



NEWS BRIEF

Home Minister Amit Shah to Review J&K Security Today

HT News Network

New Delhi, Feb 03 (KNO): Union Home Minister Amit Shah will review Jammu & Kashmir's security during a high-level meeting in New Delhi on Tuesday, official sources told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO). They said that the meeting will be attended by J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Secretary Atal Duloo, Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat, and top officials from paramilitary forces and intelligence agencies.

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

PDD worker, injured due to electrocution 9 days ago, succumbs

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 03: A Power Development Department (PDD) worker, who was critically injured after receiving an electric shock in the Nowshera area of Srinagar, has succumbed to his injuries, officials said on Monday. An official told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the worker, identified as Bashir Ahmad Sofi (38), a resident of Ganderbal, was electrocuted while on duty in Nowshera on January 26. He was admitted to a hospital for treatment where he succumbed to injuries after 9 days—(KNO)

Srinagar police files chargesheet against 7 terror associates under UAPA

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 03: Srinagar Police have filed a chargesheet against seven terror associates

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Youth proving their mettle in every field: CM Omar Abdullah

Praises NCC cadets from J&K, Ladakh for exemplary performance at Republic Day Parade-2025

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 03: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today praised the achievements of National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadets from Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, emphasizing their remarkable representation during the Republic Day celebrations at Kartavya Path in New Delhi. The Chief Minister made these remarks during an interaction program organized for 127 NCC cadets from Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh



TURN ON.....PAGE 02

JK has nearly 78% 'Untrained Teachers' at KG level

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 03: Among all states of India, Jammu and Kashmir education sector has second highest 'Untrained Teachers' at Pre-Primary and Upper Primary

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Ex-army soldier killed in Kulgam terrorist attack, his wife, niece injured

LG Sinha, CM condemn; express solidarity with bereaved family

HT News Network

Kulgam, Feb 03: A former army soldier was killed while his wife and niece sustained injuries after they were attacked by terrorists in Behibagh area of South Kashmir's

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Kulgam district on Monday, officials said. An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) unidentified terrorists fired upon Manzoor Ahmad Wagay, a retired army man in Behibagh when

9-Member Panel Headed by Speaker to Review Modifications Proposed in Assembly Rules Today

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 03: The nine-member committee headed by Speaker Abdul Rahim Rafter will review the modifications proposed in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly tomorrow.



Sources told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the

panel will meet tomorrow to discuss the modifications proposed by the Assembly Secretariat in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the House.

In the draft modifications, sources disclosed that the Legislative Assembly Secretariat has deleted references to

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

In Parliament Ruhullah seeks statehood, restoration of J&K's pre-1953 position

Hits out at Rahul Gandhi for ignoring Muslims in his speech

HT News Network

New Delhi, Feb 03: Pointing out that the Leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi didn't mention plight of Muslims in his speech, National Conference Member Parliament Aga Ruhul-



lah on Monday said that besides restoring Jammu and Kashmir's statehood, New Delhi will have to return pre-1953 position to the region.

Speaking in response to the President's address in the Parliament, Ruhullah, according to

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

CS for developing grievance portal for persons facing hiccups in availing credit

Assesses saturation level of social sector, financial inclusion schemes

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 3: Chief Secretary, Atal Duloo, today directed for developing an efficacious grievance portal for the people who face hurdles in availing credit from the financial institutions to start their businesses or for other self employment activities.

The meeting besides the Principal Secretary, Finance was attended by Principal Secretary,



Agriculture; Commissioner Secretary, I&C; Secretary, Labour & Employment; Secretary, PWD; Convenor UTLCB; Representatives from Banks and other con-

cerned officers. Duloo, while taking cognizance of the Ease of Doing Business in the UT, observed that credit linkage is one of

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Srinagar gets 'Centre for Breast and Colorectal Cancer'

HT News Network

Srinagar, : The Director National Health Mission on Monday inaugurated the 'Centre for Breast & Colorectal Cancers & Non Cancer Disorders' at Karan Nagar here.

The centre, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), is headed by Dr Shabnam Bashir. The centre comprises allied clinics in addition to colorectal cancer & non-cancer disorders. The focus of the centre would be catering to all breast & colorectal cancers and its related issues in addition to non cancer disorders related to these systems.

The centre would focus on gradual upgradations to

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Deworming, vaccination, proper hygiene key to risk-free pet-human bond: Expert

Dr Altaf Geelani highlights risks of neglecting pet care; around 5,000 cat bite cases reported in SMHS in 2024

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 03: Regular deworming, timely vaccinations and proper hygiene practices are essential to maintaining a safe and healthy bond between pets and their owners, according to a senior veterinary doctor.

Addressing a press conference, Dr Altaf Geelani, Superintendent of a Veterinary Hospital in Srinagar, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that pet owners



must adopt preventive health measures to ensure both animal welfare and human safety.

"Maintaining regular hygiene, including routine grooming and dental care, helps prevent skin

infections and dental diseases in pets," he said.

He said deworming plays a critical role in eliminating internal parasites, which can adversely affect animal health and, in some cases, be transmitted to humans. "Vaccinations are equally important as they protect pets from various contagious diseases, some of which can pose health risks to humans," he added.

Dr Geelani expressed concern over cases where pet owners have neglected vaccinations for

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

CM

who participated in the 2025 Republic Day celebrations.

The event was attended by Minister for Youth Services & Sports Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary to the CM Dheeraj Gupta, Additional Director General of NCC Directorate Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh, Major General Anupinder Bevl, along with other senior army officers and dignitaries.

Highlighting the extraordinary feat of a Jammu and Kashmir girl cadet who commanded the all-women NCC contingent at the parade, the Chief Minister remarked, "This is not a small achievement. The images of her leading the contingent resonated globally, showcasing Jammu and Kashmir's commitment to discipline and unity."

"She didn't just lead the 17 cadets from Jammu and Kashmir; she commanded the entire national contingent of girls, marching proudly before not just our nation, but a global audience," said CM Abdullah. "Republic Day isn't just seen by those present at Kartavya Path or watching television in India; it is broadcast worldwide. The world witnessed what Jammu and Kashmir has to offer."

Addressing the cadets, CM Omar Abdullah commended their dedication and spirit they brought to the national stage. "Your presence on Kartavya Path symbolized not just personal dedication but also the vibrant spirit of our region. This year, 127 cadets from Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh—alongside military cadets, support staff and trainers—represented us with immense pride," he said.

The Chief Minister also lauded the cadets for their cultural performance, which won third prize among teams from across the country. "This achievement speaks volumes about your hard work and unity. Your cultural presentation infused with the rich traditions of our land captured the hearts of many and brought honor to J&K," he added.

Reflecting on his personal experiences during his school days as NCC cadet, the Chief Minister shared, "Your triumph takes me back to my school days. While I never had the privilege of marching on Rajpath (Kartavya Path), my time as head boy and NCC cadet taught me invaluable lessons in leadership and discipline. The crisp commands, the camaraderie and the spirit of teamwork have stayed with me throughout my life."

He underscored the transformative role of the NCC in shaping young minds. "The NCC is more than a program; it is a crucible that forges character. In today's world, where young people face immense pressures—academic, social, and personal—your commitment to the NCC's values of service and discipline is truly commendable," he said.

The Chief Minister acknowledged the academic pressures faced by today's youth and praised the cadets for their dedication to the NCC despite these challenges. "When I was in school, scoring 80% was considered a big deal. Today, some colleges have a 100% cut-off. But even with these academic demands, you have chosen to embrace the NCC's values of discipline, leadership and service. You've made the journey to Delhi to represent our region, proving that education is not confined to textbooks—it is about life experiences that shape your character," he remarked.

He urged the cadets to cherish these opportunities, relations emphasizing their importance in shaping life values beyond the NCC. "These friendships will be your support system in times of challenge, the people who will stand by you when life tests your strength. They represent the spirit and unity of our nation, reminding you that no matter where you are or what you face, you are part of a larger family—a family that embodies Unity in Diversity," he concluded.

Encouraging the cadets to be role models in their communities, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah urged them to take a stand against drug abuse and play their best role in combating this menace. "I urge you to channel your NCC spirit into safeguarding our youth from the scourge of drugs. As role models, your influence is profound. If you see a peer faltering, extend a hand. Share your stories of discipline and show them a path of purpose and guide them," he said, aligning the message with the Prime Minister's vision of a *Nasha Mukta Bharat*.

Concluding his address, the Chief Minister called on the cadets to carry forward the pride and values of the NCC in their everyday lives. "Lead with empathy, stand firm in your values, and remember: the greatest service to our nation lies in lifting others. Together, let us build a future where Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh—and all of India—shine as beacons of hope and unity," he said.

On the occasion, several NCC cadets from Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh shared their experiences from the Republic Day Camp in Delhi.

TRAIN

ones that traverse through the upper reaches."

"In mountainous terrain, oxygen needs to be artificially generated inside the train coaches. We have studied similar models in

Switzerland. The tickets will remain the same. Passengers will have to board another train which would be standing on the opposite platform of the railway station where the bridging will take place," Vaishnav said.

He said that the practice of bridging the trains is followed across the world in the mountainous regions. "The railway system is being developed in line with global standards."

The Minister said, "Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) is an engineering marvel having two major bridges and 90 kilometers of tunnels. "All the necessary tests have been conducted successfully and commercial train services from Jammu to Srinagar will commence soon," he added.

Referring to the up gradation work at Jammu Railway Station, Vaishnav said, "To accommodate increased passenger traffic, Jammu Railway Station is being expanded from three to seven platforms. However, until the completion of this expansion, train services to Srinagar will be operated from Katra. Hopefully the upgraded Jammu Railway Station would be thrown open for the public by August-September this year. It would lead to direct train connectivity between Jammu and Srinagar cities."

J&K gets Rs 844 crore in budget allocation He said that the government is also exploring new railway projects to improve connectivity to far-flung areas, including a Ladakh-Srinagar rail link. "A total budget allocation of Rs 844 crore has been earmarked for Jammu & Kashmir's railway projects. Once the new projects are sanctioned the budget allocation will increase. There will be no dearth of funds," Vaishnav added.

The Minister emphasized the significant progress made in railway electrification, noting that since 2014, a total of 344 km of railway tracks have been electrified, making Jammu & Kashmir 100% electrified.

Providing financial and developmental insights, the Union Minister stated that since 2014, a total of 135 km of new railway tracks have been constructed in Jammu & Kashmir, improving regional connectivity and accessibility.

He also informed that four major railway stations Budgam, Jammu Tawi, Katra, and Udhampur are being developed as 'Amrit Stations' at a total cost of Rs. 292.5 crore, enhancing passenger amenities and station infrastructure.

The budgetary allocation and development projects reaffirm the government's dedication to modernizing railway infrastructure in Jammu & Kashmir, fostering economic growth, and improving connectivity in the region, Vaishnav added.

Highlighting the government's extensive railway development plans, the Minister announced that 50 new Namo Bharat trains, 100 new Amrit Bharat trains, and 200 new Vande Bharat trains are in the pipeline. "Additionally, a budget of Rs 1,14,000 crore has been allocated for railway safety and Rs 2,52,000 crore for overall railway infrastructure."

The Railway Minister praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, under which 35,000 kilometers of new railway tracks have been laid and 100% electrification of railway lines in Jammu and Kashmir has been achieved.

On the issue of concessions for senior citizens, he clarified that half of the expenses of all the travelers are borne by the Railways. "Passengers across the country travel on subsidized rates," he added.

The Minister thanked both the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister for their support in the rapid expansion and modernization of the Indian Railways—(KNO)

KILLED

he was with his wife and niece, injuring them.

He said that the trio was taken to a hospital in injured condition where Wagay succumbed.

The condition of Aaina Akhtar, 32, wife of Manzoor Ahmed Wagay and Saina Hameed, 13, daughter of Habibullah Shah is stable. They are undergoing treatment at Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag.

Soon after the incident, police and security forces rushed to the area and launched a search operation to nab the attackers. This is the first killing of an unarmed person in Kashmir this year.

Manzoor's younger brother said that he (Manzoor) used to stay at home after retiring in 2021.

He said that Manzoor had four daughters and a son and was the sole breadwinner for the family.

"Our only demand is justice and nothing else... He was running his own business," he added.

SCHOOLS

levels. Besides, the Union Territory has 4th highest untrained teachers at primary level as well.

The recent official figures reveal that the highest numbers of untrained teachers were reported in Tamil Nadu followed by Jammu and Kashmir wherein only 22.3 percent of teachers at Pre-Primary levels (Kindergartens)

were trained to teach the students.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the official figures also reveal that only 16.4 percent male and 25.2 percent teachers at both government and private sectors were trained to teach the students at Pre-Primary levels.

It also states that the Upper-Primary level schools in Jammu and Kashmir were also having second highest untrained teachers.

The figures suggest that at least 78.5 percent were trained to teach the students at Upper Primary level including 82 percent male and 73.4 percent female tutors.

At primary level, from 1-5 classes, Jammu and Kashmir has figured at 4th number in terms of untrained teachers.

According to the recent official figures, only 77.3 percent teachers were trained to teach at primary level including 83.8 percent male and 71.7 percent female tutors.

Pertinently, KNO published a series of stories—highlighting the major loopholes in both government and private education sectors in Jammu and Kashmir.

On February-01, the news agency reported that in Jammu and Kashmir more than 98 percent of educational institutes sans digital library services.

"Only 373 schools across Jammu and Kashmir were having digital library services available for the students," it reads.

The recent official figures reveal that "Among the total 24,296 government and private schools of Jammu and Kashmir, only 373 institutions that amount to 1.53 percent were having the digital libraries."

It also reveals that in 5452 private schools of Jammu and Kashmir, more than 12 Lakh students and in the case of 18,785 government schools, over 14 Lakh students were enrolled—(KNO)

MP

to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "The LoP (Rahul Gandhi) spoke about his AI (Artificial Intelligence) vision, he included OBCs, backward classes but he forgot Muslims. Are Muslims only meant to be frightened by the BJP for votes? I want to make it clear that Muslims are not afraid of anyone."

He asserted that merely restoring Jammu and Kashmir's statehood was not enough, adding, "Not just Article 370, but the pre-1953 status must be restored. Many people have pinned their hopes on the restoration of statehood, but true justice will only be done when the region's autonomy is reinstated."

Ruhullah also criticized the BJP for misleading people regarding the abrogation of Article 370, stating that parliamentary and assembly elections were held even when Article 370 was in force. "It is strange how people across the nation are being fooled. Elections were always held before, but Article 370 was removed through an illegitimate process. People have responded by participating in the elections, but what have been the consequences of its removal? Article 370 actually benefited Jammu and Kashmir," he argued.

Referring to statistical data, Ruhullah highlighted that when Article 370 was in force, Jammu and Kashmir was ranked sixth in the Human Development Index (HDI) with a score of 0.712, surpassing many BJP-ruled states such as Haryana (0.702), Uttar Pradesh (0.596), Madhya Pradesh (0.606), and Gujarat (0.677).

He further compared poverty rates and key social indicators across states, emphasizing that before the abrogation of Article 370, Jammu and Kashmir had a higher life expectancy rate (73.5 years) compared to Gujarat (68 years) and a higher gross enrollment ratio in higher education (30.9%) compared to Gujarat (20.4%), Uttar Pradesh (28.5%), and Bihar (14%)—(KNO)

PANNAL

the Jammu & Kashmir Constitution, the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Council, and the Joint Select Committee.

They also revealed that the Assembly Secretariat has proposed changes in the quorum of the Legislative Assembly in light of the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act-2019. As per the modifications, the quorum to constitute a sitting of the House would be 10 members instead of 23 members.

According to the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act, the quorum to constitute a meeting of the Legislative Assembly shall be ten members or one-tenth of the total number of members of the Legislative Assembly, whichever is greater.

Sources disclosed that the Legislative Assembly Secretariat has also deleted rules governing amendments to the Jammu & Kashmir Constitution and bills defining or altering permanent residents. Additionally, references relating to the Governor in the Rules have been replaced with Lieutenant Governor.

"The modifications have been proposed to make the Rules in sync with the constitutional changes effected on August 5, 2019," a member of the committee, wishing to remain anonymous, told KNO.

He said the committee would meet tomorrow to discuss the changes proposed in the Rules of Assembly. "We will finalize the modifications in these Rules before the begin-

ning of the Assembly session from January 03," he said—(KNO)

CS

the primary aspects of venturing into any business or establishing a unit. He maintained that any difficulty faced by the potential entrepreneur in availing this credit becomes a stumbling block in advancing his business prospectives. He enjoined upon the financial institutions to make the credit-linkage process less cumbersome so that these aspiring youth can give wings to their aspirations. He directed that a grievance portal inclusive of government machinery and nodal officers from each bank functioning here should be created so that people had a platform to seek timely resolution of their grievances.

He also took note of the saturation of social security schemes like Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Atal Pension Yojana and other financial inclusion schemes across the districts of J&K.

He impressed upon the financial institutions to readily extend the benefits of these schemes to the citizens of the UT. He also directed the Finance Department to explore the possibility of linking death records with these accounts so that the death benefits directly accrue to the legal heirs or their nominees immediately after recording of such events.

The Chief Secretary also called for spreading the ambit of these schemes to the uncovered people. He asked the concerned DCs to increase both the number of Rupay Debit Cards and KCC by reaching out to the eligible population. He asked them to employ the IT based interventions to meet the purpose.

He showed his optimism that 30 lakh SHG members could be supported by means of credit linkage. He asked for devising a specific loan product attractive for them besides proportionate increase in the MSME accounts. He advised for inclusion of building construction workers under the Atal Pension Yojana for their ulterior benefit.

Regarding financial inclusion of all and penetration of digital transactions across cross section of the society, he asked for coverage of all the panchayats through Business Correspondents. He also urged them to take advantage of the database build after accomplishing the survey of around 5.5 lakh youth under mission YUVA.

As far as the priority sector lending is concerned, the Chief Secretary emphasised enhanced credit in agriculture sector. He took note of the poor term loan performance and asked for improving the same.

It was given out in the meeting that there are around 24,75,900 PMJDY individual bank accounts, 8,25,500 PMJJBY accounts, 20,13,800 PMSBY accounts and 2,31,500 Atal Pension Yojana accounts registered by the citizens of the UT.

It was further revealed that as part of the previous directions UTLCB is targeting unorganized workers registered on e-Shram portal and members of Self Help Groups (SHGs) for coverage under social security schemes. UTLCB and PFRDA is conducting programmes throughout the year for LDMs and State Coordinators (Banks) sensitizing them to cover the eligible left out population under the ambit of APY, the meeting was apprised.

As far as digital transactions are concerned, it was added that till December, 2024 the overall coverage of eligible saving bank accounts and eligible business accounts is around 99.80%. Moreover, 1.28 crore eligible accounts are on digital platform leaving a gap of just 25,472 accounts in the UT.

SRINAGAR

proven patients suffering from these cancers all the facilities under one room so that they don't have to go outside Kashmir for such issues or those problems do not stay unaddressed—(KNO)

ANIMAL BOND

years, putting both pets and humans at risk. "By adhering to these preventive measures, pet owners can safeguard the well-being of their animals and significantly reduce the risk of zoonotic diseases, thereby fostering a harmonious coexistence between humans and their pets," he said.

Experts present at the conference said toxoplasmosis is a rare parasitic disease transmitted through cats and teamed it a health concern. Although rare, toxoplasmosis can pose serious risks to pregnant women, including the possibility of miscarriage if an infection occurs due to a cat bite. However, they reassured that such cases are uncommon and can be prevented through proper hygiene practices.

Cat bite cases in Kashmir have been on the rise over the past few years. According to data from the Anti-Rabies Clinic (ARC) at SMHS Hospital, 4,736 cat bite cases were reported in 2024, compared to 5,883 dog bite cases during the same period.

The statistics reveal a dramatic increase in cat bite incidents over the years. In 2018, cat bites accounted for just 8% of all bite cases reported at ARC SMHS. By 2023, this figure

had surged to 20%. In 2024, cat bites constituted a staggering 44% of all animal bite cases.

This rising trend has raised concerns among health professionals, who said the surge is due to increased pet ownership, lack of awareness about proper pet handling, and negligence in pet care practices.

Dr Geelani urged pet owners to remain vigilant and proactive about their pets' health. "It's not just about the pets; it's about public health too. We need greater awareness about responsible pet ownership, including regular veterinary checkups, vaccination drives, and community education programs," he said—(KNO)

HM

The meeting is likely to discuss the security plan for the coming months as snow will start melting, leading to the opening of infiltration routes along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir. Other issues that may come up for discussion include securing tourist spots before the commencement of the peak tourism season.

The meeting is expected to discuss steps to eliminate the terror ecosystem in J&K. The top security brass will apprise the Home Minister about the steps being taken to maintain peace across Jammu and Kashmir—(KNO)

POLICE

under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in a Srinagar court. According to a statement, issued to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the chargesheet pertains to case FIR No. 31/2024, registered at police station Khanyar, under Sections 13, 18, 20, 23, and 38 of the UA(P) Act, along with Section 7/25 of the Arms Act

Sunil Sharma Hails Union Budget, Terms Rs 41,000 Cr Allocation for J&K a 'Landmark Moment'



Srinagar, Feb 03, : BJP's MLA from Padder Nagseni and Leader of Opposition in J&K Assembly, Sunil Sharma, has welcomed the new union budget presented by the Government of India.

According to the Associated News Bureau (ANB), Sharma hailed the allocation of Rs. 41,000 crores for Jammu and Kashmir, terming it a "landmark moment" for the region.

According to Sunil Sharma, this significant allocation will propel J&K's development journey forward, under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He said that the BJP Government has opened new doors of development, especially inclusive development, in Jammu and Kashmir, and remarkable changes are visible on grounds.

The BJP leader emphasized that the union budget is a crucial step towards transforming Jammu and Kashmir into a 'Naya Jammu and Kashmir', building on the vast development initiatives already undertaken in the region.

He said the union budget's focus on infrastructure development, healthcare, and education is expected to have a positive impact on J&K's economy and the lives of its citizens.

With the union budget paving the way for unprecedented development in J&K, Sharma urged the people of the region to work together to ensure that the benefits of the budget reach every corner of the state.

He further discussed the budget presented at national level saying the new tax regime as well as other provisions of the new budget are a welcome step for every single household of the country and will pave the way for moving ahead on making India more developed and strong. The BJP leader emphasized that the union budget is a crucial step towards transforming Jammu and Kashmir into a 'Naya Jammu and Kashmir', building on the vast development initiatives already undertaken in the region. He said the union budget's focus on infrastructure development, healthcare, and education is expected to have a positive impact on J&K's economy and the lives of its citizens. With the union budget paving the way for unprecedented development in J&K, Sharma urged the people of the region to work together to ensure that the benefits of the budget reach every corner of the state. He further discussed the budget presented at national level saying the new tax regime as well as other provisions of the new budget are a welcome step for every single household of the country and will pave the way for moving ahead on making India.



MSME Skill Development Program on EV, Solar begins at NIT Srinagar

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 03: A weeklong Advanced Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Program (A-ESDP) (Hands-on Training) commenced on Monday at the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar. The hands-on training workshop is being organized by the Department of Mechanical Engineering, NIT Srinagar, and sponsored by the Ministry of MSME, Government of India. The inaugural session was presided over by Registrar NIT Srinagar, Prof. Atikur Rahman, while Prof. Bhim Singh from IIT Delhi was the Chief Guest. Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. Binodh Kumar Kanuja was the Chief Patron of the workshop. The patrons include Prof. Atikur Rahman (Registrar), Prof. M.F. Wani (MED), Prof. G.A. Harmain (MED), Prof. Sheikh Nazir Ahmed (MED), and Prof. Roohi Naaz Mir (Dean R&C). While the Chairpersons for the workshop include Prof. M.M. Wani (HoD, MED) and Prof. Adnan Qoyum (MED), Dr. Dinesh Kumar Rajendran, the Nodal Officer of the MSME ESDP Scheme, introduced various



schemes and funding opportunities, whereas Dr. Manoj Kumar, workshop coordinator, welcomed the gathering and highlighted key insights of the program. The workshop is being attended by 25 participants from different parts of the country. In his speech, Prof. Adnan Qoyum enlightened the participants about the growing research opportunities in EV, Solar, and Hydrogen Fuels. Prof. Maruf Wani, Head Mechanical Engineering Department said that ESDP Program on

"Energy" offers a comprehensive and immersive learning experience, equipping educators with essential knowledge and skills to effectively teach and inspire participants in the fields of EV, Solar, and Hydrogen Fuel. "This program is designed to address the growing significance of energy and its transformative impact across various industries. It aims to bridge the gap between academia and industry, equipping participants with necessary tools and expertise to prepare the next

generation of innovators and engineers for dynamic world of additive manufacturing," he said. Speaking on the occasion, Registrar NIT Srinagar, Prof. Atikur Rahman said that importance of Viksit Bharat 2047, stating that its goals are crucial for economic growth, achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), improving quality of life, supporting businesses, and building better infrastructure. "Regardless of our diverse fields, we must work for the development of the country and support the vision of Viksit Bharat," he said adding that aspiring scholars and students should delve into local technologies and engage in research within these domains. In the first session, Prof. Bhim Singh (IIT Delhi) discussed India's promising future in electric vehicles (EVs), driven by government incentives, technological advancements, and increasing environmental awareness. "The Indian government's push for sustainable mobility through schemes like FAME (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles) and subsidies on EV purchases is accelerating adoption. With major auto-makers investing in EV production.

Special Lok-Adalat for 'Traffic Challans & Electricity Bills' on Feb 22 in Srinagar

HT News Network

Srinagar, February 03: As per the calendar of activities issued by the J&K Legal Services Authority, a special Lok Adalat focusing on the amicable settlement of "Traffic Challans and Electricity Bills" is scheduled to be held on February 22, 2025 at the District Court Complex, Srinagar. To facilitate maximum settlement of traffic challans, a Pre-Lok Adalat session for Traffic Challans will commence from 10th February 2025 and shall continue till 21st February 2025.

It is hereby notified that all concerned learned advocates and parties wishing to settle their Traffic Challans through the Lok Adalat are encouraged to approach the concerned court during this period for a mutually agreeable resolution.

This initiative aims to ensure an efficient and amicable settlement of pending cases. All stakeholders are requested to avail themselves of this opportunity.

Horticulture Deptt organises training program regarding NPSS Mobile App

HT News Network



Srinagar, February 03: The Directorate of Horticulture, Kashmir, in collaboration with the Central Integrated Pest Management Centre, Srinagar, organized a comprehensive training session on the functionality of the NPSS (National Pest Surveillance System) Mobile App. The session was conducted by Assistant Plant Protection Officer (PP) Dr. Haroon Rashid Hakla, who provided a detailed demonstration about features of App and its benefits to the farming community.

The training programme was attended by District Level Officers of the Horticulture Department and orchardists from various parts of Kashmir.

The session focused on educating participants about the app's role in monitoring and managing pest control through a user-friendly digital interface, making pest management easier for farmers. Joint Director Horticulture Sh. A.H. Bhat, on the occasion underscored the significance of App for the farming community. He stated that the app would be a valuable tool for orchardists, aiding them in better pest management and ultimately improving the productivity and sustainability of the horticulture sector in the region. This training is part of the ongoing efforts by the Directorate of Horticulture, Kashmir, to equip local farmers with modern tools and knowledge to enhance agricultural practices. The session focused on educating participants about the app's role in monitoring and managing pest control through a user-friendly digital interface, making pest management easier for farmers. Joint Director Horticulture Sh. A.H. Bhat, on the occasion underscored the significance of App for the farming community. He stated that the app would be a valuable.

CCF, Kashmir refutes media report regarding decrease in J&K's forest cover

Says forest cover of J&K showed significant increase in last decade

HT News Network

Srinagar, February 03: The India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023 highlighted a substantial increase in forest cover which showed a rise of 34.78 square kilometers in the region's forest area compared to the 2021 assessment. The report reveals that J&K has shown an increase of 398.12 Sq Kms in forest cover in one decade from 2013 to 2023. According to India State of Forest Report forest cover of J&K in 2013 was 20,948.27 Sq Kms while in 2023 the forest cover increased to 21,346.39 Sq Kms.

Irfan Rasol, the Chief Conservator of Forests for Kashmir, (CCFK) highlighted these positive findings while addressing the media. He stated that J&K boasts the highest number of forest types in the country, an impressive 43, along with the highest average growing stock of 296.22 cubic meters per hectare and the highest estimated carbon stock of 174.10 tons per hectare.

He strongly refuted recent media reports that claimed a decrease of 40.61 square kilometers in J&K's forest cover. He termed these reports as inaccurate and not based on the quoted ISFR 2023. "These reports are misleading and do not reflect the actual findings of the ISFR," he stated. The CCFK stressed the importance of thoroughly studying the ISFR report before drawing any conclusions. He said that understanding the methodology used in the assessment is crucial for accurately interpreting the results. He urged media outlets to exercise caution and ensure their reporting aligns with the official data and its proper context.

5 months after daughter's death, Pulwama family protest outside CM's residence in Srinagar

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 03 (KNO): Around five months after the death of a young girl from South Kashmir's Pulwama district, the deceased's family members and relatives staged a protest outside the Chief Minister's residence in Srinagar and demanded action against the erring doctors involved in the alleged negligence.

The protesters as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said that the authorities have failed to take action against the involved doctors. The grieving family, holding placards and banners, demanded strict action against the medical staff following the tragic death of Saboora, who allegedly succumbed to an anaesthesia overdose after a routine septoplasty at Mohammedia Nursing Institute in



Gangoo on 15th September last year. Saboora's mother recalled the heart-breaking sequence of events, stating that her daughter was taken to the operation theatre at 2:50 p.m. for the procedure. Hours later, at 5:50 p.m., the doctors informed them that she was experiencing severe palpitations and needed to be shifted to a hospital in Srinagar. Unfortunately, by the time they arrived, she had already passed away, she said. They said that at the

time of the incident, there was no elected government but now since the government is in place it must ensure justice. They have sought the attention of CM Omar Abdullah and Dr Farooq Abdullah in this regard.

Notably, soon after the death of Saboora, daughter of Arshid Hussain Bhat of Arihal Pulwama, her family members and relatives had staged several protests following which investigation committees at DHSK and district levels were constituted. The district

administration had sealed the private hospital for some time as well.

However, the deceased woman's family alleged justice is being delayed. They said that the family has been running from pillar to post to get justice, but to date, nothing has been done. They demanded the DHSK committee report must be made public at an earliest.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr Basharat Qayoom told KNO that the district committee submitted its report with recommendations. He said that recommendations regarding Hospital were implemented through Chief Medical Officer while regarding doctors, the recommendations were sent to Director Health Services Kashmir and Govt Medical College Srinagar for necessary action under rules, he said—(KNO)

Sakeena Ito reviews progress on SAMAGRA Shiksha interventions across J&K

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 03: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Ito, today chaired a meeting at Civil Secretariat here to review progress on various interventions as well as formulation of upcoming work plan for SAMAGRA Shiksha across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by MLAs of several constituencies; Additional Chief Secretary, School Education Department (SED); Special Secretary SED; Director School Education Kashmir/Jammu; Project Director Samagra Shiksha; CEOs and other concerned officers.

During the meeting, Sakeena Ito emphasised the need for more inclusive and transparent approach in policy implementation. She stressed on the officers



to involve elected representatives (MLAs) in formulation of work plans in their respective constituencies to ensure that need based works are initiated. "Public representatives play a crucial role in identifying grassroots issues. The inclusion of MLAs in policy formulation will lead to more practical and

impactful decisions, ensuring holistic development of the education sector", Sakeena maintained.

The Minister further underlined that the coordination between public representatives and project agency will also ensure non duplication of works.

During the meeting, the Minister also assessed the

progress on various educational initiatives under SAMAGRA Shiksha. She highlighted that the interventions under this schemes will fill infrastructure gaps, teacher shortages as well as the need for enhanced digital learning facilities in rural and remote areas. She directed the officers to expedite completion of ongoing projects and improve accountability mechanisms for better execution of schemes.

Stressing on the importance of equity and accessibility in education, Sakeena Ito asked the officers to prioritise underprivileged students and marginalised communities to bridge the educational divide.

During the meeting, Project Director Samagra Shiksha gave a detailed presentation on different aspects and interventions of Samagra Shiksha.

Photostat Shop Sealed in Handwara for Allegedly Producing Fake Domicile Certificates

DR. AB QAYOOM

Langate, Feb. 03: Authorities have sealed a photostat shop in Handwara after it was allegedly found involved in producing fake domicile certificates. The action was taken following an investigation led by Tehsildar Langate, Mohammad Ismail, after a forged domicile certificate was detected. According to Tehsildar Langate, the case surfaced when a certificate dealing assistant at the Tehsil office in Qalamabad received a domicile certificate in the name of Rehana Begum, wife of Sajad Ahmad Peer from Sanzipora Mawar. Upon verification, no records of the certificate were found in either online or offline records. Following a thorough investigation, it was discovered that the document was entirely fake.



During questioning, the

claimant revealed that the forged certificate had been obtained from Wani Photostat Shop near the Old Bus Stand in Handwara.

Acting on this information, Tehsildar Langate coordinated with Tehsildar Handwara, Zeeshan Ahmad Khan, and Handwara Police to conduct a joint raid on the shop. The shop was immediately sealed for further investigation, and a case has been registered by Handwara Police.

It is worth mentioning that just a month ago, Tehsildar Handwara Zeeshan Ahmad Khan had also seized a CSC center in the Magam area for allegedly being involved in a similar case.

The public has widely appreciated the swift action taken by Tehsildar Langate, Tehsildar Handwara, and Handwara Police in curbing fraudulent activities related to official documents.

EDITORIAL

Diminishing
purchasing power
impacts Haj 2025

THE union territory of Jammu & Kashmir has witnessed a sharp decline in the number of applications for the annual Haj pilgrimage 2025. There was a time when the number of applications would be many times more than the allocated quota but the picture has changed over the past few years. For 2025 the office of Haj Committee, Jammu & Kashmir received just over 4,100 applications and out of the same more than 500 aspiring pilgrims have dropped out.

In the past the authorities received applications in the range of 25,000-30,000 and out of the same not more than 8,000-10,000 pilgrims would get selected for the holy pilgrimage. Many times the local government had to approach the office of Haj Committee of India for enhancement of the quota. In most of the cases the request was heeded and the quota for Jammu & Kashmir was increased. In the past the system of draw of lots was used so as to select the Haj pilgrims.

Over the past few years the system of draw of lots has been abandoned and all the intending pilgrims for Haj got selected. For Haj 2025 it was expected that the authorities like the past few years would receive the number of applications that would be equal to the number of pilgrims intending to proceed on the holy pilgrimage. However, this did not happen since the number of applications was less than 50 percent as compared to the number of applications received for Hajj 2024.

Over the years the purchasing power of the people of Jammu & Kashmir has been reduced and this is being seen as one of the reasons for the less number of applications received for this year's Haj. Since the charges for the Haj pilgrimage through the government have already crossed four lakh rupees it is getting difficult for the common masses to arrange the same so as to proceed for the holy pilgrimage. Affordability holds key to such a sacred pilgrimage and as on date the people are feeling the heat on this front.

One can hope that the economical situation improves and the people are able to earn more money. Once that happens then it is quite possible that more and more people would aspire to perform Hajj. Given the trend of increasing costs it is highly impossible that the government would slash the charges for the annual Haj pilgrimage.

It was all due to the efforts of MLA Budhal Javed Iqbal Choudhary that the impossible happened!

BY M S NAZKI

THIS is a story of inspiration and it can do wonders to those reading it but more importantly feeling it! This is a story of MLA Budhal Javed Iqbal Choudhary and it is a Live Example of a great human being who gave a lesson or two regarding the fact what a human being can do if he desires to do so!

But before I come to the fact as to what Javed did, here is a story which I found in my friend's diary:

This is a story that inspired me many years ago, and still I follow it and remember it. Thought this would be a great share here.

A successful businessman was growing old and knew it was time to choose a successor to take over the business. Instead of choosing one of his directors or his children, he decided to do something different. He called all the young executives in his company together. He said, "It is time for me to step down and choose the next CEO. I have decided to choose one of you." The young executives were shocked, but the boss continued, "I am going to give each one of you a seed today - one very special seed. I want you to plant the seed,

water it, and come back here one year from today with what you have grown from the seed I have given you. I will then judge the plants that you bring, and the one I choose will be the next CEO." One man, named Jim, was there that day and he, like the others, received a seed. He went home and excitedly told his wife the story. She helped him get a pot, soil and compost and he planted the seed. Everyday, he would water it and watch to see if it had grown. After about three weeks, some of the other executives began to talk about their seeds and the plants that were beginning to grow.

Jim kept checking his seed, but nothing ever grew. Three weeks, four weeks, five weeks went by, still nothing. By now, others were talking about their plants, but Jim didn't have a plant and he felt like a failure. Six months went by - still nothing in Jim's pot. He just knew he had killed his seed. Everyone else had trees and tall plants, but he had nothing. Jim didn't say anything to his colleagues, however, he just kept watering and fertilizing the soil. He wanted the seed to grow. A year went by and the CEO asked the young executives to bring their plants to work for inspection.



When Jim told his wife that he wasn't going to take an empty pot, she asked him to be honest about what happened. Jim felt sick to his stomach, it was going to be the most embarrassing moment of his life, but he knew his wife was right. He took his empty pot to the board room. When Jim arrived, he was amazed at the variety of plants grown by the other executives. They were beautiful - in all shapes and sizes. Jim put his empty pot on the floor and many of his colleagues laughed, a few felt sorry for him! When the CEO arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted his young executives. Jim just tried to hide in the back. "My, what great plants, trees and flowers you have grown," said the CEO. "Today one of you will be appointed the next CEO!"

All of a sudden, the CEO spotted Jim at the

back of the room with his empty pot. He asked Jim to come to the front of the room. Jim was terrified. He thought, "The CEO knows I'm a failure! Maybe he will have me fired!" When Jim got to the front, the CEO asked him what had happened to his seed. Jim told him the story. The CEO asked everyone to sit down except Jim. He looked at Jim, and then announced to the young executives, "Behold your next Chief Executive Officer - Jim!"

Jim couldn't believe it. Jim couldn't even grow his seed. "How could he be the new CEO?" the others said. Then the CEO said, "One year ago today, I gave everyone in this room a seed. I told you to take the seed, plant it, water it, and bring it back to me today. But I gave you all boiled seeds; they were dead - it was not possible for them to grow. All of you, except Jim, have brought me trees

and plants and flowers. When you found that the seed would not grow, you substituted another seed for the one I gave you. Jim was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my seed in it. Therefore, he is the one who will be the new Chief Executive Officer!"

This is what Honesty can do to a human being!

Now cong to Javed's story! But before that yet another one on integrity:

"There was a boy who had a great collection of marbles and a girl had a collection of sweets. Each looked at what the other had and was envious. So they agreed on an exchange: the boy to give the girl his marbles, and the girl to give her sweets. The boy kept the biggest and the particularly attractive marble aside and gave the rest to the girl. The girl gave him all her sweets as she had promised.

That night, the girl went off to a pleasant sleep. But the boy couldn't sleep as he kept wondering if the girl had hidden some sweets from him the way he had hidden his best marble. Integrity is one of the most salient elements in every single relationship you have in your life. Integrity is a way of life, not just a behavior. Don't

allow yourself to hold any of your marbles back from another person. If you are experiencing any doubt, is there only because you know that deep down inside yourself, you have never truly given that person all of WHO YOU ARE! Give your hundred percent to everything you do and sleep peacefully.

That is what Javed did: The Member Legislature Assembly did a Tremendous Job and did Tireless hard work for Badhal Death's Tragedy.

People were crestfallen not knowing as to what they had to do! They were dying and so were their cattle! The darkest possible cloud of desolation had descended upon the village! It was a tragedy of boundless limits! It was here that Javed Iqbal Choudhary decided that he should take a plunge! He asked the people to move out of the village to a different place! He also made sure that their livestock also moved along with them! It was a tireless effort but Javed had made sure that his people were safe and sound! Had Javed not taken the initiative everything seemed doomed for the village! It was all due to the efforts of Javed that the impossible happened!

The science of mudras

RAVI VALLURI

Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita says, "There is nothing as sacred as knowledge." Knowledge can be acquired by the human mind through the 5 Ds - dedication, determination, dynamism, devotion and discipline and one H - Humility. The science of mudras, is intrinsically related to the esoteric knowledge of yoga and which can be further segregated into the five elements, the five life forces (or subtle forces of energy called the pranas) and the three doshas. The five elements are namely - Akash (ether or space), Vayu (air), Agni (fire), Jal (water) and Prithvi (earth); the five life forces or pranas are Prana, Udana, Samana, Apana and Vyana and the three

doshas are Vata, Kapha and Pitta. Humans unconsciously practice mudras. For instance, the Namaste Mudra or a young child begins learning to walk with his thumbs raised which is called the Meru Dand Mudra. An infant even in a deep slumber, his index finger would involuntarily touch the thumb and the other three fingers are on the base of the palm (Chinmaya Mudra). The universe in its auto-mode conjures these processes to take place and we are oblivious to the occurrence. Some other mudras which need to be practised are:

(a) Jnana mudra: This is performed to increase brain power, improve memory and for the removal of negative thoughts. Thereby one attains peace and bliss.



(b) Prithvi mudra: This helps in balancing the five sense organs, improves blood circulation and enhances our energy levels. Practice of this mudra assists in increasing our alertness.

(c) Apana mudra: This facilitates an improved elimination process, revitalising the digestive system, improving the gums and strengthening immunity.

(d) Prana mudra: This mudra addresses the problem of fatigue; it also provides essential vitamins to the body besides increasing stamina and vigour to the human body. It also helps in maintenance of the health of our eyes.

(e) Dhyana mudra: Essentially, this mudra helps in making us mindful and wakeful and we are at peace with ourselves. Over a period, we attain peace of mind.

(f) Shunya Vayu mudra: Practice of this mudra helps in combating problems of flatulence and gastric ailments. The gut houses our solar plexus, which is also referred to as the second brain. We need to take adequate care of our abdomen as most human ailments arise from this part of the body.

Therefore, there is enormous merit in the adage, "Health is in your hands".

Sudarshan Kriya: The unique breathing technique of Sudarshan Kriya is the fulcrum of the Happiness Programme of the Art of Living. Su means proper, Darshan implies vision and Kriya is a purifying action. Through the actions of our breath, we appreciate a proper vision of who we are. It is momentous to understand that nature runs on a rhythm. For instance, the sun rises and sets at a particular time, similarly, seasons arrive and exit at predetermined times. Humans feel hungry or sleepy at certain times. Our emotions, feelings and thoughts are all cast in the symphony of rhythm. We are unable to distinguish between cacophony and

symphony in this frenetic pace of life which is canonaded by innumerable thoughts, continuous action and noise. When sounds are harmonised by the syllable of Soham, we can term it as magical music. Enlightenment is not accruing anything providential but harmonising our whole being rhythmically. During the breathing process participants feel varied sensations, emotions, tingling sensations, laughter, weeping among others. This wonderful knowledge and wisdom have triggered humanness to blossom when every cell is energised.

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)

The deprived section of the society should also get milk to drink

DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

India's dairy sector, driven by the White Revolution, has become the world's largest milk producer, yet access to milk remains highly unequal. Milk consumption is limited among disadvantaged groups due to factors such as income differences, regional variations, and affordability limitations. With growing concerns about under-nutrition and over-nutrition, specific policies are needed to bridge this gap and promote equitable nutritional security for all sections of society. When we look at differences in milk consumption across socio-economic and regional groups, households with the highest incomes consume three to four times more milk

per capita than those with lower incomes, reflecting significant economic inequalities. The lowest 30% of households consume only 18% of India's milk, highlighting affordability issues among lower-income groups despite high overall production. Urban households consume 30 percent.

Western and northern states such as Rajasthan, Punjab, and Haryana have higher per capita consumption (333 g-421 g per day), while eastern states such as Chhattisgarh and Odisha consume only 75 g-171 g per day. Haryana's dairy-friendly culture and cooperative networks promote high milk consumption across households. Tribal (ST) households in general consume four liters less milk per capita than other households,

highlighting long-standing social inequalities. Despite the nutritional benefits of milk, limited access to dairy markets and economic constraints push ST communities to rely on less expensive, non-dairy alternatives. While wealthy metropolitan consumers consume more than twice the recommended amount, mainly from high-fat, high-sugar dairy products, milk is expensive for low-income households, accounting for 10%-30% of their monthly expenditure to meet the recommended daily consumption of 300 g.

A daily wage worker earning 300 per day may struggle to budget 30-90 for milk alone, resulting in diets being affected. Rural producers lack adequate storage and distribution networks, resulting

Policy measures to ensure equitable milk access come first. Improve nutrition programs such as Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman and increase financial support for schemes such as Integrated Child Development Services, which supply milk in school meals and take-home rations.

in an inability to reach low-income and isolated households. Lactose sensitivity and dietary preferences affect milk intake, especially in eastern and tribal areas, where alternative protein sources are

preferred. Adivasi tribes in Jharkhand rely on pulses and millets due to cultural food preferences. Due to financial constraints, some states eliminated milk provision from welfare programs, restricting access to

vulnerable communities. Chhattisgarh stopped milk supply. Policy measures come first to ensure equitable milk access.

Improve nutrition programs. Increase financial support for schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman and Integrated Child Development Services, which supply milk in school meals and take-home rations. States such as Karnataka and Gujarat currently provide milk through school nutrition programs, but expanding coverage could improve children's health. Introduce milk vouchers for needy families in areas with strong dairy networks to reduce distribution costs and increase affordability. Dairy cooperatives in Gujarat could work with social initiatives to provide milk coupons that can be

redeemed at local stores. Investigate social bonds, CSR funding, and taxing unhealthy foods to generate funds for subsidized milk distribution. A small tax could be imposed on high-sugar dairy products such as ice cream to fund milk distribution.

Use Anganwadi centers, self-help groups, and media partnerships to educate women and families about the importance of milk. Maharashtra's Poshan Maah 2024 campaign successfully raised awareness about a balanced diet, improving dietary diversity in rural communities. To prevent excessive dairy intake, encourage moderation through health messaging, similar to the UK's Change4Life Sugar Swap campaign. Doctors and nutritionists can advocate

for healthy dairy consumption patterns, which can reduce the burden of obesity and non-communicable diseases. Targeted subsidies, strong public distribution systems, and incentives for small-scale dairy farming are needed to bridge milk consumption inequalities. Strengthening cold storage infrastructure and promoting fortified dairy products can increase access.

A multi-stakeholder approach, integrating technology and awareness campaigns, will ensure nutritional security, leading to a healthier and more equitable India.

Dr. Satyawan Saurabh is a Research Scholar in Political Science, Delhi University, Poet, freelance journalist, and columnist.

Kashmiri Pheran Paradox: From Ban to Brand



MAHOOR HAYA SHAH

Cultural Theft, Now in Vogue
They cut the cloth but not the cold,
A borrowed shape, a story sold.
The wind still whispers through the seams,
But none recall its woven dreams.
They named it ragged, outlawed its thread,
Called it crude, a past misread.
They stripped our streets of wool and warmth,
Yet now they drape in what they scorned.
The Pheran, worn in hush of snow,
Through war, through grief, through ebb and flow.
A shroud for loss, a shield for pain,
A quiet oath we wore again.
The hands that spun in winter's ache,
The looms that hummed by Dal's still lake.
The thread that wrapped both rich and worn,
From Sultan's court to soldier's dawn.
They take, they wear, they do not know—
The weight of winter, the hush of snow.
The hands that spun, the hearths that warmed,
The ghosts of fires now deformed.
Once they saw it as a mark of chains,
Too foreign, too crude for their refined plains.
They banned it, shamed it, tried to erase,
A piece of us, a time, a place.
Yet winters came and winters passed,
The Pheran stood, it held steadfast.
A whispered prayer in folds so deep,
A rebel's warmth, a mother's keep.
And now they wear it, claim it new,
As if the snow has changed its hue.
No tales of struggle, none of fight,
Just fabric draped in borrowed light.
They take, they claim, they do not know—
The weight of exiles, ice, and woe.
What once was shunned, now vogue decree,
A fashion's whim, a stolen spree.
Yet we remain, as mountains stand,
With fires lit in cupped, cold hands.
No theft of cloth, nor borrowed name,
Can weave away what still remains.
A name misplaced, a hem undone,
A history blurred beneath the sun.
Yet in the mountains, high and steep,
The Pheran's breath is ours to keep.
The Pheran breathes, unbowed, unbent,
A map of all the storms we've spent.
A banner high, a truth unfurled,
Our warmth, our pride - our woven world.
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MUSHTAQUE ALI AHMAD KHAN! The shining star of theater, radio, TV and filmy world



BY GULFAM BARJI
HARWAN SRINAGAR

Ever since the world of art, civilization and culture came into being in Jammu and Kashmir, many such personalities have made their iron in the art and culture here and they will be remembered for the rest of the world. The literature, civilization, culture of these personalities as well as the artistic services will always be remembered. The names of Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan are also considered among these personalities. Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan was born on August 28, 1960, in a mediocre family in Shaheed Ganj in Srinagar. Just a few months after Khan was born in his family emigrated to Jawahar Nagar in Srinagar. Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan's family moved to the KursuRajbagh area of Srinagar after a flood in Kashmir in 2014 after almost five decades. Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan started his journey in the performing arts in 1974

when he started acting in short plays in Children's programs in Doordarshan Kendra Srinagar, called "Television Center" at that time. This continued for a few years. He later worked as anchor in the same program. Meanwhile, in 1977 Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan began working for Akashwani's Yuva Wani service "Youth Channel" and the series continued for a few years.

During the post graduation in the year of 1980-81 Khan was very active at the Cultural Club of Kashmir University, which he participated in music programs as well as dramas. The Cultural Club was appointed Secretary. After completing the post graduation he joined the Active Theater in Kashmir. He worked extensively with great intensity. Sometimes he rehearsed 2 or 3 dramas with different groups simultaneously. I used to be busy in 1983, Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan passed the drama audition from Doordarshan Kendra Srinagar. In those days the drama audition was very severe. Then after that Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan did not look back. He showed his acting in Urdu and Kashmiri Telecommunications, Telephans, and Tele Series. A twist honest how long and north serials were popular and prominent serials in his acting. Meanwhile, Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan passed the drama audition from All India Radio Srinagar, which was then called Radio Kashmir Srinagar and for some time worked as a newscaster besides Anunsar In Srinagar, Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan worked as a producer and director for DD Srinagar, DD Kashmir, DD Metro and DD Urdu since 1988 to 2014 and thus Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan's identity of Doordarshan a leading producer and director. In his 50-year career, Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan also made films for the Tourism Department, J&K Excise and Taxation Department and other private entities in addition to Doordarshan. From 1990 to 2005, Khan's theater activities were badly affected due to the unforeseen conditions, but after 2005 he



regularly resumed acting, directing and set designing for stage plays which is still ongoing till date. Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan organized more than half a dozen theater workshops, theater conferences, seminars and other cultural and civilization programs. In 2009, He received a senior fellowship from the Ministry of Culture and has held several seminars on Kashmir's folk theater till date. Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan has his life Kashmir. He has been dedicated to the protection and promotion of civilization and culture including Modern Theatre, Folk art and other traditional methods. Over the past four decades they have led the steps to permanently include young people in nationalization activities while ensuring local level nuances in his performing career, Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan made a place in the hearts of millions of fans by performing his performances in Jammu and Kashmir besides other states of the country. Khan Creative Theater (ACT) one of the oldest and most famous creative organizations in Kashmir since 1983. The chairman and creative director of which has now been renamed to the "ACT" this cultural

group came into being in 1976 and is actively working in the fields of theater and music. Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan worked as a consultant at the North Zone Cultural Center (NZCC) Patiala and his Srinagar sub office and organized dozens of performing arts and Fine Arts programs. Sub-consultation committee has been a member from 2014 to 2019. Khan has played a central role in more than three dozen plays based on Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi and Kashmiri languages in Jammu and Kashmir and other states of the country since 1980. Since 2005 he has directed more than award winning stage plays in Kashmiri and Urdu languages. Khan is also the founder of the Kashmir World Film Festival and has organized four successful film festivals since 2017 and in the preparations for the 5th film festival is busy. Mushtaq Ali Ahmad Khan has included various institutions, including Cultural Academy, North Zone Cultural Center, Song and Drama Division New Delhi, All India Radio Srinagar and several other government and non governmental organizations. Mushtaq Ali Ahmad Khan has been honored several times till date. In the year 1983 he was also honored for his outstanding performance

in 'Jaloos' the stage drama "procession" of the Annual Drama Festival organized by the J&K Academy of Art Culture and Languages. Mushtaq Ali Ahmad Khan's performances in Kashmir for decades have been acknowledged by public and non governmental organizations as well as private sectors for which he was awarded several dignified awards till today. He was honored by the SARHAD namely NGO in Srinagar by the promotion of television, radio, film and theatre. Apart from the Best Theatre Practitioner Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan has also been honored. In the year 2022 the Lifetime Achievement Award was received by Mushtaque Ali at the hands of Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, while Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan was awarded the State Award 2025 by the Jammu and Kashmir UT government on the occasion of the 76th republic day. In addition many other states of the country have also awarded Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan from time to time and the series is still underway. Similarly, Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan is the shining star of the art, culture, radio, tv, theatre and filmy world. May Allah bless this passenger of art, culture and acting.

Prioritise Teachers' Welfare In Jammu and Kashmir

RAYEES MASROOR

Teachers play a fundamental role in shaping societies, yet their welfare often remains a neglected aspect of policy and governance. Around the world, different countries have recognized the importance of teacher welfare by introducing health insurance, risk coverage, and financial security programs. In advanced nations like Finland, Canada, and the UK, teachers receive comprehensive medical insurance, pension benefits, and financial support in emergencies. Countries like Singapore and South Korea prioritize teachers' well-being through structured welfare programs, emphasizing that a secure

teacher is more productive and dedicated. However, in many developing nations, including India, teachers still struggle with inadequate financial and health security, leaving them vulnerable to various risks.

In the union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, teachers face severe challenges. They often work in difficult conditions, especially in conflict-prone and remote areas, where they are at constant risk. Over the years, several teachers have lost their lives, suffered injuries, or been permanently disabled due to unforeseen circumstances such as violence, accidents and various life-consuming diseases. Many teachers battle life-threatening diseases that require expen-

sive medical treatments, putting an immense financial burden on their families.

Unfortunately, no structured mechanism is in place to support teachers during such crises. Unlike other professions where employees have access to health insurance and financial risk mitigation, teachers in J&K are left to fend for themselves. This lack of institutional support not only affects individual teachers but also disturbs their families, leading to financial distress and emotional suffering.

Given this grim reality, teachers in J&K must take collective action to safeguard their interests. One of the most viable solutions is to establish a Kashmir Division Teach-

ers Contributory Welfare Fund, an independent initiative designed to support teachers in times of crisis. This fund would have a proper structure, transparent financial management and regular audits to ensure its credibility. It would be open to all teaching professionals including regular teachers, ReT teachers, grades 1st and 2nd, masters, headmasters, lecturers, and principals.

Volunteer contributions from teachers themselves, along with potential support from civil society and educational institutions, can create a robust financial pool. This fund can be used to provide emergency financial aid, medical assistance, and compensation in cases of accidents, disabil-

ity, or death. Establishing such a mechanism would not only offer financial security to teachers but also restore dignity to the profession by ensuring that educators do not have to rely on charity or personal savings during crises. It is time for teachers to come together, take the initiative, and build a safety net for themselves and future generations in the teaching community.

All teachers, including teacher unions, must come forward to support the Kashmir Division Teachers Contributory Welfare Fund, as it is a crucial step toward ensuring financial security and emergency assistance for educators. Given the hardships teachers face ranging from health crises to unforeseen accidents,

this initiative can serve as a lifeline in times of distress. Teacher unions, being the collective voice of the profession, should actively participate in mobilizing resources, spreading awareness, and ensuring proper management of the fund.

By uniting for this cause, teachers can build a sustainable support system that provides timely assistance and safeguards the dignity of the profession. A well-structured welfare fund is not just a financial safety net but a symbol of solidarity, responsibility, and care for the teaching community.

The writer is a columnist and academician
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Vocational education the need of the hour

ASHISH SHARMA
ALJAZ AHMAD

In today's rapidly changing global economy, the conversation around education must adapt to meet the demands of technological advancements and shifting employment landscapes. Vocational education, often overlooked in favor of traditional academic pathways, is emerging as a critical solution to the challenges posed by skill gaps and unemployment. NEP 2020 seeks to integrate vocational training into mainstream education, ensuring students are prepared for a future defined by innovation and expertise.

In an age characterized by rapid technological advancements and shifting job markets, the conversa-

tion around education is more crucial than ever. While traditional academic pathways have long been the gold standard, the emerging reality calls for a reevaluation of our educational priorities. Vocational education – often sidelined in the discourse surrounding higher learning – is steadily gaining recognition as a pivotal solution to contemporary challenges.

As economies evolve and industries adapt, the demand for skilled labor has surged. According to the World Economic Forum, over 80 million jobs worldwide are expected to be displaced because of automation, yet the same report indicates that over 90 million new jobs will require specialized skills. This presents a paradox where a signifi-



cant talent gap exists; millions of positions remain unfilled due to a lack of skilled candidates. This is where vocational education comes into play. Vocational education equips students with practical skills, preparing them

for specific trades and occupations. From electricians and plumbers to IT technicians and healthcare support, vocational training offers targeted curriculum that aligns with the needs of local and global economies. This hands-on

approach not only fosters expertise but also instills a strong work ethic and practical problem-solving skills that are essential in today's workforce.

Moreover, vocational education can also serve as a pathway to econom-

ic empowerment, particularly for underrepresented groups. It opens doors for non-traditional students, providing alternative routes to successful careers without the burden of substantial student debt. By investing

in vocational training, we create educational pathways that are inclusive and reflective of the diverse talents within our communities.

Further, the integration of vocational programs into secondary schooling enriches students' choices, allowing them to explore various career paths early in their lives. This exposure can help dismantle the stigma surrounding trades and technical work, proving that these professions are not only viable but lucrative and fulfilling.

In many countries, initiatives are already being implemented to bolster vocational training programs. Partnerships between educational institutions and industry leaders are being forged to ensure curricula remain

relevant and responsive to market demands. Community colleges and vocational schools are receiving increased funding to expand their offerings, ensuring that students gain access to modern facilities and technologies essential for skill development.

However, this momentum requires support from policymakers, businesses, and educational institutions alike. There is a pressing need for a cultural shift in how we perceive vocational education. By promoting success stories and championing the value of skilled trades, we can inspire a new generation to pursue these essential careers.

This article is penned down by two sporadic writers of the valley. Ashish sharma is presently vocational trainer at GHS sadrota

Forest Minister directs for aligning development with environment conservation

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 03: Underscoring the need for development that aligns with environmental conservation, Minister for Forest, Javed Ahmed Rana, today reviewed the Forest Department's proposals and action plan during a meeting at Civil Secretariat Jammu.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary Forests Ecology and Environment, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests JK, Secretary in Forest Department and Director Finance, Forest Ecology and Environment.

Javed Rana called for effective

strategies that lead to sustainable development while taking into consideration environmental concerns along with economic prosperity.

Reaffirming Government's commitment towards balancing ecological preservation with economic and social development, Rana said that the proposals of the department should be aligned in line with the sustainable development of the region. He stressed the importance of conducting comprehensive studies and assessments to ensure sustainable development. He said that there is a significant need of conducting the study of value of forest of J&K, research and livelihood and these things should be



reflected in the proposals of the department.

During the meeting, detailed

deliberations were held on the proposals including development of migratory routes and

implementation of scientific fodder production to support pastoral communities. He called

for submitting of a detailed DPR for effective soil and water conservation in Kandi region.

For conservation of Medicinal plants in the Shivalik Region, Rana asked for roping in Forest Research Institute that have expertise in the field to suggest the type of plants that can be grown there. He also called for establishment of having a larger training facilities at Jammu and Srinagar.

The Minister also called for preparation of a comprehensive project for conservation of water bodies including Wular Lake, Gharana Wetlands etc.

Additionally, up-gradation of Kashmir Forest Training Institute at Chittanar District Bandipora, in line with Tamil Nadu

Forest Academy and Kundal Academy in Maharashtra also came up for discussion.

Javed Rana further said that there is a need to attach high importance to addressing the challenges of climate change.

Other proposals that were deliberated upon included proposal for Forest Resource Management using AI and remote sensing to plan water harvesting structures, afforestation outcomes, fire prevention etc under Centrally Sponsored Scheme, allocation of funds under CAMPA and Green India Mission. The Minister also called for preparation of a comprehensive project for conservation of water bodies including Wular Lake, Gharana Wetlands.

District-Level Committee finalises beneficiaries under HADP

HT News Network

REASI, FEBRUARY 03: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Reasi, Nidhi Malik chaired the district-level committee meeting to finalize beneficiaries for varied components of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP). Emphasizing the need for extensive outreach, the DDC directed officials from the Agriculture and allied department to ensure that at least 35% of eligible applicants are covered under the scheme. She stressed the



importance of reaching every household and motivating the farmers to take advantage of the program's benefits.

To enhance farmers' skill development, the DDC instructed officers to enroll a maximum number of farmers on the Daksh Kis-

an program and ensure the successful completion of their training. Additionally, she directed officials to register every family under KKGs to facilitate better access to agricultural schemes and resources. Coordination between various departments and

financial institutions was also emphasized to ensure seamless implementation.

The DDC urged Heads of Departments (HODs) to hold internal meetings with their teams and assign area-wise targets to boost application numbers under the HADP. She reiterated that effective teamwork and strategic planning would be key to maximizing the scheme's impact, ultimately benefiting the farming community and strengthening the district's agro-economy. ADDC Reasi Sukhdev Samyal, CPO Narinder Kumar, CAO, CHO, CAHO were present.

Saroori Tours Dugga, Drabshalla, Bhagra, and Sarthal, Addresses Public Concerns

Emphasizes Urgent Need for Development in Remote Areas, Assures Continuous Support to People

HT News Network

Kishtwar, February 03: Former Jammu & Kashmir Minister and senior leader G. M. Saroori, accompanied by his close associate Shabir Lone, conducted an extensive tour of Dugga, Drabshalla, Bhagra, Narwar, and Sarthal, where he met with the local populace, listened to their grievances, and assured them of his unwavering support in all circumstances.

During his visit, G. M. Saroori attended the Nimaz-e-Janazah (funeral prayers) of Javed Ahmed Zargar's mother in Drabshalla. He expressed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, offering prayers for the departed soul and strength for the family to bear the loss. Saroori emphasized that he shares the sorrow of every family in the region and stands with them during their difficult times.

Following the funeral, Saroori visited Dugga, Bhagra, Narwar, and Sarthal, where he engaged in direct interaction with local residents. He patiently listened to their grievances,



which primarily revolved around poor road connectivity, lack of electricity, inadequate healthcare facilities, scarcity of clean drinking water, and limited educational infrastructure. People expressed their frustration over the non-completion of government projects and the lack of attention from the administration towards their needs. They highlighted how severe winter conditions further worsen their hardships, making it even more difficult to access essential services.

Saroori strongly criticized the government's inaction and said: "It is disheartening to see that despite repeated appeals, the basic needs of people in remote areas remain

unfulfilled. The government must prioritize these issues and take immediate steps to improve infrastructure and public services." During the visit, Saroori was informed that several key development projects in Dugga, Bhagra, and Drabshalla have been stalled for years, leaving residents without much-needed improvements in their daily lives. He urged the authorities to fast-track the construction of roads, improve electricity supply, and establish functional healthcare centers in these far-flung areas. He specifically demanded: Completion of road infrastructure in Sarthal, Bhagra, and Drabshalla to enhance connectivity; Improvement in electricity supply to tackle

frequent power outages. Setup of well-equipped medical centers and dispensaries to ensure basic healthcare facilities. Expanding access to clean drinking water in villages where water scarcity is a major problem.

Saroori assured the residents that he would continue to raise their concerns at the highest levels of government until their legitimate demands were met. Saroori also addressed rising unemployment among the youth in the region. He urged the government to initiate employment programs and create opportunities for young people by boosting local industries, vocational training programs, and self-employment schemes. "The government must accelerate recruitment drives in public sector departments and support small businesses in these areas to create sustainable jobs for the youth," Saroori emphasized. Saroori reassured the people that he would always stand by them, no matter the circumstances. He vowed to bring their issues to the forefront and fight for their rights.

India moving towards Viksit Bharat mission by 2047: Arun Gupta

Citizen centric budget 2025 is clear direction to Viksit Bharat: Arun Gupta

Jammu: India is increasingly moving towards becoming Viksit Bharat by 2047. With the Citizen centric budget 2025, Modi government has taken another step to achieve the mission, stated Arun Gupta.

Arun Gupta, spokesperson, J&K BJP accompanied by Rajni Sethi, spokesperson and Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, Media Secretary, was addressing media persons in a press conference at BJP headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu. Arun Gupta, while addressing

the media persons, said that the citizen centric budget of 2025 has focused on Agriculture, MSME, Investment and exports to empower citizens by creating lot of resources in the country benefiting all segments of society. Middle class will get a relief with improvement in ease of living.

Arun Gupta mentioned that it shall benefit 1.7 crore farmers-PM Dhanaya Krishi Yojana. In Pulses, Tur, Urad, Masoor are targeted. He said that the Fish farming and cattle feed

farming is also covered. The KCC Loan upto 5 lakh will be provided. MSME credit is to be enhanced from 5 crore to 10 crore to make it easy for small entrepreneurs to grow. He said that with this budget, Leather industries, Textile industries, Toys industries will get boost. Gupta said that Capital expenditure increased from 2,00,000 crore in 2014 to 10,20,000 in 2025. He said that new Medical Colleges, Nursing Colleges, and all related infrastructure will be enhanced.

Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT, PAHLOO

E.MAIL-cdpopahloo@gmail.com

PRIME MINISTER'S OVERARCHING SCHEME FOR HOLISTIC NUTRITION

Subject: Final selection list of candidate applied for the post of anganwadi helper (sahayika) for anganwadi centre "Hapatward, ward No: three-03".

- Reference: 1. Government Order No.222-JK (SWD) of 2022 Dated: 30.11.2022
- 2. Government Order No. 103-JK (SWD) of 2023 dated: 28.04.2023
- 3. MD/Poshan/Estt/2023/30680-30821 dated: 27-09-2023
- 4. DPO/POSHAN/KUL/2023/1230-35 dated: 05-10-2023
- 5. Adv. Notification No: 02-CDPO-PLD of 2023 dated: 09-10-2023
- 6. No: Re-Adv. Notf. No: 11-CDPO-PLD of 2023 dated: 20-12-2023
- 7. Notification No: 14-CDPO-PLD of 2024 dated: 11-10-2024
- 8. Endtm No: CDPO/POSHAN/PLD/REC/2024/913-23 dated: 11-10-2024. Notification No: 01-CDPO-PLD of 2025 dated: 22-01-2025

NOTIFICATION NO: 02, CDPO-PLD OF 2025 DATED: 03-02-2025
The post of anganwadi helper (sahayika) was advertised by this office vide Notification No: 02-CDPO-PLD of 2023 dated: 09-10-2023 under endorsement No: CDPO/Poshan/PLD/Estt/2023/1635-48 dated: 09-10-2023 for "Hapatward, ward No: three-03" in follow up of government orders referred above, related to the recruitment, the advertisement was published in daily news paper "Aftaab" vide DIPK No: 10190-23/10-23 and extension made by this office vide No: CDPO/Poshan/PLD/Estt/2023/1704-12 dated: 27-10-2023 published in daily news paper "Iqbal E Kashmir" vide DIPK No: 11199-23 dated: 28-10-2023 and re-advertisement made vide Notification No: 11-CDPO-PLD of 2023 dated: 20-12-2023 endorsed vide No: CDPO/Poshan/PLD/2023/2144-54 dated: 20-12-2023 published in news papers i.e. "Kashmir dispatch" vide DIPK No: 14093/23 dated: 21-12-2023 and "Global Kashmir" vide DIPK No: 14093/23. Further, the provisional merit list of all candidates applied for the post was issued by this office vide notification No: 01-CDPO-PLD of 2025 dated: 22-01-2025 endorsed vide No: CDPO/Poshan/PLD/2024/1352-55 dated: 22-01-2025 and was accordingly published in news papers "Brighter Kashmir" and "Tameel-I-Irshad" vide DIPK No: 11135-24 dated: 22-01-2025 for seeking/inviting objections and after completion of seven (07) days, no any objection has been recorded by this office. Further, the final selection list of the post/candidate is appended at annexure "A" and selected candidate is accordingly directed to attend this office within a period of (15) days along with all credentials/documents in original and two sets of xerox copies.

Annexe A

Final selection list of candidate applied for the post of Aganwadi Helper of Sahayika for aganwadi centre ,Hapatward, Ward No 03 Poshian Project Pahloo Dist Kulgam .

S.no	Name of applicant	Parrantage	D.O.B	Residence	Qualification	Total Marks	Marks Obtained	%age	Marital Status	Two Additional Point for family Member of retired AW/Helper	Total Mirit Points
1	Masaratjan	Mohamad Shafi Gorsis	04-07-2005	Lammbur	10 th	500	256	51.2	M	Yes	53.2

DIPK-11495/24
Date: Feb 3 2025

Child development Project Officer
Poshan Project Pahloo

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 & Death (Block Development Officer Wagoora / chokedar) has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of SAFAAN BASHIR MALIK & ZEHRAN BASHIR MALIK S/O BASHIR AHMAD MALIK R/O HARNOW KAWCHECK Tehsil TANGMARG District BARAMULLA having verified the Date of Birth as 27/ 05/2021 & 01 / 09/ 2019 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of Delay orders .In this connection if anyone , if anybody have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his / her to claim this office within 7 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 IMAD IRFAN KHAN D/O MOHD IRFAN KHAN R/O MIRANGUND Tehsil BARAMULLA Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 09/08/2022 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection , if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI
(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)
Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of RUTBA AIJAZ D/O AIJAZ AHMAD YATOO R/O TILAGAM Tehsil PATTAN Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 20/01/2021 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be 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 ARIF AKHTER D/O HABIBULLAH MIR R/O KOHLINA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 09/04/1995 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 FARHAAN FIRDOUS MIR S/O FIRDOUS AHMAD MIR R/O SALOOSA Tehsil KREERI 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 entertaine

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI
(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)
Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of ZAIN BIN SAREER S/O SAREER AHMAD TANTRAY R/O MIRANGUND Tehsil BARAMULLA Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 05/11/2020 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

DC Baramulla chairs DLCDC meeting, approves key initiatives for International Year of Cooperation

■ HT News Network

Baramulla, February 03: Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today chaired the District-Level Cooperative Development Committee meeting, where several key initiatives were approved as part of the International Year of Cooperation.

The meeting focused on fostering sustainable development, enhancing youth participation, and promoting economic growth through cooperative models in the district.

Deputy Registrar Cooperatives, Baramulla, Adnan



Nazir, gave a detailed PowerPoint presentation, outlining the strategies for strengthening the cooperative sector. The approved initiatives include the establishment of Mini Superbazar at Tarzoo and

Pattan, formation of Model Society at Cooperative Marketing Society Sopore which would include an Artisan Village, Cold Storage Facilities, Food Processing Units, Gym Centers and Community library & Mar-

riage Hall amongst other projects.

These projects are designed to boost local industries, create job opportunities, and enhance the livelihood.

Addressing the meeting, DC Minga Sherpa emphasized the role of cooperatives in economic empowerment and community development. He highlighted that the initiatives, aligned with the International Year of Cooperation, will provide significant support to local communities and promote the growth of cooperative enterprises.

MLA Sonawari visits Hajin; Directs restoration of Road cracks near Bangar Mohalla

■ HT News Network

Bandipora FEBRUARY 03: Member Legislative Assembly, (MLA) Sonawari, Hilal Akbar Lone, on Monday visited the Hajin area to assess the critical situation of road cracks along the Jehlum River, near Bangar Mohalla. During the visit, he observed the significant damage caused to the road, which poses a risk to the safety and daily commute of residents. MLA Lone directed for immediate action to restore and repair the damaged stretches, ensuring that the road is safe for public use.



Speaking during the visit, Lone stated, "The safety and well-being of the people are my top priority. We cannot delay any further action in repairing these critical road cracks. I

have instructed the concerned authorities to start the restoration work at the earliest to prevent any further damage and provide relief to the residents." The MLA also emphasized the

need for long-term measures to prevent further road deterioration, especially in areas prone to such challenges due to proximity to the Jehlum River. While interacting with the public, he assured the public that restoration works will begin immediately, with a focus on quality and durability. Later, MLA Hilal Akbar Lone, also visited the site of a devastating fire that recently gutted a joinery mill in Nowgam. The fire destroyed the mill, causing significant loss to the owner. MLA Lone spoke with the affected person and conveyed that he has raised the issue.

Illegal Occupation of Playground Sparks Outrage Among Youth in K.Kot Awantipora

■ HT News Network

Pulwama, February 03: The illegal occupation of government land (Measles Number 996) designated for a playground in the K.Kot area of Awantipora has triggered frustration and anger among the local youth. The encroachment has deprived them of a much-needed space for recreational and sporting activities, leading to growing resentment in the community.

Expressing concern over the issue, BJP District Minority President Suheab Ayoub has demanded swift action from the administration. He warned that if the illegal occupation is not removed promptly, he will be compelled to seek intervention from the Lieutenant Governor's administration. "The youth need a playground to engage in sports and stay away from drugs and other social evils. If the administration fails to act in time, it will put the future of our young generation at risk," Ayoub stated. Residents of the area have echoed these concerns, urging authorities to take immediate steps to clear the encroachment. Frustrated by the inaction, they have also warned that they may resort to protests if their demands are not met.

The illegal occupation of public spaces continues to be a pressing issue, and the people of K.Kot Awantipora now look to the administration for a decisive resolution that will safeguard the interests of the youth and ensure access to a proper playground.

DDC Shopian reviews progress under District Capex budget 2024-25



■ HT News Network

Shopian, February, 03: The District Development Commissioner (DDC), Shopian, Shishir Gupta today chaired a review meeting in his office chamber here at Mini-Secretariat Shopian to assess the physical and financial progress of ongoing developmental projects & works under the District Capex Budget for 2024-25.

The meeting featured a detailed sector-wise analysis and progress achieved till date highlighting key parameters such as fund allocation and utilization rates, physical targets achieved, and challenges encountered during project execution.

The DDC emphasized the impor-

ance of timely project execution, optimal fund utilization, and adherence to quality standards across all sectors.

He directed for providing a detailed workwise information of all works and called for enhanced inter-departmental coordination to resolve bottlenecks hindering project progress.

The district heads were urged to expedite the clearance of financial claims to ensure immediate progress financially.

ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone, ACR, Shakoor Ahmed Dar, ACD, Manzoor Ahmad, Xens, BDOs and other concerned were present. ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone, ACR, Shakoor Ahmed Dar, ACD, Manzoor Ahmad, Xens, BDOs and other concerned were present.

PWNSAT empowers scholars with over Rs. 2.2 Crore in cash rewards

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, Feb 3: PhysicsWallah, (PW), an education platform, honoured 1,581 students who emerged as top performers in the National Scholarship Admission Test (PWNSAT) 2024 from all over the country.

In Srinagar alone, PW felicitated 38 students. As part of its pursuit to make education accessible, PW awarded these students a total of Rs. 2.2 crore in cash prizes at the felicitation ceremony, recognizing their academic achievements. The event marked the culmination of PWNSAT 2024, with over 15.5 lakh students appearing for the exam, making it a significant scholarship initiative in the country.

The PWNSAT 2024 scholarship fund, amounting to Rs. 250 crore, represents a vision by PW to assist students gain access to coaching without the



burden of tuition fees. Through PWNSAT 2024 the aim is to provide JEE and NEET aspirants the access to the faculties, resources, and learning environment. The scholarship program is extended beyond financial assistance, offering accommodation support and mentorship, allowing meritorious students to pursue their academic goals. This year, over 5 lakh students received at least a 50 percent scholarship.

Alakh Pandey, Founder & CEO of PW, said, "When we started, the aim was simple, to make education accessible and affordable. PWNSAT 2024 is one of the

ways we try so that financial constraints are not a hurdle for talented students. This Rs. 250 crore scholarship amount isn't just a number, it represents our commitment to help a student's future. The 1,581 students we are felicitating today have worked hard, and this is our way of recognizing their efforts. The real success will be when they achieve their dreams and help others do the same."

The felicitation ceremony was an event celebrating the perseverance, dedication, and achievements of these students. It brought together students, parents,

educators, and academic leaders to recognize and reward exceptional talent. With this initiative, PW continues to redefine access to education in India, and reinforce its aim to make learning equitable, affordable, and empowering. PhysicsWallah (PW), an education platform, was founded in 2020 by Alakh Pandey and Prateek Maheshwari. Headquartered in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, PW aims to democratize education through online, offline and hybrid platforms. Initially launched as a YouTube channel in 2014, PW now offers education to students through its YouTube channels in multiple vernacular languages.

The company also has an Institute of Innovation (IOI) that provides residential job-ready programs. PW has raised funding from investors, including Hornbill Capital, Light speed Ventures, West-bridge and GSV Ventures.

Police arrests 03 drug peddlers in Sopore; Contraband substance recovered

■ HT News Network



Sopore, February 03: Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Police have arrested 03 drug peddlers in Sopore and recovered contraband substance from their possession.

A police team led by SHO Police Station Panzalla, at a checkpoint established at Hamdania Colony Naidhal Rafiabad intercepted 03 suspicious person. They have been identified as Aadil Ahmad Lone son of Mohammad Rajab Lone, Mohammad Shafi Sheikh son of Ghulam Nabi Sheikh and Sajad Ahmad Lone son of Mohammad Sadeeq Lone all residents of Naidhal Rafiabad. During their personal search, 122 grams of contraband charas like substance was recovered from their possession. All the accused have been arrested.

Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 06/2025 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Panzalla and further investigation has been initiated.

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

Formulate concrete proposals for socio-economic upliftment of tribals: Rana to officers

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 03: Minister for Tribal Affairs, Javed Rana, today called for formulation of concrete proposals aimed at socio-economic upliftment of the tribal communities in Jammu and Kashmir.

He was speaking while chairing a meeting held at Civil Secretariat here. The meeting was attended by Secretary Tribal Affairs, Prasanna Ramaswamy G; Deputy Secretary, Tribal Affairs, Abdul Khabir; Director, Tribal Affairs, Ghulam Rasool and Director Finance Tribal Affairs.

Javed Rana said that the proposals should be reflective of development needs of the tribals with a focus on sustainable development, cultural preservation and socio-economic empowerment.

While addressing the meeting, Rana encouraged formulation of proposals through consultative process. He asked the depart-



ment that the proposal should clearly establish linkage with the overall development of the community.

The Minister emphasised expanded coverage of Dharti Aaba to all tribal villages and targeted efforts to bridge critical gaps in social infrastructure, healthcare, education and livelihood ensuring sustainable growth for tribal communities. He called for expediting fund utilisation and approval of the remaining villages to be covered under Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY).

The Minister asked the

officers to monitor the progress closely so that the remaining villages are covered under the scheme. He asked them to submit the utilisation certificates promptly which will bolster our claim to remaining funds and underscore financial discipline.

While reviewing the progress on hostels and Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS), Rana called for submission of fortnightly reports on construction so that they are completed within the stipulated time frame. He also asked them to address issues of dietary expenses in the Hostels being man-

aged by the Department.

During the meeting, extensive discussions were held on various proposals including formulation of a comprehensive admission policy and conduct of Hostel Audit, sanction of posts for Hostels managed by the Department to preparation of action plan for implementation of Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana and submission of a detailed proposal for reviewing the Policy for deputation of Wardens/Assistant Wardens/Tutors in Gujjar-Bakerwal Hostels.

It is pertinent to mention that the Minister has recently met Union Tribal Affairs Minister, Jugal Oram, in New Delhi and had requested for increased funding for the sector from the Union Government. The Minister emphasised expanded coverage of Dharti Aaba to all tribal villages and targeted efforts to bridge critical gaps in social infrastructure, healthcare, education and livelihood.

District administration Baramulla organizes farewell for SDM Uri, CEO

■ HT News Network

Baramulla, February 03: The District Administration Baramulla, under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Minga Sherpa, organized a farewell ceremony at Dak Bungalow Baramulla to bid adieu to Sub-Divisional Magistrate Uri, Javed Ahmad Rather, and Chief Education Officer, Shabir Ahmad Khan, on their transfer.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Dr Zahoor Ahmad Raina, Joint Director Planning, Javed Ahmad, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Arshad Ahmad Khan and other senior officers and officials attended the farewell function. Speaking on the occasion, DC Baramulla Minga Sherpa appreciated the dedicated services of Javed Ahmad Rather and Shabir Ahmad Khan, commending their professionalism and commitment to public service. He extended his best wishes for their future endeavors and expressed confidence that they would continue to excel in their new roles. SDM Uri Javed Ahmad Rather, in his farewell address, expressed gratitude to the district administration for unwavering support during his tenure. "Serving in Uri has been both challenging



and rewarding. I am thankful to the administration, my colleagues, and the people of Uri for their cooperation. The experience I have gained here will always guide me in my future responsibilities," he said. Chief Education Officer Shabir Ahmad Khan also shared his reflections, emphasizing the collective efforts that strengthened the education sector in the district. "Ensuring quality education has been my top priority, and I deeply appreciate the support of the administration, teachers, and the community in achieving this goal. It has been a privilege to serve in Baramulla," he remarked. Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramulla on the occasion highlighted the contributions of the outgoing officers, noting their dedication to public service.

Education Department Kupwara hosts farewell, welcome ceremony

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 03: The Education Department Kupwara organized a function today in the Conference Hall of the D.C. Office Kupwara to bid farewell to the

outgoing Chief Education Officer (CEO), Abdul Majeed Dar, and to formally welcome the newly posted CEO, Mehraj-u-din Shah.

ACR Kupwara, Peerzada Mumtaz Ahmad was chief guest on the occasion. The function was attended



by large number of senior officers and employees of the Education department, besides, newly promoted officers from Kupwara district including CEO Anantnag, Bashir Ahmad Shah; Principal DIET Kupwara, Manzoor Ahmad Bhat and DPEO Kup-

wara and retired officers. During the event, speakers & participants Abdul Majeed Dar for his dedicated service and significant contributions to the educational development in the district. They also commended Dar's leadership and vision for improving,

DC inaugurates Science Mela & Book Exhibition at GHSSB Rajouri

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, FEBRUARY 3: Government Boys Model Higher Secondary School, in collaboration with J&K Science Communicators Network (J&K SCN) on Monday organized the first-ever Science Mela and Book Exhibition, marking a significant milestone in promoting scientific inquiry and literary appreciation among students.

The prestigious event was graced by Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma as the Chief Guest, while Joint Director SCERT, H.R. Pakhru, presided over the function. Chief Education Officer Bishamber Das was the special invitee, adding further prestige to



the occasion. A distinguished gathering of academicians, intellectuals, principals, teachers, masters and lecturers from Zone Rajouri witnessed the event, alongside an enthusiastic participation of students. The Science Mela and Book Exhibition served as an innovative platform for students to explore, experiment, and engage with

both the world of science and the vast ocean of literature. The program included an interactive "Fun with Science" session and a Sky Observation Camp, where students got a rare opportunity to witness celestial wonders, igniting their curiosity about the universe. The hands-on science activities and demonstrations

allowed students to experience the practical application of scientific principles in an engaging and fun-filled manner.

In his address, the Deputy Commissioner commended the efforts of Principal HSS and the entire organizing team and resource persons for conceptualizing and executing such an enriching event. He highlighted the importance of such initiatives in fostering scientific thinking, rational inquiry and literary enrichment among students, calling it a transformative step in the education sector.

"Events like the Science Mela and Book Exhibition are essential in shaping young minds, enhancing critical thinking.

DC Kishtwar hands over Key of Tractor to HADP Beneficiary

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, FEBRUARY 03: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishtwar, Rajesh Kumar Shavan today handed over keys of Tractor to a farmer Abdul Salam Wani from the far-flung area of Bhatta, Warwan of Sub Division Marwah provided to him under the Farm Mechanization and Automation Scheme of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) for the year 2024-25. The farmer was provided a 50% subsidy, with a maximum limit of 5 lakh, to facilitate modern farming practices in remote areas.



The DC interacted with the beneficiary, gathering insights on how the tractor will be utilized to improve agricultural productivity in the region. Last month a tractor was provided to a Farmer from Haynan Marwah under the same scheme.

The Agriculture Department is

extending subsidies ranging from 50% to 90% under various HADP initiatives to support farmers across the district. The DC urged all farmers of the District to take advantage of the scheme to promote farm mechanization, which will enhance agricultural efficiency, reduce labour efforts,

and improve crop production and productivity in an economical and time-effective manner.

The event was attended by Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO) Kishtwar, Amjad Hussain Malik, Sub-Divisional Agriculture Officer (SDAO) Marwah, Manzoor Ahmed Zargar, and Subject

JK Samadhan Grievances Web Portal DC Poonch reviews disposal status of projected issues

■ HT News Network

POONCH, FEBRUARY 03: Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal today reviewed the grievances redressal mechanism, particularly the status of those received on JK Samadhan Grievance Web Portal.



Chairing a meeting, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of addressing pending grievances and ensuring timely disposal. He directed all officers to prioritize clearing any backlog on the portal and to facilitate the registration of citizens.

The Deputy Commissioner also mandated a thorough quality check on grievance disposals, highlighting the need for transparency and efficiency in

public service. He reviewed the actions taken by various departments in response to citizen complaints submitted through the Samadhan portal.

To further support this initiative, all departments were urged to actively engage with the public, raise awareness about the JK Samadhan portal, and assist citizens in the registration process.

The meeting saw the participation of key officials, including ADC, Addi-

tional SP; ACR; ACD; ACP; DFO; DSWO; CMO; CAO; CEO Education; CEO Municipality; Executive Engineers; Tehsildars; AD FCS&CA; Inspector MVD, besides some joining via virtual mode. The Deputy Commissioner also mandated a thorough quality check on grievance disposals, highlighting the need for transparency and efficiency in public service. He reviewed the actions taken by various departments in response to citizen.

NCORD meeting reviews Drug Control measures in Udhampur DC seeks focus on counseling services, IEC activities

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, FEBRUARY 03: To review and reinforce measures to combat drug abuse in the district, Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai, chaired a District-Level Committee meeting of the Narco Coordination Centre here in Mini Conference Hall DC Office Complex Udhampur.

The meeting was attended by Senior Superintendent of Police, Amod Ashok Nagpure; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Gurvinderjeet Singh; Assistant Commissioner Development, Dr. Ranjeet Singh Kotwal and other senior officers. A comprehensive discussion was held on different aspects of drug prevention, including identification and rehabilitation of drug addicts, tracking and apprehending individuals involved in drug trafficking, eliminating illegal cannabis cultivation, identifying drug abuse hotspots, strengthening



Nasha Mukta Panchayat initiatives, and implementing robust rehabilitation measures for addicts.

The DC instructed concerned officers to compile detailed action reports on previous directives and emphasized the mandatory installation of 100% CCTV cameras in all medical shops to curb the misuse of prescription drugs. She further directed all departments to intensify counseling services and IEC activities to spread awareness

about drug abuse.

The Principals of Colleges were directed to organize regular awareness programs in their institutions.

The CMO was instructed to conduct sensitization and counseling sessions for staff at all healthcare institutions and to extend IEC campaigns to the village level.

The DC stressed strict enforcement actions to seize illicit drugs and protect the youth, particularly students, from drug abuse.

She directed the Police Department to submit a detailed report on the types of drugs seized and their locations, enabling a targeted strategy to track and apprehend drug peddlers.

The DC emphasized disrupting drug supply chains through a collaborative approach among all line departments. A comprehensive discussion was held on different aspects of drug prevention, including identification and rehabilitation of drug addicts, tracking and apprehending individuals involved in drug trafficking, eliminating illegal cannabis cultivation, identifying drug abuse hotspots, strengthening Nasha Mukta Panchayat initiatives, and implementing robust rehabilitation measures for addicts.

The DC instructed concerned officers to compile detailed action reports on previous directives and emphasized the mandatory installation of 100% CCTV cameras in all medical shops.

Awareness program on PCPNDT Act held at AWC Nagrota

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 03: Reinforcing its commitment to women's empowerment and social justice and effective implementation of BBBP initiatives, Mission Shakti SANKALP HEW Jammu took a proactive step by organizing a high-impact awareness programme on the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act at the Anganwadi Centre in Nagrota. The initiative further solidified Mission Shakti's role as a champion of women's rights and gender equality in Jammu.

The session, led by legal expert Advocate Kiran Thakur, provided a powerful insight into the legal provisions of the PCPNDT Act, emphasizing its strict measures against the misuse of ultrasound technology for sex determination.



She elaborated on the stringent regulations for diagnostic centers and the severe penalties for violations, driving home the critical message of preventing female foeticide.

Beyond legal awareness, Mission Shakti SANKALP HEW Jammu seized the opportunity to educate women about an extensive range

of welfare schemes dedicated to their upliftment. District Mission Coordinator Mission Shakti Shagun Manchanda enlightened the participants about flagship initiatives such as State Marriage Assistance Scheme (SMAS), Ladli Beti, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), Old Age Pension, Widow and Disability Pensions, PMEGP,

Tejaswini, and various skill development programs offered by RSETI and other training institutes.

The event was graced by key dignitaries, including CDPO Poshan Project Dansal Ranbireswar Singh, Health and Nutrition Mobilizer Nazia Choudhary, and District Mission Coordinator Shagun Manchanda, who reiterated Mission Shakti's unwavering commitment to empowering women at every level.

To further support and encourage maternal health, Mission Shakti SANKALP HEW Jammu distributed nutritional kits to pregnant women in the area, ensuring that both mother and child receive the necessary care for a healthy future. Baby kits were also distributed among new born baby girls. The programme was organised under the supervision of District Social Welfare Officer Jammu Mamta Rajput.

ANMT School Doda organises Debate Competition on Leprosy, Tuberculosis, Biomedical Waste Management

■ HT News Network

DODA, FEBRUARY 3: The Government ANMT School Doda organized a debate competition on the crucial topics of Leprosy, Tuberculosis, and Biomedical Waste Management today. The event aimed to raise awareness among students about these important health concerns and their management.

The programme was graced by Chief Medical Officer Doda, Dr. Om Kumar, as the Chief Guest, while Principal ANMT Doda, Vidya Kotwal, along with Dr. Javed Ahmed Parray, Mohammad Shafi Attu, and Advocate Sanjeev Rana, were also present. The staff of ANMT School and enthusiastic students also attended the event.

A total of 10 students from different paramedical courses participated in the debate competition, delivering insightful speeches on their respective topics. Their

presentations reflected deep understanding and awareness of the subjects.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Om Kumar highlighted the significance of leprosy and tuberculosis awareness, as well as the proper management of biomedical waste. He conducted an interactive session, providing valuable insights to the students.

Principal ANMT Vidya Kotwal, also addressed the gathering, expressing gratitude to the CMO and other officials for their presence and support in making the event successful.

Later, participation certificates were presented to the students in recognition of their efforts and engagement in the competition.

The event concluded on a positive note, emphasizing the importance of health awareness and proper biomedical waste disposal in the medical field.

MLA Haveli and MLA Surankote inaugurates Scientific Beekeeping seminar at Poonch

■ HT News Network

Poonch: A two-day seminar-cum-training programme on scientific beekeeping commenced today in Poonch, organized by the Department of Agriculture Poonch to promote modern apiculture techniques and financial assistance schemes available to farmers. The programme was formally inaugurated by Hon'ble MLA Haveli Ajaz Ahmed Jan and Hon'ble MLA Surankote Ch. Mohd Akram, who underscored the role of beekeeping in enhancing farm productivity and rural livelihoods.

Speaking at the inaugural session, the Chief Agriculture

Officer Poonch highlighted beekeeping as a viable agri-allied venture, particularly in the context of government schemes such as the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and the Madhu Kranti Portal which facilitates beekeeper registration and subsidy disbursement. Farmers were informed about financial incentives, including an 80% subsidy on beekeeping units, aimed at promoting the sector in the region. He also briefed participants on the immense potential of beekeeping in the district and shed light on the medicinal value of honey, the role of pollination in enhancing food grain production, and employment generation in the apiculture



sector.

The first day of the seminar witnessed the participation of over 200 individuals, including college students, farmers, and

beekeepers, demonstrating strong interest in apiculture. Expert speakers from the Agriculture and allied departments conducted technical sessions

covering scientific hive management, disease control, pollination benefits and honey extraction techniques.

MLA Haveli Ajaz Ahmed,

Jan appreciated the efforts of the Chief Agriculture Officer Poonch for his tireless work in boosting mushroom production in the district. He highlighted that Poonch has transitioned from being a mushroom importer to a self-sufficient producer, significantly strengthening the local economy. He also assured farmers that there is no shortage of funds, and they should fully avail themselves of the financial incentives and support available.

MLA Surankote Ch. Mohd Akram commended the Agriculture Department for its initiatives and emphasized that 90% of the district's economy depends on agriculture. He

acknowledged the immense efforts made by the department to promote agricultural activities, ensuring sustainable growth and increased farmer income.

The event concluded with an interactive session where progressive beekeepers and farmers shared their experiences, discussed challenges, and explored opportunities for scaling up honey production. Tomorrow, the programme will continue with hands-on practical training on colony management, honey harvesting, and scientific disease prevention techniques, ensuring a comprehensive learning experience for all participants.

Udhampur: District Advisory Committee reviews enforcement of PC & PNDT Act

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, FEBRUARY 03: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai convened a meeting of the District Advisory Committee today to review the implementation of the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act in the district.

At the outset, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Anil Manhas provided an overview of the meeting's objectives and presented cases for the registration of new private ultrasound centers.

A detailed discussion was held on various key issues, including the registration and renewal of ultrasound center certificates, regulations under the PC & PNDT Act, inspection protocols and mechanisms for monitoring compliance, conducting IEC activities to raise public awareness was also emphasized. The DC



directed the CMO to grant provisional registration to clinical establishments upon fulfillment of requisite formalities. Additionally, the CMO was instructed to carry out inspections of both registered and take action against unregistered clinical establishments, if any, as per the provisions of the Clinical Establishment Act. The stakeholder departments were

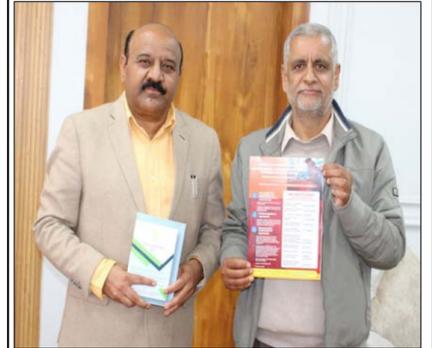
tasked with conducting frequent inspections of ultrasound clinics, particularly in remote areas, to ensure compliance with the rules and provisions of the Act. Strict action was recommended against any institutions found violating the regulations. The DC emphasized that the inspection team must include a representative from the police department. For the

approval of new ultrasound center registrations, the DC mandated that photographs and videographic evidence of the premises and its surroundings be presented before the Advisory Committee. All ultrasound centers across the district were directed to maintain proper records of antenatal cases. The stakeholder departments were tasked with conducting frequent inspections of ultrasound clinics, particularly in remote areas, to ensure compliance with the rules and provisions of the Act. Strict action was recommended against any institutions found violating the regulations. The DC emphasized that the inspection team must include a representative from the police department.

For the approval of new ultrasound center registrations, the DC mandated that photographs and videographic evidence of the premises and its surroundings be presented before the Advisory Committee.

Dy CM releases JKBOCW Board compendium Meets several deputations; assesses their issues

HT News Network



JAMMU, FEBRUARY 3:- Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Chowdhary, today released a Compendium on laws related to Jammu and Kashmir Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (JKBOCW) besides a poster highlighting various incentives being offered to the workers. Chief Executive Officer, JKBOCW, Muneer ul Islam, was also present. The compendium, replete with the information about the relevant laws, would serve as a referral to the concerned.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister also met several deputations and took stock of their issues and concerns. A deputation of ASHA workers demanded revision of monthly incentives, regularisation of Asha workers as Health workers and other related issues. The Kashmir Labour Unions' Federation demanded settlement of issues related to death cases, matrimonial cases and other related issues. Similarly, deputations from Verinag, Katra, Anantnag, Rajouri, Poonch and Doda also met the Deputy Chief Minister and highlighted several developmental issues of their respective areas and sought immediate redressal. While interacting with the deputations, the Deputy Chief Minister assured them of early redressal of the issues projected by them.

DLSA Samba hosts special Lok Adalat on Feb 22, 2025

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 03: In Compliance to the Calendar of Activities for the year 2025, issued by J&K Legal Services Authority, District Legal Services Authority Samba, under the chairmanship of Ravinder Nath Watal, the Chairman, shall be organizing a Special Lok Adalat on Traffic Challans and Electricity Bills on Feb 22, 2025 in the District.

The litigants are informed that if any of them is interested to settle his/her dispute or case in the said Lok Adalat amicably through Conciliation and Mediation, he/she shall approach the concerned Court and get his/her case fixed in the said National Lok Adalat.

Plantation drive conducted on Doda-Ghat Road

HT News Network

DODA, FEBRUARY 03: In a significant step towards environmental conservation, a plantation drive was today conducted along the Doda-Ghat road in presence of Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh. The initiative was organised by the Forest Department in collaboration with Professor (Retd) Zahir Abbas Hashmi—a well-known social activist. The event witnessed active participation from several dignitaries, including DDC Member, Advocate Asim Hashmi, DFO Doda, and other Officers and officials. The Deputy Commissioner Doda emphasized the importance of afforestation in combating climate change and enhancing the region's green cover. He also encouraged citizens to contribute towards such environmental conservation initiatives. The plantation drive aimed to promote ecological balance and raise awareness about the significance of tree plantation in maintaining biodiversity. The Forest Department provided saplings and technical support for the event.

DC Rajouri inspects structures affected by NH construction in Nowshera BRO asked to expedite retaining wall construction

HT News Network

RAJOURI, FEBRUARY 03: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma conducted an on-the-site inspection today to assess the impact of the ongoing National Highway construction on some structures in Nowshera.

During the visit, he directed the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) to expedite retaining walls construction and complete the same before onset of rains to ensure the safety and well-

being of residents. Interacting with the locals, the DC listened to their grievances and assured timely redressal. He also directed Assistant Commissioner Defence, to expedite the land acquisition process and ensure that compensation is awarded to the affected residents without delay.

Accompanying the DC during the visit were ADC, Nowshera, Babu Ram Tandon, AC Defense, Israr Mir, representatives from BRO, and other district and sectoral officers.



Nasha Mukh Abhiyan AYUSH Department organises awareness program at SAR Institute-Ramban

HT News Network

RAMBAN, FEBRUARY 03: Intensifying the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, the Department of AYUSH, in line with directives issued by District Administration Ramban, organized a lecture-cum-awareness program at SAR Institute, Ramban to educate students about the harmful effects of substance abuse and mobile addiction.

During the event, Raju Singh from Padhoji Institute, Jammu, delivered an insightful counselling lecture, emphasizing the psychological impact and strategies to overcome dependency to addiction. He highlighted the growing concern of digital addiction among youth and the need for balanced usage of technology. Senior Medical Officer & District Yoga Coordinator Dr. Masood Iqbal Zarger spoke about the Nasha Mukh Abhiyan, underlining the critical role of Yoga and Meditation in de-addiction and mental well-being. He urged students to adopt a healthy lifestyle and engage in activities that promote mindfulness and self-discipline.

Expressing gratitude, Head of SAR Institute Ajaz Ahmed thanked the Department of AYUSH for conducting this valuable awareness session. He appreciated the efforts of the District Administration Ramban, under the guidance of the Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary in organizing programs that contribute to the well-being of students and the community.

The session concluded with a call to action, encouraging students to spread awareness about the ill effects of substance abuse and adopt healthier life choices.

118 Cr RDSS works under execution in Poonch to strengthen power distribution system DC conducts on-site inspection to assess progress

HT News Network

POONCH, FEBRUARY 3: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Poonch, Vikas Kundal conducted a day-long tour to inspect the progress of ongoing works under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) in the district.

Executive Engineer Aftab Ahmed briefed the DC on the status of the RDSS projects. The scheme, with a project cost of 118 crore aims to strengthen the power distribution infrastructure in the District. Key components of the project include the installation of 11,000 poles, laying Low Tension Aerial Bundled Cables (LT ABC), and the addition of 500 new distribution transformers for augmentation and replacement of outdated equipment. This initiative is expected to significantly reduce Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses in the district.

DC Kundal emphasized the importance of properly implementing the RDSS scheme, stating that it is a game changer for enhancing the power infrastructure in the district.



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The Deputy Commissioner instructed the executing agency to ensure that all ongoing works under the scheme are completed within the established timelines, aiming for the overall improvement of the power scenario in the district.

DC Kundal emphasized the importance of properly implementing the RDSS scheme, stating that it is a game changer for enhancing the power infrastructure in the district.

Poonch. He highlighted that the scheme is designed to modernize and augment power supply, ultimately improving quality, reliability, and affordability for consumers. Executive Engineer Aftab Ahmed briefed the DC on the status of the RDSS projects. The scheme, with a project cost of 118 crore aims to strengthen the power distribution infrastructure in the District. Key components of the project include the installation of 11,000 poles, laying Low Tension Aerial Bundled Cables (LT ABC), and the addition of 500 new distribution transformers for augmentation and replacement of outdated equipment. This initiative is expected to significantly reduce Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses in the district.

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DC Kundal emphasized the importance of properly implementing the RDSS scheme, stating that it is a game changer for enhancing the power infrastructure in the district Poonch. He highlighted that the scheme is designed to modernize and augment power supply, ultimately improving quality, reliability, and affordability.

J&K to join nationwide 'Watershed Yatra' RDD Minister to flag off 'Yatra van' from Kathua on Feb 5

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 03: In a significant step towards sustainable water management, the Government of India is all set to launch the "Watershed Yatra"—a nationwide awareness campaign under the Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY 2.0).

The campaign will be flagged off on February 5 at the national level by Union Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, which will be



virtually broadcast across India, including Jammu and Kashmir.

Simultaneously, in Jammu and Kashmir, the yatra will be inaugurated by Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Election Departments, Javed Ahmad

Dar, from Hiranagar, Kathua.

A state-of-the-art "Watershed Yatra Van, equipped with Augmented Reality (AR) tools and digital demonstrations, will traverse 2,400 km across Jammu and Kashmir, targeting over 5 lakh residents through interactive work-

shops, community activities and awareness drives. The campaign, running until March 1, 2025, will culminate in Jammu, showcasing cutting-edge techniques in watershed conservation, soil health enhancement and rainwater harvesting.

The primary aim of this campaign is to encourage public participation and raise awareness about watershed development under the Watershed Development Component of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana 2.0 (WDC-PMKSY 2.0) across all states and Union Territories (UTs) in India.

DDC Doda finalises scale of finance for Kharif 2025, Rabi 2025-26 crops

HT News Network

DODA, FEBRUARY 03: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Doda, Harvinder Singh today chaired a meeting in Mini Meeting Hall, DC Office Complex to finalize the Scale of Finance for Kharif 2025 and Rabi 2025-26.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Planning Officer, General Manager DIC, Chief Agriculture Officer, Lead District Manager and other senior officers.

Also present were branch heads of various banks, DD Manager NAB-



ARD, Zonal Head J&K Bank, branch managers, the Nodal Officer JKEDI, and other stakeholders.

Discussions were held on different financial aspects, including the Scale of Finance for the upcoming cropping sea-

sons, as well as the progress of District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) cases under schemes like Mumkin, Tejaswini, and Spurring Entrepreneurship Initiative (S.E.I.).

The meeting reviewed cases under PMEGP and JKREGP, ensuring timely approvals and financial support to beneficiaries. The DDC emphasized the need for a streamlined financial structure to support farmers and entrepreneurs. He directed the concerned officers to ensure efficient processing of financial cases to maximize benefits for the people of the district. The meeting was attended by the Chief Planning Officer, General Manager DIC, Chief Agriculture Officer, Lead District Manager and other senior officers. Also present were branch heads of various banks, DD Manager NABARD.

Chief priest of Ram temple admitted to PGI

AGENCIES
AYODHYA (UP), FEB 3 (UND)

Chief priest of the Ram temple Acharya Satyendra Das at Shri Ram Janmabhoomi, has been admitted to PGI after his health deteriorated, family sources said here on Monday.

According to family sources, his condition is critical. He has been admitted to PGI after a brain stroke. He is also suffering from diabetes and high blood pressure.

At present, he is stable and is under the observation of specialist doctors.

According to the health bulletin issued by PGI, his condition is critical. Currently, he has been admitted to the Neurology Ward HDU and is undergoing treatment under the supervision of specialist doctors.

On Sunday, Satyendra Das was admitted to a local hospital after difficulty in breathing, where the doctors referred him to Lucknow.

4 dead in Philippine fire

AGENCIES
MANILA, FEB 3 (UND)

Four people, including a three-year-old girl, have died after they were trapped in their burning two-story house in Bataan province, west of Philippine capital Manila, the Bureau of Fire Protection said.

The bureau said fire engulfed the house at around 4:45 a.m. local time on Sunday, torching the house and the four victims inside, a 70-year-old female, a 53-year-old male, a 24-year-old female, and a three-year-old girl.

According to the bureau, the fire started on the house's first floor.

It took firefighters less than 30 minutes to control the fire.

Authorities are still investigating the cause of the fire.

Policeman escorting polio team killed in NW Pakistan

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD, FEB 3 (UND)

A policeman was killed in firing by unidentified militants in Pakistan's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Monday morning, official sources said.

The incident happened at about 9:20 a.m. local time (GMT 0420) in the Khyber district, where the policeman, who was on duty as part of a polio vaccination campaign, was targeted, the sources from the district told Xinhua.

The assailants fled the scene after seizing the cop's submachine gun, the sources added.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack yet. However, the sources indicated that the area has seen increased activities by militant groups, including factions associated with the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan.

Police cordoned off the area, and an investigation into the attack has commenced.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday kicked off a nationwide anti-polio campaign for the year 2025, reaffirming his government's determination to completely eliminate the polio disease from the South Asian country.

Neither UPA nor NDA could answer the youth about employment: Rahul Gandhi

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 3 (UND)

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi on Monday said the biggest issue before the country is to tackle the problem of unemployment and neither the UPA nor the NDA governments have given an answer to the youth of the country.

Participating in the motion of thanks to the President's address in the Lok Sabha, Gandhi said, "The future of this country is going to be decided by the youth of India. I think anything we say has to be addressed to them."

"The first thing in front of



us and this is something, I am sure the Prime Minister will accept and pretty much everybody in this room will accept is that even though, we have grown and are still growing, a universal problem

we have faced is that we have not been able to tackle the problem of unemployment. Neither the UPA government nor today's NDA government have given a clear-cut answer to the youth of India about

employment," he said.

While calling the government's "Make in India" a "good idea", Rahul said despite the functions and investments, the "manufacturing fell from 15.3 percent of GDP in 2014 to 12.6 percent of GDP today, which is the lowest share of manufacturing in 60 years".

He said Make in India was "conceptually a good idea and the Prime Minister tried. But it is clear that the PM failed".

Referring to the President's address, the former Congress President said: "I've heard the same address before, and it is was the same laundry list of things".

Delhi AAP govt has failed people by not implementing central schemes: BJP

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 3 (UND)

The BJP on Monday attacked the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for not implementing any central schemes, including the Ayushman Bharat Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, and committing gross injustice to the people of Delhi, especially those from 'Purvanchal'.

Moving the motion of thanks on the President's address in the Lok Sabha, BJP member Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said that the AAP, during its rule, has destroyed the local infrastructure and failed the public transport system and provided poor education and



health systems.

Countering those who accuse the Narendra Modi government of doing nothing for Delhi in the last 10 years, he said they "should listen today to what I am saying. After becoming the Prime Minister, Modi ji constructed the peripheral road. But the AAP government did not give a single penny. But our government did not stop the work."

Entire world is observing India's fast growth: AP CM

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 3 (UND)

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, on Monday said that the entire world is now closely observing the fast progress of India and that during his recent visit to Davos he closely observed this.

Addressing media persons in New Delhi on Monday during the second day of his visit to the national capital, the Chief Minister said that the global focus was earlier on Information Technology (IT) but now it has shifted to Artificial Intelligence (AI). Chandrababu Naidu is of the firm opinion that the nation is much ahead of other coun-



tries with regard to AI and the whole world is well aware of this fact. The Chief Minister is confident that by 2047 India would be a well developed nation. He mentioned that the budgetary allocations are mainly to achieve the objectives of Vikasitha Bharat and top priority will be accorded

for creating basic amenities. He felt that several changes have been made in tax reforms while reforms in power sector Andhra Pradesh stood on top. The Chief Minister is of the firm opinion that policy adopted with regard to MSME is going to be a game-changer for the whole nation.

Sri Lankan Navy apprehends 10 fishermen from Tamil Nadu

AGENCIES
RAMESWARAM (TAMIL NADU) FEB 3 (UND)

The Sri Lankan Navy on Monday apprehended 10 Indian fishermen and seized their mechanised fishing trawler allegedly for straying into the Sri Lankan territorial waters and indulging in illegal fishing activities.

Fisheries department officials said here that the fishermen, hailing from Thangachimadam fishing hamlet in Rameswaram, were apprehended by the Lankan navy when they were fishing in the Palk Bay close to the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) in the wee hours.

The fishermen had set sail



into the sea from Mandapam South Fishing Harbour on Sunday morning for routine fishing activities.

The seized boat, together with arrested fishermen, will be handed over to the fisheries officials at Mannar for onwards legal proceedings.

With this, the Sri Lankan

maritime forces arrested 75 Indian fishermen and seized eight Indian fishing trawlers so far this year.

In 2024 alone, the Sri Lankan navy apprehended 554 Indian fishermen, seized 72 Indian fishing boats, and initiated legal action against them.

RS takes up Motion of Thanks to President Address

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 3 (UND)

The Rajya Sabha on Monday took up discussion on Motion of Thanks to President Droupadi Murmu's address following other scheduled businesses even as the Upper House witnessed uproarious scenes on the third day of the Budget session of the Parliament.

Speaking during the Motion of Thanks to the President's address, BJP leader Kiran Choudhry said that the President in her address encapsulated the vision for India where youth, women, farmers, common man and all the citizens of the country have the best opportunity to flourish.

"Farmers have always been the backbone of our nation

and the government has taken monumental steps to double the incomes and to improve their lifestyles," she said as she spoke in support of the Motion of Thanks. BJP MP Neeraj Shekhar listed out the achievements of the government and highlighted the success of various schemes.

"Today there are about five expressways in Uttar Pradesh. An expressway is being built with an estimated cost of Rs 6,000 crore Ballia," he said highlighting the development works being undertaken by the government.

Earlier during the day as the House began its proceedings, Opposition members demanded a discussion on stampede in Maha Kumbh but their plea was rejected by Chairman Jagdeep Dhanekar.

SC declines to entertain petition on Maha Kumbh 2025 stampede

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 3 (UND)

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a writ petition highlighting concerns over crowd management and public safety at large religious gatherings, including the recent stampede at Maha Kumbh 2025 in Uttar Pradesh.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar emphasised that the matter should be moved to the Allahabad High Court. "It's an unfortunate incident, something that is of concern, but move the High Court," remarked the CJI during the hearing. The petitioner, Advoca-



te Vishal Tiwari, appeared in person, arguing that stampede incidents at religious events had become a recurring issue.

Senior Advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing the State of Uttar Pradesh, informed the bench that a

related petition was already pending before the Allahabad High Court.

Taking note of the submission, the top court granted the petitioner liberty to approach the High Court.

The petition, filed under Article 12 of the Constitution,

raised serious concerns over the "failure" of the authorities to implement adequate safety measures despite past tragedies, including the 1954 Kumbh Mela stampede. It is alleged that administrative planning and execution remain deficient, with the Central and state Governments bearing absolute liability for ensuring public welfare during mass gatherings.

The plea also highlighted the disparity in administrative response, alleging that while elaborate security arrangements are made for VIPs, the general public often faces overcrowding, mismanagement and inadequate safety measures.

King of Bhutan set to visit Maha Kumbh on Tuesday

AGENCIES
LUCKNOW, FEB 3 (UND)

King of Bhutan, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, arrived in Lucknow on Monday.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath warmly welcomed the King at Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport.

The CM presented a bouquet to the King and inquired about his well-being. In return, the King of Bhutan extended his greetings to Yogi.

In keeping with Indian tradition, artists welcomed the King with various cultural performances at the Airport. Wangchuck acknowledged their efforts and encouraged the artists.

On Tuesday, the King of



Bhutan is set to visit Prayagraj Maha Kumbh, where he will take a holy bath at the Triveni Sangam and perform darshan and Pujan at the sacred site.

Among those who were present to welcome the King

at the Airport were Mayor Sushma Kharkwal, Principal Secretary (Home) Sanjay Prasad, DGP Prashant Kumar, and Lucknow District Magistrate Vishak G, who also presented bouquets to the King.

Ayodhya sets record as over 1 cr devotees visit since Jan 26

AGENCIES
AYODHYA (UP), FEB 3 (UND)

Ayodhya has set a new record with over one crore devotees visiting the holy city since January 26 till Basant Panchami on Monday. Amid vigilant administrative arrangements, devotees arriving in Ayodhya are filled with joy and devotion, chanting slogans in praise of Modi, Yogi, and Lord Shri Ram. On Basant Panchami, lakhs of devotees performed sacred baths and offered prayers, further enriching the spiritual atmosphere.

For the first time since Ram Lalla was enthroned in the grand temple, Maha Kumbh is being held in Prayagraj, drawing an influx of pilgrims

to Ayodhya as well. Anticipating this, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had deployed a dedicated team of officials to oversee the arrangements and ensure a seamless experience for devotees.

Following a public meeting in Milkipur on February 2, he reinforced instructions to officials, emphasising that no devotee should face any difficulty.

The sacred bathing ritual on Basant Panchami began at dawn and continued until the afternoon, accompanied by acts of charity and devotion. Devotees then proceeded to maths and temples for darshan, with queues stretching till late evening at Ram Temple and Hanuman Garhi.

The Ram Temple remains the spiritual epicenter of Ayodhya, attracting around three lakh devotees daily. The temple trust has made elaborate arrangements to facilitate darshan, keeping the temple open for 18 hours a day.

Simultaneously, Hanuman Garhi continues to witness a steady stream of devotees, reinforcing Ayodhya's deep-rooted spiritual significance.

The maths and temples of Ayodhya witnessed vibrant celebrations on Basant Panchami, as sadhus and saints joyfully played with colours, marking the festive spirit. As part of the rituals, abir and gular were also applied to the deity seated in the sanctum sanctorum.

Lifestyle choices, workplace culture key for mental well-being, productivity: Eco Survey



Lifestyle choices and workplace culture are critical for the mental well-being and thus, the productivity of the people in India, according to the Economic Survey 2024-25.

Tabled in Parliament by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the Survey noted that mental well-being encompasses all our mental-emotional, social, cognitive, and physical capabilities -- construed as the mind's composite health.

It noted that beyond being an economic issue, mental well-being is the ability to navigate life's challenges and function productively.

"Data suggests that mental well-being is not static; indeed, there is a myriad of factors, including workplace culture, hours spent working, and lifestyle, that influence mental well-being," the Survey said.

It highlights how lifestyle, work culture, family bonds, eating habits, etc., are affecting the mental

health of citizens in the country.

It also laid emphasis on the impact of screen time and ultra-processed foods on mental health.

"While promoting a better workplace culture will lead to better mental well-being, lifestyle choices, and family situations also play a significant role. Results of the survey show that individuals who rarely consume ultra-processed or packaged junk food have better mental well-being than those who regularly do," the Survey said.

Similarly, people who rarely exercise, spend their free time on social media or are not close to their families have worse mental well-being.

"Lifestyle choices and workplace culture are critical for mental well-being and, hence, productivity. If India's economic ambitions are to be met, then immediate attention must be given to lifestyle choices that are often made during childhood/youth," it said.

Eco Survey raises concerns on rising ultra-processed food consumption, proposes health tax

Increasing consumption of ultra-processed foods (UPF) -- rich in sugar, salt, and unsaturated fats and nutrient deficient -- in India is leading to multiple chronic conditions and even mental health issues, according to the Economic Survey 2024-25.

The Economic Survey 2024-25, tabled in Parliament on Friday by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, also proposed a 'health tax' to reduce consumption.

"From sweetened breakfast cereals, soft drinks, and energy drinks to fried chicken and packaged cookies, ultra-processed foods have undeniably marked their formidable presence in everyday diet," the Survey said.

The NOVA food classification system defines UPFs as ready-to-eat products characterised



as industrial formulations composed of substances extracted from food. To enhance taste, these UPFs use additives such as preservatives, sweeteners, and emulsifiers.

"Convenience, hyper palat-

ability, affordability, longer shelf life, and vigorous advertising and marketing strategies have made a conducive environment for the thriving business of UPFs in India," the Survey said.

According to data from WHO

India, between 2011 and 2021, the value of retail sales in the UPF segment grew at a CAGR of 13.7 per cent.

The Survey also pointed to research that shows how the shift in dietary practices to UPF items exposes people to a wide range of adverse health outcomes ranging from obesity, chronic inflammatory disorders, cardiovascular diseases, and mental disorders.

Being lower in fibre content, UPFs are observed to lead to weight gain and obesity in adults and children -- which again is a precursor to many diseases.

The Survey cited how hyper palatability of food items and marketing strategies involving misleading advertisements and celebrity endorsements targeting consumer behaviour have boosted the UPF market in

India. Often unhealthy packaged food items are advertised and marketed as healthy products.

"Misleading nutrition claims and information on UPFs need to be tackled and should be brought under the scanner," said the Survey. It also stressed the need to set standards for permissible levels of salt and sugar and ensure checks for UPF brands to adhere to the regulations.

The Survey also proposed taxing the UPFs to reduce the consumption.

"A higher tax rate for UPFs may also be considered as a 'health tax' measure targeted specifically at brands/products that advertise."

The Survey also recommended bringing awareness of the ill effects of UPF, and healthy food choices by making it a part of the school curriculum.

US FDA approves painkillers designed to eliminate risk of addiction associated with opioids

US federal officials have approved a new type of pain pill designed to eliminate the risks of addiction and overdose associated with opioid medications like Vicodin and OxyContin.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said on Thursday it approved Vertex Pharmaceuticals' Journavx for short-term pain that often follows surgery or injuries, Xinhua news agency reported.

Journavx (suzetrigine) 50 milligram oral tab-

lets, is the first drug to be approved in this new class of pain management medicines.

"Today's approval is an important public health milestone in acute pain management," said Jacqueline Corrigan-Curay, acting director of the US FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. Buy vitamins and supplements

"A new non-opioid analgesic therapeutic class for acute pain offers an opportunity to mitigate



certain risks associated with using an opioid for pain and provides patients with another treatment



option. This action and the agency's designations to expedite the drug's development and review

underscore FDA's commitment to approving safe and effective alternatives to opioids for pain management," Corrigan-Curay said.

Journavx reduces pain by targeting a pain-signaling pathway involving sodium channels in the peripheral nervous system before pain signals reach the brain. But the medication's modest effectiveness and lengthy development process underscore the challenges of finding new ways to manage pain, it

noted.

Studies in more than 870 patients with acute pain due to foot and abdominal surgeries showed Vertex's drug provided more relief than a dummy pill but didn't outperform a common opioid-acetaminophen combination pill, it added.

The most common adverse reactions in study participants who received Journavx were itching, muscle spasms, increased blood levels of creatine phosphokinase, and rash.

85 pc increase in cancer cases, deaths expected by 2050 in S. E Asia: WHO

South-East Asia region is expected to witness an 85 per cent increase in the number of new Cancer cases and deaths, said the World Health Organization (WHO), ahead of World Cancer Day.

Each year 4 February is commemorated as World Cancer Day.

"The theme this year United by Unique is a reminder of the collective commitment against cancer," said Saima Wazed, Regional Director for WHO South-East Asia. "WHO acknowledges every patient's unique experiences and the value of people-centered care delivered jointly by health-care providers, families, friends, and community," she added.

In 2022, the WHO South-East Asia Region had 2.4 million new cases of cancer, including



56,000 children, and 1.5 million deaths.

"Among all the WHO regions, our Region had the highest number of cancers of lips and oral cavity, uterine cervix, and childhood cancers. It is estimated that by 2050, there will be an 85 per cent increase in the number of new cases and deaths in the Region," said Wazed.

She also noted the progress made in countries in the Region in the last few years. This includes a

reduction in tobacco consumption.

"The Region has seen the fastest rate of decline in tobacco use which is a major risk factor for several high burden cancers," Wazed said.

Wazed said six countries have dedicated national plans for cancer control, and two countries have included cancer as part of the national NCD plan to strategically guide cancer prevention and control activities.

Eight countries have introduced nationwide Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination.

The Regional Director said that 10 countries are implementing global initiatives for childhood cancer and seven countries have operational population-based cancer registries. In 10 countries, tertiary-level cancer care is generally available, reaching 50 per cent or more patients in need.

However, some persisting challenges include scattered responses to cancer control. National cancer control programmes and plans are not fully aligned with evidence or best practices resulting in their ineffective implementation.

Policies and guidance on control of cancer-causing agents prevalent in the Region, such as areca nut, are lacking.

Women with twins 2x more at higher risk of heart disease: Study

Women who give birth to twin babies are two times more at risk of facing a heart problem than those with singleton births, according to a study.

The research, published in the European Heart Journal, showed that the mother of twins is at higher risk of hospitalisation due to heart disease a year after birth.

Notably, the risk is even higher in those who had a high blood pressure condition during pregnancy, also known as preeclampsia.

The study, led by researchers from Rutgers University in the US, comes as "the rate of twin pregnancies worldwide has risen in recent decades, driven by fertility treatments and older maternal ages".

"The maternal heart



works harder for twin pregnancies than for singleton pregnancies, and it takes weeks for the maternal heart to return to its pre-pregnancy state," said lead author

Dr. Ruby Lin, a maternal foetal medicine fellow at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

"People with twin pregnancies should be aware of the short-term increase

in cardiovascular disease complications in the first year after birth, even if they had a pregnancy that was not complicated by high blood pressure conditions, such as preeclampsia," she added.

The study analysed data on 36 million hospital deliveries in the US from 2010 to 2020.

The results showed a higher proportion of readmissions for cardiovascular disease within a year of giving birth in women with twins (1,105.4 per 100,000 deliveries) than those with singleton pregnancies (734.1 per 100,000 deliveries).

Compared to singleton pregnancies with normal blood pressure, people with twins with normal blood pressure were around twice as likely to be hospitalised with cardiovascular disease.

Drinkers with depression experience same stimulation as those without depression: Study

People with alcohol use disorder (AUD) and depression experience high levels of stimulation and pleasure when intoxicated, similar to drinkers who do not have depression, according to a new study.

The study by the University of Chicago Medicine in the US reveals that counter the long-held belief that the pleasure people experience when drinking alco-

hol decreases with addiction and that drinking to intoxication is mainly to reduce negative feelings as a form of self-medication.

"We have this folklore that people drink excessively when they're feeling depressed and that it's really about self-medicating," said Andrea King, PhD, Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience.

In this study of natural

environment drinking and smart phone-based reports of the effects of alcohol in real-time, participants with AUD and a depressive disorder reported feeling acute, sustained positive and rewarding alcohol effects -- just like their non-depressed counterparts.

The study, published in the American Journal of Psychiatry, challenged conventional notions about alcohol's effects in



depressed people who drink excessively and could improve treatment approaches by focusing

medication and behavioural approaches more on alcohol's pleasure reward pathways and less on

stress-responsive systems.

The effects of alcohol on the brain are complex, and improved understanding of the factors that affect an individual's vulnerability to AUD and depression is critical to identify and initiate early, effective treatment.

The research followed 232 individuals across the U.S. between the ages of 21 to 35, corresponding to the period when most heavy

drinking occurs in a person's lifetime.

Half of the study group met criteria for AUD in the past year and were evenly divided in terms of those who had or had not experienced a major depressive disorder in the past year. Individuals who had suicidal ideation were excluded for safety reasons, as were people who had severe alcohol withdrawal symptoms.

The researchers found that alcohol consumption reduced negative feelings, although the reduction was small and nonspecific to their depression or AUD status.

The positive effects of alcohol were much higher in individuals with AUD than those without AUD and contrary to lore, similar in those with AUD and depression and those without depression.

BCCI rewards WC champions India U-19 women's team with Rs 5 cr

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, FEB 3 (UNI)

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced a cash reward of Rs 5 crore for the India under-19 women's team following their outstanding victory in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2025 in Malaysia.

The team, led by captain Niki Prasad, successfully defended their title, remaining unbeaten throughout the tournament and clinching the crown with a dominant nine-wicket win over South Africa in the final.

The BCCI's announcement of the cash reward serves as a fitting recognition of the team's exceptional performance, where both batswomen and bowlers showcased immense skill and composure on the global stage.

The squad, alongside their support staff, including Head



Coach Nooshin Al Khadeer, has been celebrated for resilience and dominant play throughout the competition.

Standout performances came from Gongadi Trisha, who finished as the highest run-scorer of the tournament with 309 runs, and also claimed the Player of the Match and Player of the Tournament awards. Trisha's allround contributions were matched by excellent bowling displays from spinners Vaishnavi Sharma and

Aayushi Shukla, who topped the wicket-takers' list with 17 and 14 wickets, respectively.

India's victory in both the inaugural ICC U-19 Women's T20 World Cup in 2023 and the 2025 underscores the strength of the BCCI's age-group and grassroots cricket structure, ensuring a continuous flow of talent to the senior national team.

Roger Binny, President, BCCI, shared: "Congratulations to our girls for retaining

the U19 Women's World Cup. Their unbeaten campaign reflects the growth of women's cricket in India. This trophy is a proud moment for all of us, and I am delighted to see every member shine."

Devajit Saikia, Honorary Secretary, BCCI, remarked: "This victory showcases their dedication, resilience, and skill. It highlights the strength of India's grassroots cricket and the bright future of women's cricket in the country."

Rajeev Shukla, Vice-President, BCCI, said: "Winning back-to-back World Cups is a testament to their discipline and perseverance. This victory will inspire the next generation of young girls across India to dream big."

This remarkable triumph not only adds to India's legacy in women's cricket but also reinforces the country's growing prominence on the global stage.

Boys set for title clash in battle for supremacy in National TT

AGENCIES
INDORE, FEB 3

With the girls having set the stage, the UTT 86th Cadet and Sub-Junior National Championships now turn to the boys, where intense competition awaits at the Abhay Prashal Indoor Hall here on Monday.

While rankings have placed West Bengal, PSPBA, Tamil Nadu, and Jammu & Kashmir at the top of their groups, the true test begins on the table tomorrow onwards.

The PSPBA's depth, Bengal's hunger for redemption, and Tamil Nadu's well-rounded squad make them the frontrunners, but with individual brilliance scattered across Maharashtra, Karnataka, Assam, and Haryana, upsets are inevitable.

The title is there for the taking—only the sharpest and steeliest will seize it in a tournament where 33 state and institutional teams will compete for the ultimate honour.

By the end of the three intense days, only one team will emerge as the champion, standing atop the podium with gold medals around their necks. While silver and bronze

(awarded to two teams) will be up for grabs, those finishing second or third will know they fell just short of the ultimate prize.

The stakes are high, and today's draw placed last year's runners-up, West Bengal, as the top seed in Group A. Defending champions the Petroleum Sports Promotion Board Academy (PSPBA) find themselves in Group B, while Tamil Nadu and Jammu & Kashmir lead Groups C and D, respectively.

The team draw is based on the ranking points of each squad's two best players. However, rankings alone do not dictate the final four or the eventual champion.

For example, Bengal's Aditya Das (360 points) leads a strong squad, supported by a teammate with 60 points, giving them an edge in placement. In contrast, Jammu & Kashmir's top position in Group D is thanks to Ritvik Gupta (240 points), but his teammates have just one point each. This heavy dependence on a single player makes J&K's knockout prospects uncertain.

Among the favourites, PSPBA boasts a balanced

squad, led by Sahil Rawat and Vivaan Dave, both are expected to play crucial roles in singles and doubles.

Bengal will rely on Aditya Das and Shrestho Chakraborty to mount a strong challenge. Tamil Nadu also poses a serious threat, with Akash Rajavelu and Vishruth

Ramakrishnan led their charge, supported by K. Akshay Bhushan and Mohammed Murtuza. Their collective performance will be key to staying competitive.

But the tournament isn't just about the top four seeds. Maharashtra, Karnataka, Assam, and Haryana all have talented individuals who could shake up the draw.

Watch out for Shouren Soman, Atharva Nawarange, Abheek Kashyap, and Eshan Nayak, who will be instrumental in their teams' fortunes.

Aside from J&K, most top teams have the depth and quality to secure knockout-stage berths—barring surprises in the group stages. Even last year's bronze medallist, Odisha, faces an uphill battle to match their previous performance.

Affarwat-XI Sports Club Baramulla Congratulates JKCA for remarkable achievement in Ranji Trophy



HT NEWS NETWORK
SRINAGAR, FEB 3

Warmest congratulations to JKCA on advancing to the quarterfinals, a remarkable achievement that shines a light on the team's unshakable commitment, perseverance, and passion for excellence. This triumph is a testament to the collaborative spirit of our talented players, expert coaches, and dedicated training staff, who have all worked tirelessly to push beyond their limits. Special recognition is due to Mr. Abdul Qayoom, whose selfless efforts behind the scenes have been a driving force behind this success. Well done, team JKCA, this is just the beginning of an exciting journey.

Premier League: Arsenal thrash Man City, climb to second place in points table



AGENCIES
LONDON, FEB 3 (UNI)

Arsenal moved to within six points of Premier League leaders Liverpool by thrashing Manchester City at Emirates Stadium.

The Gunners, who knew only a victory would suffice with Liverpool opening a commanding lead at the top of the table after winning at Bournemouth, responded by overpowering the fading champions in emphatic fashion, the BBC reported.

Arsenal have played a game more than Liverpool, but this impressive victory at least means they remain within touching distance of Arne Slot's pacesetters.

City, as they had done against Chelsea eight days previously, gifted their oppo-

nents an early lead, this time inside two minutes when defender Manuel Akanji lost possession, Arsenal captain Martin Odegaard then steering in Kai Havertz's pass.

Arsenal were wondering whether they would regret Havertz's dreadful first-half miss when Erling Haaland headed City level after 55 minutes, but their lead was restored within two minutes when Thomas Partey's shot was deflected wide of keeper Stefan Ortega off John Stones.

And the points were made safe after 62 minutes as 18-year-old Myles Lewis-Skelly fired home his first goal for Arsenal, Ortega getting a hand to his powerful shot but failing to keep it out.

As City crumbled once

more in this season of turmoil, Havertz made up for his earlier miss by steering a precise left-foot finish into the far corner past Ortega with 14 minutes left.

JK Netball Association to hold trials for Junior Nationals

HT NEWS NETWORK
SRINAGAR, FEB 3

The Netball association of J and K is going to conduct trials for 37th Junior Nationals, 3rd Junior Fastfive and First Junior

Mixed Netball National Championship Scheduled to be held in Haryana. The trials will be held on 3rd and 4th February at Dussehra Ground Gandhinagar Jammu. The trials are open for all Registered Players.

UP Warriorz sign West Indian Chinelle Henry

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, FEB 3 (UNI)

UP Warriorz (UPW) have roped in West Indies all-rounder Chinelle Henry as a replacement for Australian wicketkeeper-batswoman Alyssa Healy for the upcoming edition of the TATA Women's Premier League (WPL) 2025.

Alyssa has been ruled out of the tournament due to an injury.

Chinelle, who has represented the West Indies in 62 T20Is, has scored 473 runs and claimed 22 wickets in the format. She joins UPW for Rs 30 lakh.

Meanwhile, Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) have secured the services of Australian cricketers Heather Graham and Kim Garth as replacements for



Sophie Devine and Kate Cross, respectively. Sophie and Kate will miss the third season of the TATA WPL due to personal reasons.

Heather, an all-rounder, has played five T20Is for Australia, picking up eight wickets. Kim, who previously played for Gujarat Giants (GG) in the WPL, has fea-

tured in 59 T20Is, 56 ODIs, and four Tests for Australia, accumulating 764 runs and 49 wickets in the shortest format. Both Graham and Kim have been signed by RCB for Rs 30 lakh each.

The TATA WPL 2025 is set to witness high-profile clashes as teams gear up with new additions to their squads.

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