

DDC reviews implementation of FPO Scheme in Doda District

P/9

Dy CM lays foundation stone for development works at Nowshera

P/08



Bharat set to become third largest economy by 2027: LG Sinha

Pays rich tributes to Mahatma Gandhi on this death anniversary

HT News Network

Jammu, Jan 30: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday expressed optimism that Bharat is on track to becoming the third-largest economy in the world by 2027.

Speaking at the Shanti Doot Sannam organized by the Gandhi Global Family here, the Lieutenant Governor, according to the news



agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), highlighted the country's economic growth and social

progress over the past decade. "In the past 10 years, our country has witnessed unprecedented-

ed growth. By 2027, Bharat will be the third-largest economy in the

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Life returning to normal in Badhaal after 17 mysterious deaths

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 30: After 54 days of uncertainty, life in Badhaal, Rajouri is finally returning to normal following a mysterious illness that claimed 17 lives.

Over the last seven days, no new cases have been reported, and most of the previously admitted patients have recovered, which has brought some relief to the fear-stricken community.

Locals speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said that though delayed, the government's preventive measures have helped in containing the crisis. However, they demand urgent answers regarding the exact cause of the deaths so that proper safety measures can be put in place and that the residents can resume normal life

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Tourism Top Priority To Position J&K As Global Hotspot: CM Omar Abdullah

HT News Network

MUMBAI, Jan 30: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said his government's top priority is to make the region a global tourism hotspot.

Abdullah made the statement during his visit to the Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Pavilion at the Outbound Travel Mart (OTM) 2025, Asia's largest travel trade show, being held at the Jio World Convention Centre here.

The event, which runs from January 30 to February 1, has brought together exhibitors and buyers from across the globe, providing a platform for destinations to showcase their unique offerings.



This year, Jammu and Kashmir has made a strong impression with the participation of 120 tourism trade and travel operators, highlighting the region's unparalleled tourism potential.

From its breathtaking landscapes to its rich cultural heritage, the pavilion showcased why Jammu and Kashmir is a must-visit destination for travelers worldwide.

The Chief Minister emphasized his government's

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Chila-i-Kalan ends, Chila-i-Khurd makes dry entry in Kashmir

No major activity till Feb 5, light snowfall in higher reaches tomorrow: MeT

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 30 The 40-day harshest winter period, Chila-i-Kalan, has ended in the Valley without any major wet spell, the Chila-i-Khurd, a 20-day milder winter period, has commenced one a dry not with the weatherman predicting no major activity in the next few days, but also stated that light snowfall and rains are expected in the higher reaches intermittently till February 05. According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the chilly weather conditions usually being witnessed in the harshest

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

J&K Budget 2025-26: Will Omar-led Govt deliver on free electricity, women's stipend, job creation promises?

In a bid to prioritize electoral guarantees, Govt to seek Rs 20,000 Cr special package from Centre

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 30 (KNO): As the forthcoming 2025-26 budget session is set to commence from March 3 this year, the million dollar question remains that whether the Omar Abdullah led dispensation will fulfill its poll-pledges- topping among them is 200 units of free electricity and creation of more than three lac government jobs for the youth here.

As per the inputs received by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is expected to hold discussions with key stakeholders,



while the government is set to prioritize electoral guarantees in the upcoming budget.

According to official sources, the budget session of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly is proposed to commence on March 3- the first annual budget presen-

tation for the region in six years.

A proposal to convene the session was recently approved in a cabinet meeting and sent to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. The final duration of the session will be determined by Assembly Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather, following consultations with the Business Advisory Committee.

For the first time as Finance Minister, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah will present the state budget in the assembly.

During his previous tenure as Chief Minister, Abdullah oversaw the Home, General Administration, and

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Jailed Er. Rasheed to go on hunger strike, Party leaders supported strike call

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 30 Awami itihad party on thursday said that Er. Rasheed, will start a hunger strike, with party leaders supporting his call.

AIP Vice President Advocate GN Shaheen, addressing a press conference in Srinagar, as per news agency JKNS said that as the Parliament session begins, Er. Rasheed Sahab remains incarcerated in Tihar Jail, and his interim bail hearing was scheduled for today. "We have been informed that Er. Sahab is going on a hunger strike

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

NEWS BRIEF

Army foils infiltration bid in Poonch

HT News Network

Jammu, Jan 30 Army on Thursday foiled an infiltration bid by a group of heavily-armed terrorists along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu's Poonch district, officials told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

"Alert Army troops picked up the movement of the terrorists trying to sneak into this side from across the LoC in Khari Karmara area, leading to a gunfight between the two sides," the officials said, adding, "Soldiers fired after observing suspicious movement along the Line of Control in the Poonch sector. Terrorist movement detected in Poonch sector along the Line of Control. Alert troops opened fire leading to a heavy exchange of fire. Operations are underway," Indian Army's White

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Truck crushes woman to death in Kulgam

HT News Network

Kulgam, Jan 30: A woman was killed after being hit by a truck at Wanpoh crossing in Kulgam district on Thursday, an official said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that at around 15:30 hours, a pedestrian, identified as Mubeena Bano, wife of Mohd Shafi Malik, resident of Danter, Anantnag (aged about 55 years), was hit by a truck bearing registration number (JK03H-8772) at Wanpoh crossing.

He said the woman sustained serious injuries in the incident and was shifted to GMC Anantnag for treatment, where doctors declared her

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

J&K incomplete without statehood: Minister Satish Sharma

Says CM Omar keen to see youth compete at global level

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 30 Minister for Youth Services & Sports Satish Sharma on Thursday said that Jammu and Kashmir is incomplete without statehood.

Speaking on the sidelines of the inaugural function of two-day All India Inter-University Winter Games by the Central University of Kashmir (CUK), the Minister said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given assurance that J&K's statehood will be restored. We will get it back. It may get delayed by a few months, but it



will be restored. It was taken from us, and we are incomplete without it." The Minister, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) also reassured that

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

every promise made in their election manifesto would be fulfilled. "It has been just 105 days. You will hear a happy announcement in a few days, then another in three months. There's a lot to happen—this is our time," he said.

Taking a pledge to put J&K in top three sports destinations, Sharma said that there is a need for regular and year-round sporting events in the Union Territory. "Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is keen to empower J&K's youth to compete at the global level," he added.

The Minister said that

5 IAS officers transferred, Nitish Rajora is new Director Information

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 30: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Thursday ordered the transfer and posting of five senior IAS officials in the interest of administration. As per an order, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Jatin Kishore (IAS, AGMUT:2020), Additional Secretary in the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat and holding additional charge as Director, Information J&K, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Ganderbal.



TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Conduct regular testing for early detection of TB: Sakeena Itoo asks DCs

HT News Network

Jammu, Jan 30: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, Thursday asked the Deputy Commissioners to identify vulnerable groups in their respective districts and conduct regular testing at these places for early detection of Tuberculosis (TB).

The Minister passed on these directions while chairing a high-level meeting held to review progress on implementation of 100-Day Tuberculosis (TB) Elimination Campaign across Jammu and Kashmir.

Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah; Mission Director, National Health Mission; Deputy Commissioners of all districts; Director Finance Health and Medical Education; Director Health Services Jammu/Kashmir;

First Budget of NC-Led Government LG Summons Assembly from March 03, to Begin with His Address

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 30: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has summoned the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly from March 03 for the first budget to be presented by the National Conference-led government.

According to a notice from the Legislative Assembly secretariat, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the LG has

summoned the Assembly from March 03.

"I, Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, in exercise of the powers conferred upon me under Section 18(1) of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019, do hereby summon the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly to meet at Jammu on Monday, the 3rd day of March, 2025 at 10:00 AM," reads the order issued by the LG.



The session will start with the LG's address to the MLAs on the same day at 10:00 AM. "I, Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

CS asks to accelerate pace of progress on projects under AMRUT 2.0

HT News Network



JAMMU, JANUARY 30: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today chaired 6th UT Level Steering Committee (UTLSC) Meeting of AMRUT 2.0 to take stock of its performance besides taking decisions over other matters related to its implementation here.

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

LG

world," he said.
LG Sinha paid rich tributes to father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi on his death anniversary and stated that "Bharat is all set to fulfill Bapu's dream of becoming Vikhsit."
He noted that 25 crore Indians have risen above the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category in the last decade, reflecting the government's commitment to inclusive development.
Citing a recent State Bank of India (SBI) report, he pointed out that rural poverty, which stood at 26% in 2012, has now been reduced to less than 5% in 2024.
DREAMS BAPU HAD ENVISIONED BEING FULFILLED

Emphasizing Mahatma Gandhi's ideals, the LG said, "The dreams Bapu had envisioned are being fulfilled. Gandhiji always wanted every section of society to be empowered, and his principles continue to provide us with a roadmap for Viksit Bharat."
He added that by following Gandhiji's philosophy, India can achieve great heights and show a new direction to the world. "We are striving to make Bharat Viksit by 2047, and this mission aligns with Bapu's lifelong commitment to wiping tears from every eye," he remarked.

LG Sinha also recalled Gandhiji's Karachi Convention of 1931, where he advocated for justice and equality, noting that the vision outlined then is now becoming the foundation for a developed India.

Highlighting the progress made in women's empowerment, the Lieutenant Governor said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has opened new avenues for women, enabling them to excel across sectors. "Girls have been outperforming boys in academics, proving that they are no less than men," he added.

PRAISES HOLISTIC AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN J&K

Turning to agriculture, LG Sinha praised the Holistic Agricultural Development Programme (HADP) for farmers in Jammu and Kashmir, which has led to a revolution in farming practices. "Farmers are adopting innovative methods, proving their capability to achieve new heights. Gandhiji always recognized the wisdom of Indian farmers, and today, their contributions are shaping a self-reliant India," he said.

LG Sinha also underlined the government's efforts to create employment opportunities for the youth, emphasizing the need for collective action.

"People want Swaraj, and I want Swaraj too. But first, we must take the initiative; only then will the government follow," LG Sinha quoted Gandhiji as having said.

GANDHIJI'S PRINCIPLES GUIDING FORCE FOR US

Referring to the principles and values of Mahatma Gandhi, LG Sinha said, "The principles and values of truth and non-violence to which Gandhiji was always committed are beyond time and place. They are as relevant today as they were during his lifetime. He has guided us for peaceful resolution of differences and well-being of every Indian."

The Lieutenant Governor honoured the family members of the army brave-hearts, and also paid homage to all the leaders, fighters, and martyrs who devoted themselves towards India's freedom. "The world, that we live in today, is witnessing conflicts. In many parts of the globe, societies are facing disruption because of ongoing aggression. In such a scenario, the need for peace and non-violence is deeply felt. I am confident in this situation Bapu's ideals will show the right path to humanity," LG said.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon every section of the society to rededicate themselves to the ideals and values of Mahatma Gandhi and come together for the cause of empowerment of poor, youth, women and farmers and make their valuable contribution to realise the vision of Viksit Bharat.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the Gandhi Global Family J&K, for its constant endeavours to promote Gandhian values and spreading the noble message of Truth, Non-Violence and Social Harmony.

Responding to the demand put forth by the President of Gandhi Global Family J&K, Padma Shri Dr S.P. Varma, Lieutenant Governor assured that the month-long Gandhi Jayanti celebrations will continue across J&K as per the past practice.

He said that humanity can achieve the right path and goal of peace, harmony and development in Jammu Kashmir, the country and the world only by following the ideals of Bapu.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor was honoured with Shanti Doot Samman by the Gandhi Global Family.

Padma Shri Awardees including Dr. S.P. Varma, Prof. Vishwa Murti Shastri, Dr. Jiten-dra Udhamपुरi, and Romalo Ram; meritorious students and Youth were also felicitated by the Lieutenant Governor with Gandhi Doot Samman.

A two-minute silence was observed as a mark of respect to the Father of the Nation and the martyrs who made supreme sacrifice in the struggle for India's freedom. A pledge was also administered to uphold and promote Gandhiji's vision, ideals and philosophies.
Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Anand Jain,

ADGP Jammu; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu; retired and serving officials of Civil Administration, Police and Security Forces; members of Gandhi Global Family; family members of martyrs and freedom fighters, representatives of various social organizations and students in large numbers were present.

Yudhvir Sethi, Member of Legislative Assembly, Jammu East; Arjun Singh Raju, Member of Legislative Assembly, Ramban and prominent citizens were also present on the occasion—(KNO)

LIFE

without fear.
The first death in Badhaal was reported on December 8, and since then, more than 50 days have passed without the government being able to determine the cause.

Locals expressed frustration over the slow pace of the investigation, saying the issue should have been treated as a health emergency and resolved on priority.

A government official informed KNO that most patients admitted at Government Medical College (GMC) Rajouri have recovered, though they remain under observation. He said that antidotes given to the affected patients have been effective, but authorities still lack conclusive evidence about the cause of the deaths and are awaiting Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) reports.

MLA Budhal Javed Iqbal Choudhary, speaking to KNO, criticised the delayed investigation and expressed concern that no official FSL or test reports have been released even after nearly two months. The situation remains in the realm of 'guesswork', with no confirmed scientific findings, he said.

The MLA accused GMC Jammu of negligence, holding them responsible for the deaths of 12 children. He vowed to push for a full-fledged investigation. "There must be a swift inquiry process," he said, adding that authorities must prioritise finding the root cause of these deaths—(KNO)

CM

unwavering commitment to tourism promotion, and said, "Tourism is a top priority for our government, and we are dedicated to positioning Jammu and Kashmir as a global tourism hotspot.

"Our participation in events like OTM is a step toward achieving this vision," Abdullah said, interacting with stakeholders, including travel operators, artisans and tourism officials.

He also inquired about the arrangements in place for their participation.

The chief minister also conducted a detailed inspection of the pavilion, appreciating the efforts to present Jammu and Kashmir's diverse offerings creatively.

He directed the tourism department to ensure maximum outreach by actively engaging in major travel marts across the country and internationally.

Abdullah reiterated that his government is committed to supporting the tourism industry and ensuring that Jammu and Kashmir continues to shine on the global stage.

The stakeholders expressed optimism about forging new collaborations and attracting more visitors to Jammu and Kashmir.

MET

winter period, could not be witnessed amidst the prolonged dry spell in this Chilai-Kalan as the day temperatures settled to above normal for the majority of the days.

In the last 29 days of the harshest winter period, Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a deficit rainfall of 87 per cent as against the normal rainfall of 88.2 mm, the Union Territory has recorded a precipitation of just 11.5 mm only.

As the 20-day milder winter period commenced from today, the weather remained almost dry across Jammu and Kashmir while Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that there is no forecast of any major weather activity till February 05.

However, he said that there is a possibility of light snow from tomorrow in the higher reaches and also some parts of plains as well. "Another wet spell is expected on February 04," he said.

Partly to generally cloudy weather is expected from February 06 to February 08, he said.

Meanwhile, the MeT has advised the tourists, travelers and transporters to follow administration and traffic advisory—(KNO)

OMAR

other departments but had not directly handled finance. The budget must be approved before March 31, and while Union Territories typically have shorter budget sessions than states, this session may extend for several weeks.

Currently, the Jammu and Kashmir government consists of six ministers, including the Chief Minister. The Business Advisory Committee will decide on time allocations for key legislative activities, including: Debate on the motion of thanks to the Lieutenant Governor's address, discussions on budgets and grants

of various ministries, debates on private members' resolutions and bills and other government business

The last budget for Jammu and Kashmir as a state was presented in January 2018 by then Finance Minister Dr. Haseeb Drabu, amounting to Rs 80,313 crore for FY 2018-19. However, following the dissolution of the assembly in June 2018, the State Administrative Council (SAC) adopted a budget of Rs 88,911 crore for FY 2019-20. From 2020-21 to 2024-25, budgets were presented and passed in Parliament in the absence of an elected assembly. The 2024-25 budget, passed by Parliament, stood at Rs 1,18,728 crore, a slight increase from the Rs 1,18,500 crore budget of 2023-24.

The Omar Abdullah-led government is expected to focus on fulfilling key electoral promises, including:

200 units of free electricity for eligible households

Rs 5,000 per month for economically weaker women

12 free LPG cylinders per year

Expanded ration distribution

Job creation (3 lakh government jobs)

Boosting agriculture and horticulture

Promoting tourism and industrial growth

These guarantees are likely to be key priorities in the budget, and the NC led dispensation will ensure their inclusion in government expenditure plans.

According to sources, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has requested a 20,000 crore special package from the Union Government in a recent meeting with the Union Finance Minister and other central ministers. If approved, this package may be included under a specific budget component.

Additionally, the Jammu and Kashmir Finance Department has instructed Administrative Secretaries to cut down on unnecessary expenses while preparing budget proposals. This move aims to curb wasteful government spending and promote fiscal discipline—(KNO)

ER RASHEED

from tomorrow in Tihar Jail. So, here in Jammu and Kashmir, we have also decided to go on a hunger strike to support Er. Rasheed Sahab's call," Shaheen said.

JKNS has learnt that the incarcerated Member of Parliament from Baramulla, Engineer Rashid, in a letter to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, informed him of his decision to commence an indefinite hunger strike starting January 31, 2025. (JKNS)

SATISH SHARMA

the government wants to hold sports activities in J&K all throughout the year. "We won't deter. I am a soldier's son and remain dedicated to my words. We will bring Jammu and Kashmir among the top three regions in sports."

To engage the youth in constructive activities, Sharma highlighted efforts to curb drug abuse and mobile addiction by bringing youngsters to playgrounds.

Additionally, he announced that 225 youth will soon be employed, with orders set to be issued shortly.

"For IT parks alone, at least 20,000 to 30,000 youth will be recruited soon, by God's grace," he said, adding that the government was committed to creating job avenues for the youth.

With Khelo India Winter Games approaching, Sharma assured that preparations were in full swing.

Pertinently, All India Inter-University Winter Games commenced today at Gulmarg, with participation from 27 universities across the country.

A total of 169 athletes, along with their coaches and support staff, will compete in the event, being hosted by the Central University of Kashmir—(KNO)

FIRST BUDGET

of Jammu and Kashmir, under the provisions of Section 21(1) of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019, call upon the Members of the Legislative Assembly for the Union Territory Jammu and Kashmir to assemble in the Legislative Assembly Complex at Jammu on Monday, the 3rd day of March, 2025 at 10:00 AM to hear my address," reads another order from the LG.

The cabinet led by Omar Abdullah last week recommended the LG to summon the assembly in the first week of March, something which was objected to by Peoples Conference president Sajad Gani Lone, citing the holy month of Ramadhan.

According to the Legislative Assembly secretariat, each MLA cannot submit more than ten starred and ten un-starred questions by or before February 10, 2025. The MLAs also cannot submit more than three bills by or before February 10, 2025. They can submit a maximum of four resolutions by or before February 16, 2025—(KNO)

IAS

Shishir Gupta (IAS, AGMUT:2020), Additional Deputy Commissioner, Jammu, has

been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Shopian. Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar (JKAS), whom he replaces, will report to the General Administration Department for further posting.

Nitish Rajora (IAS, AGMUT:2021), Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Jammu (North), has been transferred and posted as Director, Information J&K.

Rakesh Kumar (IAS, AGMUT:2021), Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Hiranagar, has been transferred and posted as Additional Deputy Commissioner, Jammu.

Shubhankar Pratyush Pathak (IAS, AGMUT:2022), Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Akhnoor, Jammu, has been transferred and posted as Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Uri, Baramulla. He replaces Javid Ahmad Rather (JKAS), who will report to the General Administration Department for further posting—(KNO)

TB

in Gold Zone districts so that they also can achieve the status of TB free districts. She also instructed the health officials and district administrators to increase the frequency of screenings, conduct aggressive outreach programs and enhance community participation to curb spread of the disease effectively. "Involve PRIs, ULBs and local religious preachers into the campaign as they have maximum reach to far off areas as well", Sakeena said.

The Minister further called for identifying vulnerable groups in all districts, whether TB free or not. She also called for regular screening in TB free declared districts so that the TB is not relapsing there. "Continuous testing and active surveillance are essential to prevent re-emergence and ensure the long-term success of elimination efforts", she maintained.

The Minister urged the officers, particularly both the Directors of health services, to stay vigilant, conduct routine screenings and engage with at-risk populations to detect any undiagnosed cases early.

While reviewing different aspects of 100 days TB Elimination Campaign, Sakeena Itoo called for deployment of mobile testing vans for door-to-door screenings in far off areas for TB testing. "Strengthen diagnostic infrastructure at the grassroots level as it is imperative for maintaining a healthy society", Sakeena said.

She called for enhanced coordination among the district TB officers, ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers, local health units, local NGOs and Mohalla Committees to reinforce participation in TB prevention strategies.

The Minister also called for launching comprehensive awareness programs in collaboration with schools, colleges and local self-help groups to educate people on symptoms and preventive measures.

During the meeting, MD NHM gave a detailed presentation on the progress on implementation of 100 days TB Elimination Campaign across Jammu and Kashmir. He informed that the campaign aligns with Union Government's vision of achieving TB-free India by 2025 by accelerating TB detection, treatment and eradication efforts across country.

The Minister also assessed measures being taken by respective district administrations and health department regarding the fight against drug menace across Jammu and Kashmir. She called upon the Deputy Commissioners for maximum deterrence in coordination with law enforcement agencies so that the society gets rid of this menace, which is destroying future of our youth.

The Minister asked the Deputy Commissioners for formation of squads in collaboration with Colleges and Higher educational institutions to conduct regular surprise inspections in these places. "Elimination of drug menace requires a collaborative approach, involving government agencies, healthcare providers and the general public. We need to work in cohesion in ensuring that our society is free of this menace", she stated.

She reiterated that the Omar Abdullah led government is committed to safeguard the health and well-being of its citizens. "By addressing both the root causes and consequences of drug abuse, the government aims to foster healthier and more prosperous future for Jammu and Kashmir", Sakeena maintained.

The Minister further asked all Deputy Commissioners for rehabilitation of drug abuse victims by giving them skill and self-employment training in different courses during their time in drug de-addiction centres so that they can have employment avenues after rehabilitation. She also asked them for augmentation of infrastructure in their respective district so that this menace can be dealt with effectively—(KNO)

CS

Besides the Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD the meeting was attended by ACS, Jal Shakti Department; Principal Secretary, Finance; Commissioner Secretary, Forest; Commissioner, JMC/SMC; MD, AMRUT; Director ULB, Jammu/Kashmir besides other concerned officers.

While addressing the meeting, Dulloo directed for accelerating pace of progress on projects being executed under AMRUT 2.0.

He said that any issue hampering the progress of AMRUT need to be ironed out forthwith for smooth implementation of the projects on ground. He emphasised the need to expedite the formulation of the pending DPRs besides promptly initiating the tendering process for the approved projects.

He said that timely preparation and approval of DPRs will ensure smooth implementation of AMRUT projects, which will contribute towards the overall development and quality of life in the region. He further said that the government's attention towards these projects reflects its strong commitment in improving the water supply services and addressing the pressing water related challenges.

The Chief Secretary urged the concerned to examine the needs of each town to be covered under the programme and prioritise the implementation accordingly.

Dulloo also asked the senior officials to closely monitor the quality of work and give clear instructions to their subordinates to take remedial measures where ever problems arise.

He made out that projects certified by the Technical Appraisal Committee should only be taken up for approval so that there remains no scope for any glitches in implementation of works on ground.

During the meeting, details of the projects sanctioned and the progress made so far under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0 for J&K was highlighted.

It was given out that, so far, 63 DPRs of Water Supply Scheme (Jammu Region - 23, Kashmir Region-40), have been approved by the UTLS. Additionally, 03 more DPRs have been technically approved by the UTLS for Udhampur, Basohli and JMC.

It is noteworthy to mention here that some of the major towns for which the WSS had been envisaged under AMRUT 2.0 included Srinagar, Jammu, Budgam, Kulgam, Baderwah, Batote, RS Pura, Akhnoor, Chenani, Hiranagar, Kathua, Lakhampur, Vijaypur, Reasi, Baramulla, Beerwah, Magam, Pattan, Devsar, Uri, Awantipora, Kupwara, Ganderbal, Sopore and many other smaller towns in both the divisions of J&K.

ARMY

Knight Corps posted on X.
However, there is no clarity on casualties but reliable sources said that "at least two terrorists were hit by the bullets in the Army firing but it was not immediately known whether they were dead or injured."

Reinforcements have rushed to the scene with thick foliage and a search operation is underway, the officials said, adding further details are awaited—(KNO)

WOMEN

brought dead.
Meanwhile, Police have taken cognizance of the incident and are completing the necessary medico-legal formalities—(KNO)

Uncertainty looms over NC alliance as Congress begins preparations for Nagrota By-Election

Srinagar, Jan 30: The Congress party has kick started its preparations for the upcoming by-election in the Nagrota assembly constituency, which fell vacant following the demise of BJP MLA Devendra Singh Rana.

While the election date is yet to be announced, the political maneuvering has already begun, with the Congress setting up its office in the constituency and weighing potential candidates. Details available with news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) reveal that the 2024 assembly elections, Congress had fielded local Sarpanch Balbir Singh, who lost the seat to BJP's Devendra Singh Rana. Singh had secured only 5,979 votes, while National Conference (NC) candidate Jogendra Singh garnered 17,641 votes. The late BJP leader emerged victorious with a commanding 48,113 votes. Former minister and ex-MLA Balwan Singh, who won the seat in 1983, has now emerged as a strong contender for the Congress ticket. Another key factor in the electoral battle is the late Devendra Singh Rana's daughter, who is being considered a frontrunner for the BJP's ticket. The bigger question looming over the by-election is whether NC and Congress will once again contest separately or field a joint candidate. In the 2024 assembly elections, both parties had a pre-poll alliance but fought a "friendly contest," leading to a split in votes. Collectively, they secured around 25,000 votes, indicating that a united front could pose a strong challenge to the BJP. Sources told KNO that the National Conference is yet to decide whether to contest the seat, given Devendra Singh Rana's long association with the party before switching to the BJP. Rana was once a close confidant of former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, making NC's decision on whether to contest or support Congress crucial in shaping the electoral dynamics.



After Massive Revamp Of City Infra, Admin Continues To Fail Controlling Footpath Encroachments

SMC Recovered Rs 2.5 Lakh Fine From Vendors Occupying Footpaths: PRO

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 30, : Newly constructed footpaths across Srinagar are being brazenly encroached upon by shopkeepers and erring vehicle owners, turning pedestrian walkways into personal parking spaces.

This growing menace is evident in areas such as Old City, Babademb, Batamalloo, Hazratbal, Nowhatta and Khanyar, where pedestrians are increasingly forced to walk on busy roads, risking their lives.

The Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) has acknowledged the issue and assured strict action against encroachments. Speaking to the correspondent of 'Associated News Bureau,' the Public Relations Officer (PRO) Idrees Aqail Mir of SMC said, "We are conducting continuous drives against footpath encroachments. Despite significant investments in urban infrastructure, including the construction of footpaths to ensure safer movement for pedestrians, many of these walkways are now occupied by vendors, shopkeepers, scrap dealers, and car deal-



ers, particularly in Babademb.

The encroachment has not only disrupted pedestrian movement but also led to frequent traffic congestion, making everyday commuting a nightmare for residents.

Residents and commuters have voiced their frustration over the issue, calling for strict action against the violators. Abdul Ahad, a resident of Batamalloo said,

"We were happy when the government built proper footpaths, but now they are of no use. Shopkeepers and vendors have taken them over, leaving no space for pedestrians." In Babademb, the situation is even worse, with scrap dealers and car dealers occupying large sections of footpaths, forcing pedestrians onto the road. Many elderly citizens and children find it particularly difficult to navigate through

these encroached spaces, increasing the chances of accidents.

"Walking to college has become dangerous. We have to navigate through parked vehicles and roadside vendors. Authorities need to take strict action before an unfortunate accident occurs," said Zahid Ahmed Dar, a student.

In fact, in 2024 alone, we have recovered fines amounting to Rs. 2.5 lakh from those who have illegally occupied footpaths. Additionally, we have seized goods from violators."

However, despite these measures, encroachments continue to resurface, indicating that fines and temporary crack-downs might not be enough to deter habitual offenders. The SMC official further stated that operations against encroachers would be intensified in the coming days. Beyond enforcement, the lack of civic sense among a section of the public remains a pressing concern. While authorities can remove illegal structures and fine violators, sustainable change can only be achieved when people understand the importance of keeping footpaths free for pedestrians.

Handicrafts & Handloom Dept bids adieu to G. R. Ahanger on retirement

HT News Network



SRINAGAR, JANUARY 30: The Department of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, today bid adieu to its National Awardee employee in the School of Designs, Ghulam Rasool Ahanger, who retired as Assistant Craftsmen after putting in 28 years of exemplary service.

In a felicitation function, Director Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, Mussarat Islam, lauded the efforts of the official, who had gained great expertise in the field of wood carving. "His retirement has left a deep void in the department and his absence shall be severely missed," he stated.

Handicrafts and Handloom Department wished Ghulam Rasool Ahanger a very happy post-retirement life.

CUKashmir's DCJ Commemorates Indian Newspaper Day with Expert Lecture

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 30: Department of Communication & Journalism (DCJ), Central University of Kashmir, observed "Indian Newspaper Day" by organizing an online lecture featuring Prof. Sanjeev Bhanawat, former Head and Professor of Journalism at the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. In his message to students and scholars, Vice-Chancellor Prof. A. Ravinder Nath underscored the historical importance of the day and encouraged aspiring journalists to uphold ethical and fact-based journalism.

In his keynote speech, Prof. Sanjeev Bhanawat delivered an engaging lecture on the evolution of newspapers in India, their contemporary relevance, and the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on journalism. He outlined both the opportunities and challenges posed by AI, along with key concerns such as declining print readership, the rise of fake news, and the credibility crisis in the media industry.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Shahid Rasool, Dean, School of Media Studies, emphasized the role of newspapers as instruments of societal change. He also raised concerns over the decreasing credibility of media due to increasing trivialization, commercialization, and commodification of news.

The session also highlighted the historical significance of Indian Newspaper Day, marking the beginnings of journalism in the country. Students and scholars were encouraged to recognize their responsibility in upholding ethical and fact-based journalism in an era of rapid media transformation.

Earlier, the event began with a welcome address by Dr. Arif Nazir, Head of the Department, who encouraged students to engage actively in the discussion.

The lecture witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, scholars, and alumni, followed by an interactive Q&A session. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Noor Karaju, Asst Professor.

Unified Call for Dignity & Healing: GMC Srinagar marks World Leprosy Day

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 30: The Postgraduate Department of Dermatology, Venereology & Leprosy, Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, in collaboration with the Indian Association of Dermatologists, Venereologists & Leprologists (IADVL) J&K branch organized a Continuing Medical Education (CME) program to mark World Leprosy Day.

The event, themed 'Unified Call for Dignity & Healing', aimed to raise awareness, update medical professionals on recent advancements in leprosy management, and reinforce the commitment to eliminating the disease. The theme emphasizes the importance of a unified approach to address leprosy, promote dignity, and ensure healing of affected persons.

The CME was attended by dermatologists, medical faculty, postgraduate students, and healthcare professionals. During the event, renowned experts delivered insightful lectures on epidemiology, early diagnosis, leprosy reactions, treatment modalities, and stigma associated with leprosy. Principal GMC Srinagar, Prof. Dr. Iffat Hassan while speaking in the CME, reaffirmed the GMC Srinagar's commitment to leprosy control initiatives and appreciated the efforts of the Dermatology Department in organizing the CME. She urged everyone to reaffirm commitment to leprosy control and asked for working together to promote awareness, education, and community engagement. She emphasized to strive to provide compassionate and patient-centered care to those affected by leprosy.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Yasmeen Jabeen, Head of the Department of Dermatology & President IADVL J&K, emphasized the importance of continued education and awareness in eradicating leprosy.

DLSA Srinagar conducts inspection of Psychiatric Hospital, Prison Legal Aid Clinic

HT News Network

Srinagar, January 30: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar, conducted a comprehensive inspection of the Prison Legal Aid Clinic at Central Jail, Srinagar, and the Legal Aid Clinic at Psychiatric Hospital, Rainawari.

The event was held under the chairmanship of Jaffer Hussain Beg, Chairman DLSA Srinagar/Principal District & Sessions Judge, Srinagar, and was supervised by Ms. Nusrat Ali Hakak, Secretary DLSA Srinagar. Secretary DLSA Srinagar, carried out the inspection of the Prison Legal Aid Clinic in presence of Shahbaz Hussainin, DYsp, Central Jail Srinagar, in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA). The objective of the



inspection was to assess the accessibility and quality of legal aid services provided to prisoners, ensuring that they receive timely legal representation and support.

During the visit, she closely monitored the functioning of the legal aid services in the prison and interacted with the jail para-legal volunteers (PLVs) to evaluate their role in assisting inmates with legal aid and awareness. Meanwhile, an awareness

programme was also organized for jail inmates, where Saad Ganaie, Chief Legal Aid Defense Counsel, along with Assistant Legal Aid Defense Counsel, Urba Rashid and Sehar Nazir, served as resource persons. They educated the inmates about their legal rights and the availability of free legal aid services. Emphasis was placed on how prisoners can access these legal services, ensuring that they are not deprived of legal

representation due to financial constraints. The session aimed at empowering inmates with knowledge about their rights and the legal avenues available for their defense and rehabilitation.

In addition to the prison inspection, Secretary DLSA also inspected the Legal Aid Clinic at Psychiatric Hospital, Rainawari.

The objective was to review the operation of the clinic and assess the performance and effectiveness of para-legal volunteers in delivering legal services to patients undergoing psychiatric treatment. The inspection focused on ensuring that individuals receiving treatment at the hospital have access to necessary legal assistance, particularly in matters related to mental health rights, legal representation, and other welfare concerns.

ABVP Organizes Taranga Rally in Srinagar, Students March to Ganta Ghar

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 30, ANB: In a rare political display in the heart of Srinagar, the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) organized a 'Taranga Rally' on Thursday, which saw the participation of nearly 70 students. The rally commenced from the Tourist Reception Centre (TRC) and culminated at the historic Ghanta Ghar (Clock Tower) in Lal Chowk.

According to 'Associated News Bureau' correspondent, the participants, mostly students, carried the national flag and chanted patriotic slogans as they marched through the city. Security was heightened along the route, with police and paramilitary forces deployed to ensure smooth conduct of the event.

The rally was organized as part of ABVP's initiative to instill a sense of nationalism and patriotism among students. Holding banners and waving tricolors, the students aimed to send a message of unity and national integration.

An ABVP representative speaking at the rally with Associated News



Bureau, stated, "Our purpose is to strengthen the bond of patriotism among the youth and reaffirm our commitment to the nation. The participation of students in such events is crucial for fostering a sense of responsibility and national pride."

Many students who participated in the march expressed enthusiasm about the event. "This is a proud moment for us. We are here to celebrate our nation and uphold its integrity," said a student, who preferred to remain anonymous.

Given the sensitivity surrounding such events police and CRPF personnel were seen stationed at key points along the rally route, monitoring the situation closely. However, the rally proceeded without any disruptions.

A shopkeeper in Lal Chowk remarked, "We have seen many rallies and marches over the years, but events like these always bring mixed reactions from people. As long as everything remains peaceful, it's fine." (ANB)

Apni Party holds extraordinary meeting to outline future strategy

Decides to pursue the party's incomplete agenda, including statehood restoration

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 30, (KNS): Apni Party's top leadership gathered today in Jammu to hold an extraordinary meeting aimed at discussing the present political scenario, important party matters, and outlining the future strategy.

The meeting was presided over by the party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, while as Senior Vice President Ghulam Hassan Mir, and Chairman of the party's Parliamentary Affairs Committee (PAK) Mohammad Dilawar Mir were also present on the occasion.

According to a party statement issued here, "In a crucial meeting, the leaders held thorough deliberations on the present political scenario in Jammu



and Kashmir. They also discussed several important party matters and exchanged views and ideas to formulate a future strategy, ensuring the party plays its role effectively as a vibrant opposition party in Jammu and Kashmir."

"During the meeting, the party leaders decided to take effective measures to further strengthen the party at the grassroots level across Jammu and Kashmir. In this regard, they resolved to enhance public outreach while

adopting an inclusive approach to connect with diverse sections of society," the statement reads.

The leaders unanimously agreed upon, that "Although Apni Party has ensured that the people of J&K have exclusive rights to land and jobs, however, party's agenda remains incomplete as statehood is yet to be restored. Therefore, the party will make every effort at all levels to achieve this goal."

During the meeting, it was decided that as an

opposition party, Apni Party must remain active in identifying pressing public issues and ensuring their redressal.

"In addition to striving for the restoration of the rights of the people of J&K, the party must stay vigilant about public issues and grievances to ensure that the government addresses them promptly. Also, it is the party's responsibility to closely monitor the government, ensuring that it provides efficient and transparent governance," the press statement added.

Besides Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, Ghulam Hassan Mir, and Mohammad Dilawar Mir, the prominent party leaders who were present in the meeting included General Secretary Vijay Bakaya, Additional General Secretary Hilal Ahmad Shah.

EDITORIAL

Increase retirement age for faculty of medical & dental colleges of J&K

In the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir many medical colleges have come up and at the same time All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) hospitals have been proposed by the central government. While AIIMS Jammu has already started its operations, the one at Kashmir is yet to start the same. Given this fact it is important that experienced faculty is put in place at the medical colleges and the AIIMS hospitals so that people are entitled to world class health facilities.

In the other parts of the country the faculty of the medical colleges and dental colleges superannuate at the age of 65 while as their counterparts in Jammu & Kashmir hang up their boots at the age of 62. This is a glaring disparity and the same needs to be removed at the earliest so that Jammu & Kashmir is brought at par with the other parts of the country when it comes to the appointment and superannuation of the faculty.

Over the years it has been observed that the recruitment of the faculty at the medical colleges across the union territory goes at a tardy pace. It takes months together to appoint a lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor and professor in the medical colleges of Jammu & Kashmir. The situation is more alarming at the dental college of Srinagar where no recruitment of faculty has taken place over the past one decade or so. This has seriously impacted the working of the dental college.

It is due to this reason that many students who get selected for the graduation of dental surgery (BDS) drop out of the course if they get selected for MBBS or any professional course in the subsequent year or years. Since a lot of capital is needed to set up a dental clinic it is very difficult for the dental graduates to set up their own clinics once they pass out from the dental college.

It is imperative that the health and medical education department increases the retirement age of the faculty of the medical and dental colleges from existing 62 years to 65 years. Steps should also be taken to appoint the requisite faculty at the medical colleges and also at AIIMS Kashmir. This would provide job opportunities to the professionals in the field of medicine. At the end of the day the common masses benefit since they will be entitled to treatment from the best available talent.

Tral: A Town of Beauty, History, and Transformation

BY M S NAZKI

Tral was always a beautiful place but remained on the edge of the blade for the last thirty five years and seven months! The terrorists ruled the roost here but now it is not the case! The Indian Army has made sure that it remains as it eas always!

A description of tral by my fellow journalist, a junior all the way AT! The only problem with her is she speaks too fast and I'm useless at shorthand writing! But I have manifested a new form of writing and that is to use abbreviations! For example for Lower Tral (LT) and for the upper one (UT)! And here is what she described Tral as!

-Tral is a beautiful town which is well known for its natural beauty. Tral comes under Pulwama district. This district is renowned for the archeological monuments of Raja Avantivarman.

-There are approximately 82 villages which come under Tral tehsil. The houses built here are made from sun dried bricks and some baked bricks.

-Tral is famous for its enormous number of natural assets such as waterfalls, streams, fruits, aromatic flowers and springs.

-Tral is a privileged or fortunate tehsil among Kashmir for its literacy rate is more as compared to all other parts of Kashmir, therefore it is also known as 'Knowledge Hub of Kashmir'.

-Tral, the name hardly any Kashmiri would be unacquainted with; the town has been always in the limelight for different reasons, mostly related to the history!

-Tral, the name hardly any Kashmiri would be unacquainted with; the town has been always in the limelight for different reasons, mostly related to the changing situations on ground, and different aspects of Kashmir history.

- But there is another side, which is not much highlighted or discussed. Many readers would have got it exactly; and yes, I am referring to its potential of becoming a tourism hub as it is gifted with untamed and unexplored beauty.

-Tral is a fascinating place to visit. To say that the striking and mesmerizing beauty of this place has no parallels would not be an exaggeration. The town is rich in famous and cen-



tury-old chinars and freshwater bodies (springs) that remain warm in winter and cold in summer.

-The rich land is blessed with green meadows, unending pastures, pristine and pure water bodies, dense forests, waterfalls, fragrant flowers, delicious fruits, wildlife sanctuary and alpine lakes.

-The sad state of affairs is that these unexplored places of Tral have not been promoted, presented or publicized as they deserve. The historical town is bound by a continuous mountain range, touching the boundaries of Pampore and Srinagar from the north side, Pahalgam from the east side and Anantnag district from the south side.

-History:

Historical aspect of Tral: As far as historical context, Tral has got a lot to write about. Some places even date back to 2000-3000 BC. For example, Gufkraal (a combination of two Kashmiri words: 'Guf' meaning 'cave' and 'kraal' meaning 'potter'), one of the oldest and historical Archeological sites of the Valley, is an ancient landmark that portrays the art of traditional pottery and bears witness to some oldest caves of ancient potters. Located on the kerawas of Hurdmir, three kilometers ahead of Tral town, Gufkraal, a Neolithic site, is vital to the history of Kashmir. Ironically, the site is being decimated and nothing substantial is being done to preserve it.

-S h i k a r g a h : - The famous resting and hunting place of Maharaj Hari Singh is another historical place in Tral. This place/guest house was used by the Maharaja to spend his leisure time and served as a picnic spot back in those days. This place is blessed with dense forests and is

now a breeding and conservation centre for the famous Hangul (Kashmiri Stag).

-Another historical place, known as Narastan, is located in the upper reaches of Tral and marking one of the boundaries of this beautiful town. Apart from breathtaking beauty, it is also a witness to the famous Neolithic site. The archaeological site of Narastan has an 11th century stone cut temple which provides an idea of their existence and influence in that area and surely glorifies the rich history.

-It is pertinent to mention here that there are numerous shrines, some of them belonging to various disciples of the famous Sufi Saint Mir Syed Ali Hamadan (commonly known as Ameer Kabir) and some belonging to Sufi saints of other Sufi silsilas/ orders. The most historical among these shrines is the Khanqah of Tral which was a testimony to the beautiful art and architecture, but sadly that historical place got destroyed in a fire incident, many years ago. The marvellous design and traditional architecture of that shrine was a treasure.

-A shrine in Sufigund, in the backdrop of dense forests, belongs to Sheikh Bakir; and to reach this shrine, one has to climb more than 200 steps as it is located on top of a mountain. Moreover, in Parigam village, near the shrine of the prominent Sufi saint Sheikh Nur ud Din Noorani (commonly known as Sheikh-ul-Alam), Kashmir's oldest and the largest mulberry tree exists, which dates back to the 14th century and is said to have grown from the base of a wooden log, leftover by the saint after it failed to catch fire.

-Majestic Beauty of Tral: The beauty of this hamlet is second to none. The

popularity on the lines of conflict and the political situation has hindered its fame in breathtaking beauty and mesmerizing surroundings. The geographical landscape of Tral is such that whichever direction one looks, green and dense mountain tops enrich one's soul and soothe one's eyes. The unexplored natural beauty has a magnetic attraction and long-lasting effect.

-Nagbearan, a meadow located in the deep mountain ranges of the upper reaches (East) of Tral, is one of the best camping places. An unending meadow, occupied by paper trees and guarded by pine and coniferous trees, laden with green carpet with blooming and admirable wildflowers. The snow-capped Himalayan mountain range, surrounding this meadow, presents a delightful view. The famous (twin lakes of) Tarsar and Marsar are accessed via this meadow and serve as the base for it. Nagbearan is also connected to Dachigam national park in the south-east and many trails lead into the national park of fame and fall under its jurisdiction, while other trails lead to Pahalgam.

-Bugmad mountain range has emerged as a new camping site/ place for the locals. A 2-3 hours trek to this mountain welcomes you with another marvelous piece of unexplored beauty, where people find solace and tranquillity. The Bugmad mountain is historical in its fact that it is believed that Ameer Kabir has visited Kashmir once through this mountain range; this is corroborated by these poetic lines: peer aawum bugmad bae'l (Peer [Amer Kabir] has arrived from Bugmad mountain). This historical mountain top leads to unending mountain ranges and green pas-

tures which connect Tral with Aru valley of Pahalgam.

-Apart from these famous places, another notable place in Tral is Aripal Spring. Its distinguishing feature is its shape and source, though unknown. Gushing out underneath the vertical rocky mountain, the icy cold and bluish water body serves as a picnic spot and the mountains in its backdrop add splendour to its spectacular beauty.

-Wustoorwan mountain range is another camping site, which is a boundary line between Tral and Pampore and can be accessed from both sides. Apart from these places, the Alpine lakes in the upper reaches are a treat to eyes, notables being Tarsar and Marsar, Munwarsar, Chumnai Sar and Chunsar, etc. Places like Hajin, Panmer (Water Dam), Doodh-Marg, Zooastan having gushing water streams, dense forest cover are always thronged by local people.

-Though incidents related to the conflict resulted in portraying Tral differently, but the fact is that Tral is home to various historical/ archeological sites and Sufi shrines, and has been bestowed by Nature with abundant beauty, in the form of mountain ranges, lush green forests, meadows, and gushing water streams.

-As terrorism emerged Tral became a dreaded place! It took three and a half years to get Tral back to normalcy! Today it is buzzing and back to normalcy!

Something big happened in Tral and it happened in the following way: 'Itne Din Ke Baad Mile Ho, Zara Batao Kaun Hain Tum, Hum Wasiyon Ka Naam Tral Hai Sanam!' (After so many days we have met, just tell who you

are, we are the people of Tral!)

-This was what happened:

-National flag unfurled for first time in 35 years at South Kashmir's Tral

-For the first time in 35 years, the national tricolour was unfurled at Tral in South Kashmir's Pulwama district on Sunday as patriotic songs marked the celebration of 76th Republic Day.

-Once a bastion of terrorists and separatists, Tral town reverberated with patriotic songs and chants of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' as PDP MLA Rafiq Naik joined nearly 1,000 participants in the Republic Day function.

-The residents of the south Kashmir town said it was perhaps for the first time that the national flag was hoisted on Republic Day at the Tral Chowk.

-The flag was jointly unfurled by an elderly, a youth and a child, symbolising the unity of generations and their shared commitment to the nation.

-This occasion marks a significant transformation for Tral, a place known for unrest, as it embraces peace, progress and national integration," a senior security force officer, who was present at the event, said.

-The ceremony, held amid heightened security by the Rashtriya Rifles, Jammu and Kashmir Police and CRPF, proceeded peacefully, reflecting the collaboration between local communities and the security forces.

-The sight of people from all walks of life waving the tricolour was a testament to Tral's transformation and its aspirations for harmony and development," the officer said.

He said the participation of the youth underscored their desire for a brighter and unified future rooted in the ideals of democracy. As the tricolour fluttered proudly against the backdrop of snow-capped mountains, it became a symbol of Tral's journey towards peace, progress and its renewed dedication to the values enshrined in the Indian Constitution, he said!

AT concluded by saying...Aaj Humne Dil Se, Yeh Faisla Kar Diya, Hum Jiyan Aur Mareng Aye Watan tere Liye! (We have pledged from our hearts, we will live and die for the great Nation by the name of India!

The Role Of Social Media In Raising Funds For Critical Health Needs

SYED MUDASIR MUSHTAQ

In today's digital age, social media has become an invaluable tool for spreading information and rallying support for various causes. One area where it has proven particularly impactful is in raising awareness and funds for individuals suffering from life-threatening diseases such as kidney failure, cancer, liver transplant needs, and other costly medical conditions. Social media platforms serve as a lifeline, connecting people in need with those who are willing to donate, regardless of the amount.

When a person faces a severe illness, particularly one that requires expensive treatments or surgeries, they often find themselves in a financial crisis. The cost of medical care for conditions like kidney failure, cancer,

and liver disease can quickly escalate to amounts that most individuals cannot afford. In such cases, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and GoFundMe have been used to create awareness about these urgent medical needs. These platforms allow families and friends to share their stories and directly appeal to the public for donations. Many individuals, both familiar and strangers, respond with kindness, offering financial support to help cover the medical bills.

This form of crowdfunding is crucial not only in times of immediate need but also in showing the power of collective effort. Even small donations can add up to a significant sum, helping to save lives. While the donations may vary in size, every contribution plays an

important role, acting as a lifeline for the ailing individuals and their families. It is heartwarming to see the level of empathy and willingness among people to support those in need, proving that humanity is not lost, and people are ready to help one another in times of crisis. Donating to support patients is one of the highest forms of charity in the eyes of God.

However, while social media provides a temporary solution to the financial burdens of medical treatment, it is clear that a more permanent and systemic solution is needed. Governments have a significant role to play in ensuring that all citizens, regardless of their financial status, have access to affordable healthcare. In many countries, the high cost of treatment remains a barrier to accessing life-saving care,

particularly for low-income individuals and families.

One of the most important steps the government can take is to provide subsidies or insurance policies at an affordable rate. While many governments have programs in place to support low-income families, the policies are often not comprehensive enough to cover the full scope of medical needs, especially when it comes to critical illnesses. By creating low-cost insurance policies, individuals could receive the care they need without the fear of financial ruin.

In recent years, the government has made positive strides by introducing schemes like the Golden Card and Ayushman Bharat. These initiatives have been instrumental in providing healthcare access to millions of low-income individuals. The Golden Card, offering

coverage up to 5 lakh rupees, has significantly alleviated the financial burden on many families. Ayushman Bharat, a national health insurance scheme, has expanded its reach, helping a vast number of patients in need of medical treatment. These programs have played an essential role in offering relief to those who would otherwise be unable to afford costly treatments.

However, these initiatives should not be seen as the end of the journey. To ensure that the most vulnerable populations continue to receive the best care, it is vital that the government not only maintains but also enhances these programs. The coverage provided by the Golden Card and Ayushman Bharat should be extended, and new facilities should be introduced to ensure that patients can

seek treatment at renowned hospitals, even those that are not part of the current network. Access to the best possible healthcare should not be limited by one's financial status or geographical location.

Additionally, the government should explore ways to include more comprehensive coverage for critical and life-consuming diseases, which often require long-term and expensive treatments. This would ensure that even in the most dire circumstances, patients can receive the care they need without the added stress of financial burdens.

Furthermore, governments should consider making healthcare free at both public and private hospitals. This would level the playing field, ensuring that both the rich and the poor have equal access to the

treatment they need. Healthcare should not be a privilege reserved only for those who can afford it; it should be a basic human right. The life of a poor individual is just as valuable as that of a wealthy person, and no one should have to suffer due to their inability to pay for treatment.

While it is understood that governments may need to raise taxes or increase rates on items like fuel and utilities to fund these programs, the investment in people's health is one that will pay long-term dividends. By ensuring that medical care is accessible to everyone, the government will be able to improve the overall health of the population, reduce the financial burden on families, and ultimately save lives.

In conclusion, while social media plays an important role in spreading awareness

and raising funds for those in dire need of medical treatment, the government must take proactive steps to ensure that healthcare is accessible and affordable for all. The introduction of initiatives like the Golden Card and Ayushman Bharat is a commendable effort, but continued expansion and enhancement of these programs will ensure that every citizen, regardless of their financial situation, can access life-saving medical care. Healthcare should be free at government hospitals and should include coverage for both routine and critical diseases. The health of the nation is a reflection of its humanity, and it is time to ensure that no one is left behind when it comes to access to life-saving treatment.

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Technology in Education: A Step Toward the Future

BY MOOLRAJ

In today's rapidly evolving world, the integration of technology into education has become not just a convenience, but a necessity. As an advocate for the innovative potential of technology, I firmly believe that embracing digital tools and platforms can transform education, making it more accessible, engaging, and personalized. In fact, when used correctly, technology can elevate the learning experience in ways that traditional methods simply cannot match.

First and foremost, technology allows for unprecedented access to information. Gone are the days when students had to rely solely on textbooks or classroom materials. With the internet, a wealth of knowledge is literally at students' fingertips. From online libraries to interactive tutorials, educational videos, and research databases, the scope of learning is limitless. This democratization of knowledge has leveled the playing field, enabling students from all walks of life to access the same resources regardless of their geographical location or socioeconomic background.

Moreover, technology enhances the learning experience by fostering a more personalized approach. In a traditional classroom, it is nearly impossible for a teacher to cater to the individual needs of every student. However, with the advent of adaptive learning software and online educational tools, students can now progress at their own pace. These tools can identify areas where a student struggles and provide additional resources and exercises to address those gaps. This not only improves learning outcomes but also boosts student confidence as they can learn at a pace that suits their abilities.

The interactivity that technology enables is another powerful factor in its favor. Tools such as virtual reality (VR), gamified learning platforms, and educational apps turn what was once a monotonous task into an exciting challenge. Students

become more engaged when they are allowed to interact with the content, whether through immersive simulations or interactive quizzes. This increased engagement leads to better retention of information and a more enjoyable learning process overall.

Furthermore, technology facilitates collaboration and communication in ways that are not possible in a traditional setting. Online platforms enable students to work together on projects, discuss topics in forums, and even participate in virtual classrooms that bring together peers from around the world. The ability to collaborate with others, regardless of location, not only enriches the learning experience but also prepares students for the increasingly globalized and interconnected workforce they will enter after graduation.

Critics often point to the potential drawbacks of technology in education, such as the risk of distraction or the digital divide. While these are valid concerns, they are not insurmountable. With proper guidance, students can learn to use technology responsibly and productively. Teachers and parents play a crucial role in setting boundaries and encouraging focused use of digital tools. As for the digital divide, efforts to provide affordable internet access and digital devices to underserved communities are essential to ensure that every student benefits from the opportunities that technology offers.

In conclusion, I am strongly in favor of incorporating technology into education. Its ability to provide access to information, personalize learning, foster interactivity, and encourage collaboration makes it a valuable tool in today's educational landscape. As we continue to move forward into an increasingly digital world, it is essential that we embrace technology not just as a supplement to traditional education, but as a powerful force that can drive progress and innovation in the classroom.

THE AUTHOR IS A REGULAR COLUMNIST AND FREELANCE WRITER

Winter Vacations vs. Winter Coaching: A Contradiction in Kashmir's Education Policy



ALTAF HUSSAIN PEERZADA

Winter in Kashmir is unforgiving. The bone-chilling cold, frequent snowfall, and sub-zero temperatures make it nearly impossible for students to attend schools comfortably. To safeguard the

health of young learners, the government rightly announces winter vacations. However, a perplexing contradiction arises when the same students, who are sent home for protection, are asked to attend winter coaching classes in government schools. This raises an important question: If the government can provide heating arrangements for winter coaching, why can't the same facilities be ensured during the regular school session?

The Dilemma of Winter Coaching

The primary justification for winter vacations is to shield students from the extreme cold, given the lack of proper heating infrastructure in most schools. However, with the introduction of government-run winter coaching, students are expected to brave the same harsh weather they were initially excused from. This policy contradiction not only confuses students and parents but also questions the purpose of winter vacations altogether. If schools can ensure warmth for coaching, why can't they do

the same during normal classes?

The Need for a Rational Approach

If winter vacations are truly meant to protect students, they should be allowed to self-study at home or be provided with online learning options. Advancements in digital education make it possible for students to continue their studies without stepping out in the cold. If the government is genuinely concerned about learning continuity, it should invest in e-learning platforms and ensure students have

access to online resources rather than forcing them into winter coaching centers.

Reevaluating Winter Vacations

The current system of shutting down schools for winter while simultaneously conducting coaching sessions in the same cold conditions makes winter vacations seem redundant. Either the government should:

1. Equip all schools with proper heating facilities so that winter vacations are no longer needed, or
2. Ensure students stay

home for genuine self-study or online classes instead of attending winter coaching in chilly classrooms.

A well-thought-out winter education policy is crucial. The contradiction of winter vacations alongside winter coaching needs urgent attention. A clear and student-friendly approach—either ensuring warm classrooms throughout or fully embracing digital education—would make winter vacations more meaningful and beneficial for Kashmiri students.

From Snow To Sunshine: The Journey of Tujan Pulwama's Cricket Ground

AAMIR AFZAL

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In the Tujan area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district, a cricket ground stands as a symbol of resilience, passion, and the unyielding spirit of the game. It is more than just a stretch of earth; it is a living entity that witnesses the changing seasons and adapts to their rhythm. Under the icy grip of winter and the thaw of spring, this ground undergoes a stunning transformation, each season painting a unique narrative of its existence.

When winter arrives, the cricket ground rests beneath a thick, pristine blanket of snow. The green grass and earthy tones disappear, replaced by an unbroken expanse of white. The stillness is profound as if the ground itself is savoring the peace that comes with the season. Snowfall silences the hustle and bustle of the players, transforming the lively pitch into a tranquil haven. The boundaries that once echoed with cheers are now silent, as nature claims its moment to pause.

Winter brings a much-needed respite for the ground, as though it takes a deep breath after the relentless footfalls, bat



strikes, and ball deliveries of the warmer months. It is during this time that the ground, cloaked in snow, embodies serenity. The snow becomes both a blanket and a mirror, reflecting the pale winter skies and the soft light of the moon.

However, this peace is temporary. As the snow begins to melt, the cricket ground stirs from its slumber. The arrival of spring and the retreat of winter mark the ground's reawakening. The once-muted energy bursts forth with the return of players eager to reclaim their space. The snow that had covered the pitch gave way to the familiar soil, a surface that tells countless tales of intense matches, near vic-

tories, and unforgettable moments.

This transformation is not just physical; it is symbolic. The ground, having rested during winter, now welcomes the boundless enthusiasm of players with renewed vigor. It becomes evident that the cricket ground does not belong solely to the past or present but is part of an ongoing story that bridges seasons, communities, and generations.

Even as the seasons change, the love for the game remains constant. The ground never truly rests for long. Players of all ages take to the field, their passion undeterred by the chill of early spring mornings or the fading warmth of autumn eve-

nings. Cricket matches resume, marked by the thud of leather on willow, the shouts of appeals, and the joy of companionship.

On a personal note, this cricket ground holds a special place in my heart. Whenever I return to my village from the University of Kashmir, during the evening time I walk along the sidelines of this ground with my dear friend and teacher, Dr. MohdYounis Dar. Together, we reminisce about the countless memories etched into its soil, discussing its transformation across the seasons. As we stroll, the ground's enduring spirit fills me with a sense of belonging and nostalgia. It's more than a cricket ground to us—it's a space that con-

nects us to the heart of our village and its community.

However, while the ground has been developed in a thoughtful and commendable way, the administration still needs to pay attention to upgrading its infrastructure. Proper arrangements, a well-maintained pitch, and better drainage facilities could not only enhance the playing conditions but also make it a hub for community engagement and sports events. The dedication of the players, who play tirelessly through all seasons, deserves a space that matches their passion and commitment.

Over the years, individuals like Aarif Sir and Gul Mohd Sir, among many others, have worked tirelessly to highlight the issues and potential of this cricket ground. Their relentless efforts to draw attention to its needs have been commendable, and their commitment to the betterment of the community is inspiring. Their advocacy underscores the importance of this ground, not just as a sports facility but as a cornerstone of local culture and identity.

The cricket ground of Tujan Pulwama is a metaphor for resilience. Winter may bring a temporary halt to its activities, but it does not diminish its purpose. Instead, it strengthens the bond between the

ground and the players who return, season after season, to engage with its spirit. It stands as a testament to the enduring power of community and sport.

Through every snowfall and every sunlit day, the cricket ground bears witness to the harmony between nature and human determination. It teaches the beauty of pause during winter, showing how rest can rejuvenate the busiest of spaces. As the snow fades, it inspires with its ability to endure, adapt, and thrive, becoming a lively space for unyielding passion.

In the end, the cricket ground of Tujan Pulwama is more than just a playing field. It is a stage where nature and the human spirit come together, a place where silence meets action and rest meets resilience. With continued efforts from individuals like Aarif Sir and Gul Mohd Sir, and the right administrative support, it has the potential to not only serve its community better but also to become a landmark of regional sports. Its story told through the changing seasons and personal connections, is one of timeless beauty, relentless perseverance, and hope for a brighter future.

The writer is a Political Science student at the University of Kashmir

Book Review of 'Chubhan' by Abdul Majeed Bhaaderwahi

SADAKET ALI MALIK
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Through poignant narratives and profound themes, 'Chubhan' highlights the complexities of human emotions, societal challenges and moral values, enriching Urdu literature with timeless insights.

'Chubhan' is a remarkable collection of short stories by Abdul Majeed Bhaaderwahi, a distinguished Urdu writer. This compilation focuses on human emotions, societal challenges, religious reflections, spirituality, and moral values. Each story resonates deeply with readers, introducing them to a new intellectual realm while encouraging them to ponder the realities of social, cultural, and spiritual dilemmas.

The collection addresses themes such as human relationships, love, sacrifice, social apathy, and class disparity in a simple yet impactful style. Abdul Majeed Bhaaderwahi masterfully explores the depths of human life, leaving readers with thought-provoking questions and urging them to reassess the realities of their everyday existence.

Stories like "Kuch Der To Ruk Jate," "Yeh Qurbatein Yeh Doorriyan," "Dil Ka Aaina," and "Nigah-e-Mard-e-Momin" explore the subtleties and complexities of human connections. These tales focus on love, sacrifice, and the intricacies of relationships. For instance, "Kuch Der To Ruk Jate" vividly portrays a moment of emotional turmoil, capturing the

conflict between love and separation. Similarly, "Yeh Qurbatein Yeh Doorriyan" highlights the trials of a relationship caught between intimacy and distance, demonstrating the endurance of bonds.

The stories "Mehangai Bhatta," "Maan Aur Ashram: Afsos Sad Afsos," "Afsos! Phir Talaq Ho Gayi," "Padhiye Gar Bimar To," and "Delivery Boy" offer piercing insights into societal challenges. Addressing themes such as poverty, inflation, family disputes, and social apathy, these stories shed light on the stark realities of modern society. For example, "Maan Aur Ashram" is a poignant narrative about the neglect of elderly parents, forcing them to seek solace in ashrams. Simi-

larly, "Mehangai Bhatta" exposes the struggles of the impoverished against systemic inequalities.

Spirituality and faith play a great role in stories like "Hayya Alal Salah," "Tameer Masjid Ke Liye," "Tahqeeq Sunnat Hai," and "Bismillah Ki Barkat." These narratives emphasize piety, righteousness, and the essence of human spirituality. For instance, "Tameer Masjid Ke Liye" underscores the importance of community solidarity and philanthropy, illustrating how religion teaches service to humanity alongside worship.

The stories "Maan Ka Aanchal," "Shareek-e-Safar Ko Hi Manzil Mili," "Muqaddas Maa Wardh Ashram Mein," and "Maan Se Wada" celebrate the role of women

as mothers, wives, and daughters. "Maan Ka Aanchal" focuses on a mother's boundless love and sacrifices, while "Shareek-e-Safar Ko Hi Manzil Mili" portrays a woman's struggle and resilience in the face of adversity.

His other Stories like "Wafa Dari Ka Laboratory Test," "Yaad-e-Mazi Azaab Hai," "Khawab Aur Ansoo," "Ghalat Fehmi," and "Yaad-e-Rafta" delve into human psychology, exploring desires, weaknesses, and inner conflicts. "Wafa Dari Ka Laboratory Test" offers a unique perspective on loyalty, while "Yaad-e-Mazi Azaab Hai" highlights the burden of regret and the weight of past memories.

Moral and ethical values are the main

domain felt by Bhaaderwahi in his book, 'The tales "Jhoot Ka Anjam," "Wada Wafa Karna Qarz Aur Nibhana Farz Hai," "Bismillah Ki Barkat," and "Anokhi Mazdoori" advocate for integrity and moral conduct. These stories teach the significance of truth, promise-keeping, and living a righteous life. For instance, "Jhoot Ka Anjam" showcases the devastating consequences of deceit, while "Wada Wafa Karna Qarz" emphasizes the sanctity of one's word.

His writings like "Ajab Ilaaj-e-Tanhai," "Yeh Ansoo Dil Ki Zubaan Hai," "Aakhri Bulawa," and "Shama Bujhne Se Pehle" address the themes of isolation and grief. "Ajab Ilaaj-e-Tanhai" explores innovative ways to cope with solitude, while

"Aakhri Bulawa" poignantly portrays the significance of life's final moments.

"Delivery Boy," "Salgirah Aur Uske Baad," "Ghalat Fehmi," and "Faislay Qudrat Ke" depict the harsh truths of life, shedding light on aspects often overlooked. "Delivery Boy" highlights the struggles faced by the working class, making it a tale of resilience and perseverance.

His language is straightforward yet impactful, drawing readers into the narrative. His writing focuses on realism with symbolism to enhance the depth of his stories. The conversations are concise, meaningful, and reflective of the characters' emotional states. The depiction of scenes is so vivid that it brings

the stories to life.

Each story maintains coherence from beginning to end, keeping readers captivated.

In short, 'Chubhan' is a literary treasure that explores the many dimensions of life. Through themes of love, sacrifice, societal struggles, faith, and moral values, Abdul Majeed Bhaaderwahi offers profound insights into human existence. His stories not only entertain but also leave a lasting impression on the reader's heart and mind. This book is a valuable contribution to Urdu literature, inspiring future generations and serving as an inspiration for those seeking truth and self-awareness.

DIPR hosts 2nd Edition of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Memorial Lecture Series

Eminent Scientists deliver lectures on science, technology and leadership

HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 30: Department of Information & Public Relations, Jammu & Kashmir organized the second edition of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Memorial Lecture Series today here at the Convention Center.

The event brought together eminent scientists who delivered insightful lectures on various topics, paying tribute to the visionary legacy of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, the former President of India and a pioneer in space and missile technology. The theme of the Lecture Series for the second edition was, 'The Power of Dreams: How big ideas can transform the

world.'

The lecture series featured two distinguished speakers who shared their expertise and inspired the audience with their thought-provoking presentations.

Dr. Vellanki Seshagiri Rao, a former Distinguished Scientist, Associate Director at ISRO, and former Satish Dhawan Professor at ISRO, delivered a lecture on the theme: "From Classroom to Cosmos - The Inspirational Journey of Science and Technology in Space Exploration."

Dr. Rao's lecture highlighted Dr. Kalam's belief that knowledge and innovation, when nurtured in classrooms, can propel humanity to unimaginable heights, even to the



cosmos. He emphasized the importance of fostering scientific curiosity and innovation among students to drive India's future advancements in space exploration.

Government of India, spoke on the theme: "Visionary Leadership - Transforming Dreams into Reality." Dr. Patiriyari's lecture focused on the role of visionary leadership in turning ambitious dreams into tangible achievements, drawing inspiration from Dr. Kalam's life and work. He underscored the importance of perseverance, innovation, and leadership in achieving breakthroughs in science and technology.

In his welcome address, Director Information, Jatin Kishore, spoke about Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam's monumental contributions to missile technology and space organizations. He highlighted Dr. Kalam's role as a mentor and inspiration to countless sci-

entists and students, emphasizing how his legacy continues to guide India's scientific and technological progress.

The event was attended by Joint Director Information (Hqrs), Vivek Puri, Joint Director Information Jammu, Atul Gupta, Deputy Director Information (PR&AV), Deepak Dubey, Deputy Director Information (Central), Sunil Kumar, Deputy Director (PR) Jammu, Deputy Director (Hqrs) Jammu, Information Officers, Accounts Officers and other staff members.

Students from various institutions, including IIM Jammu and IIMC Jammu, actively participated in the lecture series, showcasing their enthusiasm for science and technology.

Er Aijaz Hussain Resolves Long-Pending Issue of Traditional Mining in River Jhelum, Boosting Local Economy in Srinagar

HT News Network

Srinagar, January 30, 2025: Er Aijaz Hussain, DDC Lalchowk and Senior BJP Leader, today successfully inaugurated the long-pending initiative for sand mining extraction from the River Jhelum in Srinagar, addressing an issue that has affected hundreds of local miners for years. The initiative revives traditional or customary mining practices, which were halted in



2019 despite receiving permission. Through his persistent efforts, Er Aijaz Hussain has facilitated the identification of six key

spots for traditional mining along the river, providing a lifeline to the local community dependent on this industry. The move is set

to ensure sustainable mining practices while benefiting hundreds of people involved in the trade. To mark the occasion, Er Aijaz Hussain personally saw off the first vehicle carrying sand from Padshahibagh, symbolizing the official reopening of the mining operations. The local community expressed deep gratitude to him for his dedication in resolving the issue and making this long-awaited initiative a reality.

Tariq Gani Wani laid to rest in Thindima Kreeri

Scores of people participated in Nimazi Jinaza

Aashiq Hussain

Kreeri, 30 Jan (HT) Tariq Gani Wani Physical education Teacher passed away due to cardiac arrest at Thindima Kreeri. His last rites were performed at Thindima kreeri baramulla in which scores of people participated. The demise of Tariq Gani has been widely mourned various Social religious organizations have consoled with the bereaved family. NC leader Mohd yaqoob

condoles the said demise of Tariq Gani Wani. In a condolence message wani expressed shock and grief over the sad demise of Son of EX ZEO Wagoora Ab Gani Wani prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss. Senior NC leader showed sympathy with the bereaved family at this difficult time. Senior DU Leader Oman Bashir express heartfelt sympathies with the bereaved family especially with Ab Gani Wani Ex



ZEO Wagoora. Chairman JKGC-WFSyed Shahmeem Ahmad Bukhari also expressed grief over this irreparable loss and prayed for the peace to the departed soul. Social Activist Sajad Ahmad

Lone has expressed deep anguish over the sad demise of Tariq Gani Wani extended heartfelt condolence to the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul. HT

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

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill) power connection is registered on the name BILAL AHMAD MIR S/O GHULAM RASOOL MIR R/O RAMPORA. Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 021203010011350 wants to be registered on my name MOHAMMAD SHAFI GASHRU S/O AB REHMAN GASHRU R/O RAMPORA VEER II. If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name...MOHAMMAD SHAFI GASHRU
D/O ...AB REHMAN GASHRU
R/O RAMPORA VEER II

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI

(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of ALEEZA JAAN AND KASHIB S/O HAFEZULLAH MALIK R/O HARNOW KAWACHEK Tehsil TANGMARG Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 17/03/2019 & 27/11/2022 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 entertained

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI

(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of UMER FAROOQ S/O FAROOQ AHMAD SHEIKH R/O TAPPER WARIPORA Tehsil PATTAN Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 30/01/2017 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 entertained

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI

(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of FARHAAN FIRDOUS MIR S/O FIRDOUS AHMAD MIR R/O SALOOSA Tehsil KTEERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 10/01/2017 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 entertained

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

THE ADMINISTRATION OF UNION TERRITORY OF LADAKH

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT

OFFICER KARGIL LADAKH

Whereas a joint application has been received from Shri/ Smt. Mohd Iqbal S/O Ghulam Rasool R/O Goshan Drass Kargil (Transfer) and Aniss Rahman S/O Abdul Razaq R/O Bhrinbat Drass. transferee for transfer of Carriage

Route Permit No. covering vehicle No JK 07-1922 Now, therefore, it is notified for general information that objections, if any to the proposed transfer of the said Route Permit/ Vehicle shall be filed in writing in the office of ARTO Kargil with in a period of days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper

The seller and purchaser identified by the authorized representative of MS Mold Iqbal Namely Shri/Smt Aniss Rahman.

No:ARTO 2025-1366 ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT
Date: 22/01/2025 OFFICER KARGIL LADAKH

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 12th pass School Leaving certificate at somewhere. Now I am applying for its duplicate if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of GOVT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL WAGOORA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name...SAQIB ASSADULLAH TELI
S/O MOHAMMAD ASSADULLAH TELI
R/O VIZER

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR ANANTNAG

(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 PAHALGAM)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of OWAS SHAFI WANI S/O MOHAMMAD SHAFI WANI R/O LIDROO PAHALGAM Tehsil ANANTNAG Distt. ANANTNAG having verified the date of Birth as 02/03/2011 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 entertained

Executive Magistrate
1st Class ANANTNAG

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI

(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of AYAAN BILAL YATOO S/O BILAL AHMAD YATOO R/O WARIPORA PAYEEN Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 27/09/2018 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 entertained.

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI

(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of TAMEENA QADIR S/O GH QADIR BHAT R/O SALOOSA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 07/02/2013 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 entertained

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI

(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of MADIHA BINTI AIJAZ S/O AIJAZ AHMAD NAJAR R/O DOULATPORA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 22/06/2019 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 entertained.

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI

(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of SABIYA FAYAZ MIR S/O FAYAZ AHMAD MIR R/O SALOOSA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 05/11/2017 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 entertained.

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION SUMBAL

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

FRESH NIT No.75 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

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 Partioning 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

following works:-

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 as per schedule of dates given below:-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	30-01-2025 from 2.00P.M
3	Bid submission Start Date	30-01-2025 from 2.00P.M
4	Bid Submission End Date	04-02-2025 upto 4.00P.M.
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	05-02-2025 at 11.00A.M in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sumbal.

Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document (as mentioned above) in the shape of Treasury Receipt/e-Challan in 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 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

Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.

To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.

The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.

Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.

Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the technical bid.

Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.

The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.

Scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sumbal (The date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Sumbal must be uploaded with the documents of the bid. The original Treasury Challan (cost of tender document), and other relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of contract.

Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually.

Price escalation and Taxes:- The %age quoted by the bidder shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of the work. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.

Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on R&B e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required. In case of CRF and any other specified project, the relevant guidelines / standard bidding document shall be followed.

DIPK-11397/24
Date: Jan 30 2025

Sd./
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Sumbal

DC Kulgam reviews arrangements for Urs of Syed Noor Shah Wali Bagdadi (RA)

■ Farooq Rather

Kulgam January 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today chaired a meeting to review arrangements for annual urs of Sufi saint Hazrat Syed Noor Shah Saheb Wali Bagdadi (RA). Chairman Local Intizamia Committee Kund informed that the Urs of the saint will commence from February 01 and shall be observed with reverence & religious fervour at Walteng and Oriel Shrines of Kund Valley.



Addressing the meeting, Deputy Commissioner (DC) directed the officers to ensure uninterrupted power supply, safe drinking water supply, proper sanitation measures besides healthcare facilities and security arrangements at shrine during Urs days. DC emphasized the KPDC to ensure the uninterrupted power supply during the auspicious days in entire Kund block and repairing of high mast lights. The concerned officer of

Mechanical department was asked to keep men and machinery available and in ready mode to clear roads in case of snowfall during these days to ensure hassle-free movement of devotees. DC stressed upon the officers to work in coordination and to put in place all the requisite arrangements in advance to avoid any inconvenience to the people and assist in smooth observance of Urs. Transport department was directed to ensure hassle-free movement of devotees besides availability of late evening public transport services to Kund

Chairman DDC Kupwara inaugurates H&W Centre Panditpora, Tourist Spot Lokipora

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, JANUARY 30: Chairman District Development Council Kupwara, Irfan Sultan Panditpora today inaugurated Health & Wellness Centre and Tourist Spot Lokipora in Qaziabad block of district Kupwara in presence of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan. Besides, Assistant Commissioner Development Kupwara, BDO Qaziabad; residents of the area were also present on the occasion. While inaugurating



Tourist Spot in Qaziabad, Panditpora reiterated long pending demand of the local people to develop the area as tourist destination. He added that the area

has a good potential of tourism and hoped that the administration will explore its full potential for the development and welfare of the people. Later, the Chairman DDC visited Panditpora village where he inaugurated the newly constructed building of Health & Wellness Centre in presence Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan. Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Kupwara also visited various areas of block Qaziabad & inspected different developmental works including JJM works at Kralgund.

JKGCWF Mourns the Loss of Tariq Ahmad Wani

■ HT News Network



Srinagar, January 29, 2024 – Syed Shameem Ahmad, Chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir General Category Welfare Forum (JKGCWF), expressed profound grief and condolences on the untimely demise of Tariq Ahmad Wani. Mr. Wani, a dedicated physical education teacher and son of former Zonal Education Officer Abdul Gani Wani, passed away due to a cardiac arrest. Chairman Shamim Bukhari conveyed his personal connection with the bereaved family, stating, "I was deeply shocked and saddened to hear this news. This is an irreparable loss."

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the Wani family during this incredibly difficult time," said Shameem Bukhari. "Mr. Wani was a dedicated teacher who inspired countless students, and his contributions to local sports will be deeply missed. He leaves behind a legacy of service and commitment to the community." The JKGCWF joins the community in mourning the loss of Mr. Wani and extends its heartfelt sympathies to his family relatives, friends, colleagues, and students. The organization recognizes the significant impact Mr. Wani had on the lives of young people and acknowledged his valuable contributions to the field of education and sports. May Allah tallah bestow him with heights places in janatul firdous and give courage to bear this irreparable Loss.

Police in Kupwara Nab Notorious Drug Peddler on the Run Since 2023

■ HT News Network

Kupwara January 30: In a significant breakthrough in the ongoing fight against the drug menace, Police in Kupwara apprehended a notorious drug peddler who had been evading arrest for the past 14 months. The accused, Jameel Khan son of Gh Qadir Khan resident of Dever Lolab, was wanted in connection with case FIR No. 90/2023 registered under Section 8/20 NDPS Act at Police Station Lalpora. The FIR was lodged on 14/11/2023, and since then, the accused had been on the run to avoid legal action. After sustained efforts and credible intelligence inputs, a police team from PS Lalpora launched a planned operation, leading to his arrest. His arrest marks a step in curbing drug-related activities in the region and J&K Police's commitment to ensuring a drug-free society.

Javed Rana meets Army Chief, discusses critical issues affecting LoC residents

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 30: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Rana, today held detailed discussions with Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Upendra Dwivedi, on wide ranging issues affecting the residents of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly those living along the Line of Control (LoC). During the meeting, focused discussions were held on mitigating the adverse effects of LoC fencing on tribal livelihoods, especially the Gujjar-Bakerwal community. The discussions aimed at finding solutions to minimise the impact on their daily lives especially emergency movements from and to the villages across LoC fencing.

With an aim to facilitate smooth and unhindered movement and livelihood activities of Gujjar-Bakerwals, Rana emphasised on easing restrictions on traditional migration routes and access to grazing lands. During the meeting, threadbare discussion was also held on improving connectivity and easing the movement of people. The maintenance and upgradation of all BRO roads in areas along the LoC and Pir Panjal Region was also discussed.



The meeting emphasised the importance of mainstreaming the role of Gujjar-Bakerwals and other tribes in maintaining peace and stability in J&K.

In order to ensure the safety and well-being of local communities, the meeting also delved on demining of areas along the LoC inhabited or frequently visited by people, besides establishing an advanced information system in the event of any emergency situation. The Minister also proposed a recruitment drive/camps in far-flung districts of J&K and establishment of a Gujjar Regiment to facilitate recruitment of Gujjar youth into the Territorial Army.

To promote equitable development in the region, Rana also proposed collaboration in construction of a Sports Stadium at Sagra Village and Helipad at Dhana Shastar, Mendhar.

DLSA Ganderbal organises awareness prog on Sexual Harassment of Women at workplace

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, JANUARY 30: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Ganderbal in collaboration with District Administration, Ganderbal organized a legal awareness program on the Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) (POSH) Act, 2013 today, at Tehsil Office Complex Wakura.

The event was held under the supervision of Abdul Nasir, Chairman, DLSA (Pr. District & Sessions Judge), Ganderbal and guidance of Sheikh Babar Hussain, Secretary, DLSA Ganderbal, aimed to provide safe and secure environment for women at workplace.

Advocate Sajid Irfan, Deputy Legal Defense Counsel Ganderbal, delivered an insightful speech, elaborated on the legal framework of Act and also highlighted the object of



POSH Act. He said the Act is applicable to all women irrespective of their age or employment status, working in organised or unorganised sector and the Act casts an obligation upon every employer to create an environment which is free from sexual harassment. He explained the procedure for filing complaints under the POSH Act in detail, empowering participants to take action against sexual harassment.

Advocate, Asif Mustafa, emphasized the importance of the POSH Act in creating a safe and equitable work environment for women and encouraged proactive measures for its implementation. He added that POSH act has undoubtedly laid a strong foundation for workplace safety. He emphasized the need for participants to spread awareness about the POSH Act among their colleagues, promoting a culture of respect and safety in the workplace and added that the Ministry has developed an online complaint management system titled the Sexual Harassment electronic-Box (SHe-Box, www.shebox.nic.in) for registering complaints related to sexual harassment of women at workplace. The event was also attended by the Tehsildar Wakura, Officials of Rural Development Department, Health Department, Staff members of various schools and PLVs (Adhikar Mitras) of DLSA, Ganderbal.

Illegal Felling of Keekar Trees in Social Forestry Compartment 22-B, Handwara: Civil Society Demands Immediate Action

■ DR. AB QAYOOM

Handwara, Jan 30: In a shocking case of environmental destruction, around 50 to 70 evergreen Keekar trees have been illegally felled in Social Forestry Compartment 22-B, located in the upper areas of Takibal village in Handwara. Local civil society members have urged the authorities to take immediate action against those responsible, including officials and employees involved in the act.

According to residents, an active timber mafia has been operating in the area for the past year, with increased activity over the last 7-8 months. The illegal logging is reportedly being carried out under the pretext of collecting firewood for local mosques, without obtaining the necessary



No Objection Certificate (NOC) or completing other official formalities. This blatant violation goes against government regulations, particularly Order No. DIR/DSF/C&E/1828-43 dated 27-12-2022, which mandates strict procedures for safeguarding evergreen trees in social forestry compartments.

Concerned citizens have expressed outrage over the large-scale felling, highlighting the severe ecological consequences such as soil erosion, habitat destruction, and climate imbalance. They have appealed to Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha and

relevant government agencies in North Kashmir to intervene urgently and bring the culprits to justice.

When contacted, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) confirmed that the department received a complaint about the illegal felling and has initiated an investigation. "Our team, led by the concerned officer, visited the site this morning. A detailed report is being prepared, and strict action will be taken against those involved. Even department employees found complicit will not be spared," the DFO assured.

With growing public outcry, environmental activists and local residents are demanding strict enforcement of forest protection laws to prevent further destruction of Kashmir's green cover.

Food Supplies Employees Association Hosts Farewell for Retiring Employees in Shopian



■ HT News Network

Shopian, Jan 30: The Food and Supplies Employees Association of Shopian organized a heartfelt farewell ceremony to honor three esteemed employees of the Department of Food Supplies—TSO Sira Juddin Shah, Manzoor Ahmad Gatoo, and Mohammad Hanef Naiko—who retired after decades of dedicated service.

The event, held in an atmosphere of gratitude and camaraderie, saw the participation of senior officials, colleagues, and well-wishers who gathered to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the retiring employees. A significant highlight of the ceremony was the official handover of pension sanction authority papers, ensuring a smooth transition into their post-retirement phase. The retirees were commended

for their relentless efforts in ensuring the uninterrupted distribution of essential supplies to the people of Shopian. Their dedication to public service was widely appreciated, with officials and employees also recognizing the instrumental leadership of AD Food, Tajemul Yousef, and SO Syed Mudasar Ahmad in maintaining efficiency and transparency within the department.

Addressing the gathering, officials underscored the pivotal role played by the retirees in strengthening the public distribution system. Fellow colleagues expressed deep admiration for their work ethic, integrity, and commitment to service.

The farewell ceremony concluded on an emotional yet celebratory note, with warm wishes extended to the retirees as they embark on a new chapter of life after years of selfless service.

Awareness on Women's dignity, empowering held at Ganderbal

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, JANUARY 30: In a significant initiative for women's rights and protection, Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women, Mission Shakti, Ganderbal, in collaboration with TUSA Ganderbal, Special Cell for Women, and ICDS conducted an impactful aware-

ness camp at Dar Mohalla Chunt Walivar, under the supervision of the District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) today. The camp focused on the NALSA (Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children) Scheme, 2015, providing crucial information about legal protections, rehabilitation support, and measures to combat trafficking and exploitation. Legal experts



and government officials discussed the importance of community vigilance, legal aid services, and the role of law enforcement in preventing gender-based crimes. In addition to the legal framework, the camp also highlighted various women-centric government schemes, such as financial assistance programs, skill development initiatives, and the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) initiative,

aimed at empowering women and promoting gender equality.

As part of the BBBP initiative, Sankalp Hub distributed baby kits and blankets to nursing mothers, reinforcing its commitment to maternal and child welfare. The camp witnessed active participation from women in the region, who engaged in discussions, sought legal guidance, and shared concerns about

Dy CM lays foundation stone for development works at Nowshera

HT News Network

NEWSHERA, (RAJOURI) JANUARY 30: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today laid foundation stone for upgradation of Conference Hall at PWD Dak Bungalow, Nowshera, and remodelling of Palaash Nowshera.

The upgradation of the conference hall, to be raised with a sanctioned cost of Rs 249.39 lakh, aims to improve conference and meeting facilities in the region.

Speaking on the occasion, Surinder Choudhary emphasised the government's commitment towards strengthening infrastructure to facilitate efficient governance and



better service delivery. He highlighted that the upgraded conference hall will serve as a modern venue for official meetings, public interactions and other important deliberations. Additionally, the Remodelling work on Palaash Nowshera, to be done with an estimated cost of Rs 107.48 lakh, was

also launched by the Deputy Chief Minister. The project aims to provide a better environment for the residents. Officials from the Public Works Department (PWD), local administration and public representatives were present at the event. They reiterated their dedication towards ensuring the timely completion

of both projects with high-quality standards.

These infrastructure development initiatives are part of the broader agenda of present administration to improve public service facilities and urban amenities in Nowshera, reinforcing the government's focus on holistic regional development. Additionally, the Remodelling work on Palaash Nowshera, to be done with an estimated cost of Rs 107.48 lakh, was also launched by the Deputy Chief Minister. The project aims to provide a better environment for the residents. Officials from the Public Works Department (PWD), local administration and public representatives were present at the event.

DC reviews implementation of Land Use Regulations in Doda District, Approves 4 CLU cases

HT News Network

DODA, JANUARY 30: Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh chaired a meeting of the District Level Committee on the Change of Land Use (CLU) here in the Mini Conference Hall to review implementation of the land use regulations and policy compliance in the District.

The meeting also scrutinized the petitions seeking Change of Land Use and approved 4 cases.

The meeting focused on streamlining the land conversion process while ensuring planned and sustainable development across the district. Officials from Revenue, Town Planning, and Rural Development departments participated, providing inputs on pending applications and adherence to government policies.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need to balance development with environmental sustainability. He directed officials to prevent unauthorized land conversions to



avoid haphazard urbanization. The committee also discussed expediting pending CLU cases, ensuring transparency in approvals, and maintaining proper records to prevent legal disputes. Harvinder Singh stressed the importance of a robust monitoring mechanism to track land conversions and prevent the misuse of agricultural land for non-permissible activities.

A total of five CLU cases were deliberated upon, out of which four were approved after a thorough evaluation.

The Deputy Commissioner instructed officials to expedite the issuance of No Objection Certificates (NOCs) for approved cases, ensuring all necessary documents are duly verified. He also emphasized the need for public awareness regarding land use policies, directing officials to educate citizens about legal procedures and environmental impacts. The meeting concluded with a commitment to ensuring a transparent, balanced, and sustainable approach to land development in Doda district.

DC inspects NH-1C Land Acquisition Site and Government School in Katra

HT News Network

REASI, JANUARY 30: Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik today conducted a spot inspection of NH-1C at Kotli Manotarian village to assess land acquisition for the construction of a 20-meter span bridge. She directed the concerned authorities to ensure timely disbursement of compensation to the landowners and instructed immediate commencement of the bridge construction to enhance connectivity in the region.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner also inspected Government High School Bhagga, where she reviewed classroom conditions and checked the teachers' attendance register. She emphasized the



proper utilization of school grants for cleanliness and maintenance. Additionally, she mandated that the school sweeper be present daily to maintain hygiene standards.

To ensure accountability, DC Nidhi Malik directed the Tehsildar to conduct regular school inspections. She instructed strict action

against the in-charge if cleanliness standards were not met, reinforcing the administration's commitment to improving educational infrastructure and student well-being. ACR Anshumali Sharma, SDM Katra Piyush Dhotra, Tehsildar Katra, XENs were present.

District-Level NCORD meeting held to strengthen anti-drug measures in Samba

HT News Network

SAMBA, JANUARY 30: Additional Deputy Commissioner Samba, Jagdish Singh, today chaired the district-level committee meeting under the Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) here at the DC Office. The meeting focused on reviewing and reinforcing measures to curb drug abuse and illicit narcotic trade in the district.

The meeting was attended by Additional SP Samba Garu Ram, Chief Education Officer, SDM Vijaypur and Ghagwal, GM DIC, Chief Medical Officer, Tehsildars, district officers and other concerned officials.

Discussions centered on countering drug abuse, identifying high-risk areas and reviewing the action taken on directives from the previous NCORD meeting. Stressing the need for a comprehensive approach,



the ADC directed all stakeholders to conduct awareness drives in schools, colleges, and communities, ensuring active involvement of parents to protect the youth from substance abuse. The ADC further underscored the importance of sustained law enforcement efforts,

urging agencies to intensify vigilance against drug trafficking. He asked district officers to submit a monthly progress report for the compilation of a coffee table book, documenting the administration's anti-drug initiatives.

In a significant move to curb the

misuse of prescription drugs, the CCTV cameras have been installed in medical shops across the district. Additionally, officers were directed to hold regular sub-divisional meetings, install awareness signboards in Nasha Mukta Panchayats and conduct random checks on medical stores to enforce computerized billing. Discussions centered on countering drug abuse, identifying high-risk areas and reviewing the action taken on directives from the previous NCORD meeting. Stressing the need for a comprehensive approach, the ADC directed all stakeholders to conduct awareness drives in schools, colleges, and communities, ensuring active involvement of parents to protect the youth from substance abuse. The ADC further underscored the importance of sustained law enforcement efforts, urging agencies to intensify vigilance against drug trafficking.

Horticulture Department organises farmers' awareness program at Satwari

HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 30: The Department of Horticulture Jammu today conducted a farmers' awareness camp/ kisan mela at Satwari under the aegis of Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) scheme.

Member Legislative Assembly Dr. Narinder Singh Raina was the chief guest, while former BDC Chairman Daleep Kumar presided over the event.

While addressing the gathering of more than 100 farmers including women farmers, MLA Dr. Narinder Singh Raina impressed upon them to associate with the Horticulture department and avail the benefits of different farmer



friendly schemes of the department. He appreciated the role of the department in creating awareness among the farming community about the various schemes of the department.

Joint Director Horticulture Jammu Vikas Anand welcomed the guests and briefed them about the progress made in respect of

plantations and other works in the area. He said that the camp was organized to generate awareness about the central and UT government schemes of the department, especially HADP with a motive to enhance the farmers' income. He also stressed the importance of these initiatives in promoting sustainable agricultural practices and

enhancing the economic stability of farmers.

Earlier, Chief Horticulture Officer Jammu Rakesh Kotwal deliberated on the upcoming Spring Season Plantation. He briefed the farmers in detail about the various government schemes of the department especially Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and elaborated on the benefits these schemes offer, particularly to unemployed youth. He said that HADP is designed to provide comprehensive support, enabling farmers to harness modern techniques and resources for better productivity and profitability.

HDO Satwari Dheeraj Sharma conducted the proceedings of the programme.

BJP's Aijaz Hussain Facilitates Resumption of Traditional Sand Mining in Jhelum

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jan 30, KNT: Er Aijaz Hussain, District Development Council (DDC) member for Lalchowk and senior BJP leader, Thursday successfully facilitated the resumption of traditional sand mining in the River Jhelum, addressing a long-standing issue that has impacted hundreds of local miners since operations were halted in 2019. The party said that through persistent efforts, Er Aijaz Hussain played a key role in identifying six crucial sites along the river where traditional mining can resume, ensuring a sustainable and structured approach to the practice. This move is expected to provide a significant economic boost to the local community reliant on the industry.

To mark the occasion, Er Aijaz Hussain personally oversaw the dispatch of the first boat carrying sand from Padshahibagh, symbolizing the official restart of mining operations. The development was met with widespread appreciation from

the local community, which had long awaited the revival of this economic activity. Er Aijaz Hussain extended his gratitude to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin, Chief Engineer Irrigation and Flood Control, Director of Geology and Mining Department, DMO Srinagar, and other relevant departments for their efforts in making this initiative a reality. He highlighted the collective role of the administration in overcoming the challenges faced by local miners. Er Aijaz Hussain underscored the importance of reviving the industry while ensuring environmental sustainability. He acknowledged the vital role of traditional mining in supporting livelihoods in Srinagar and reaffirmed his commitment to advocating for initiatives that foster economic growth and responsible resource management. "This initiative has been a long time coming, and I am proud to have played a part in ensuring that our traditional mining practices.

JK makes significant strides in strengthening Cooperative sector: Javed Dar

537 PACS computerised for enhanced operational efficiency, transparency

HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 30: As the United Nations Organization (UNO) has declared 2025 as the international year of Cooperatives under the theme 'Cooperatives build a better world', Minister for Cooperative, Agriculture Production and Rural Development departments, Javed Ahmad Dar, today said that the Jammu and Kashmir has made significant strides in strengthening Cooperative sector for welfare and progress of farmers and rural communities.

He said that special focus is being given on the cooperative sector globally and J&K is also keenly focusing on promotion of the sector and all serious efforts shall be made

under the theme, decided by UNO.

The Minister said that computerisation of 537 Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) at a cost of Rs. 1746.27 lakh has significantly strengthened cooperative sector in Jammu and Kashmir.

Highlighting the importance of digitization of PACS, the Minister said that it has enhanced operational efficiency, improved transparency and promoted financial inclusion, ensuring better service delivery for farmers and rural communities.

Under the Central Ministry, a series of transformative initiatives including UT level Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), have been implemented to modernize and expand cooperative institutions across the region. Improving healthcare access to



the people, establishment of 46 Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendras (PMJAKs)

through PACS have been established, making quality medicines available at affordable rates and reducing healthcare costs for rural populations.

The Minister added that the Cooperative network has been further strengthened with the launch of 144 Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samridhhi Kendras (PMKSKs), which act as one-stop agricultural service hubs. "These centers provide farmers with high-quality seeds, fertilizers and expert advisory services to boost agricultural productivity and sustainability and empower farmers with the necessary resources and knowledge," asserted the Minister.

In a major step towards digital inclusion, 480 Common Service Centers (CSCs) have been established through PACS, bridging the

rural-urban digital divide. "These centers offer access to online government services, e-governance platforms, banking, and financial assistance, ensuring seamless service delivery to rural populations" the Minister said.

Additionally, 61 PACS have been transformed into Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) to enhance market access and bargaining power for farmers.

The Minister said that six PACS have been identified for godown construction to enhance storage capacity, minimise post-harvest losses and improve food security besides comprehensive updation of cooperative society records on the National Cooperative Database (NCD) Portal, ensuring greater transparency and efficiency.

Dy CM Surinder Choudhary holds Public Outreach Program at Seri

Addresses Public Grievances, Directs Officers for Prompt Redressal

HT News Network

SERI, (RAJOURI), JANUARY 30: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, conducted a public outreach program at Seri to take stock of issues and concerns of local residents besides reviewing development works. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from the public, who raised various developmental concerns and sought immediate intervention from the administration in redressal of the same. Among the key issues highlighted by the people included construction of multi-storey building for government offices, upgradation of schools, acute shortage of teaching and medical staff in schools and Primary Health Centre (PHC) at Seri. Additionally, the public demanded deployment of technical staff, installation of an X-ray machine and laboratory facilities, provision of a dental chair and estab-



lishment of new veterinary centres at Kalal and Sail. Other pressing concerns included pending Administrative Approval (AAA) for a grid station, requisition of electricity poles and wires, installation of new transformers and upgradation of existing ones in various panchayats. The

people also sought expeditious execution of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) works, bifurcation of panchayats and construction of check dams. The Dy CM issued directions for prompt action and redressal of grievance of general public on priority basis. He instructed for rationalisation of staff

in schools and health institutions to address the deficiencies. He emphasised that the work under Jeevan Mission (JJM) must be executed as per guidelines to ensure water supply reaches every panchayat. He asked the officers not to solely rely on feedback from field staff but to personally visit each panchayat and assess the ground situation. The Dy CM reiterated that corruption would not be tolerated and firmly stated that the "commission culture" must end. He asked the concerned departments to ensure availability of essential public amenities. The Dy CM ordered a strict ban on mining activities near water sources to prevent environmental degradation and safeguard drinking water supply. The outreach program was attended by ADCC Rajouri, Raj Kumar Thapa; ADC Nowshera, Babu Ram Tandon; ADC Sunderbani, Rajeev Magotra, along with other district and sectoral officers.

MVD conducts Road Safety signature Campaign, awareness drive in Poonch

HT News Network

POONCH, JANUARY 30: As part of the ongoing National Road Safety Month, the Motor Vehicles department Poonch conducted a signature campaign to spread

awareness among the public about traffic rules and safe driving. The campaign was initiated by Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal, who is the Chairman District Road Safety Committee in the lawns of the DC Office complex with a message to the people of Poonch to abide by the road safety rules in order to avoid accidents and save precious lives. The Deputy Commissioner also took a selfie with the road safety selfie boards installed at the venue.

Assistant Regional Transport Officer Basharat Mahmood urged people to adopt Road safety principles in their daily life. He also requested the parents not to give motor bikes and vehicles to their young children till they attain a valid Driving license. Dy, SP Traffic Rajouri-Poonch Shiv Kumar also participated in the event

Later, a joint awareness drive was conducted at Naka



Wali Chowk P where commuters were advised to wear seat belts while driving and drive within speed limits

DC flags off Awareness Van under Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign at Samba

HT News Network



SAMBA, JANUARY 30: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Samba Rajesh Sharma today flagged off an awareness van from the District Office Complex, Samba, marking the launch of the Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign. The initiative is being carried out under the overall supervision of Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. Vidhi Bhatial. The campaign will be observed across all health institutions in District Samba from January 30 to February 13, 2025, under the theme "Fortnight IEC Activities. It aims to educate the public about the signs and symptoms of leprosy, its prevention, early diagnosis, and the availability of free treatment in government health institutions. The campaign also emphasizes the need to eliminate stigma and discrimination against individuals affected by leprosy. The launch event was attended by DHO Samba, District Nodal Officer (RBSK), Nodal Officer (School Health Programme), officials from the CMO/Dy, CMO office Samba, and other dignitaries.

Transport Commissioner inaugurates road safety awareness program at Warehouse

HT News Network

JAMMU, JANUARY 30: As part of the ongoing Road Safety Month, Transport Commissioner J&K Vishesh Paul Mahajan inaugurated a road safety awareness program at Warehouse Jammu to promote responsible driving and minimize accidents. The Transport Commissioner was accompanied by Regional Transport Officer Jammu Pankaj Bhagotra, ARTOs, officials from MVD and representatives from several Transport unions.

Speaking on the occasion, the Transport Commissioner emphasized that road safety is not just a one-day affair but a lifelong commitment. He stated, "Every day should be observed as Road Safety Day and following traffic rules, staying vigilant, and promoting responsible driving should be part of our daily routine, not just during special campaigns," he added.

Highlighting the significance of adopting Traffic related disciplines he strongly urged people to avoid drunk driving, emphasizing that alcohol impairs judgment, slows reflexes, and significantly increases the risk of fatal accidents. He highlighted that strict action will be taken against those caught violating rules. He fur-



ther reiterated the dangers of over speeding, rash driving, and breaking traffic rules, stressing that a few minutes of impatience on the road can cost precious lives. The Transport Commissioner said that a detailed analysis of accident trends would be conducted at the end of the year to check the effectiveness and impact of these campaigns. He emphasized on pedestrian safety, lane discipline, and traffic signal adherence, urging citizens to set an example by adopt-

ing good traffic related habits. Earlier, the Transport Commissioner also paid a surprise visit to RTO Jammu premises to review the functioning of the office. He directed the concerned officials to deliver all services within the stipulated timeline. He also asked concerned officials to display the notified fee for each service at prominent places within premises so that applicants can come to know about notified fees and not fall prey to any middlemen.

Shri Ram School Wins First Prize In Patriotic Song

HT News Network



JAMMU, The Shri Ram Universal School in Jammu has Achieved a Commendable feat by earning first place in the Patriotic Song Singing Competition 2025, organized by the Department of Information & Public Relations in UT of Jammu & Kashmir. The school showcased exceptional talent and dedication in the group song competition category.

On January 29, 2025, the students and staff gathered at MA Stadium for a heartfelt felicitation ceremony. A momentous occasion unfolded as the school was presented with a cash prize of 10,000 from the Honorable Lieutenant Governor of UT of Jammu & Kashmir, Shri Manoj Sinha.

In celebration of this achievement, a special assembly was held to honour the efforts of the students and their dedicated music teachers, Akash Sangral and Prakash Bhatti. During the assembly, the management distributed the prize money among the participating students and teachers as a token of appreciation for their hard work and dedication. They also expressed deep appreciation for their hard work which has brought immense pride to the school and inspired the entire community.

Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign 2025 launched in Ramban

HT News Network

RAMBAN, JANUARY 30: World Leprosy Day was observed today at District Hospital Ramban and all medical block levels across the district under the supervision of Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. Kamal Ji Zadu, along with District Health Officer Dr. Moham-mad Iqbal, Orthopedic Specialist Dr. Mohd Rafi and Physician Dr. Mohd Syed.

As part of the observance, a rally was organized to raise awareness about leprosy, focusing on its early detection and elimination of social stigma associated with the disease. The rally witnessed active participation from Senior and junior staff of District Hospital Ramban and students of Government ANM School Ramban. On this occasion, the SPARSH Leprosy Awareness Campaign 2025 was also launched, which will continue from January 30 to February 13, 2025. The campaign aims to educate communities, promote early diagnosis, and ensure stigma-free treatment for leprosy patients. Authorities urged the public to support the initiative by spreading awareness and ensuring timely medical intervention for those affected by leprosy.

CMO Doda flags off Sparsh Leprosy Rally-cum-Awareness Van

HT News Network

DODA, JANUARY 30: Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Doda today flagged off the Sparsh Leprosy Rally-Cum-Awareness Van, marking the launch of an extensive awareness drive under the Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign. The initiative aims to educate the public about leprosy, eradicate misconceptions, and promote early detection and treatment across the district.

The event was attended by BMO Ghat, Dr. Abdul Gafoor, Principal ANMT Doda, Smt. Vidya Kotwal, Javed Iqbal (Head Assistant), Mohd Shafi Attu (Health Educator), Sanjeev Rana (I/c Legal Section), Mohd Faheem Butt (FLO NCD), along with Leprosy Staff members Mr. Ram Raj and Sajad Ahmed (both PMAs) and the staff of ANMT School, among others. The CMO emphasized the importance of awareness in eliminating the stigma surrounding leprosy and urged people to avail themselves of free diagnosis and treatment services provided by the health department.

DC Reasi reviews working of Revenue Department Calls for removal of encroachments, strict enforcement measures

HT News Network

REASI, JANUARY 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Nidhi Malik chaired a comprehensive review of the Revenue Department to assess digitization of land records, including Jamabandies, eviction of encroachments from state land, status of revenue court cases, SAMITVA schemes, online services on the Jan Sugam portal and land acquisition cases. The meeting focused on expediting critical processes to enhance efficiency and transparency in revenue administration. The Tehsildars were asked to complete the



verification of digitalized Jamabandies within a week and address concerns related to dual verification. Stressing the importance of safeguarding state land, she instructed revenue

officials to ensure no fresh encroachments occur and to expedite the resolution of pending revenue court cases. Additionally, she emphasized the need for increased field visits, par-

ticularly to schools, to strengthen on-ground monitoring and governance. The DC underscored the importance of adhering to construction regulations, urging officials to encourage citizens to obtain proper permissions and take stringent action against illegal structures. She reiterated the administration's commitment to transparent and effective revenue management, calling for proactive measures to streamline online services and improve overall service delivery.

Meeting was attended by ACR Anshumali Sharma, SDM Piyush Dhotra, SDM Mazzahir Hussain and Tehsildar's

DDC reviews implementation of FPO Scheme in Doda District

HT News Network

DODA, JANUARY 30: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Harvinder Singh today chaired a meeting of the District-Level Monitoring Committee to review the progress of the Central Sector Scheme for the formation and promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs).

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Manesh Kumar; DDM NABARD Rakesh Kumar and representatives from other implementing agencies, including NCDC, SFAC, NAFED, and FDRVC, along with Cluster-Based Business Organizations. The progress of FPOs operating in the district was reviewed in detail. Discussions focused on the number of shareholders, the status of equity



grants and the paid-up capital of these organizations.

The DDC emphasised the need for effective coordination between implementing agencies and stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of the scheme and maximize benefits for farmers.

The DDC directed concerned officials to expedite the formation and strengthening of FPOs, ensuring their sustainability and market linkage. He also stressed capacity-building measures and financial support mechanisms to enhance the economic viability of farmer collectives.

Shah chairs review meeting on implementation of new criminal laws in Gujarat

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JAN 30 (UNI)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday chaired a review meeting here on the implementation of the three new criminal laws in Gujarat and asked the state government to ensure its implementation in all commissionerates by April 30.

The meeting, attended by Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, reviewed the implementation and present status of various new provisions relating to police, jail, courts, prosecution and forensics in Gujarat, a Home Ministry statement said.

During the discussion, Shah said that the essence of the three new criminal laws lies in the provision of delivering justice within three years, from the filing of an FIR till the Supreme Court's verdict in any case.

Appreciating the work done so far by the Gujarat government in implementing the new criminal laws, the Home Minister said that the Gujarat government should ensure



the implementation of the new criminal laws in all commissionerates by April 30, and across the entire state at the earliest.

He said it should be reviewed monthly by the Chief Minister, fortnightly by the State Home Minister and weekly at the level of Chief Secretary, Additional Chief Secretary (Home) and Director General of Police.

Shah stated that Gujarat has commendably achieved timely filing of chargesheets in over 92 per cent of cases involving sentences of more than 10 years. He said that Gujarat has done a commendable job in converting Zero FIRs into 100 percent regular FIRs and emphasised the need to establish

a system where FIRs can be transferred between two states through the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS).

The Home Minister also suggested that Gujarat should adopt CCTNS 2.0.

Regarding the provision of electronic evidence in the new laws, he mentioned that the state's Home and Health Departments should hold meetings to ensure that post-mortem and other medical reports from hospitals are received electronically.

Shah said that the police should provide the details of people detained for questioning on the electronic dashboard, along with the seizure

list and the cases to be forwarded to the courts. He also directed the state Director General of Police for continuous monitoring of these cases.

The Home Minister said that the state government should issue circulars to ensure that provisions of organised crime, terrorism, mob lynching, are not misused.

The meeting was attended by Gujarat's Minister of State for Home, the Union Home Secretary, state Chief Secretary and Director General of Police, Director General of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), and senior officials from the Union Home Ministry and the State Government.

PIL filed in SC over Maha Kumbh stampede, Seeks safety measures

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JAN 30 (UNI)

A public interest litigation (PIL) has been filed in the Supreme Court following the tragic stampede at the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, seeking immediate directives to enhance safety measures for pilgrims from across the country.

The stampede, which occurred on the morning of January 29 in the Sangam area, resulted in the death of at least 30 people and injuries to over 60.

Advocate Vishal Tiwari, who filed the PIL, has urged the apex court to



direct all states to establish facilitation centres at Prayagraj, providing essential information regarding safety guidelines for pilgrims.

The plea further emphasizes the need for multilingual announce-

ments and display boards to assist visitors in navigating roads and directions, thereby minimizing confusion and ensuring a safer experience for those from different linguistic backgrounds.

The petitioner has

also proposed deploying small medical teams by all state governments, in coordination with Uttar Pradesh authorities, comprising doctors and nurses to handle medical emergencies during the Maha Kumbh.

Additionally, the plea calls for accountability, seeking action against officials and authorities whose alleged negligence led to the stampede.

"Direct the State of Uttar Pradesh to submit a status report on January 29, 2025, stampede and initiate legal action against responsible persons, authorities, and officials for their negligent conduct," the PIL urges.

MP: Three workers killed, several injured as scaffolding collapses at cement factory in Panna



BJP's Harpreet Kaur Babla elected Mayor of Chandigarh MC

AGENCIES
CHANDIGARH, JAN 30 (UNI)

In a major jolt to the Aam Aadmi Party-Congress alliance in Chandigarh, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Harpreet Kaur Babla was elected as the Mayor of Chandigarh Municipal Corporation and Congress candidate Jasbir Singh Bunty as the Senior Deputy Mayor.

Babla got 19 votes in a 35-member house, whereas AAP's candidate Premlata could muster 17 votes.

For the Deputy Mayor election, Bunty secured 19 votes, whereas BJP candidate Bimla Devi got 17 votes.

At least three councillors from the AAP-Congress camp voted for Babla thereby ensuring BJP's victory. BJP had 16 members in the house including a Congress councillor, who had joined the saffron outfit a couple of days back.

AAP-Congress alliance had 19 members and a MP, who is an ex-officio member of the house, also casted its vote.

Nine Indians killed in Saudi Arabia road accident

AGENCIES
RIYADH, JAN 30 (UNI)

Nine Indians have been killed in a road accident in Saudi Arabia, authorities said Wednesday.

There were no immediate details released from Saudi Arabian officials about the crash, with the Indian Consulate in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, announcing the accident on the social platform X.

The consulate described the crash as happening in Jizan in southwest Saudi Arabia, according to an Associated Press report.

The Indian consulate, in a statement on X said, "We deeply mourn the tragic loss of 9 Indian nationals in a road accident, near Jizan, in the Western Region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Our heartfelt condolences to the families affected. The Consulate General of India in Jeddah is providing full support and is in touch with the authorities and families. We also wish a speedy recovery to the injured. A dedicated helpline has been set up for further queries."

Indian economy has entered into a slowdown phase under Modi govt, alleges Chidambaram

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JAN 30 (UNI)

Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Thursday slammed the Narendra Modi government for the "poor performance of the Indian economy" alleging that it has entered into a slowdown phase under his regime and the growth rate may fall by at least two percentage points.

He further alleged that there was huge unemployment amongst the employable youth, food and other essentials items and services have become dearer and the poor are finding the life challenging.

Addressing the media, Chidambaram along with Congress leaders Rajeev Gowda and Supriya Srinate after releasing the 'Real State of the Economy 2025' report at the AICC office here, said, "The economy is indeed facing significant challenges. The high unemployment rates



among youth and graduates are alarming, with nearly 40 percent and 30 percent, respectively".

"This is exacerbated by stagnant wages, which have remained unchanged for four to five years, making it difficult for people to make ends meet. Meanwhile, inflation is on the rise, with food, education, and healthcare inflation increasing by double digits. There is a huge inequality gap, with 70 percent of the population living on a meagre 100-150 rupees per day. The rich-poor divide is growing,"

the former Finance Minister alleged. He said that PM Modi promised two crore jobs a year. Instead, there is massive job destruction and "we have a "job-loss" growth", adding that people were moving back to the farm.

The Rajya Sabha MP further alleged that the agriculture sector growth had also fallen from 4.7 percent in 2022-23 to 1.4 percent in 2023-24.

Chidambaram said that the real wages for salaried workers had declined 1 percent annually since

2014 and the household savings was at a 47-year low.

He also alleged that the private sector investment had remained stagnant and the new project announcements had dipped by 21 percent between the FY 23 and FY 24.

The senior Congress leader said, "Many of the facts mentioned in the report 'Real State of the Economy 2025' are conveniently buried and completely ignored by the Union Government. The media doesn't get the opportunity to carry the truth. Therefore, Prof Rajeev Gowda's team decided to produce a comprehensive report on the real state of the economy. This report is well-documented and well-sourced".

It may be mentioned that Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present her eighth Budget on February 1.

and efforts are being made to gather information from factory management.

At least three workers were killed and around two dozen injured after a scaffolding at JK Cement factory collapsed during construction work in Panna district of Madhya Pradesh on Thursday.

The incident occurred when labourers were laying a ceiling slab of the under-construction building, resulting in the collapse of the scaffolding they were standing on.

Talking to UNI, an official of Pawai in Panna district confirmed the death of three workers in the incident.

Reports said that around two dozen workers have been injured,

AGENCIES
PANNA, JAN 30 (UNI)

and injured workers could not be ascertained at the moment, and an investigation is underway.

Local MP and BJP state president Vishnudutt Sharma has directed the district administration to provide immediate relief to the victims at the cement factory accident.

In a statement, Sharma said that he has discussed with the district administration in this regard and has directed the administration to provide immediate assistance in the accident.

Instructions have been given to provide better medical treatment to the injured,' Sharma added. The factory management has not released any official statement so far.

18 bodies recovered from river following aircraft crash near Reagan Airport in D.C.

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON, JAN 30 (UNI)

Eighteen bodies have been recovered from the Potomac River following the collision of a passenger plane and an Army Blackhawk helicopter near the Reagan National Airport in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday, local media reported.

No survivors have been pulled out of the river into which the collided aircraft crashed, as rescue efforts were underway, CNN said.

American Airlines, which operated the ill-fated passenger plane, said in a statement that 60 passengers and four crew members were on board. The airliner has set up a hotline for those with loved ones onboard the plane.

Three soldiers were



on board the Blackhawk, CNN reported, citing a U.S. defense official.

U.S. President Donald Trump said in a statement that he had been "fully briefed on the terrible accident" and that he was "monitoring the situation and will provide more details as they arise."

U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth said on the social platform X that the Pentagon is

"actively monitoring" the situation and is "poised to assist if needed."

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration said that the midair collision occurred around 9 p.m. EST (0200 GMT Thursday), involving a regional jet that had departed from Wichita, Kansas, and a military Blackhawk helicopter, and that all take-offs and landings from the airport have been halted.

VP Dhankar to pay one-day visit to Chennai tomorrow, security tightened

AGENCIES
CHENNAI, JAN 30 (UNI)

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar will pay a day's visit to Chennai tomorrow (Friday).

During his visit, the Vice-President will preside as the Chief Guest at the 3rd National Conference of the Deaf-Blind on Advocacy for Education, Accessibility and Wellbeing, official sources said on Thursday.

The event will be organised by the National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (Divyangjan), Chennai, an organisation under the Department of



Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India.

The National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (Divyangjan) was located at Muttukadu on the ECR about 45 km from Chennai.

Meanwhile, police have made elaborate and tight

security arrangements in view of his visit and have banned flying of drones and UAVs.

The entire stretch of the route to be travelled by Mr Dhankar, right from airport to Raj Bhavan and to the function venue, has been declared as a "Red Zone" by the police.

Police sources today said "the Vice President will be visiting Chennai on January 31 and attending functions at Muttukadu and Mahabalipuram the same day."

An order under section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 was promulgated prohibiting use of drones,

remote controlled micro-lighted aircrafts, para gliders is already in force from December 26, 2024 to February 23, 2025 in Greater Chennai Police limits.

In view of security reasons, the area coming under the jurisdiction of Greater Chennai Police including Chennai Airport, Raj Bhavan and the routes to be traversed by the VVIP have been declared as a "Red Zone" (RED ZONE) and flying of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS)/Drone and any other aerial objects have been banned in Chennai on January 31, except the Government arrangements.

New AI tool to find previously unknown signs of stillbirth, complications



A new artificial intelligence-based model on Thursday has shown previously unidentified combinations of risk factors linked to serious negative pregnancy outcomes, including stillbirth.

A team of US researchers including from the Universities of Utah and Brown conducted an AI-based analysis of almost 10,000 pregnancies in the country.

It included information on social and physical characteristics ranging from pregnant people's level of social support to their blood pressure, medical history, and foetal weight, as well as the outcome of each pregnancy.

There may be up to a 10-fold difference in risk for infants who are currently treated identically under clinical guidelines, revealed the results, published in the journal BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth. Foetal sex, presence or absence of pre-existing diabetes and the presence or absence of a foetal anomaly such as a heart defect could determine the risk.

The AI model helped identify a "really unexpected" combination of factors that revealed higher risk, said Nathan

Blue, from Utah's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

The model can progress toward making "more personalised risk assessment and pregnancy care", he added.

The findings showed that female babies could be at higher risk than males if the mother has pre-existing diabetes. Usually, female foetuses are at slightly lower risk for complications than male foetuses -- a small but well-established effect.

"The AI model detected something that could be used to inform risk that not even the really flexible, experienced clinician brain was recognising," Blue said. The researchers were especially interested in developing better risk estimates for foetuses in the bottom 10 per cent for weight, but not the bottom 3 per cent.

These babies are small enough to be concerning, but large enough that they are usually perfectly healthy.

While current clinical guidelines advise intensive medical monitoring for all such pregnancies, the team found that within this foetal weight class, the risk of an unhealthy pregnancy outcome varied widely.

Common sleep medication may prevent brain from clearing 'waste'

Although doctors recommend that adults over the age of 18 get at least 7 hours of quality sleep each night, the most recent data suggest that many may face consistent sleep issues, such as insomnia and sleep apnea.

Data from 2022 suggest that, in the United States alone, 39% of adults over the age of 45 were not getting sufficient sleep.

Past studies report that not getting enough sleep each night can increase a person's risk for several health concerns, including brain-related conditions, such as cognitive decline, dementia, and depression.

"Sleep allows the brain to go offline, shut down processing of the external world and focus on maintenance tasks, such as immune surveillance and removal of waste," Natalie Hauglund, PhD, a postdoctoral fellow at the Universities of Copenhagen in Denmark, and Oxford in the United Kingdom, explained to Medical News Today. "The lack of sleep is associated with cognitive impairment and disease development."

But could some sleep aids also contribute to poorer brain health as we age? It is now more important than ever to study all the possible factors that might contribute to cognitive decline, particularly seeing that a new study published in Nature Medicine estimates that dementia risk after the age of 55 among Americans has more than doubled, compared to past figures.

Hauglund is the first author of another study, which appears in the journal Cell, and that, for the first time,

describes the synchronized oscillations during sleep that power the brain's glymphatic system to help remove "waste" associated with neurodegenerative diseases, via a mouse model.

The study also reports that the commonly prescribed sleep aid zolpidem -- marketed under the name Ambien -- may suppress those oscillations, disrupting the brain's waste removal during sleep.

What powers the brain's 'waste-removal' system?

For this study, researchers used various technologies to record brain activity while mice were both awake and asleep.

Scientists observed that slow synchronized oscillations of the neurotransmitter norepinephrine, along with cerebral blood and cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) flow, essentially power the brain's waste-removing glymphatic system.

"Our brain is unique in that it does not have lymphatic vessels, which removes waste products such as dead cells and bacteria from the rest of our body," Maiken Nedergaard, MD, PhD, professor at the Universities of Rochester and Copenhagen and lead author of this study told MNT.

"Instead, the brain uses cerebrospinal fluid, a brain fluid that is produced inside the brain, to flush the brain tissue and wash away unwanted molecules," she explained.

"Norepinephrine binds to the muscle cells of the arteries, which makes them constrict," Nedergaard told us. "Therefore, the slow oscillation in norepi-



nephine concentration drives a slow fluctuation in the diameter of the arteries and in the blood volume in the brain."

"This dynamic change in blood volume works like a pump to transport cerebrospinal fluid along the arteries towards the brain and through the brain tissue. Thus, norepinephrine coordinates the synchronized constriction and dilation of the blood vessels which drives the glymphatic system," she detailed.

Sleep aids may disrupt brain's glymphatic system

Researchers also examined if sleep aids might replicate the natural oscillations needed for glymphatic function. They focused their research on the sedative zolpidem.

They discovered that zolpidem appeared to halt norepinephrine oscillations, interrupting the glymphatic system's waste removal in the brain during sleep.

"Sleep aids may provide a short-cut to sleep, but our study shows that the sleep you get with sleep medication may lack the

beneficial effects of natural, restorative sleep," Hauglund said. "Our findings underscore that sleep aids should only be used for short periods of time and as a last resort."

Should sleep-aid users be concerned?

MNT also spoke with Clifford Segil, DO, a neurologist at Providence Saint John's Health Center in Santa Monica, CA, about this study.

According to Segil, who was not involved in the recent research, "it is extremely unlikely the benefits of increased sleep which occurs when patients use a sleep aid like zolpidem are outweighed by any claimed potential adverse effect of this medication decreasing REM sleep, which then in turn decreases brain neurotransmitter levels, [which] then in turn decreases brain protein levels."

"There are too many 'in turn' claims to cause me any concern [that] there is any clinical significance to the research," he told us. "Clinical neurologists like me are not concerned [that] using zolpidem appropriately in elderly patients who can't sleep will cause dementia."

Furthermore, he pointed out: "In the year 2025, there remains no accepted response on why we sleep. Different researchers make different claims and sometimes these are the same and sometimes they are different. We know healthy sleep makes us healthy and poor sleep makes us unhealthy."

"For clinical neurologists like me, it is challenging to agree that a sleeping medication will cause dementia, and I would reassure my patients the benefits or a

good night sleep outweigh any claimed potential risk these can cause memory loss as you age or dementia," Segil added.

The interaction between brain health, quality sleep, and overall health

Finally, MNT spoke with Peter G. Polos, MD, PhD, FCCP, FAASM, an assistant professor of sleep medicine at the Hackensack Meridian Neuroscience Institute at JFK University Medical Center in New Jersey, about this research.

Polos, who was not involved in the study, commented that he found the results intriguing.

"There is no doubt that the interaction between the glymphatic system and various transmitters and waste products in the brain can work in synchrony," he said.

"If more work were to be done in this area, we certainly would like to see if studies could assess the impact of sleep aids on human glymphatic flow," Polos continued. "This of course would require noninvasive techniques and perhaps some advanced imaging. Such information, even if in small numbers, would be of benefit."

"The interaction between the brain, quality sleep, and overall health cannot be understated," he added. "The rhythmic nature of sleep and the regular cycling of sleep stages have been well studied. We have learned much about the effects of alterations in the brain and their impact on sleep. We do have much more to learn and so we, as sleep physicians, fully support continued research in the relationship between the brain, sleep, and overall health."

Psychological health more important for Indian manufacturing employees: Report

Manufacturing sector employees at the best workplaces in India are 2.7 times more likely to stay in psychologically healthy environments, and the overall view of manufacturing as a great place to work has risen to 87 per cent in 2025, according to a report on Thursday.

As India's manufacturing industry advances toward Industry 5.0, the need for companies to prioritise not just technological innovation, but also the well-being of their workforce, has never been more critical, said the report by Great Place To Work.

"As the industry advances toward Industry 5.0, the focus isn't just on smarter machines but on fostering workplaces that prioritise employee well-being. To combat employee burnout, organisations are



taking steps to improve work-life balance, make leaders more approachable, and enhance employee engagement," said Balbir Singh, CEO, Great Place To Work, India.

"Leading organisations are building a culture of trust and psychological safety, and when employees feel valued, they are 2.7 times more likely to stay. To overcome challenges, organisations need to continuously listen and empower their employees, to shape the industry's future," he added.

The report showed that even as companies con-

tinued to foster positive and inclusive cultures, challenges remain. The voice of employees consistently highlights the need for more action around psychological safety, care, and equitable growth.

Best Workplaces have responded by implementing mechanisms for regular feedback, ensuring fair task allocation, and introducing flexible shifts to accommodate the needs of their workforce.

For their business and corporate employees, these companies have adopted flexible work models, extended

paid leave, and created opportunities for career growth and leadership development. These have also expanded benefits packages to include wellness programmes, zero-interest loans, bonuses, and a broader range of support systems to meet the diverse needs of their teams, the report said.

Some of the best workplaces for manufacturing recognised for their exceptional culture and employee satisfaction, listed in the report include Apollo Tyres, Orient Cement, Tata Steel India, Amara Raja Power Systems, Sula Vineyards, and Bajaj Energy.

"These companies are not just focused on producing goods -- they are committed to producing an environment where employees thrive, grow, and feel valued," the report said.

Study decodes how microbes help detoxify our atmosphere

A team of Australian researchers has found key understanding of how microbes consume huge amounts of carbon monoxide (CO) and help reduce levels of this deadly gas.

According to a recent study published in the Science Direct journal, more than two billion tonnes of CO is released into the atmosphere globally each year. However, microbes consume about 250 million tonnes of this, reducing CO to safer levels.

The latest study led by Monash University researchers showed that microbes consume CO present in the atmosphere by using a special enzyme, called the CO dehydrogenase.

This enzyme helps them to extract energy from this universally present but highly toxic gas. The study, published in



the journal Nature Chemical Biology, reveals how this enzyme extracted atmospheric CO and powered cells.

"This enzyme is used by trillions of microbes in our soils and waters. These microbes consume CO for their own survival, but in the process inad-

vertently help us," said Ashleigh Kropp, from the Monash Biomedicine Discovery Institute's (BDI).

Dr David Gillett, from the varsity showed that the microbes help clean our atmosphere as well as counteracts air pollution -- a known killer. The microbes also help reduce

global warming given CO is indirectly a greenhouse gas.

The findings highlight the essential role played by microbes in both human and planetary health.

"Yet, because they're invisible and often misunderstood, their contributions frequently go unnoticed," said the researchers.

They noted that microbes were a big reason why air was breathable.

"They make half the oxygen we breathe and detoxify various pollutants like CO. It's crucial we better understand and appreciate how they support our own survival".

Another recent study by Finnish researchers showed microbes deep within Arctic Sea yield promising prospects for antibiotics.

White blood cell count may signal severity of Covid symptoms in women: Study

A count of white blood cells (leukocytes) may be a crucial indicator for determining debilitating outcomes of Covid-19 in postmenopausal women, according to a new international study on Wednesday.

Even months after the initial diagnosis of Covid -- caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus -- millions of people worldwide suffer from its ongoing effects.

Cognitive impairment and fatigue are the most common lingering symptoms, with cognitive impairment affecting 70 per cent of patients.

Older adults -- especially women -- are the most at risk, said the researchers from the US, and Singapore. "Post-acute sequelae of Covid infection significantly affects quality of life, often leading to severe disability.

This effect is particularly pronounced in women, who already experience higher rates of cognitive impairment after menopause," said Dr. Monica Christmas, associate medical director for The Menopause Society.

"By understanding underlying factors, we can better address these chal-



lenges and work to mitigate the cascade of symptoms that follow," she added.

The study, led by researchers from Rush University, Harvard Medical School, and Ohio State University, aims to better understand pre-existing risk factors that may make certain adults -- especially older postmenopausal women -- more

vulnerable to more serious ongoing symptoms.

Specifically, they examined whether leukocyte count (a widely available clinical marker of systemic inflammation) was associated with Covid disease outcomes.

The results, published online today in the journal Menopause, showed that leukocyte count is an independent predictor of Covid symptom severity in

postmenopausal women.

The findings extend the evidence that low-grade inflammation is not only an outcome of Covid symptom severity but may also precede acute Covid infection.

While more research is necessary, the initial work is promising because leukocyte count represents an easily accessible, inexpensive clinical marker, said the team.

Hockey India announces 32-member Team for FIH Pro League

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JAN 30 (UNI)

Hockey India on Thursday announced a 32-member Indian Men's Hockey squad ahead of the Bhubaneswar leg of the FIH Pro League 2024-25, which will be held at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium.

Veteran drag-flicker Harmanpreet Singh will continue to lead the side as captain with deputy Hardik Singh by side. India will kick start its campaign with matches against Spain, Germany, Ireland and England from 15th to 25th February playing each team twice.

The squad includes first-choice goalkeeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak along with Suraj Karkera and Princedeep Singh in goal.

Jarmanpreet Singh, Amit Rohidas, Captain Harmanpreet Singh, Sumit, Sanjay, Jugraj Singh, Nilam Sanjeep Xess, Varun Kumar and Yashdeep Siwach will be stationed in defence.

In the midfield, the team features Rajkumar Pal, Shamsher Singh, Manpreet Singh, Vice Captain Hardik Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Nilakanta Sharma, Moirangthem Rabichandra Singh and Rajinder Singh. Playing in the attack



HOCKEY INDIA

will be Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, Mandeep Singh, Gurjant Singh, Bobby Singh Dhami, Shilanand Lakra, Dilpreet Singh, Arajjeet Singh Hundal, Uttam Singh and lastly Angad Bir Singh and Arshdeep Singh make the cut.

Impressive performances in the junior team and the ongoing Hockey India League has won 22-year-old Angad Bir Singh and 20-year-old Arshdeep Singh their first senior team call-ups for the upcoming FIH Pro League matches.

Speaking on the squad selection, Indian Men's Team Head Coach Craig Fulton stated, "Extremely happy with the squad we have selected for the upcoming Bhubaneswar leg matches of the FIH Pro League 2024-25. I believe this team can win us games, perform in harmony and most importantly play an impressive brand of hockey. Looking forward to training with the players in the camp and starting our Pro League campaign on the right note."

India's middle order faces test as Eng lean on Perrin

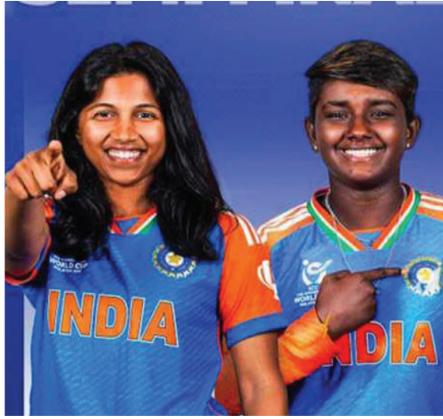
AGENCIES
KUALA LUMPUR, JAN 22 (UNI)

India's untested middle order will face its sternest examination yet as the defending champions take on an England side heavily reliant on opener Davina Perrin in the semifinal of the ICC Women's Under-19 T20 World Cup here on Friday.

While India have bulldozed through the competition with a perfect record, their middle order remains largely unchallenged, whereas England's inconsistent middle order has been a lingering concern.

Under the astute leadership of Niki Prasad, India have lived up to their billing, dismantling all opposition en route to the knockouts. Having played all their matches at the Baymeas Oval, they enter the semifinal unbeaten, securing emphatic wins over West Indies, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Scotland. Their only real test came against Sri Lanka, where they still managed a commanding 60-run victory.

India's dominance has stemmed from their formidable bowling attack, spearheaded by VJ Joshitha and Shabnam Shakil. The duo has pro-



vided early breakthroughs consistently, helping India claim 19 wickets in the powerplay—the most by any team in the tournament. Joshitha's ability to swing the ball both ways has drawn comparisons to Bhuvneshwar Kumar.

Complementing the pacers, India's trio of left-arm spinners—Parunika Sisodia, Aayushi Shukla, and Vaishnavi Sharma—have choked opposition batting lineups. Sharma, in particular, has been outstanding, claiming 12 wickets at an average of 2.33 and an economy rate of just 2.00, including a hat-trick.

With the bat, G Trisha has been India's standout performer. She became the tournament's first cen-

turion with an unbeaten 110 off 59 balls against Scotland and showcased her temperament on a tricky surface against Sri Lanka, top-scoring with 49 when no other batter crossed 16. However, India's middle order remains untested. In comfortable chases against West Indies, Malaysia, and Bangladesh, India barely required contributions from their lower-order batters. The only instance of a collapse came against Sri Lanka, where they scraped to 118/9, with only Trisha displaying resilience. If the middle order is required to step up in the semifinal, it will be under pressure for the first time in the tournament.

Global Indian Pravasi Kabaddi League announces captains from 12 franchises

AGENCIES
GURUGRAM, JAN 30 (UNI)

Global Indian Pravasi Kabaddi League (GI-PKL) on Thursday announced the captains of the men's and women's franchises ahead of the much awaited kick-off.

The league will witness participation from countries such as Egypt, Kenya, Argentina, Taiwan, and Poland, amongst others showcasing the growing global reach of Kabaddi, in the quest to promote the sport globally.

The GI-PKL inaugural season will feature 12 teams—six women's teams and six corresponding men's teams—each embodying the cultural and linguistic richness of India. The teams have been strategically named to reflect their regional identities:

Men's Teams: Marathi Vultures, Bhojpuri Leopards, Telugu Panthers, Tamil Lions, Punjabi Tigers and Haryanvi Sharks.

While Shiv Prasad has been handed the captain duties for Bhojpuri Leopards, Vikash Dahiya will lead Haryanvi Sharks. Marathi Vultures and Punjabi Tigers have



named Kapil Narwal and Sawin Narwal as captains respectively. Sunil Narwal will lead Tamil Lions and Sandeep Kandola will captain Telugu Panthers. Women's Teams: Marathi Falcons, Bhojpuri Leopardess, Telugu Cheetahs, Tamil Lioness, Punjabi Tigress, and Haryanvi Eagles.

Pushpa Rana will lead Haryanvi Eagles and Meena Kadyan will captain Bhojpuri Leopardess. Marathi Falcons and Punjabi Tigress have named Tanu Sharma and Meera as captains respectively. While Julie Bhati will lead Telugu Cheetahs, Suman will oversee the captain's duties for Tamil Lioness.

All the captains boast of a strong record in the sport at both National and International levels.

Speaking about the captains Kanthi D. Suresh, President of the Holistic International Pravasi Sports Association (HIPSA), said, "The

announcement of captains marks an exciting milestone in GI-PKL's journey. These players are not just leading their teams but are also playing a crucial role in inspiring them. We believe their leadership and dedication will set the tone for a competitive season."

Each franchisee will own both a men's and a women's team, a first-of-its-kind arrangement in kabaddi, promoting equality and inclusivity.

Meanwhile, players have already begun rigorous training for the League and are leaving no stone unturned in their training. Sawin Narwal, Sandeep Kandola, Ajay Kumar, and Kapil Narwal are among the players who have started practicing. National gold medalists like M Anitha, Indra Rohini, Arul Santhiya, and Selvarebiksha have also commenced training sessions in their respective states.

U19 Women T20 WC: Australia, South Africa set for high-stakes semifinal

AGENCIES
KUALA LUMPUR, JAN 30 (UNI)

Australia and South Africa are set to face off in a crucial semifinal encounter of the ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup here on Friday.

While Australia enter the fixture after a shock defeat, South Africa remain undefeated, setting up a fascinating contest between a battle-hardened unit and a team yet to play a full 20-over match in the tournament.

Australia topped their group with dominant victories over Scotland and Nepal, and a hard-fought two-wicket win against Bangladesh. Their commanding win against West Indies in the Super Six stage ensured a semifinal berth even before their final clash against



Sri Lanka, where they faltered in a low-scoring chase, failing to reach a target of 100.

The Australian bowling attack has been their strength, with left-arm pacer Eleanor Larosa proving effective with the new ball. Fifteen-year-old WBBL prodigy Caoimhe Bray has showcased her all-round skills, playing a role reminiscent of Ellyse Perry, while leg-spinners Teegan Williamson and Hasrat Gill have collectively claimed 15 wickets

at an average of 7.77. Lily Bassingthwaite's late inclusion has further bolstered the attack, restricting opposition sides to modest totals throughout the tournament.

However, Australia's batting remains a concern. Openers Kate Pelle and Ines McKeon have struggled for consistency, leading to a potential selection dilemma ahead of the semi-final. Captain Lucy Hamilton has been the most reliable batter, her 30 off 35 against Ban-

gladesh in challenging conditions proving crucial in a successful chase of 92.

Despite their recent loss, Australia's experience on tougher surfaces at the UKM Oval could work in their favour as they shift to the batting-friendly Baymeas Oval for the semi-final. With their potent bowling attack, a competitive total of 100-110 could prove defendable.

Led by Kayla Reyneke, South Africa have cruised into the semi-finals without a single full-length match due to persistent rain disruptions. They secured victories in reduced-overs matches against New Zealand, Nigeria, and Ireland, with their only completed fixture against Samoa resulting in a record low total of 16 for their opponents.

Manchester City avoid Champions League humiliation as Real or Bayern await

AGENCIES
LONDON, JAN 30 (UNI)

Manchester City's Champions League campaign could have gone the same way as the merchandise stand outside Etihad Stadium that went up in flames before kick-off - but

a fightback on the pitch meant they scraped into the play-offs.

Even City manager Pep Guardiola sensed the bad omens, saying: "When I saw the fire before the game I thought 'the journalists have their headlines already.'" Thankfully,



no-one was hurt in that pre-match drama, while City were also able to finally emerge unscathed from a night of tension and nerves, displaying more of the fragility that has characterised their season, the BBC reported.

It's Real Madrid or Bayern Munich next - a scenario that might send shudders down the spine of the most ardent City follower.

City's final placing of 22nd in the new Champions League opening phase

after Wednesday's 3-1 win against Club Brugge should be a source of embarrassment to a club of such high ambition, winners of this tournament in 2023.

And yet, for a short while, it look like it was going to be a lot worse as Guardiola's side faced the humiliation of not even making the play-offs. Apart from one noisy corner occupied by Brugge fans, you could have heard a pin drop when Raphael Onyedika's low drive right on half-time left City needing two goals to score the win they required.

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