transport and outdoor spaces. He further instructed the department to produce a short film highlighting the ill effects of drugs and ways to protect individuals and society from this growing threat.

Stressing a multi-pronged strategy, Atal Dulloo stated that by

implementing stringent measures, we aim to dismantle drug networks, reduce drug demand and create a healthier, safer society.

The awareness program will focus on educating students on prevention strategies, emphasizing the role of mental health support, engaging youth in anti-drug campaigns.

To ensure widespread outreach, the Chief Secretary directed the Police, Health, School Education, Social Welfare and Rural Development Departments to prepare a calendar of activities covering every Panchayat. This will accelerate the momentum of the Drug-Free Campaign, especially among the students and young people.

## 76th Republic Day celebrations culminate with Beating Retreat Ceremony

HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 29: The Customary 'Beating Retreat' ceremony marked the culmination of the four-day-long Republic Day celebrations, at the MA Stadium, today. Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha was the Chief Guest for the ceremony.

Enchanting patriotic tunes by the Brass Bands and Pipe drum Bands of Armed Forces and J&K Police and the musical performances on Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon and other mesmerizing musical tunes enthralled the audience.

The ceremony also featured the felicitation of the contingents of Jammu Kashmir Police and Security Forces; Parade Commander, Dy Parade Com-



mander, Ex-Servicemen, officials of Civil Administration; marching contingents of cadets from NCC (Boys & Girls), cultural performers, children with special needs and Tableaux of different departments by the Lieutenant Governor for their outstanding display at the grand event.

The Lieutenant Governor also awarded the winners of the Patriotic Song

Singing competition organized by the Department of Information and Public Relations.

The Beating Retreat ceremony was concluded with the ever-popular 'Saare Jahan Se Achha' with simultaneous display of spectacular fireworks and sound & light display followed by the National Anthem.

## Chief Justice inaugurates Judicial Enclave at DCC Kathua

HT News Network

KATHUA, JANUARY 29: Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Tashi Rabstan, today inaugurated the Judicial Enclave, comprising five well furnished apartments for Judicial Officers, at District Court Complex, Kathua in presence of Justice Rajnesh Oswal, Administrative Judge, Kathua district.

Shahzad Azeem, Registrar General, High Court; MK Sharma, Principal Secretary to Chief Justice; Amit Gupta, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority and Judicial Officers posted at District Headquarters Kathua were also present on the occasion.

The Chief Justice highlighted the significance of having dignified residences for the Judicial Officers nearer to the Court Complex. He emphasised early completion of the under construction Court Complex at Kathua and other Court Buildings in the district so that the Courts, which are presently func-



tioning in the buildings with grossly insufficient and inadequate space and facilities, can be shifted there. The same would be beneficial for all the stakeholders paving the way for smooth and speedy dispensation of Justice.

Justice Rajnesh Oswal also

expressed happiness at the completion of the Judicial Enclave and appreciated the pioneering efforts made by the Chief Justice in this regard.

In his welcome address, Jatinder Singh Jamwal, Principal District and Sessions Judge, Kathua wel-

comed Chief Justice, Administrative Judge and all other dignitaries which included Officers of the High Court Registry, the Deputy Commissioner Kathua and Senior Superintendent of Police Kathua.

He presented a brief overview of Judicial Enclave and other infrastructural projects coming up in the district.

Pravin Pandoh, Additional District Judge Kathua, presented vote of thanks. He thanked all the dignitaries present on the occasion and made a special mention of Parvez Malik and his team for their dedication in timely completion of this project.

The proceedings of the event were conducted by Amandeep kour, Special Mobile Magistrate, Kathua. The Chief Justice highlighted the significance of having dignified residences for the Judicial Officers nearer to the Court Complex. He emphasised early completion of the under construction Court Complex at Kathua and other Court Buildings in the district so that the Courts,

## BJP Committed for Dignified Return of Kashmiri Pandits: Sat Sharma

HT News Network

Jammu, Jan 29, : Bharatiya Janata Party is committed for the dignified return of the Kashmiri Pandit community to their homeland. The party has from the beginning championed the cause of the displaced community and has taken effective measures to safeguard their basic rights and dignity. Prime Minister Narendra Modi led union government has ensured a significant improvement in curbing the terrorist and separatist related incidents. These developments will ensure the socio-economic growth of the society as a whole and encourage the re-development of faith in the Kashmiri displaced community for their dignified return to their land," said Sat Sharma.

According to the Associated News Bureau, Sat Sharma was speaking, while he welcomed the BJP's Kashmiri displaced district team led by its new District President Rajeev Pandita at



the party headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

Sat Sharma said that the woes faced by the community were taken at every forum by the party with a firm commitment for the dignified return of the Kashmiri Displaced persons, while working to provide lasting solutions to their issues. He said that the party has entrusted a strong confidence in the party's Kashmiri displaced unit to enlist and highlight the griev-

ances and the issues of the community. The new unit of BJP KDD has the foremost duty to live up to the expectations of the organization as well as the community now, added Sat Sharma. BJP, Kashmir Displaced district (KDD) led by its President Rajeev Pandita, also felicitated Sat Sharma for his election as the President of BJP Jammu & Kashmir. The KDD team also felicitated Ashok Koul, General Secretary (organization), acknowledging his invaluable contributions to the party and the community.

Rajeev Pandita said that the BJP has always stood for the cause of the Kashmiri displaced community and worked for the betterment of the community through various measures. He assured the President that KDD will work with full dedication as a team for the best interests of the organization and the betterment of displaced people. KDD assured their leadership about their commitment of strengthening the party and serving the displaced community with unwavering dedication.

## Doctor Duped For 30.50 Lakh, Crime Branch Files Charges Against 4 Including Director

HT News Network

Jammu, Jan 29, ANB: Crime Branch (CB) has filed a charge-sheet against four accused including Director of Bengaluru based company for duping Rs 30.50 Lakh from a Doctor of Jammu on the pretext of setting up a Gym in joint venture.

According to the Associated News Bureau, this case was registered on 20-02-2023 on the written complaint of Dr. Anuj Arora (Dentist) S/o Shri K.K. Arora R/O C-3 Extension Gandhi Nagar Jammu against Director & others of M/S Chisel Fitness LLP after conducting preliminary verification and prima- facie proving commission of a cognizable case.

A team of CB officers also conducted raids in Bengaluru, Karnatak last month. The team also conducted thorough searches in collaboration with the officers / officials of Police Station Wilsen Garden, Bengaluru and Police Station Ashok Nagar, Bengaluru. It was found that the office premises/building of M/S Chisel Fitness

LLP located at 36 NR Chambers Richmond Road Bangalore was closed for the last 3-4 years.

Investigation has been completed and challan produced in the court of law against the four accused namely 1. Satya Shardul Sinha W/o Shardul Ashok Sinha R/o No. 24 K.H Road Bangalore South Wilson Garden Bengaluru Karnataka Founder &amp; Director Chisel Fitness LLP bearing address as 36 NR Chambers, Richmond Road, Bangalore, Karnatak 2.

Sushil Kumar Tongbram brother of said Mrs. Satya Sinha Director Chisel Fitness LLP supply and chain Management LLP Bangalore, Karnataka 3. Dr. Kingmoohan Director, Corporate & Legal Affairs LLP Bangalore, Karnataka 4. Gangoni Poorna Chandra, Architect Chisel Fitness LLP Bangalore, Karnataka.

Senior Superintendent of Police Crime Jammu Benam Tosh confirmed that the chargesheet of case FIR No. 22/2023 has been filed in the court of law for judicial determination. (ANB)

## Chief Justice rolls out activity calendar of J&K Legal Services Authority for the year 2025

### A Unified Launch from Jammu and Srinagar to Strengthen Justice and Awareness

HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 29: In a significant step towards strengthening legal awareness and ensuring access to justice for all, Justice Tashi Rabstan, Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh & Patron-in-Chief, J&K Legal Services Authority, today rolled out an Activity Calendar (Wall Hanging) 2025 of the J&K Legal Services Authority in the august presence of Justice Atul Sreedharan, Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority, who joined the simple but impressive ceremony virtually from Srinagar.

The Activity Calendar 2025 serves as a comprehensive roadmap for legal

awareness programs, legal aid initiatives and outreach activities planned for the current year across the Union Territory of J&K. Besides highlighting key dates for National and Special Lok Adalats, it outlines awareness campaigns on social justice issues, training programs for legal aid functionaries, helpline numbers for enhanced accessibility and initiatives aimed at strengthening alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

While releasing the calendar, the Chief Justice commended the J&K Legal Services Authority for its commitment in bridging the gap between legal institutions and the legal aid seekers, particularly those from marginalized and underprivileged sections



of society. The Chief Justice emphasized that the calendar will act as a guiding document for all stakeholders, including judicial officers, legal aid counsels, paralegal

volunteers, and legal services institutions, to effectively execute their responsibilities in ensuring access to justice. Justice Atul Sreedharan, Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services

Authority also underscored the importance of activity calendar in timely execution of legal aid initiatives and stressed that the calendar would serve as a strategic tool for organizing legal literacy programs, Lok Adalats, victim support initiatives and pro bono services across the UT. The event also marked discussions on further strengthening legal aid mechanisms, enhancing digital outreach and promoting legal literacy at the grassroots level. The calendar includes special focus areas such as legal assistance to prisoners, empowerment of women and children, awareness on cyber laws, environmental justice, rehabilitation of victims of crime and undertaking of

special campaigns launched by the NALSA.

The function was attended by Shahzad Azeem, Registrar General, M. K. Sharma, Pr. Secretary to Chief Justice, Amit Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority, Sandeep Kour, Registrar Judicial, Jammu, Anoop Sharma, Registrar Computers (IT), Jeewan Kumar, Secretary, HCLSC and other officers of the Registry who also appreciated the efforts of the J&K Legal Services Authority in conceptualizing and preparing an extensive activity schedule, ensuring timely execution of legal aid services in line with the objectives of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).

# Javed Rana calls on Union Forest Minister, HP Chief Minister

Seeks greater financial, policy support for Forest Conservation, Tribal Welfare in J&K

HT News Network

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 29: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today called on Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Bhupendra Yadav, in New Delhi to discuss key environmental and tribal welfare issues concerning Jammu & Kashmir.

Emphasizing the ecological significance of Jammu & Kashmir, which has over 52% of its land under forest cover, Javed Rana sought greater financial assistance and policy support from the central government to protect J&K's biodiversity and strengthen sustainable development efforts.

During the meeting, Javed Rana highlighted the urgent need for increased funding for forest conservation, soil and water preservation and afforestation programs. He submitted a proposal seeking 75 crore for soil and water conservation in the Kandi region over the next three years, 100 crore for development of migratory routes for nomadic grazers and 50 crore for conserving medicinal plants in the Shivalik region.

Highlighting the increasing risks posed by forest fires, he urged for release of 10 crore at the beginning of the financial year for fire prevention and management. Additionally, he demanded 50 crore for conducting a comprehensive study on the ecological and economic value of J&K's forests, as well as expedited approval for a JICA-backed training facility in Jammu and Srinagar to enhance forest manage-



ment expertise.

Recognizing the role of technology in modern forestry, Javed Rana sought 4 crore under a centrally sponsored scheme to leverage AI and remote sensing for forest resource management, afforestation monitoring, fire prevention and water harvesting. He also pushed for a 300 crore allocation over the next five years under the Climate Change Action Plan to strengthen J&K's environmental resilience.

Besides, special funding of 100 crore was also requested for conservation of key water bodies including Wular Lake and Gharana Wetlands.

Additionally, he called for enhanced financial allocations under the Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) and the Green India Mission to support large-scale affor-

estation and ecological restoration efforts in the region. Apart from conservation funding, Rana raised several concerns regarding the forestry sector's human resource challenges.

The Minister particularly pushed the induction of SFS officers recruited in 2011 into the Indian Forest Service (IFS) to strengthen mid-level management and requested increased allocation of IFS officers under the AGMUT cadre to support J&K's growing forestry needs.

He further recommended upgrading the Kashmir Forest Training Institute in Bandipora to an academy at par with Tamil Nadu Forest Academy and Kundal Academy in Maharashtra to provide advanced training for forest officers across the country. The discussion also covered critical policy interventions including the

need to restore the powers of the Chairman of J&K Pollution Control Committee (JKPCC) under Section 5 of the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

Rana urged the Union Minister to expedite clearance of over 400 pending cases under the Forest Conservation Act related to the Jal Jeevan Mission, which are awaiting approval at the regional office, so that water infrastructure projects in forested areas can be implemented without further delay.

The Union Minister acknowledged the concerns raised and assured full cooperation from the central government. He reiterated the Centre's commitment towards strengthening conservation efforts, enhancing financial support for afforestation projects and ensuring that tribal communities receive the benefits they rightfully deserve.

Both leaders agreed on the need for a collaborative approach between the central and J&K governments to implement long-term solutions that balance environmental conservation with economic growth. The Union Minister assured that the proposals would be considered on priority and necessary steps would be taken to expedite approvals and fund allocations. Speaking after the meeting, Javed Rana exuded confidence that proactive policymaking and sustained government support would lead to meaningful environmental reforms. He reaffirmed the commitment of J&K Government led by Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, for policies that safeguard J&K's natural heritage while ensuring the welfare of its tribal and forest-dependent communities.

## ABRSM delegation meets UGC Chairman

HT News Network



JAMMU, JANUARY 29: The delegation of Akhil Bharatiya Rashtriya Shaikshik Mahasangh (ABRSM) met the Chairman of University Grants Commission (UGC) Prof. M. Jagadeesh Kumar and Secretary Prof. Manish Joshi and discussed the anomalies in the draft regulation 2025.

National President of ABRSM Prof. Narayan Lal Gupta said that in this discussion which lasted for about two hours, the ground level problems regarding the proposed provisions of appointment and promotion of teachers were put before the UGC. ABRSM opposed considering bureaucrats and industrialists eligible for the post of Vice Chancellor and demanded its withdrawal.

Prof. Gupta said that issues like limiting the requirement of PhD in Career Advancement Scheme to Associate Professor and Professor posts only, making the criteria of Notable Contribution practical, giving promotion of Academic Level 15 to college teachers as well and removing the limit of 10% were raised prominently. ABRSM also objected to proposed changes in service conditions before the implementation of the Eighth Pay Commission recommendations. ABRSM's National General Secretary, Prof. Geeta Bhatt, stated that the delegation emphasized giving priority to teaching, research, and publication in Indian languages for promotions and recruitment. ABRSM also recommended provisions for paid study leave to teachers for Ph.D., granting CAS promotion benefits from the date of eligibility, ensuring tenure for Principals until retirement, addressing anomalies in the benefits of past service, eliminating the distinction between undergraduate and postgraduate Principals, and capping contractual academic positions to a maximum of 20% of approved posts. Prof. Bhatt further added that the delegation discussed the appointment of an Ombudsman to ensure transparency in resolving complaints related to violations of UGC regulations, defining teachers' workload, limiting daily stay in institutions to five hours, organizing refresher and orientation courses offline and treating such activities as on-duty.

## 10 Day Skill development Workshop commences at GDC Marh

HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 29: Student Welfare-Women Empowerment- IIC Committee, student presidium of Government Degree College Marh, in collaboration with Dogre Well Wisher Foundation, registered with the directorate of Handicraft J&K and Ministry of Textiles Government of India, organised 10 day workshop on handicraft skills under the patronage of the principal of the college Dr. Rakesh Kumar Koul. The resource persons for the workshop are Ritu Gupta and Arun Kumar from Dogre Well Wisher Foundation.

The inaugural session started with a welcome note by the college Principal, who emphasized the importance of handicraft in generating self-employment and self-sustenance among the rural youth and upholding and preserving the traditional culture of Jammu and Kashmir. The workshop will provide a platform to the participants to gain hands-on experience in Aari work handmade embroidery. It shall also serve as a platform for fostering collaborations and enabling cultural exchange. As many as 35 students along with faculty members registered themselves for the workshop. On the first day, the male as well as the female students were imparted the training in handling the Aari (needle) and the fundamentals of stitching which shall finally lead to fine embroidery. A healthy competition among male and female students was noticed as an equiptotal stakeholder of the society which was very encouraging under the NEP.

## DC reviews performance of RDD in Poonch district

HT News Network



POONCH, JANUARY 29: Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal, convened a meeting today to assess the current status of construction of Panchayat Ghars and Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) works in the district.

The meeting was held in the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex. The Deputy Commissioner conducted a detailed block-wise review of all ongoing and completed projects undertaken by the Rural Development Department under BDC/PRI/DDC works, SBM initiatives, the status of Panchayat Ghars and the audit parameters.

The Block Development Officers (BDOs) were asked to actively inspect projects and collaborate with Assistant Executive Engineers (AEEs) to guarantee timely project completion. The meeting was attended by ACD Poonch, ACP Poonch, Executive Engineer (XEN) REW, BDOs, and other concerned officers.

## Satish Sharma inaugurates medical camp at Railway Station Hints at establishing dormitories, toilets, Driver Sarai at major transport hubs'

HT News Network



JAMMU, JANUARY 29: Minister for Food and Civil Supplies, Transport and IT, Satish Sharma, today inaugurated a Medical Camp at Railway Station, Jammu.

The camp was organised by the Motor Vehicles Department in collaboration with Health Department and Taxi Operator Union Railway Station Jammu to promote health awareness and well-being among the transport workers. During the camp, more than 450 drivers participated and underwent BP, sugar and eyesight check-up for colour blindness and other eye sight related issues. The Minister was accompanied by the DIG JKS Range; Transport Commissioner; SSP Railways; Joint Transport Commissioner; RTO Jammu; CMO Jammu and other senior officials from the respective departments. Addressing the gathering, the Minister appreciated the dedication of drivers who, despite their demanding schedules, participated in the camp, prioritizing their health over daily earnings. He urged the participants to develop a sense of responsibility by adhering

to road safety measures, including wearing seat belts and helmets and avoiding mobile phone use while driving. The Minister highlighted that drivers play a crucial role in building a responsible and progressive society, as their behaviour influences young minds travelling in their vehicles during their struggle time.

Satish Sharma also expressed concern over the rising number of road accident fatalities, which claim around 1,70,000 lives annually, stressing that this number surpasses casualties from some diseases. He called

upon all stakeholders to come forward and contribute towards road safety and accident prevention.

The Minister assured that monthly health check-up camps would be organized for drivers in collaboration with the Transport and Health Departments. Additionally, efforts will be made to establish dormitories, toilets and a "Driver Sarai" at major transport hubs for the welfare of drivers and their helpers.

Earlier, the Transport Commissioner and DIG spoke at length about the significance of road safety and the measures needed to curb the accidents. "This initiative reaffirms government's commitment towards enhancing road safety, ensuring the well-being of transport workers, and fostering a responsible driving culture in Jammu & Kashmir", maintained the Minister. Earlier, the Transport Commissioner and DIG spoke at length about the significance of road safety and the measures needed to curb the accidents. "This initiative reaffirms government's commitment towards enhancing road safety, ensuring the well-being of transport workers, and fostering a responsible driving culture in Jammu & Kashmir",

## DC reviews implementation of Holistic Agriculture Development Programme in Kishtwar

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, JANUARY 29: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishtwar, Rajesh Kumar Shavan today reviewed the progress of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) in the district.

The meeting focused on assessing the progress made under various schemes.

The Nodal Officer HADP/ Chief Agriculture Officer, Kishtwar Amjad Hussain Malik, presented a detailed report on the programme's progress. He informed that a total of 14,314 applications were received across agriculture and allied sec-



tors. Of these, 10,532 applications have been approved, including 7,996 in the Agriculture sector, 331 in Horticulture, 1,425 in Animal Husbandry, 589 in Sheep Husbandry, 167 in Sericulture, 18 in Fisheries, and 6 in the Marketing sector, as approved by the District Level Committee (DLC).

During the review, the DC emphasized the importance of maximizing the registration of eligible candidates throughout the district and directed field functionaries to ensure greater outreach and participation in the programme.

The meeting also included a comprehensive review

of both physical and financial achievements across various sectors, such as Horticulture, Fisheries, Sheep Husbandry, and Animal Husbandry.

The DC also set new targets for all allied departments to ensure progress in HADP and to achieve the top rank in the UT. These included a total number of targets: 7,350 for the Kisan Sathi Portal, 1,600 for Daksh Kisan, and 750 for adding farms to the KKG app.

The review meeting was attended by CPO Kishtwar Shah Nawaz Bali, CHO Kishtwar Sajid Mustafa, DSHO Kishtwar, DAO Kishtwar, SDO, SDAOs, SMS and other officials from agri-

## Ramban admin approves calendar of activities for IYC2025, reviews working of M-PACS

HT News Network

RAMBAN, JANUARY 29: The 6th District Level Cooperative Development Committee (DLDC) meeting was held today under the chairmanship of District Development Commissioner (DDC) Ramban, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary to approve the calendar of activities for the International Year of Cooperatives-2025 (IYC-2025). The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Roshan Lal; Assistant Commissioner Panchayat (ACP) Ashfaq Ahmed and district heads of allied departments, DDM NABARD and other officials.

After thorough discussion, a comprehensive calendar of activities was approved envisaging hosting of a Sehkar Mela, Health Camps, awareness & training camps in collabora-



tion with Agriculture and allied departments. The Committee also approved the plan for establishment of a Mini Super Bazaar at M-PACS Maitra, the opening of Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendra (PMJAK) at Primary Health Centre Batote and the establishment of two food processing units. In addition to this, an exhibition showcasing organic products from cooperatives will be held as part of the celebrations.

The Committee also reviewed the implementation of decisions taken at the last two Joint Working Committee meetings. One of the key focuses of the meeting was the establishment of a Grain storage project at Village Pernote. The Revenue Department was instructed to find a feasible site for the project.

Furthermore, the DDC directed the Deputy Registrar, Cooperatives (DRCS) and other Committee members to expedite the formation of new M-PACS, Dairy, and Fisheries Cooperative Societies. He also instructed them to identify potential Panchayats for mobilizing cooperative membership through awareness camps in collaboration with allied departments. Earlier, Deputy Registrar, Cooperatives Priyanka Sharma, delivered a PowerPoint presentation on the overall scenario of the cooperative sector in the district.

# Stampede at Maha Kumbh, a few pilgrims injured

AGENCIES

PRAYAGRAJ, JAN 29 (UND)

A few pilgrims were injured in a stampede on the Sangam bank at the Maha Kumbh here early on Wednesday, official sources said.

The sources said the incident took place around 2 am due to heavy crowd pressure on the occasion of Mauni Amavasya. However, the exact number of the injured is yet to be confirmed by the Mela administration or the police.

The sources said that



the injured have been admitted to the central hospital. It is being claimed that relief and rescue work was carried

out and the situation is under control.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has briefed Prime Minister

Narendra Modi about the entire incident. A high level review meeting is on at the CM's residence to discuss urgent steps to tackle the unfolding

Yogi Adityanath has appealed to the people to offer prayers at the temple and take a bath near the ghats of the Ganga.

He also urged the pilgrims to follow the instructions of the administration, and co-operate with the authorities in making the arrangements, without paying attention to rumours.

# Prez terms Prayagraj stampede as 'extremely sad'; PM condoles loss of lives

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 29 (UND)

President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday termed the stampede at the ongoing Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj as "extremely sad" and expressed grief over the loss of lives of the devotees.

In a post on X, Murmu said, "The stampede incident at Prayagraj Maha Kumbh is extremely sad. I express my condolences to the families of the injured devotees and pray to God that all the injured devotees recover soon". Modi termed the inci-



dent as extremely sad and wished the speedy recovery of all the injured people.

"The accident that happened in Prayagraj Maha Kumbh is extremely sad. My deepest condolences to the devotees who have lost their loved ones in this. Along with this, I wish for the speedy recovery of all the injured," he

wrote on X. He added that the local administration is engaged in helping the victims in every possible way. "In this regard, I have spoken to Chief Minister Yogi ji and I am constantly in touch with the state government".

Earlier talking to reporters, the Uttar Pradesh

Chief Minister said the situation is under control and few devotees have suffered serious injuries. Adityanath said about eight to ten crore people were present for 'Amrit Snan' on Wednesday morning at the spot and urged people to remain cautious. A stampede broke out at the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj around 2 a.m. of Wednesday ahead of the 'Amrit Snan' on 'Mauni Amavasya'.

According to officials, a large number of pilgrims turned up for a holy bath on the occasion of Mauni Amavasya, which triggered the stampede-like incident.

## ISRO's hits century, GSLV-F-15 successfully injects NVS-02 in desired orbit

AGENCIES

SRIHARIKOTA, (ANDHRA PRADESH), JAN 29 (UND)

In a record and historic 100th launch mission from SHAR Range for ISRO, the GSLV-F15 Rocket, with the indigenous cryogenic third stage, successfully injected the NVS-02 Navigation satellite into the desired orbit on Wednesday morning.

After a smooth 27 hr countdown, the heavier launch vehicle, took off majestically from the Second Launch pad after a flight duration of 19 minutes, injected the 2,250 kg satellite into the Orbit.

## Few injured in Maha Kumbh stampede, situation under control: CM Yogi

AGENCIES

LUCKNOW, JAN 29 (UND)

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Wednesday that a few devotees sustained serious injuries in the stampede at the ongoing Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj when they tried to surge ahead to Sangam Nose on the holy festival of Mauni Amavasya.

The CM said the situation is now completely under control and the bathing in Sangam is continuing uninterrupted and smoothly.

The CM has appealed to the devotees to not pay attention to the rumours,



and the fair administration has made adequate arrangements for their convenience. "The devotees are appealed to cooperate with the administration and make this Maha Snan a success," he said.

He said that strict action will be taken against those who spread rumours and negative information.



Talking to the reporters, Yogi said that there is a huge crowd of devotees in the Maha Kumbh. "About 8-10 crore devotees are present in Prayagraj today. About 5.5 crore devotees took the Maha Kumbh bath on Tuesday. There is a lot of pressure due to the devotees going to Sangam Nose. Some dev-

otees have been seriously injured while crossing the barricades on Akhara Marg between 1-2 o'clock at night. They have been immediately taken to the hospital," he said.

He said that the administration is continuously engaged at the local level to ensure the safe bathing of the devotees. "Prime Minister Modi has taken information about the devotees four times since this morning. BJP President JP Nadda, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and Governor Anandiben Patel are also continuously taking information about the devotees since morning," he said.

## SC directs Centre to respond to Muslim woman's plea seeking succession right under secular law

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 29 (UND)

The Supreme Court directed the Centre to file its response to a plea by a Muslim woman seeking the right to be governed by the Indian Succession Act, 1925, instead of Shariat law.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, Justice Sanjay Kumar, and Justice K.V. Viswanathan on Tuesday granted Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta four weeks to file an affidavit in response to the plea filed by Safiya P.M.,



the General Secretary of 'Ex-Muslims of Kerala.'

Appearing on behalf of the Centre, Tushar Mehta acknowledged that the petitioner had raised an intriguing legal question.

He highlighted that the petitioner, a born Muslim, claimed that she does not

believe in Shariat and views it as a regressive law.

The bench instructed Mehta to file a counter affidavit, and while he initially requested three weeks to take instructions, the court granted four weeks and scheduled the matter for hearing in the week starting May 5.

During the hearing, Mehta defended the criminalisation of triple talaq and referenced the case of Parveen Shakir, a former Pakistani civil service officer and renowned poet who was a victim of triple talaq. Quoting Shakir, he recited:

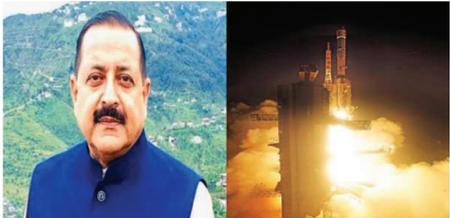
## Union Min Jitendra Singh lauds ISRO for 100th mission, says Sky is not the limit

AGENCIES

SRIHARIKOTA (ANDHRA PRADESH), JAN 29 (UND)

Union Minister of State (I/C) for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh lauded ISRO for successfully accomplishing the landmark milestone of 100th mission from the SHAR Range on Wednesday morning and said this quantum leap instilled confidence that "sky is not the limit after the space sector was unlocked by Prime Minister Narendra Modi".

In a post on X minutes



after GSV-F15 successfully and precisely injected the Navigation Satellite NVS-02 into the precise Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit, he said.

The space sector was unlocked by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

From a humble beginning by Vikram Sarabhai, Satish Dhawan and few others, it has been an amazing journey and a quantum leap after the Prime Minister unlocked the space sector, he added.

## Serbian PM quits after months of mass protests

AGENCIES

BELGRADE, JAN 29 (UND)

Serbian Prime Minister Milos Vucovic has resigned, following nationwide protests over the deadly collapse of a railway station canopy, media reports said.

He said he had acted "to avoid further complicating things" and so as to "not further raise tensions in society".

Fifteen people died in November when a concrete canopy at a railway station collapsed in the city of Novi Sad. Tens of thousands of people have been regularly taking to the streets since then, demanding accountability for the collapse and protesting against corruption,



the BBC reported.

In a TV address late on Tuesday, President Aleksandar Vucic said he would decide within the next 10 days on whether to hold parliamentary elections or form a new government.

According to BBC reports, more than a dozen people have been charged in connection with the Novi Sad incident, including former

Transport Minister Goran Vesic - who resigned days after it happened.

Students have taken the lead with the protests, halting traffic daily and blockading universities for months.

Last Friday, many Serbians stayed off work in response to a call for a general strike, while in December an estimated 100,000 people attended a demonstration in Belgrade. Many smaller protests have been held in towns and cities across the country.

Tensions rose on Monday when, during a 24-hour blockade of the busiest road junction in the capital, Belgrade, a female student was injured in clashes between the

opposition and supporters of the governing party.

That evening, President Vucic said he would pardon students and university tutors who faced charges in connection with the protests and announced a major government reshuffle, saying he expected more than half of ministers to be replaced.

In his Tuesday's address after an emergency meeting with the government, the president said he would sign pardons for 13 people on Wednesday.

He insisted that he and the government had now met student protesters' demands for transparency about the reconstruction of Novi Sad railway station.

## 10 civilians gunned down in E. Afghanistan

AGENCIES

KHOST, AFGHANISTAN, JAN 29 (UND)

Unidentified armed men shot dead 10 civilians, all members of the same family, in eastern Afghanistan's Khost province on Tuesday night, a spokesman for the provincial government, Mustaghfar Garbaz, said Wednesday. The gruesome incident took place in Ali Shir district late Tuesday when unknown armed men entered a house and opened fire, killing 10 people including two men and eight women and children on the spot.

## Saif Ali Khan stabbing case

# Mumbai Court refuses to grant further police custody of accused

AGENCIES

MUMBAI, JAN 29 (UND)

A local court here on Wednesday refused to grant further police custody of Bangladeshi National Mohammad Shariful Islam Shahzad, accused of stabbing Bollywood actor Saif Ali Khan at his residence here on January 16, and remanded him to 14-day judicial custody.

Earlier, Shahzad was produced before local Bandra court with heavy police protection.

While moving the remand application seeking further custody, police



said that there has been considerable progress in the case and further custodial interrogation of the accused was necessary to recover additional evi-

dence. Investigating officer further told the court that the accused had done a reconnaissance of Khan's building before committing the crime.

The officer also informed the court that a team was in Kolkata and probing to ascertain if anyone helped the accused.

"Who helped the accused illegally coming to India from Bangladesh and through whom the accused sent money to his family in Bangladesh? We want to probe this."

The court rejected the prosecution request and remanded him in judicial custody.

Sources in the police said that accused will be taken to Arthur road Jail where he will be lodged.

## SC directs Centre to explore a comprehensive law for domestic workers' rights

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 29 (UND)

The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the Union Government to explore enacting a comprehensive law to safeguard the rights and dignity of domestic workers.

A bench comprising Justice Surya Kant and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan instructed the Ministry of Labour & Employment, in collaboration with related ministries, to establish an expert committee to assess the feasibility of such a law and submit its findings within six months.

The bench emphasized the critical role of domes-

tic workers in urban households, performing essential tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and caregiving. Despite their growing demand, the Court noted that they remain vulnerable to exploitation and abuse due to the absence of a nationwide legislative framework.

In its judgment, authored by Justice Surya Kant, the Court highlighted that most domestic workers belong to marginalized communities, including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, and Economically Weaker Sections. They often take up domestic work out of financial desperation and

face challenges such as low wages, unsafe working conditions, and long working hours. The Court underscored the "legal vacuum" surrounding the rights of domestic workers, noting that they are excluded from several key labour laws, including the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013 and Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

While acknowledging the provisions introduced under the Code on Wages, 2019 and the Social Secu-

urity Code of 2020, which bring domestic workers within the ambit of 'unorganised workers,' the Court observed that a pan-India law with specific protections is still lacking.

The judgment referenced international standards, including guidelines from the International Labour Organization (ILO), and noted previous but unsuccessful attempts to enact legislation for domestic workers' welfare. States like Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra have set up welfare boards for domestic workers, and Kerala has introduced the Kerala Domestic Workers (Regulation and Welfare) Bill, 2021.

## Dr Tasaduk conferred IDF Fellowship Award

Kashmir-based medico Dr. Tasaduk Hussain Itoo has been conferred with the prestigious International Diabetes Federation (IDF) Fellowship Award.



SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

There's a toxic relationship between winter and hair fall. Winter weather can be tough on your hair, and it's not just about the cold. The drop in temperature, low humidity levels and indoor heating strip out moisture leaving your hair dry and brittle.

The drop in humidity during the winter season dries out the air, which in turn, pulls moisture from your mane. Moisture is important, as without it, issues like frizz, breakage, dandruff, and an overall dull appearance can cause excessive hair loss during the colder months.

Winter hair care is not limited to your pre- and post-shower routine. Instead, it involves making key adjustments to your overall lifestyle.

### 1---Use Luke Water

Hot showers might feel comforting in the cold, but they can suck out the moisture from the hair, making it more vulnerable to breakage. Hot water and steam can strip away natural oils, leading to hair dryness. Further, it can also cause dandruff and scalp irritation. So, opt for lukewarm/ cold water when washing and rinse off your hair. Always try to finish with a cold water rinse, as it seals down cuticles, locking in the moisture and making the hair look shinier

### 2---Avoid excessive heat styling:

While it's tempting to blow-dry your hair more often in the

winter, Excessive use of heat tools like blow dryers, straighteners and curling irons can further dry out your hair potentially leading to breakage and further dryness. Allow the hair to dry naturally and use heat-free styling methods whenever possible.

If you like to style your hair with hot tools, apply a heat protectant spray first. A good heat protectant will help keep your hair shiny and smooth, even when using hot styling tools.

Switch to shampoos and conditioners that are specifically designed for hydration. Look for ingredients like aloe vera, shea butter, or keratin to nourish your hair and keep it hydrated. Use a lightweight hydrating serum and leave-in conditioners that help to lock in moisture and keep your hair smooth and manageable

Avoid products with sulfates or alcohol that can strip your hair of moisture. Stick to nourishing, alcohol-free styling products to keep your hair soft and hydrated.

The right Wintertime hair care products can keep your locks looking their best.

It will help you combat frizz and offer sleek, manageable hair. Always go for hair serums with argan oil or silicone, as these ingredients build a protective layer on the hair, offering extra protection and shine.

### 3---Eat Healthy---

Healthy hair starts from within. Ensuring proper nutrition is fundamental to maintaining healthy hair, especially during winter.

Staying adequately hydrated is vital, as water is crucial in maintaining hair moisture. By nourishing your body from within, you provide the foundation for luscious and resilient hair, even in winter's challenges. Drink plenty of water, juices,



and soups and eat a balanced diet rich in vitamins A, C, and E, along with omega-3 fatty acids, to nourish your hair during winter.

Vitamin A nourishes the scalp and increases blood into hair follicles, while vitamin E prevents hair breakage.

Include fruits, vegetables, nuts, soybeans, and flaxseeds in your diet.

### 4---Avoid Tight Hairstyles

Hairstyles such as ponytails or braids, which pull your hair back harshly can also often lead to weaker hair and breakage from the roots. It can put excessive tension on the hair shafts leading to hair loss, so keeping things loose is a good idea. A relaxed braid or a low, loose ponytail will keep your hair healthy while looking stylish.

This also applies to rubber bands and hair clips, which can also cause damage if too tight.

### 5---Oil your Hair---

It is all the more important to nourish your hair regularly with natural ingredients. They are non-toxic and do not harm the structure of the hair.

Incorporate natural oils into your hair care routine to provide an extra layer of protection and

hydration. Sesame oil, argan oil, coconut oil, and jojoba oil are excellent choices. Have hot oil therapy once a week. Heat oil and apply on the hair. If the hair is dry and damaged, pure coconut oil or pure almond oil may be applied. Using your fingertips massage the scalp gently, actually moving the scalp in circular motions. This helps to improve blood circulation to the follicles. Then do the hot towel wrap.

### 6---Apply Hair Mask

Curry leaves are said to contain nutritive elements, including antioxidants, which bring back health to the roots and promote hair growth. Curry leaves contain beta-carotene, which is converted into vitamin A. This vitamin helps in the production of sebum, the natural oil that keeps the scalp and hair roots moisturized. A well-moisturized scalp is conducive to hair growth.

Make a paste of curry leaves, one tablespoon of honey and coconut oil and apply to the hair. Wash off after half an hour.

### 7---Rinse with Milk

After your shampoo, rinse the hair with milk and leave on for 5 minutes. Then rinse off with plain water. It would help to add

body and shine to the hair. For extremely dry hair, add a little milk to egg yolk and apply on the hair half an hour before shampoo. This is a wonderful nourishing treatment for dry hair. The hair looks soft, smooth and shiny.

### 8---Egg Hair Mask for Damaged Hair

The B-vitamins in eggs, including Biotin (B7) and Niacin (B3), play a significant role in promoting hair growth. The natural oils present in eggs help moisturize the hair, providing a natural shine and luster. The proteins in eggs can help repair damaged hair by filling in gaps and cracks along the hair shaft. Eggs can act as a natural conditioner, providing moisture to dry and damaged hair. Applying egg white on the hair 15 minutes of shampoo helps to reduce oiliness and add body to the hair.

### 9---Apply Apple Cider Vinegar

The natural pH of the scalp is slightly acidic, and commercial shampoos can sometimes disrupt this balance. Apple cider vinegar, with its acidic nature, helps to restore the pH level of the scalp. A balanced pH contributes to a healthier scalp and can enhance the overall condition of your hair. Apple cider vinegar has natural antibacterial and antifungal properties, making it effective in combating dandruff and alleviating an itchy scalp. Regular use of ACV can help maintain a healthy scalp environment and reduce the occurrence of dandruff. Mix one part apple cider vinegar with two parts water. After shampooing, pour the mixture over your hair as a final rinse. This helps restore the pH balance of your hair and adds shine.

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



## New voice-based approach to enable early detection of Alzheimer's

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

In a bid to overcome language limitations posed by Alzheimer's disease, a team of Chinese researchers developed a new voice-based approach to enable early detection of the neurodegenerative disease.

The team led by Prof. Li Hai and his team at the Hefei Institutes of Physical Science of the Chinese Academy of Sciences noted that with ageing global population, Alzheimer's is becoming increasingly prevalent. This makes early detection critical for improving patient outcomes.

"Language decline is often one of the earliest indicators of cognitive decline," the experts noted in the paper published in the IEEE Journal of Biomedical and Health Informatics.



Currently, available automated speech analysis offers a non-invasive and cost-effective approach to detecting Alzheimer's. However, these methods face significant challenges, including complexity, poor interpretability, and limited integration of diverse data types, which hinder accuracy and clinical applicability.

To overcome these limitations, Hai's team developed the DEMENTIA

framework.

"This innovative approach integrates speech, text, and expert knowledge using a hybrid attention mechanism, significantly enhancing both the accuracy and clinical interpretability of Alzheimer's disease detection," the researchers said.

The framework leverages advanced large language model technologies. It also captures intricate intra- and inter-modal

interactions, improving detection accuracy and enabling the prediction of cognitive function scores.

Further, the model also scores in comprehensive interpretability analyses, demonstrating its robust clinical decision-support capabilities and adaptability across diverse datasets.

"The findings underscore the potential of speech-based tools for early Alzheimer's disease screening and monitoring cognitive decline," the team said.

Alzheimer's is a progressive disease that destroys memory and other important mental functions. It is the most common form of dementia and constitutes around 75 per cent of all dementia cases.

Of the about 55 million people worldwide with dementia, 60 to 70 per cent are estimated to have Alzheimer's.

## Ocean-surface warming 4x faster in last four decades: Study

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

The rate of ocean warming has more than quadrupled over the past four decades, according to a new study on Tuesday, explaining why 2023 and early 2024 saw unprecedentedly high sea temperatures.

The study, published in the journal Environmental Research Letters, showed that ocean temperatures were rising at about 0.06 degrees Celsius per decade in the late 1980s. However, they are currently increasing at 0.27 degrees Celsius per decade.

"If the oceans were a bathtub of water, then in the 1980s, the hot tap was running slowly, warming up the water by just a fraction of a degree each decade. But now the hot tap is running much faster, and the warming



has picked up speed," said lead author Professor Chris Merchant, at the University of Reading, UK.

Merchant said that cutting global carbon emissions and moving towards net zero is the only way to slow down warming. In 2023 and early 2024, global ocean temperatures hit record highs for straight 450 days.

Besides El Nino, a natu-

ral warming event in the Pacific, the team found that the sea surface warming went up faster in the past 10 years than in earlier decades. The study noted that about 44 per cent of the record warmth was attributable to the oceans absorbing heat at an accelerating rate.

The findings show that the overall rate of global ocean warming observed

over recent decades is not an accurate guide to what happens next: it is plausible that the ocean temperature increase seen over the past 40 years will be exceeded in just the next 20 years.

Because the surface oceans set the pace for global warming, this matters for the climate as a whole, the team explained.

This accelerating warming underscores the urgency of reducing fossil fuel burning to prevent even more rapid temperature increases in the future and to begin to stabilise the climate.

Warming ocean temperatures can increase the spread of diseases in marine species. This in turn can affect humans, when consuming marine species, or from infections of wounds exposed in marine environments.

## Rise of Ayush increasingly making India a health tourism hub

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

With the rise of the AYUSH system (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) India has emerged as a premier destination for medical tourism over the years.

The Ministry of Ayush has been instrumental in promoting traditional medicines. As a result in

2024, Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy were integrated into mainstream health systems worldwide.

In 2023, the government implemented medical visa provisions to facilitate the entry of international tourists seeking health and wellness treatments in the country.

It has led to significant growth in medical tourism resulting in about 123

regular Ayush visas and 221 e-Ayush visas issued to foreigners seeking treatment in India, between July 2023 and December 2024, according to the Ministry.

During the same period, 17 e-Ayush attendant visas have also been issued.

Ayush Visa is available under four sub-categories namely: Ayush visa; Ayush attendant visa; e-Ayush visa and e-Ayush atten-

dant visa. An Ayush Visa is granted to a foreigner whose sole purpose is to seek treatment through

Ayush systems. India currently has more than 755,780 registered Ayush practitioners, 886 undergraduate and 251 post-graduate colleges with an annual intake of 59,643 UG students and 7,450 PG students.

About 3,844 Ayush hospitals and 36,848 dispensaries have also been set up, while over 43,000 studies are hosted on the Ayush Research Portal,

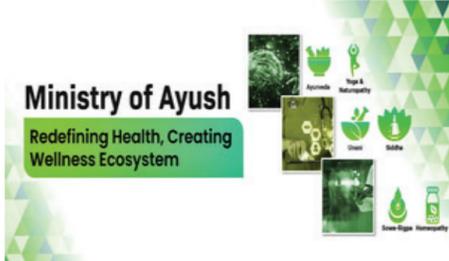
emphasising evidence-based healthcare.

Ayush has also seen digital transformation through initiatives like Ayush Grid, e-Sanjeevani telemedicine, and AI integration. Further, Ayush Telemedicine has brought quality healthcare to remote regions.

Outside India, Ayush Information Cells are currently operational in 39 locations across 35 coun-

tries. These serve as vital hubs for disseminating knowledge and building global awareness.

The Ministry has also collaborated with over 103 countries to promote Ayush systems. It established the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre in Jamnagar and led to the recognition of traditional medicine in WHO Disease Classification Series ICD-11 in 2024.



## Steve Smith joins 10,000 club in Sri Lanka



AGENCIES  
GALLE, JAN 29 (UND)

Steven Smith has joined an exclusive club, becoming just the 15th player to pass 10,000 men's Test runs.

Missing the chance to reach the mark in his home city of Sydney during the recent Border-Gavaskar Trophy series, Smith brought up the five-figure milestone in Australia's first Test against Sri Lanka in Galle, playing his signature flick toward mid-on, setting off for one before raising his bat to acknowledge the applause. The moment was marked by an ovation

from the Australia group. Smith moved the score to 137/2 with the run, continuing Australia's strong start after the tourists won the toss and elected to bat.

The 35-year-old has compiled his runs at an average of over 55, with Kumar Sangakkara the only batter beyond the 10,000 figure with a better return (57.40). He became the fifth fastest batter by innings to reach 10,000 Test runs, an ICC report said.

The batter joins Allan Border, Steve Waugh and Ricky Ponting as the fourth Australian to reach the mark.

## England spinner Adil Rashid re-claim No1 T20I bowler ranking

AGENCIES  
DUBAI, JAN 29 (UND)

England spinner Adil Rashid has been rewarded for his excellent recent form by re-claiming his position at the top of the ICC Men's T20I Bowling Rankings.

Rashid first claimed the No.1 ranking for T20I bowlers at the end of 2023 and remained in the premier spot for much of last year until fellow spinner Akeal Hosein overtook him prior to Christmas.

But a trio of strong showings with the ball against India away from home has helped Rashid return to the top, with the England right-arter gaining one place on the latest rankings following an excellent effort in the third T20I against the Asian side in Rajkot.

Rashid claimed the economical figures of 1/15 from four overs in the clash to help England clinch a narrow 26-run victory that keeps the series alive, with the 36-year-old now having collected a total of three scalps across the first three matches of the five-game series that India leads 2-1.



There is further movement inside the top 10 of the T20I bowling charts, with India spinner Varun Chakravarthy climbing 25 places to fifth following his five-wicket haul in Rajkot and England pacer Jofra Archer jumping 13 spots to sixth overall after two wickets in the same match.

India spinner Axar Patel sits just outside the top 10 after moving up five spots to 11th on the same list, while there is a new challenger to Australia star Travis Head at the top of the rankings for T20I batters after young left-hander Tilak Varma jumped one spot to second.

While Head still holds

a 23-point lead at the top of the batter rankings, Varma is hot on his heels following scores of 19 not out, 72 not out and 18 from three hits for India so far against England.

He could theoretically overtake Head with a pair of good scores during the final two matches of the series, with Head currently representing Australia against Sri Lanka at Test level in Galle. If Varma does manage to overtake Head, he will become the youngest-ever player to top the rankings.

The current record for that is held by Babar Azam, who became the No.1-ranked T20I batter at the age of just 23 years and 105 days.

## Hockey India announces 24-member Women Team for FIH Pro League

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JAN 29 (UND)

Hockey India on Wednesday announced the 24-member Indian Women's Hockey Team for the Bhubaneswar leg of the FIH Pro League 2024-25, which will be held at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium from February 15 to 25.

India will face off against visiting teams - England, the Netherlands, Spain, and Germany, playing each team twice.

Their campaign kicks off with a match against England on February 15.

The squad includes goalkeepers Savita and Bichu Devi Kharibam, while Sushila Chanu Pukhrabam, Nikki Pradhan, Uditia, Ishika Chaudhary, Jyoti Chhatrali, Jyoti.

In the midfield, the team features Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Neha, Manisha Chauhan, Salima Tete, Sunelita Toppo, Lalremisiami, Baljeet Kaur, and Sharmila Devi.

Forwards in the squad include Navneet Kaur, Mumtaz Khan, Preeti Dubey, Rutaja Dadaso Pisal, Beauty Dzungdung, Sangita Kumari, Deepika, and Vandana Katariya.

Dynamic midfielder



Salima Tete will lead the Indian team as Captain, with forward Navneet Kaur serving as Vice-Captain.

Also, the standby list comprises goalkeeper Banwari Solanki, defenders Akshata Abaso Dhekale, and Jyoti Singh, along with forwards Sakshi Rana, Annu, and Sonam.

Notably, as per the FIH regulations, if a team has more than 4 matches scheduled to play during a FIH Pro League stage, they can revise their 24-member squad after the first 4 matches. However, any changes must be made using players from their pre-approved substitution list.

Sonam, in particular, stand a chance to make

her senior international debut after an impressive performance in the recently concluded Women's Hockey India League, where she was the second-highest scorer.

Speaking on the squad selection, Indian Women's Hockey Team Chief Coach Harendra Singh said, "We are pleased with the squad we have selected for the Bhubaneswar leg of the FIH Pro League 2024-25. This team brings a good blend of experienced players and exciting young talent, which will be crucial as we face top-level competition in the tournament. Our focus has been on building a balanced squad, with strong options in every position."

## New Zealand great Debbie Hockley pays tribute to Melie Kerr following ICC Awards haul

AGENCIES  
WELLINGTON, JAN 29 (UND)

ICC Hall of Famer Debbie Hockley has paid tribute to Melie Kerr after the star all-rounder created history by becoming the first player from New Zealand to win the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year.

Kerr capped off a tremendous calendar year of 2024 this week when she won the most prestigious individual award in women's cricket and New Zealand legend Hockley was among the list of former greats to pass on their well wishes.

Hockley was among the New Zealand team that won the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup on home soil in 2000 and has a long list of individual honours that includes



being adjudged Player of the Match in a losing side of the same tournament three years earlier in India.

Kerr when one step better than Hockley when she claimed the Player of the Match award in the successful New Zealand side that netted the White Ferns their maiden ICC Women's T20 World

Cup title last year and the 24-year-old was also adjudged Player of the Tour-

nament for her efforts at the UAE event.

It was no surprise to see Kerr named ICC Women's T20I Cricketer of the Year and the significance of becoming the first player from New Zealand - either male or female - to win the ICC Cricketer of the Year award was not lost on Hockley, an ICC report said.

"I'm so admiring of Melie's desire for consis-

tency of performance and her ability in delivering that," Hockley said.

"This is what separates a good player from a truly great player," she said.

Kerr put her tremendous 2024 down to an improved performance with the ball, with the spinner claiming 15 wickets at an average of just 7.33 during the White Ferns' run at the T20 World Cup last year to lead her side to the title.

"Over the past year, I think my bowling's improved," Kerr noted.

"A lot of that comes down to the 'spin group' that I work with. I love working with (New Zealand's talent identification manager) Paul Wiseman and the others. We work hard but have a lot of fun too, and it pays off," she said.

## Geoff Allardice to step down as ICC CEO

AGENCIES  
DUBAI, JAN 29 (UND)

The International Cricket Council (ICC) confirmed that Geoff Allardice has decided to step down as ICC Chief Executive.

Allardice joined the ICC in 2012 as ICC General Manager of Cricket, joining from Cricket Australia where he held the role of Cricket Operations Manager. He was appointed as the ICC's CEO in November 2021, having previously served as the acting CEO for eight months.

ICC Chair Jay Shah said, "On behalf of the ICC Board, I want to sincerely thank Geoff for his lead-



ership and commitment during his tenure as Chief Executive. His efforts have played a key

role in advancing cricket globally. We are truly grateful for his service and wish him all the very best

in his future endeavors." Allardice said, "It has been a privilege to serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the International Cricket Council and I am incredibly proud of the results we have achieved,

from enhancing the global reach of cricket to the commercial foundation put in place for ICC Members.

"I'd like to thank the ICC Chair, the board of directors and entire cricket community for their support and collaboration over the past 13 years. I believe this is the right time for me to step down and pursue new challenges. I am confident that cricket has exciting times ahead, and I wish the ICC and the global cricket community every success in the future."

The ICC Board will initiate the next steps to identify a replacement.

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