



Sustained Efforts Have Weakened Terror Ecosystem in J&K : Amit Shah

Home Minister Chairs J&K Security Review Meet, Calls for Achieving Zero Infiltration Goal

HT News Network

New Delhi, Feb 05: After cutting short Tuesday's security review meeting on Jammu and Kashmir, Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired another meeting here on Wednesday to conclude the discussions on sensitive issues, sources told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

They said that the meeting commenced at 11 am at the Home Minister's residence in the National Capital and continued for nearly 2-hours.

Pertinently, as reported by the KNO the Union Home Minister couldn't conclude the meeting yesterday as he had to rush to the Parliament to attend the Prime Minister's reply. Today's security review meeting was attended by J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, the Union Home Secretary, the Director of the Intelligence Bureau, the Chief Secretary Atal Duloo and the Director General of J&K Police Nalin Prabhat, along with senior officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the J&K administration. On Tuesday the Union Home Minister had discussed the J&K security situation with the Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, the Home Secretary and other senior officers of MHA and Army. Shah, according to an official statement, while addressing the meeting, said that the government under the leadership of Prime



Minister Narendra Modi is committed to completely wipe out terrorism from Jammu and Kashmir. "Due to the sustained and coordinated efforts of the Modi government, the terrorism ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir has been significantly weakened," he added. The Home Minister directed all security agencies to step up the fight against terrorism by aiming for the 'zero infiltration' goal.

Shah asked all security agencies to take more stringent action on infiltration and acts of terror with a ruthless approach. "It should be our goal to uproot the existence of terrorists," he said.

The Union Home Minister said that the narco network is providing support to infiltrators and terrorists to carry out their activities. "There is a need to take prompt

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CM Omar Chairs Pre-budget Meetings, Assures People-Friendly Budget

Consultations held with peoples' representatives

HT News Network



JAMMU, FEBRUARY 05: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today reiterated his government's commitment to presenting a people-friendly budget for Jammu & Kashmir, emphasising that involvement of public representatives in budget formulation ensures people's aspirations and needs are reflected.

Chairing a series of pre-budget consultation meetings at civil secretariat Jammu and joined from districts through video conferencing by Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) from Anantnag, Budgam, Kathua and Samba districts and District Development Council Chairpersons, the Chief Minister highlighted the significance of such engagements in fostering participatory governance.

Advocate Abdul Rahim Rather, Speaker of the J&K Legislative Assembly and representative of the Charar-i-Sharif Constituency, also participated in the meeting virtually from his office. The meeting was attended by

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NEWS BRIEF

Public Outrage as Doctor Removes Uterus Instead of Performing ENT Surgery in Sopore

HT News Network

Sopore, Feb 5, KNT: In a shocking case of alleged medical negligence, Dr. Anjum Nazir is facing public fury after mistakenly removing a woman's uterus instead of performing an ENT surgery. The incident, which took place at Hakeem Sonuallah Hospital in Sopore, has sparked widespread outrage, with calls

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J&K Bank faces Rs 16,000 cr GST notice, shares drop

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 05: Jammu & Kashmir Bank is facing a significant financial challenge after receiving a massive Rs 16,000-crore GST notice, which includes the GST liability as well as a penalty amount. This demand is over 1.5 times the bank's total market capitalisation of Rs 11,273.91 crore.

News agency—Kashmir news observer (KNO) has learnt that the notice was issued by the Joint Commissioner of the Central GST Commissionerate in Jammu on February 4, 2025. The bank

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J&K Govt Appoints Special Police Officers to Crack Down Human Trafficking, Sexual Exploitation

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 05 The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has issued an order appointing Station House Officers (SHOs) of J&K Police, not below the rank of Inspector, along with SDPOs/DySP Headquarters, as Special Police Officers



within their respective jurisdictions under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA).

This decision, issued by Chandraker Bharti, Principal Secretary to the Government, supersedes all previous notifications on the subject. The move aims to strengthen enforcement mechanisms against human trafficking and sexual exploitation for commercial purposes.

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JK has over 88 Pct 'Unprofessional Teachers' at Pre-Primary level

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 05 (KNO): In Jammu and Kashmir, more than 88 percent teachers at Pre-Primary level are not 'Professionally Qualified' in all government and

private schools of the region.

The recent official figures reveal that only 11.8 percent teachers at Pre-Primary level were 'Professionally Qualified Teachers' in both public and private schools of Jammu and Kashmir.

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Kashmir Engineer detained in SA: MP Ruhullah appeals Jaishankar to intervene

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 02 (KNO): Member of Parliament, Syed Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, has appealed to the Exter-



nal Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, to intervene in the case of a Kashmiri engineer, who has been detained in Saudi Arabia

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Stray Dog Population Surges in Srinagar, Create Fear on Streets

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 05, : The increasing population of stray dogs in various parts of Srinagar has instilled fear among residents, particularly in areas like Bhorikadal, Khan-yar, Eidgah, Nawakadal and Dalgate. Residents complain that venturing out during morning and evening hours has become a daunting task, as packs of stray dogs roam the streets, often chasing pedestrians and creating a sense of insecurity.

Speaking to Associated News Bureau, a resident from Bhorikadal expressed concern over the growing menace. "We are afraid to step out early in the morning or late in the evening. The dogs chase us, and even our children fear going to their tuition



classes. We often have to accompany them to ensure their safety," he said.

The uncontrolled growth of stray dogs has become a pressing issue, with frequent cases of dog bites being reported from dif-

ferent localities. Elderly individuals, children, and women are particularly vulnerable, as aggressive canines are often seen blocking pathways and chasing vehicles and pedestrians. Several instances of dog attacks on school-going children have been reported, raising serious safety concerns.

Despite repeated appeals to the concerned authorities, residents claim that no substantial action has been taken to address the menace. A shopkeeper from Khanyar voiced his frustration, stating, "Every day, we witness people, especially children and the elderly, being chased by these stray dogs. We have approached the authorities multiple times, but no concrete steps have been taken." The presence of uncollected garbage on roadsides and in residential

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DPAP's political journey at 'fag end' in J&K Barring party chief Azad, all leaders set to rejoin Congress

HT News Network

Srinagar, Political journey of Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) led by former J&K Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad seems to be at its 'fag end' in the Union Territory.

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



had quit Congress in 2022 have decided to rejoin the "grand old party" again.

Many leaders under the leadership of former legislator Taj Mohi-ud-din are set to rejoin Congress in the next few days, they said.

Taj had quit Congress in August 2022 to join DPAP. He later announced his resignation

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Historic Convention of Pensioners and Civil Society Leaders Held at Dak Bangla Rajouri JKCSF & JKPUF Call for Social Reformation and Collective Responsibility

■ HT News Network

Rajouri, Feb 5: A landmark convention of pensioners and civil society leaders from Poonch and Rajouri districts was held today at Dak Bangla Rajouri under the leadership of Abdul Qayoom Wani, Chairman of Jammu & Kashmir Civil Society Forum (JKCSF) and President of Jammu & Kashmir Pensioners United Front (JKPUF). The event witnessed the participation of hundreds of pensioners and senior citizens from across the

region, along with top leaders from Kashmir and Jammu divisions.

The convention aimed at fostering unity among pensioners and senior citizens, addressing their grievances, and reinforcing their role in social reformation. The attendees were warmly welcomed by the district presidents of Rajouri and Poonch, and the event became a powerful forum for discussing key issues faced by pensioners and society at large.

Addressing the gathering, Abdul Qayoom Wani empha-

sized the invaluable role of pensioners and senior citizens in shaping a just and progressive society. He remarked, "Pensioners and senior citizens are the storage of wisdom and vision, having a vital role in social reformation. Their collective strength can drive positive change and uphold societal values." The convention strongly advocated for communal harmony and unity in diversity, stressing the importance of universal brotherhood and respect for all religions. Beyond pension-related con-

cerns, the convention focused on pressing social issues, particularly the menace of drug abuse. Wani called for a united front against social evils, urging civil society members and parents to play an active role in monitoring youth activities and guiding them towards a responsible life. "It is our collective responsibility to initiate a practical fight against drug abuse, social evils, and moral degradation. Parents must remain vigilant about their children's daily activities and social circles," Wani asserted.

The convention also underscored the long-pending demands of pensioners and senior citizens, urging the government to take immediate action. Wani cautioned the authorities against testing the patience of this experienced and wise segment of society, emphasizing that their demands are legitimate and long overdue. Reaffirming the commitment of JKCSF and JKPUF to the welfare of pensioners, senior citizens, and the general public, Wani assured that both organizations will continue to raise

their voice on vital social, environmental, cultural, economic, and political issues affecting the people of Jammu & Kashmir. He praised the efforts of the district leadership of Rajouri and Poonch for organizing the event successfully and expressed gratitude to delegates from Kashmir and Jammu divisions for their active participation. He also lauded the patience and enthusiasm of participants who had traveled from far-off areas of these border districts.

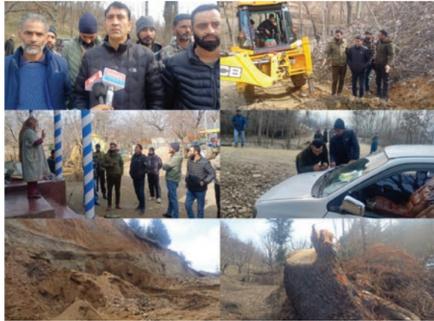
The historic convention at

Dak Bangla Rajouri marked a new chapter in the empowerment of pensioners and senior citizens in Jammu & Kashmir. With JKCSF and JKPUF at the forefront, the event reinforced the need for unity, social responsibility, and proactive engagement in addressing key issues affecting society. The momentum gained from this gathering is expected to drive meaningful reforms and stronger advocacy for the cause of pensioners and civil society members in the future.

Massive Crackdown on Illegal Mining in Shanoo, Langate; Authorities Seize Vehicles & Timber

■ DR. AB QAYOOM

Srinagar, Feb 05: In a significant move to curb illegal mining, the Revenue Department Langate, led by Tehsildar Mohd Ismail, in collaboration with Handwara Police, the Geology & Mining Department, and the Forest Department, conducted a massive crackdown on unauthorized mineral extraction in Shanoo village, Langate. Acting on multiple inputs regarding illegal extraction on state land, the joint team launched an early morning raid at various locations in the area. The operation led to the seizure of hundreds of metric tons of illegally extracted sand, along with



a dumper and several tractors used for the unlawful activity. To prevent further violations, all entry and exit points to the site were blocked. Tehsildar Langate Mohd Ismail expressed concern over the destruction of natural resources, revealing that miscreants

had not only engaged in illegal mining but had also cut down forest trees during night hours. He stated that the Forest Department has taken possession of the felled trees, which have been shifted to the Forest Division Langate. Further, raids were conducted at

multiple residences suspected of involvement in illegal tree cutting, with efforts underway to recover the fallen timber. The Tehsildar lauded the coordinated efforts of all departments, particularly Handwara Police, for their support in tackling this menace. He urged the youth to avail themselves of government-sponsored employment schemes instead of engaging in unlawful activities. Issuing a stern warning, he reiterated that illegal mining and deforestation will not be tolerated and that strict legal action will be taken against violators. The authorities have assured continuous vigilance to prevent any further illegal extraction in the region.

District Level Cooperative Development Committee (DCDC) Meeting held in Samba

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, FEBRUARY 5: The 6th District Level Cooperative Development Committee (DCDC) meeting was held today at the District Administrative Complex, Nandhani Hills, Samba. The meeting was chaired by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Champa Thakur. The meeting was convened by Deputy Registrar Cooperative Societies (DRCS) and attended by Chief Agricultural Officer (CAO), Chief Horticulture Officer (CHO), Chief Animal Husbandry Officer (CAHO), Chief Sheep Husbandry Officer (CSHO) and Chief Fisheries Officer (CFO) and other district officers.



The meeting discussed the calendar of activities for International Year of Cooperatives. A series of activities and awareness programs were planned across the district, including awareness camps on Multiple Purpose PACS (M-PACS) formation, inaugurations of Jan Aushadi Kendras and Food Processing Units at multiple locations, cooperative Week

Celebrations and mega awareness camps for farmers and strengthening Cooperative Infrastructure.

The Committee reviewed progress on key cooperative development targets. It was informed that one PACS has been registered, while two more are in the pipeline, while efforts are underway for registering eight dairy and one fishery cooperative, with multiple applica-

tions under process. Updates were provided on the establishment of food processing units under new guidelines, with specific focus on value addition and market linkage for cooperative societies. The meeting was informed that Bagoona MPSC and Khara Madana MPSC have received loan and subsidy approvals under the food processing scheme and their bakery units will be operational soon. Further, it was informed that under World's Largest Grain Storage Project, a flagship initiative, the land identification process has been completed with 8 Kanal land each transferred in Village Malani Rajpura and Rakh Barotian in Vijaypur.

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infiltration' goal." Shah asked all security agencies to take more stringent action on infiltration and acts of terror with a ruthless approach. "It should be our goal to uproot the existence of terrorists," he said. The Union Home Minister said that the narco network is providing support to infiltrators and terrorists to carry out their activities. "There is a need to take prompt action against terror funding from the proceeds of the narcotics trade with alacrity and rigour," he said. Shah directed the agencies to make new appointments in the posts of Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) in view of the timely implementation of the new criminal laws. The Union Home Minister emphasised the Modi government's 'policy of zero tolerance' against terrorism to achieve the goal of a terrorism-free Jammu and Kashmir. He directed all security agencies to remain vigilant and continue to work in synergy to eliminate terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. He appreciated the efforts of the security agencies for significant improvement in all parameters of the security scenario in Jammu and Kashmir—(KNO)

CM

Advisor to the CM Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary Finance Santosh D Vaidya, Director General Budget J&K, Deputy Commissioners of Kathua, Samba, Anantnag and Budgam districts, DDC chairpersons, MLAs along with other senior officials, both in person and through virtual mode. In his address, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah stated, "The primary aim of these consultations is to gather valuable suggestions from prime stakeholders before finalizing the budget. We want to make sure that this budget is not just by the government, but by the people, for the people. Your voices will be represented, as you represent people of Jammu & Kashmir." He emphasized that the upcoming budget will not be confined to government offices alone. "You all have won your elections because people have placed their trust in you. Their expectations are linked to your leadership, and through this meeting, we aim to align the budget priorities with the hopes of those who voted and participated in the democratic process," he told elected representatives including DDCs chairperson and MLAs. The Chief Minister assured the MLAs and DDC Chairpersons that their inputs would

play a crucial role in shaping the upcoming budget, reinforcing the government's dedication to involving elected representatives in significant decision-making processes. "These consultations are not a one-off event. We aim to establish consistent coordination with the people's representatives, ensuring transparency and inclusiveness in governance," he said. Reassuring the participants, he said "This consultation process will continue, and we will consult with you regularly to address your concerns and provide all possible support." Addressing the participants, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed confidence that the forthcoming budget session in the J&K Assembly would reflect a collective commitment to serving the people with dedication and sincerity. "Together, we will work to uplift the socio-economic conditions of our people and ensure sustainable development across J&K," the chief minister added. Earlier in the consultation sessions, the DDC Chairpersons and MLAs from these four districts highlighted various issues and projects requiring priority attention in the upcoming budget. Key concerns and demands raised included road widening projects, new road projects, enhancement of sports infrastructure, upgradation of health and educational institutions, provision of potable drinking water, development of tourist destinations, strengthening healthcare facilities with adequate staffing and the establishment of new colleges and schools in their constituencies. The elected representatives expressed their gratitude to the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for initiating these consultations, appreciating the government's efforts to incorporate grassroots perspectives into the budgetary framework.

DPAP

from the party in August last year and contested 2024 Assembly polls unsuccessfully as an independent candidate from Uri constituency. Other leaders who intend to rejoin Congress include G M Saroori, Muhammad Amin Bhat from Devsar, Ashok Kumar, Gulzar Ahmad Wani and others, sources privy to the development said. "The mass rejoining is expected to take place in Jammu or in New Delhi this week," they said. Several leaders, who are expected to rejoin Congress, have already resigned from DPAP last year. Pertinently, KNO had reported that the DPAP is facing an uncertain future following its crushing defeat in the 2024 assembly elections.

The party's activities have come to a standstill, with Azad himself maintaining an unusual silence and absence from the political scene in Jammu and Kashmir—(KNO)

GOVT

Notably, the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 is an Indian law designed to curb human trafficking and the organized commercial exploitation of individuals. While the act does not criminalize prostitution per se, it penalizes activities such as running brothels, inducing individuals into prostitution, detaining persons for such purposes, and exploiting minors. Law enforcement agencies leverage the ITPA to rescue victims and prosecute traffickers, pimps, and brothel operators. The appointment of Special Police Officers under this act is expected to enhance vigilance and ensure stricter implementation of anti-trafficking measures in Jammu and Kashmir. [KNT]

TEACHERS

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the official figures also reveal that among the total professionally qualified teachers at Pre-Primary level, including 9.1 percent male and 13.2 percent female tutors. It also states that at Primary level, a total of 68.6 percent teachers were professionally qualified that includes 76.4 percent male and 61.9 percent female tutors. The official figures further reveal that at Upper-Primary level, a total of 72.5 percent teachers were professionally qualified that includes 77.3 percent male and 66.9 percent female teachers. Likewise, at Secondary level, a total of 87.5 percent tutors were professionally qualified in both government and private schools including 87.2 percent male and 87.9 percent female teachers. Similarly, at Senior Secondary level, only 87.2 percent teachers were qualified professionally, including 86.6 percent male and 88.1 percent female tutors. Pertinently, among all states of India, Jammu and Kashmir education sector has second highest 'Untrained Teachers' at Pre-Primary and Upper Primary 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. 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 for the past four years. Aga Ruhullah, in his appeal, as per the details obtained by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), urged the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to expedite the release and safe return of Abdul Rafi Baba, a 36-year-old engineer from Srinagar's Soura area. He wrote that Baba has been held in a Saudi prison since March 1, 2020, and his family is desperate for government intervention. "Urgent Appeal: @ruhullahmehdi has written to Hon'ble EAM @DrSjaishankar regarding the detention of a Kashmiri citizen in Saudi Arabia. He urged immediate intervention to expedite the individual's release & safe return home. Hope @MEAIndia ensures swift action," the office of MP Ruhullah Mehdi wrote on X. Meanwhile, it was earlier reported that Rafi Baba, employed at King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia, was arrested under unclear circumstances. His family members spoke to KNO and said Rafi was the sole breadwinner for his family and had no criminal record in Jammu and Kashmir. "His father, Manzoor-ul-Haq Baba, said the arrest seemed linked to internal company disputes, with no valid legal charges against his son." Now, Aga Ruhullah Mehdi's recent tweet on X (formerly Twitter) highlighted the urgency of the situation, urging the government to ensure that justice is served and Rafi Baba is brought back safely. As of now, there has been no official response from the Ministry of External Affairs—(KNO) JK BANK was asked to pay Rs 8,130.66 crore in GST

liability, with a similar amount in penalty charges. The news of the GST demand caused J&K Bank's shares to fall sharply in the stock market. In Wednesday's trading session, the bank's share price dropped to an intraday low of Rs 99.26 per share on the NSE, marking a 3.95% decline. While the shares partially recovered, they were still down by 1.94% at Rs 101.35 as of 11:50 AM. Despite the alarming scale of the notice, J&K Bank has reassured its investors. In a regulatory filing, the bank stated that the demand order will not have any material impact on its financials, operations, or overall business activities—(KNO) DOGS areas is being cited as one of the main reasons for the surge in the stray dog population. The lack of proper waste disposal management has turned many streets and bylanes into feeding grounds for canines, further worsening the situation. "Until the authorities implement an effective waste management strategy, this problem will persist," said another resident from Nawakadal. When Associated News Bureau contacted an official from the Srinagar Municipal Corporation department responsible for managing the stray dog population, he acknowledged the issue but wished to remain anonymous. He revealed that the sterilization program had been temporarily halted due to the harsh winter conditions. "We cannot conduct sterilization during the cold months. However, once the temperature rises, we will resume the program to control the dog population," he said. While sterilization remains a long-term solution, many believe that immediate measures such as dog shelters and designated feeding zones should be established to prevent further attacks. Experts have also suggested increased public awareness about handling stray dogs and coordinated efforts between municipal bodies and animal welfare organizations. Apart from the fear of attacks, residents are also worried about the potential spread of diseases such as rabies. A local doctor from a Srinagar hospital highlighted the risks associated with uncontrolled stray dog populations. "Rabies is a fatal disease, and timely vaccination is crucial. If the number of stray dog attacks increases, the demand for vaccines will rise, putting immense pressure on healthcare facilities," he warned. The residents, however, demand immediate intervention. "We are not against animals, but human lives matter too."



143 out of 161 Srinagar Smart City projects completed: Official

Full completion by March; Riverfront Phase II, Shahr-e-Khaas dev nearing finalisation

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 05 (KNO): As the year 2025 enters its second month, officials from Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL) on Wednesday said that 143 out of the total 161 projects under the Smart City initiative have been completed.

An official from SSCL informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the initial budget was Rs 940 crore, and among the remaining 18 projects, work is currently underway. We are hopeful of achieving full completion by March 2025, he said.

Regarding infrastructure developments, the official said that one of the major ongoing projects is Riverfront Phase II, covering the stretch from Amira Kadal to Chat-tabal.

“The Shahr-e-Khaas development, divided into Sections A, B, and C, along with three other projects, has reached an 85% completion rate,” he said, adding that the underground ducting project along the right bank of the riverfront is progressing well, with about 75% of the work completed.



The completed projects, he said, include the redevelopment of Lal Chowk, upgrades to MA Road and Residency Road, Riverfront Phase 1, the Integrated Traffic Management System (ITMS), the SD Net, and the Srinagar data network (Intranet), among others. The upcoming

milestone projects include improvements to Batmaloo, Mominabad Road, Dalgate-Gojwara Road and others. The SSCL's initiatives aim to transform the urban landscape while preserving the city's unique cultural heritage, the official said—(KNO)

J&K Police population ratio increases by 58.90% from 2019 to 2023

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 05 (KNO): Jammu and Kashmir has secured the 4th rank in the country for the police population ratio from 2019 to year 2023, with a ratio of 598.52 police personnel per lakh of the population.

The Minister of State (MoS) in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nityanand Rai, provided these details regarding the police population ratio in the Lok Sabha.

Since 2019, J&K has shown consistent performance in its police population ratio. In 2019, the ratio was 656.62, one of the highest in the country. Over the years, the ratio saw a gradual decline, reaching 590.15 in 2022. However, in 2023, it rose to 598.52, maintaining the region's strong position.

Muzaffar Ali's 'Zooni' begin in South Kashmir's Tral

HT News Network

Pulwama, Feb 05 (KNO): The reshoots for Muzaffar Ali's long-awaited film Zooni, which had been halted midway in 1988, have officially begun in Tral area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the shooting took place in the picturesque Shikargah and Paner areas of Tral in Kashmir, marking a significant step in the revival of the 16th-century Kashmiri poet Habba Khatoon's story.

Director Muzaffar Ali, who is leading the reshoot, reminisced about the initial filming process and the challenges that halted the project years ago.

“We had shot about 75,000 feet in various locations, including Pampur, Srinagar, and Dachi village,” Ali shared. “The beauty of Kashmir, its rivers, and valleys left a deep impact on us. We are back now, and it feels like a journey of remembrance.”

J&K Bank fraud cases drop by 50% in 2023-24

Fraud amounts in 2023-24 reduced to only 2.7% of previous year's figure

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 05 (KNO): Jammu and Kashmir Bank has made significant progress in combating fraud with a 50% reduction in the number of such cases in 2023-24 compared to the previous year.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman provided data on fraud cases across all banks, including Jammu and Kashmir Bank, in response to a question in the Lok Sabha. As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the amount involved in these frauds also saw a dramatic decline, dropping to just 2.7% of the total amount from 2022-23. This improvement reflects the bank's enhanced security measures and proactive risk mitigation efforts. Despite efforts to strengthen security and compliance measures, the bank continues to grapple with varying levels of fraud, with some years seeing alarming spikes in the amounts involved. The bank reported 13 fraud cases, involving a total of Rs 69.71 crore in 2019-20. In 2020-21, the fraud cases decreased to 10, but the amount involved surged by 42.3% to Rs 99.23 crore, marking the highest amount in this period. In 2021-22, both the number of cases and the amount involved dropped, with 12 fraud cases and Rs 14.25 crore, representing an 85.6% decline in the amount compared to the previous year. In 2022-23, the bank saw a sharp rise in fraud cases, recording 16 cases.



Z-Morh Tunnel transforms Sonamarg into winter tourism hotspot

Since its opening on Jan 13, more than 3400 people visit Sonamarg every day

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 05 (KNO): The newly inaugurated Z-Morh Tunnel in Ganderbal district is proving to be a game-changer for the Sonamarg tourist destination, boosting winter tourism in the region at a very large scale. Since its opening on January 13, more than 55,000 tourists have visited Sonamarg within just 16 days during the otherwise slow winter months.

The 6.5-kilometer-long tunnel, connecting Gagangir to Sonamarg, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and has since facilitated seamless access to the picturesque valley, which was previously difficult to reach due to heavy snowfall and road closures. Official data reveals that among the 55,935 tourists who arrived post-inauguration, 1,114 were foreign visitors.



According to Ghulam Mohammad Bhat, CEO of the Sonamarg Development Authority, 33,990 tourists had visited Sonamarg in the first 10 days of January 2025. However, after the opening of the tunnel, the number surged significantly. “Earlier, due to the lack of

road connectivity, Sonamarg would witness a sharp decline in visitors during December, January, and February, leaving local businesses struggling. This year, however, the scenario has changed completely,” Bhat told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO). The increase in tourism has revitalized the local economy, with hotels, restaurants, and shops witnessing a surge in activity.

“This place, which usually remained silent during winters, is now bustling with visitors,” Bhat added. He also noted that Sonamarg currently has about 1.5 feet of snow, making it an ideal location for winter sports. The authorities are in talks with the sports department to organize skiing, skating, ice hockey, and other winter activities to further promote tourism. Local business owners are optimistic about the future. Irshad Ahmad Wani, a shopkeeper dealing in warm clothing, expressed his satisfaction with the increase in footfall. “The winter was harsh, but our pockets are full thanks to the rush of tourists. With spring and summer approaching, we expect even better business,” he said—(KNO)

Traffic violations decline by 80%: SSP Traffic Rural Kashmir

HT News Network

Kangan, Feb 05 (KNO): The SSP Traffic Rural Kashmir, Ravinder Paul Singh, has stated that the traffic violations in the region have decreased by an impressive 70 to 80 per cent, crediting the progress to the concerted efforts of traffic police and public awareness campaigns.

Singh emphasized that while the decrease in violations is a positive development; his team is committed to further reducing the remaining 20 percent to ensure safer roads for everyone. As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), he stressed that traffic violations would not be tolerated and promised that strict legal action would be taken against those found in violation of traffic laws.

Highlighting a significant concern, Singh urged parents to avoid handing over vehicles to their children and cautioned young riders against performing dangerous stunts on the roads. He issued a stern warning, saying, “If anyone is caught performing stunts on bikes or other vehicles, they will face legal action along with a fine.” As part of the ongoing crackdown, Singh revealed that traffic police teams are actively checking vehicles for proper documentation. Any vehicle found lacking the necessary paperwork will be prohibited from continuing on the roads—(KNO)

CBC Organizes Swachhta Action Programme at Chanapora

HT News Network

Srinagar, February 05, 2025: The Central Bureau of Communication, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Field Office Srinagar, organized An Integrated Communication and Outreach Programme under Swachhta Action Programme at the Community Hall in Chanapora, Srinagar. The event, held in collaboration with the Chanapora Municipality, was aimed at raising awareness about the ongoing Swachhta Abhiyaan (Cleanliness Campaign) and promoting a clean and healthy lifestyle within the community.

The event saw active participation from local residents, social activists, sanitation workers, and resource persons from various departments. Resource persons from various departments deliv-



ered speeches on the importance of cleanliness, environmental preservation, and adopting hygienic practices for a sustainable future. Field Publicity Officer, CBC Srinagar, Naseer Ahmad Rather, emphasized the role of the Swachhta Abhiyaan as a key initiative of the Central Government. He stated, “This programme was organized to further promote the initiatives under the Swachhta Action Plan, which has significantly inspired and motivated citizens to understand the importance

of cleanliness in daily life.” He said, the sanitation workers are the true heroes of our communities, who play a vital role in ensuring that our streets remain clean and healthy.

A Cleanliness Shramdhan activity was carried out by sanitation workers in various wards of the Chanapora Municipality. To support the efforts, dustbins, gloves, masks, sanitizers, brooms, and informative literature on the Swachhta Abhiyaan were distributed among participants, especially the

sanitation workers.

Cultural troupes empannelled with CBC Srinagar presented entertaining skits highlighting the importance of maintaining cleanliness and contributing to a cleaner environment.

The event was attended by a large number of sanitation workers, ward officers, and social activists who shared their commitment to keeping the localities clean and healthy.

Later, the sanitation workers also took out a rally promoting slogans of adopting a hygienic lifestyle. The participants also took a pledge to devote at least two hours a week for promoting cleanliness. The sanitation workers were also felicitated with certificates and mementoes for their contribution towards maintaining Swachhta.

Javed Dar champions eco-friendly development in J&K

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 05: Minister for Agricultural Production and Rural Development Department, Javed Ahmad Dar, today underscored the challenges posed by rapid development and commercialisation while emphasising the critical need for environmental conservation and water management.

Speaking at the flag-off ceremony of the “Watershed Yatra” at GDC Hira Nagar here, an initiative by the Department of Rural Development, Government of India, the Minister highlighted the growing environmental concerns due to urbanisation and industrial expansion.

The campaign was flagged off at the national level by Union Minister for Agriculture and Rural



Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

Dar, who is also Minister for Cooperative and Election departments, emphasised that the development should be accomplished only in consonance with the ecological balance. He urged upon the people to become part of the Yatra for their contribution towards protection of our environment against more degradation.

He stressed the urgency of preserving natural

resources, particularly water bodies and forest cover, to mitigate the effects of climate change and ensure sustainable growth.

“We are moving towards modernization and commercialization, but it is our responsibility to balance progress with environmental sustainability. Conservation of water and afforestation must be our top priorities,” said the Minister.

He stressed the need for

sustainable practices. “We are facing many challenges, but it is our duty to address them. We must plant more trees, conserve water and ensure our environment remains sustainable. Our department has several schemes, such as Amrit Sarovar, to improve water reservoirs and promote environmental health,” he added.

The Minister also said that the watershed yatra is a significant step towards a better future. He urged upon the students and local communities to actively participate in environmental conservation. “It is not just the duty of the department but also of every individual to preserve water bodies and maintain the environment. We are suffering from global warming, and it is our collective responsibility to address it,” he said.

EDITORIAL

Everything is not hunky dory about Saffron in Kashmir

The National Saffron Mission was launched with pomp and show by the Government of India so as to give a boost to the production of Saffron, considered to be a symbol of Kashmir. In the initial years the mission achieved success to a certain extent and it was expected that in the subsequent years the graph of success would be more. However, the mission failed to live up to the expectations and as on date it is a failure.

Over the past many years the government has been claiming that there has been a bumper production of saffron in Kashmir and all the previous records have been broken. On ground the tall claims of the people at helm fall flat and there is a general consensus among the people more so saffron growers that the production has come down. Some of the people associated with the Saffron Growers Association have made it a habit of claiming that everything is hunky and dory vis-a-vis production of saffron.

The ordinary saffron growers have been saying that since the group among them that claims that everything is fine is entitled to privileges from the government it is due to this reason that they are not ready to dish out the real situation in this regard. In other words it can be said that the group of saffron growers having some interests is deceiving the people in general when it comes to the production of saffron in Kashmir especially in the South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

The biggest failure of the National Saffron Mission has been the inappropriate drip irrigation system in the saffron fields. At the time when the mission was launched it was envisaged that a drip irrigation system would revolutionize the whole system. It was also given out that the saffron growers would not have to depend on rainfall as far as production of saffron is concerned. No proper planning was followed in digging of the bore wells and as such the drip irrigation system turned out to be a failure.

It is highly unfortunate that the media has not played its part in highlighting the loopholes of the National Saffron Mission. Most of the media outlets depend on the data provided by the government and they never bother to go deep into the matter so as to find the real picture. Once the loopholes would have been highlighted by the media then corrective measures might have been taken by the government.

J&K needs proactive strategies for counter-terrorism!

MSNAZKI

Barking up the wrong tree is what Pakistan's ISI is trying to do. Since 1971, it has been formally headed by a serving three-star general of the Pakistan Army, who is appointed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan in consultation with the Chief of Army Staff, who recommends three officers for the position. As of 30 September 2024, the ISI is headed by Lt. Gen. Asim Malik!

What he is doing is the idiom Barking up the wrong tree means to pursue a mistaken or misguided course of action. It comes from the hunting practice of dogs barking at the base of a tree where they believe their prey is hiding. However, the prey may have moved to another tree, leaving the dogs barking up the wrong tree!

As far as Jammu and Kashmir goes which at the moment Malik is trying every possible means to make sure that Kashmir remains on top of a Bunsen's Burner!

Though terrorism has been controlled to a larger extent but yet the fact is that Pakistan has not given up!

It appears that Funds being received by Pak as international aid is being allocated to terrorist organizations in Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir also known as POJK

It is being used for the recruitment of terrorists in PoJK and other parts of Pakistan. Recruitments are taking place in the name of:-

- Apna Rozgar Plan.
- Rescue training.
- Dastar-Khawan Pgme.
- Intelligence Training & logging on to Social Media.
- Religious gatherings and education.

What better proof than this: A recent example is, Bangladesh frees an ex-minister who funded POK terrorists to bleed India!

A Bangladesh court has freed former BNP minister Abdus Salam Pintu who helped in the recruitment and training of terrorists from Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK). Pintu was in jail for 17 years after being convicted in the 2004 plot to assassinate Sheikh Hasina. He helped terror outfit HuJI with funds to procure arms and train recruits.

A Bangladesh court has granted relief to another anti-India terror accused. On Tuesday, former junior minister and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) member, Abdus Salam

Pintu, who funded terrorists from Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK) and Bangladesh, was released from jail after 17 years.

Abdus Salam aided the Pakistan-based terrorist outfit Harkat-ul-Jihad-Islami (HuJI) in carrying out terror attacks against India. He had been sentenced to death for plotting the grenade attack on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in 2004.

Abdus Salam played a crucial role in terror attacks in India by aiding HuJI's weapons procurement, recruitment and training programmes in camps in POK. He has been accused of helping HuJI train madrasa students in firearms and explosives, and mobilising funds and weapons for terrorists in Kashmir.

The Pakistan-based HuJI, is a designated terrorist outfit not only in India but also in Bangladesh, Israel, New Zealand, the UK and the US.

Abdus was acquitted by the High Court, according to the Dhaka-based Daily Star. He had been locked up since 2008.

Abdus Salam Pintu, along with another former BNP minister, Lutfozzaman Babar, who was acquitted, were involved in the 2004 botched attempt to kill Hasina. Babar, last week, was acquitted along with five others in the 2004 Chatogram arms-haul case.

The investigation officer in 2011 also informed the court that Abdus and Babar had trained a number of youths, primarily madrasa students, in handling firearms and bombs.

"Most of their recruits came from Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK) and Bangladesh... They had also mobilised funds, arms and ammunition for insurgents in Kashmir of India," the investigation officer was quoted as saying by the Daily Star, in 2021.

He had stated that HuJI aimed to eliminate Hasina, because the Awami League government from 1996 to 2001 was seen as an "obstacle" to the group's efforts in "recruiting and training youths as operatives, and acquiring firearms for militants operating in India and Afghanistan".

When the Hasina-led Awami League lost power in 2001, HuJI received support from BNP leaders Lutfozzaman Babar and Abdus Salam Pintu, the Dhaka court said in 2021. It was through Abdus's brother and HuJI leader, Moulana Tajuddin, that both aided the terror outfit in their plans to bleed

India.

Abdus Salam Pintu had served as deputy minister for information, industries and education under former PM Khaleda Zia of the BNP.

The HuJI has been instrumental in carrying out a series of terrorist attacks in India as part of the Pakistani establishment "Bleed India with a Thousand Cuts" doctrine. This involved several low-intensity attacks, such as the court complex bombings in Varanasi in 2006, the bombing of the Ajmer Sharif Dargah in 2007, and bomb blasts in Delhi in 2011.

HuJI is known to operate in collaboration with other terrorist groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), and receive support and patronage from Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

With the release of Abdus Salam Pintu, following the freeing of Lutfozzaman Babar, the Naya Bangladesh led by Muhammad Yunus has witnessed several Islamists with headline anti-India stances walking free. Weeks after Sheikh Hasina was forced to flee to India, Jashimuddin Rahmani, the chief of the Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT), an al-Qaida-affiliated terrorist group, was also freed.

This proves that International funding to the POJK terrorists is still on and it will keep going on!

These inputs are in no way wrong because the same is happening in POJK! Now this is a fact: Beyond response: J&K needs proactive strategies for counter-terrorism!

Terrorist violence, it appears, is/was making a comeback in Jammu & Kashmir after a lull of a few months. A series of terrorist attacks and encounters in the Jammu region in the last few weeks have led to fears that militancy, which had been in its final gasps, has come back stronger to target the security forces operating in the region.

The sequence of events:

It all began on 9 June 2024, when insurgents attacked a bus carrying pilgrims in Reasi, killing 10 and injuring 33. Two days later, six soldiers were wounded in twin attacks in Doda and Kathua.

On 7 July, one army personnel was injured when terrorists attacked a security post in the Rajouri-Poonch area. Another attack followed on 8 July, when heavily armed terrorists killed five soldiers, including a Junior Commissioned Officer and

injured six in the Kathua district.

In the Doda district, four army soldiers, an officer and a J&K Police (JKP) officer were killed during an encounter. The Jaish-e-Mohammed-linked shadow groups, the Kashmir Tigers and People's Anti-Fascist Front, have claimed responsibility for these attacks.

These attacks south of Pir Panjal assume significance as, since 2019, the security grid has been largely successful in combating terrorist violence in the Kashmir valley.

These attacks south of Pir Panjal assume significance as, since 2019, the security grid has been largely successful in combating terrorist violence in the Kashmir valley.

A noticeable change in the attitude of the Kashmiri youth accompanies this reduction in terrorist violence. This was evident by the active participation of youth in the recently held Lok Sabha elections, which saw a 58 per cent voter turnout in the Union Territory. Then the Assembly elections happened!

These changed dynamics are putting pressure on Pakistan and the terrorist organisations based there to alter their geographic and tactical approaches to remain relevant.

After August 2019, security agencies focused on the terrorist strongholds of South Kashmir, which had become the hotbed of militancy. With a robust security grid, they largely succeeded in cracking down on terrorist networks and eliminated several terrorists.

The crackdown included explicitly targeting terror funding and individuals supporting or harbouring terrorists, including the Over Ground Workers (OGWs) and cadres of Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI). This Hizbul Mujahideen-linked religious organisation had spread its network far and wide in the Valley. According to the data provided by the security forces, between 2019 and 2021, the JKP arrested more than 900 OGWs under the Public Safety Act and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. In addition, the National Investigation Agency launched several investigations into terrorist financing cases. These uncovered a deep nexus between the Pakistan Army's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and terrorist organisations.

Meanwhile, the pressure on terrorist organisations continued through counter-insurgency operations that

targeted top militant leaders. Between 2021 and 2023, security forces eliminated as many as 443 terrorists, including 127 foreign terrorists (as shown in Figure 1).

As a result of these actions, there was a dip in local terrorist recruitment after 2021. In 2022, only 100 local youth joined terrorist organisations. This came down to merely 25 in 2023. At present, security agencies estimate the presence of around 110 foreign and 27 local terrorists in J&K.

These circumstances also changed the local youth's perception of Pakistan. There was a realisation that Islamabad had deceived generations of Kashmiris by exploiting religion and engaging in illegal activities like narcotics smuggling to fund insurgency in the Valley.

Pakistan is also exploring new mechanisms for infiltration, like porous international borders and riverine areas in the Jammu sector rather than the Line of Control (LoC) in the north. Security forces have noted that the infiltrating terrorists, gathering in groups of four to five, have used tactics of conservation and consolidation, i.e., staying quiet for some time and blending with the local population before carrying out attacks. Security forces also note the proliferation of equipment like M4 carbine assault rifles, night vision goggles along with highly encrypted telecom equipment (Chinese customised equipment that is usually used by Pak Army troops).

In addition, terrorists are using encrypted messaging platforms and social media apps like Telegram, Tam Tam, Mastodon, Chirpwire, Enigma, etc., along with virtual private networks, which are already banned in Rajouri and Poonch districts.

However, the region's security grid, particularly in the Rajouri and Poonch districts, was weakened because some security forces were reassigned to the eastern Ladakh sector to deal with the Chinese aggression. Terrorist organisations exploited this opportunity to target security forces, ultimately contributing to the recent surge.

The proactive measures:

Restoring the security grid in the region must be the priority, especially in the terror-hit border districts of Kathua, Doda, Rajouri and Poonch. For this purpose, experienced Army and Police officials from the

Kashmir Valley should be deployed in the region, with a mandate not only to redesign the anti-terror grid but also to create much-needed inter-agency synergy.

Restoring the security grid in the region must be the priority, especially in the terror-hit border districts of Kathua, Doda, Rajouri and Poonch.

Moreover, given the adoption of an ambush style of attack by foreign terrorists, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and JKP's Special Operations Group (SOG) can form joint teams to counter such attacks effectively. For example, CRPF's COBRA Commandos, known for their jungle and guerrilla warfare experience, can be teamed up with SOG personnel, some of whom have combat experience from the peak militancy decade of 2000-2010 in the Pir Panjal and Chenab belt region. In addition, the Army should leverage its strengths to dominate the heights, increase vigilance along the LoC, and tighten border security. Improving inter-agency coordination between the Army, CRPF, JKP's Border Security Force, and JKP is crucial.

Subsequently, the security forces must opt for additional counter-insurgency training to develop new strategies. In the last seven or eight years, most counter-insurgency operations have been successfully executed using TECHINT-based information. However, terrorists are now using encrypted apps and online activity to mislead security agencies. Therefore, agencies must reinforce HUMINT to complement TECHINT. Creating a network of informants won't be easy as intelligence agencies worked against each other's assets after 2019, taking most of the sources out of the system.

Significantly, it is not just the hard measures that will help the security forces; soft measures, too, can go a long way in avoiding losing the locals' trust. The forces can replicate some of the soft measures the Army has initiated in the Valley. This becomes even more critical from the information warfare viewpoint, something which the ISI's propaganda machinery has amplified vis-à-vis Kashmir post-August 2019.

Pakistan's only ambition is to keep Kashmir on the boil! But India will not allow the same to happen! This is what Asim Malik the ISI Chief should realize!

Make books and newspapers your companions



DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

Young people are losing interest in books due to the increasing use of the Internet. Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and other social media platforms are rapidly changing the reading habits of young Indians. The spread of smartphones and almost free Internet services has further accelerated this process of changing habits. Instant Maggi is a part of the young generation. As a result, they use Google to manage their lives. The older generation, who

once read books, gave purpose to their lives by working hard, patiently, and diligently. Books were very important for problem-solving, especially autobiographies. Earlier, parents also suggested reading books. If you do not read books and newspapers now, then develop the habit of reading from today itself. You are probably not aware of so many benefits of reading books. Nowadays, when the young generation wakes up in the morning, they start using their smartphones to browse social media sites instead of reading newspapers. No matter how popular a TV show is, families no longer gather together to watch it as they used to. Instead, they continue to keep themselves busy with social media apps on their phones.

According to experts, the digital industry will revolutionize even more. As a result, there have been, and will continue to be, changes in life and reading habits. Books are considered to be man's best friend. However, in today's busy world, there are very few people who read books. Reading books is not really a habit that should be associated with entertainment. Instead, you should include it in your daily schedule. Given that books make people happy. When asked when was the last time they read a book, most people will look surprised. Apart from students enrolled in school and college, this question is also asked by working youth who are actively involved in determining their future after graduation.

In today's busy world, people are avoiding reading. Every successful and admirable person in the world has the habit of reading books. Books are considered to be man's best friend. Reading regularly is not only good for your health, but it also increases your knowledge. It also changes a person's attitude towards life and thoughts. No matter how popular the Internet becomes, reading books will always remain the best option. Talking about the benefits of reading books, there are many. When you read a book, your attention is focused on one area. The habit of reading every day improves focus. You also feel like working on a project. Newspapers publish articles on many topics, including politics, science, technology, art, and

culture, as well as articles by well-known authors and subject experts. Children who read regularly get a chance to gain new knowledge. Due to lack of knowledge, you have to remain silent in many situations. You are unable to speak clearly or feel too shy to do so. Reading increases knowledge and information. Based on which you can discuss any topic anywhere with anyone. Reading books increases the confidence to speak and communicate. It is said that good writing is possible only by speaking well. By reading books, you start making connections between the ideas and strategies they discuss in your life. You start applying them in your life at the same time. As soon as you read a horror or sus-

penseful novel, you start imagining its characters and events. Then you start trying to understand the ending of the novel without reading it completely. Teaching the current generation to read newspapers is challenging, as they are either fascinated by their devices or prefer to read fiction. The factual presentation in newspapers is tedious and tiring for most of them. However, you can make newspaper reading one of your child's favorite pastimes by implementing some innovative ideas, and once he develops the habit, it will remain for life.

After reading a novel or a storybook, you are able to remember its characters and setting for a very long time. Reading daily improves your memory and recall. Your memory

gets better every day. This is how the brain develops. You may have read or heard the saying that if you are not able to sleep, start reading a book to fall asleep. Reading a book before sleeping at night makes your brain feel tired and relaxes the nerves of your brain, which leads to good sleep. Therefore, make it a habit to read before sleeping every day to sleep comfortably. A person's true friend is a book. They help you get rid of your loneliness. Whenever you are bored or lonely, you should read. Reading regularly gives you new energy. Your mood changes, and as a result, you feel more relaxed. It is important that young people understand that the Internet mainly serves as a source of information rather than knowledge.

Therefore, it should be limited to information only. Internet users have different attitudes, and the loneliness of young people can be easily felt. On the other hand, books can help young people become more imaginative. This was also seen earlier. It is possible that the older generation used to think and behave more politely and softly than the current generation. In real life, relationships and contacts are decreasing due to attachment to the virtual world. This creates a new risk. Additionally, warning signs have started appearing in some places. In this case, parents have to do this.

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

Why it's the best time to invest in Kharar, Punjab



MUSAAB RAFIQ
FOUNDER (M.A REAL ESTATE)

Kharar, Punjab, is experiencing a significant transformation, making it an ideal time for investment. The area is witnessing rapid urbanization, with new residential and commercial projects coming up regularly. This growth is driven by its strategic location, which connects it to Chandigarh and other major cities, making it a prime spot for both living and business.

One of the key factors making Kharar an attractive investment destination is the development of infrastructure. The government is investing in roads, public transport, and utilities, which enhances the overall livability of the area. Improved connectivity not only makes commuting

easier but also boosts the local economy by attracting businesses and professionals. This, in turn, increases the demand for housing and commercial spaces.

Additionally, Kharar is home to several educational institutions and healthcare facilities, which draw families to the area. The influx of students and professionals creates a steady demand for rental properties, leading to favorable rental yields for investors. As the population grows, property values are expected to rise, providing investors with the potential for significant capital appreciation over time.

Moreover, the real estate market in Kharar is still relatively affordable compared to nearby cities like Chandigarh. This affordability, combined with the ongoing development and demand for housing, presents a unique opportunity for investors to enter the market before prices increase further. With the right investment strategy, one can capitalize on the growth potential of Kharar, making it a promising choice for both short-term gains and long-term wealth creation.

Baramulla on the Rise: Latest Government Efforts to Boost Tourism

"Border tourism in Baramulla is transforming the region, boosting economic growth, employment, and cultural exchange while fostering peace and stability. With government support and local efforts, Baramulla is emerging as a key tourist destination, showcasing its natural beauty and rich heritage"



ZAHIDA PARVEEN
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In the beautiful Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the district of Baramulla is witnessing an extraordinary transformation, thanks to the recent surge in border tourism and economic activities. The combined efforts of the District Administration, the Lieutenant Governor's administration, and dedicated district officials have not only unearthed hidden tourist gems but have also revitalized areas that were once inaccessible. These initiatives have sparked hope among the locals, offering them a new avenue for growth and prosperity. One of the most significant milestones in this journey has been the reopening of the Kaman Post, famously known as the Bridge of Peace. This location, which had remained closed since 2018 due to security concerns, has now been made accessible to the general public with just an Aadhaar card as a permit. Previously restricted to high-ranking officials, Kaman Post is now welcoming thousands of tourists from across the country. The absence of recent terrorism-related incidents has further encouraged officials to maintain public access, making it a symbol of peace and reconciliation. The overwhelming tourist response has not only brought national attention to the area but has also strengthened the spirit of unity and coexistence. Another remarkable success story is the emergence of Babagail village in Boniyar as a prime destination for border tourism.



The government's strategic initiative to promote home-stays and encourage local cultural exchanges has made Babagail a haven for tourists seeking tranquility amidst the breathtaking Himalayan landscapes. This initiative has provided much-needed economic opportunities for local residents, allowing them to showcase their rich traditions while earning a livelihood through tourism. Adventure enthusiasts and nature lovers have been drawn to various picturesque locations within the Uri subdivision, which has witnessed an unprecedented boom in

tourism. Places like Baba Fareed, Kandi, Rustom Nambla (TV Tower), Dana Nambla, Nambla Waterfall, Bosiya, Copra Peak, Dudran, Dana Dudran, Chotali, Zulfiqar View Point, Bilal Abad Garkote, Machichurand, Lachipora Wildlife Sanctuary, Limber Wildlife Sanctuary, Ghati, Gabaywar, and Vijji Top have become sought-after destinations for trekkers and travelers alike. The district's natural beauty, once overshadowed by geopolitical tensions, is now being celebrated for its untapped potential. Another noteworthy transformation is happening in Ladua Ladoora in

the Rafiabed area. Once infamous as an infiltration route, Ladua Ladoora has now been repositioned as a tourist hotspot, thanks to the dedicated efforts of the district administration. A grand tourism festival was recently organized to showcase its scenic beauty and promote peace. This shift from being a site of strife to a place of hope is a testament to the power of positive change and developmental initiatives. The boom in border tourism has gone beyond mere sightseeing; it has become a catalyst for economic growth and employment generation in Baramulla. Numerous trekking groups

have set out to explore and document the untouched splendor of these remote regions, bringing Kashmir's natural wonders into the global spotlight. This increased visibility has also encouraged private investors and tourism-based businesses to invest in the region, further solidifying its position as a promising travel destination. One of the most remarkable developments in this new wave of tourism has been the introduction of the first-ever snow festival in Munddaji. Organized by the district administration, the festival saw an overwhelming response from visitors and locals alike.

The enthusiasm surrounding the event has fueled aspirations for more such cultural and adventure-driven festivals in the future. The festival not only promoted the area as a winter tourist attraction but also provided a significant economic boost to local businesses and artisans. These tourism-driven initiatives have played a crucial role in fostering peace and stability in areas previously marred by conflict. The development of home-stays, improvement of infrastructure, and promotion of adventure and eco-tourism have contributed to a significant rise in employment opportunities for the local youth. Tourism-related ventures have offered a sustainable source of income, reducing dependence on traditional occupations and opening doors to modern entrepreneurial possibilities. The impact of border tourism in Baramulla extends beyond economic prosperity; it has infused a sense of pride and optimism among the residents. The visible change in perception—both within and outside the region—has reinforced the belief that peace and development can go hand in hand. As more travelers continue to explore the hidden gems of Baramulla, the district is poised to emerge as a key player in Jammu and Kashmir's overall tourism landscape. With the unwavering support of the government and the dedication of local authorities, border tourism in Baramulla has become a beacon of hope. It stands as a testament to the resilience and potential of the people living in these once-overlooked regions. As these initiatives continue to flourish, Baramulla is set to embark on a brighter and more prosperous future—one where tourism is not just an industry but a bridge connecting cultures, fostering harmony, and shaping a new narrative for Jammu and Kashmir.

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Visit to Verinag: A place with surreal beauty in Anantnag district



SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

In general, it is the place where people are being called angels. The rivers are running towards their destinations, providing solace and soothing the minds of every nature lover. The snow-clad mountains look and give bridal impressions. The lush green pine trees are looking like someone has kept artificial candles upright and spreading rays like green up to far distances. The lofty waterfalls,

making no mistake and falling all drops altogether, add sensuous and sensational views to us. The green vegetation in upper reaches is quite mesmerizing. Having such a natural aroma, healing one's damaged and disturbed mind.

The meadows in the summer season call visitors from all corners of the world and provide them with soft, green signs of peace and carpet-like feelings. The meadows of the valley have different colors in different seasons. Nature lovers catch them for long times in their memories and keep every bit recorded for the loneliness period.

Kashmir Valley is unique, rare, and nature-bestowing, and is famous for genuine reasons in all corners of the world.

Like the sweet and lovely people. The hospitality of the valley is really appreciable and caught a focus of all eyes.

Kashmir Valley is again famous for its different, charming, alluring, and charming seasons, like, summer, autumn, winters and spring. Every season has its importance, and visitors from our own country and from different parts of the world come here, every visitor feeling really there is no place like Kashmir in their surroundings. Like Kashmir.

A visit to Verinag.

Today in this article I am going to explore my opinion with you on how I enjoyed and explored Verinag during the harsh period of winters. I paid a visit to Verinag with

family, my mother and father, on the 22nd of January 2025. We have to visit one of our close relatives at Shahabad Dooru after completing all the get-togethers. I decided to go to Verinag as my parents never been to there that was main reason to visit Verinag during late hour of chillai kallan.

For the local Kashmiris, we are not used to going to recreational purposes during winters due to having minus degrees, and people used to sit at home and keep themselves warm and avoid harsh, chilling cold waves. For nature lovers, all the 365 days are charming, mesmerizing, and endowed in the Kashmir Valley.

From our relative's residence, it took us 30 minutes to reach there and

park my car outside the garden, pay the entry fee, and enter from the gate. That gate remains open for 24 hours for the locals as they take water from the spring and remains open for normal routine tasks.

When I entered the garden, I felt that to really I never come here because the environmental factors were quite different and alluring then summers. The soothing sound of water. Cold waves touching open face, ears, and hands; it feels like my parts are getting numb.

The spring looks like it is waiting and undergoing immense patience and calling, Oh summer, where are you traveling now? I am alone and disturbed.

It looks like spring is missing a huge gather-

ing of people who love and have great attraction towards it during summers.

Summer and winter's impact on Verinag.

During summers it looks like we are somewhere where every corner is filled with visitors; everywhere there is a buzzing sound, some are busy searching for picturesque backgrounds for photography, and some are looking for empty space for relaxing their mood and body; some are busy with having lunch and tea.

In winters

It looks like I am a VIP and an influential personality in my nation, so I have got a great chance to visit this place. Because there were few people

there. I felt it was only because of me that there were restrictions in the garden. You think I am joking. Hmm, but it was reality; I experienced it at Verinag during winters.

Why Verinag is famous in the Kashmir Valley.

It is considered that the origin of River Jehlum is the Verinag. The River Jehlum is a major river in South Asia, a tributary of the Chenab; in the past it was called Vitasta in Sanskrit. The Jehlum River flows through the Valley of Kashmir and then through the Pakistan-controlled Kashmir and then the Punjab regions of Pakistan and covers around 700 kilometers.

Verinag is also known as Mughal Garden because Mughal emperor Jahangir maintained it in the 16th

century. And then his son, Shah Jahan, he was a great natural lover.

Verinag is in the lap of lush green pine and luscious vegetation of the Pir Panjal range and provides everyone one piece of mind. The water of spring looks green and so cold even in the scorching heat of the month of July. The fishes in the river enhance the beauty and attract thousands of visitors. All year round.

Verinag is in district Anantnag, tehsil Shabbad Bala, and has great importance among visitors as well as the locals.

Verinag bestows peace of mind and is calling the visitors from all corners of the world.

sahilmanzoor411990@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written as RUQAYA BANO D/O MOHAMMAD QASIM RATHER in my Bank account bearing account No. 022704080001128 while my correct name is RUQAYA QASIM D/O MOHAMMAD QASIM RATHER R/O MATIPORA which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection he/she may file his/her objection in the office of J&K BANK SINGHPORA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name: .RUQAYA QASIM
D/O MOHAMMAD QASIM RATHER
R/O MATIPORA SINGHPORA
DISTTBARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Mushtaq Ahmad Mohand S/O: Mohd Abdullah Mohand R/O: Hardutooru Anantnag have updated the Name of my Son as Shahzaib Ahmad Mohand from Shazif Ahmad Mohand. Now I want to update the school records of my Son named above at Evergreen Public institute kawarigam Anantnag. If any body have any objection he/she can file his/her objection at the office of Principal Evergreen Public institute kawarigam Anantnag within 7 days time. No objection will be entertained after the expiry of stipulated time.

Name: . Mushtaq Ahmad Mohand
S/O: Mohd Abdullah Mohand
R/O: Hardutooru Anantnag.

**IN THE FORM OF THE AUTHORISED OFFICER,
J.V FOREST DIVISION, BARAMULLA**

Extract of order passed by the Authorised Officer-Cum- Divisional Forest Officer, J.V Forest Division Vide No. DFO/JV/AO/ Bla/457-61 Dated 05-02-2025 in connection with case No. 15-21/AO/JV/Bla of Doabgah Forest Range "Therefore, I am of the opinion that justice will be done by confiscating the seized vehicle along with the timber. I therefore issue order under sub sec 3 of sec 52 of IFA 2020 that the seized Maruti 800 bearing Regd No. JK05/6113 (Engine No: NA, Chaises No: Nil) along with the Deodar timber 02 No equal to 08 cfts is confiscated to the UT. The confiscated vehicle is lying with Range Officer Half Wrought Factory Baramulla as custodian of the concerned confiscated assets. The Range Officer concerned will report compliance of order to this forum latest by 20/03/2025. The timber be handed over to FDC Baramulla under proper procedure. The copy of this order be communicated to the Conservator of Forest, North Circle Sopore. The copy of this order be also communicated to accused person/persons. The copy of this order be published in two leading newspapers having wide circulation in the Union Territory. The file be consigned to records after its due completion"

DIPK-11598/24
Date: Feb 5 2025

اطلاع عام

غلطی سے ادھار کاڈ زیر نمبر 956371137390 میں میرے بیٹے کا نام نعمان اسحاق لون انراج ہوا ہے جبکہ میرے بیٹے کا اصل نام لون نعمان اسحاق ہے اب اس کی دستگی کرانی مطلوب ہے کسی کو کوئی عذر ہو تو وہ سات یوم کے اندر اندر دفتر ہذا میں پیش کرے بعد ازاں معاد کوئی عذر قبول نہیں ہوگا

محمد اسحاق لون والد لون نعمان اسحاق
ساکن ونگام سانگس اننت ناگ

اطلاع عام

غلطی سے ادھار کاڈ زیر نمبر 419993099169 میں میرے بیٹے کا نام محمد اسحاق لون انراج ہوا ہے جبکہ میرے بیٹے کا اصل نام لون تحمیل اسحاق ہے اب اس کی دستگی کرانی مطلوب ہے کسی کو کوئی عذر ہو تو وہ سات یوم کے اندر اندر دفتر ہذا میں پیش کرے بعد ازاں معاد کوئی عذر قبول نہیں ہوگا

محمد اسحاق لون والد لون تحمیل اسحاق
ساکن ونگام سانگس اننت ناگ

SAD DEMISE



WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW, WE INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF
GHULAM AHMAD BHAT
S/O LATE : MOHAMMAD ISMAIL BHAT R/O QAMMARWARI QAMARABAD NEAR MASJID BATE UL SALAAM SRINAGAR, WHO LEFT FOR HEAVENLY
ABODE ON 4TH FEBRUARY 2025 TUESDAY
MAY ALMIGHTY ALLAH GRANT JANNAT-UL-FIRODOUS TO THE DEPARTED SOUL.
FATAH E KHANI WILL BE OBSERVED AT THEIR ANCESTRAL GRAVEYARD LOCATED AT Masjid Anjum SRINAGAR AT 2:30 pm ON FRIDAY.
BEREAVED BHAT FAMILY
SHOWKAT AH BHAT
Contact No. 789409955 962242447

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR PAHALGAM
(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)**

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer PAHALGAM) / chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of FAISAL HAMEED BHAT S/O ABDUL HAMEED BHAT R/O SRICHEN Tehsil ANANTNAG Distt. ANANTNAG having verified the date of Birth as 10/03/2013 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order. In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

Executive Magistrate
1st Class PAHALGAM

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR PAHALGAM
(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)**

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer PAHALGAM) / chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of BARIQ AHMAD KHATANA S/O MOHAMMAD QASIM KHATANA R/O GOJRAN BATAKOTE BATAKOTE Tehsil ANANTNAG Distt. ANANTNAG having verified the date of Birth as 20/12/2016 and event has been shown to today 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 PAHALGAM

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name , parentage and date of birth wrongly written as AJAZ AHMAD RATHA S/O GHULAM MOHD RATHA with BOB 22/09/1992 while my correct name AIJAZ AHMAD RATHER S/O GH MOHD RATHER and my correct DOB 24/04/1986 which needs corrected if anybody having any objection he/she may file his / her objection in the BDO office WAGOORA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name.....AIJAZ AHMAD RATHER
S/O GH MOHD RATHER
DOB.....24/04/1986

**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 SADDAM HUSSAIN PARRAY D/O ALTAF HUSSAIN PARRAY R/O HAIL JAGIR Tehsil KHOE Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 21/07/2016 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 HANIFA BEGUM W/O ABDUL QAYOOM THOKER R/O KALANTRA BALA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 13/04/1962 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 HASHIM RAMZAN S/O MOHAMMAD RAMZAN KHAN R/O SALOOSA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 01/04/2017 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

SAD DEMISE



With profound grief and sorrow, we regret to inform you that Fayaz Ahmad Dar S/o: Mohd Shaban dar a resident of Rampora Chattabal Srinagar, left for heavenly abode on 04-02-2025. May Almighty grant departed soul highest place in Jannah. Mourning will be observed only for three days. There will be no congregational fath khawani. Note: Ladies are requested not to bring eatables. Bereaved family 60052 82359

Subject: Grant of registration of the paying Guest house/ Home stay under the name and style " Playful Home Stay/ Paying Guest House" Situated at Bunpora Kathsoo Phalgam.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, I Ghulam Hussain Bhat S/o: Ama Bhat, R/o Bunpora Kathsoo Phalgam. Intends to apply in the office of Prescribed Authority of Directorate of Tourism Kashmir for registration of my proposed Paying Guest House/ Home Stay under the Name & Style "Playful Home Stay/Paying Guest House" Situated at near Bunpora Kathsoo Phalgam Anantnag. under Tourist trade Act 1978/82/2011-12. Whereas I will submit Landownership Certificate from Concerned Tehsildar with atleast photographs of the unit through Dy. Commissioner Concerned, Rent/Lease Deed/Partnership Deed/issued by concerned Sub-Registrar, Judicial Magistrate (if applicable NOC from the owner to the effect that the property can be used as HomeStay), Character Certificate of the applicant from the Concerned Police Station, undertaking from the owner as self declaration, Public Notice inviting objections, if any in print media, list of family members Name, Age and Photograph self attested by owner, photographs of the unit as mentioned in the application (each of exterior and individual bed rooms and bathrooms), Inspection report by the Committee shall decide whether to issue a registration to the unit or not keeping in view, the type of accommodation and amenity, aadhar card. Now before my case is processed for registration by the prescribed Authority. The matter is hereby notified for information of general Public/Organizations for objections if any and the same should reach to the office of prescribed Authority within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper of the valley. Objections received beyond the period of 7 days from the date of publication shall not be entertained and the case shall be processed under rules as per merit
Mobile No.7006900689.

**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 MOHAMMADA BANO S/O GH HYDER PANDITH R/O AUTHOORA RSHOPORA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 02/04/1979 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 MOHAMMADUSMAN PARRAY D/O AILAZ SHAFI PARRAY R/O HYGAM Tehsil KHOE Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 06/05/2021 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KRRERI 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 ABIHA HAFEEZ D/O HAFEEZULLAH KHAN R/O KALANTRA BALA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 11/10/2023 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KRRERI 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 TAIMOOR BHAT D/O ABDUL RASHID BHAT R/O KACHWA MUQAM Tehsil WAGOORA Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 11/05/2023 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 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER WATER WORKS DIVISION SRINAGAR
GIST OF NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER**

Short Term E-NIT. No: 81/WWD/Sgr/Civil-Mech of 2024-25 Dated 04.02.2025

Executive Engineer Water Works Division Srinagar on behalf of Commissioner SMC Srinagar, invites tenders by e-tendering mode on percentage basis in 2 Cover System as:-

Table-I

S. No	Name of Work	Estd. Cost (in lacs)	Cost of EMD (in Rs.)	Cost of Tender Document (in Rs.)	Head of Account	T.O.C	Class of Contractor	Tender Call
1	Provision for restoration and upkeep of electro-mechanical equipments & other machinery setup at Water Treatment Plant Nishat.	11.82	23,640/-	700/-	SMC CAPEX	30 days	Registered Electrical/ Mechanical Contractor s. Electrical / Mechanical SSI Unit Holders	1 st

Position of AAA:-Accorded Position of Funds:- Available

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings (if any), Book of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms, conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the website: www.jktendersgov.in As per schedule of dates given below

Table (II)

01	Date of publishing of Tender Notice	04.02.2025
02	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 04.02.2025 10:00 A.M. To 13.02.2025 04:00 P.M.
03	Bid Submission Start Date	04.02.2025 10:00 A.M.
04	Bid submission End Date	13.02.2025 Upto 04:00 P.M.
06	Date and time of opening of Bids (Online)	14.02.2025 at 2:00 P.M. in the office of the Executive Engineer Water Works Division Srinagar

DIPK-No 11567/24
Dated: 05.02.2025

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Water Works Division Srinagar

**GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR
Office Of The Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.
Ground Water Division Srinagar
Baghi-Ali-Mardan, Nowshara Srinagar.
E-mail:-p hegwd@yahoo.com, Tel./FaxNo:-0194-2411285**

Extension Notice 6th

- Subject: 1. Construction of Gravel Packed 250 mm Nominal dia M.S Casing Production Tube Well at Bomai, Khas, Sopore.
2. Construction of Gravel Packed 250 mm Nominal dia M.S Casing Production Tube Well at Site Shalpora, Tujjar Sopore.

Due to "Poor Response" for the work advertised vide e-NIT No.44/JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2024-25 issued vide this office endorsement No: -JS-PHE/GWDS/24-25/Corrs./ 8760-71, Dated: 11-12-2024. Bearing Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_267677_1 & 2. Which was scheduled to be downloaded till 05-02-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM are extended as per the details given below: -

S. No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Period of submission of bids	10-02-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM
2.	Date of opening of tenders	11-02-2025 11.00 AM

NOTE: All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid e-NIT issued vide above referred endst: nos.

DIPK-11596/24
Dated: 05-02-2025

Sd/=
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.
Ground Water Division Srinagar.

DDC Kupwara reviews preparations for implementation of PMJVK

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 5: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Ms. Ayushi Sudan today convened a meeting of concerned officers to discuss the preparations for implementation of Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) scheme in the district.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme, launched by the Ministry of Minority Affairs which is aimed at infrastructure development in



minority concentration areas. The objectives of the scheme is to improve the socio-economic condition of the communities living in the areas through community infrastructure development support and provide basic amenities for

improving quality of life of the people. On the occasion, the DDC enjoined upon the concerned officers to identify various impactful works in their departments which can be developed under the PMJVK scheme. She directed them to pro-

pose the construction of buildings for those Anganwadi Centres, Health Centres and Schools which are rented or in a dilapidated condition. She also asked for the development of sports infrastructure including Indoor Stadiums under the scheme which shall boost the sports sector in the district. The DDC impressed upon all the officers to ensure equal representation of every block of the district while proposing the works for development so that people at large are benefitted under the PMJVK scheme.

Chairperson, DDC Kulgam visits slain Ex-Armyman's family

■ Farooq Rather

Ganderbal, February 05: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Ganderbal, organized a legal awareness program on "Right to Free Legal Aid and Legal Representation", at a far flung village Krishansar Waliwar of district, today.

The program was held under the supervision of Chairman DLSA, Ganderbal, Abdul Nasir, and under the guidance of Sheikh Babar Hussain, Secretary DLSA Ganderbal, aimed to educate the general public



about accessing free legal representation particularly for weaker sections in criminal cases.

On the occasion, Tanveer Ashraf, Assistant LADC, Ganderbal, delivered an informative lecture, enlightening the participants about the nuances of accessing free legal repre-

sentation. He elaborated on various aspects, including, procedures to access free legal representation, conditions for free legal aid, eligibility criteria and benefits of legal aid, rights of those unable to afford legal representation, special provisions for people living below the poverty line and

availability of free legal aid in both criminal and civil cases.

His insightful presentation empowered the participants with knowledge about their rights and entitlements under the free legal aid scheme.

Bilal Ahmad Bhat, Adhikaar Mitra (PLV) VLC&SC Manigam, distributed free legal aid pamphlets published by National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and J&K Legal Services Authority (JKLSA) among the participants, providing them with valuable resources and infor-

SHEW, DYSS Shopian organise sports activities

■ HT News Network

Shopian, February 05: To mark 10 years of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) initiative, Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women (SHEW), Shopian in collaboration with the Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS) organized a sports programme for students.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students of various schools in carrom and chess competitions, highlighting the importance of focus, strategic thinking and decision-making to empower young minds to overcome challenges.

During the programme, District Social Welfare Officer Shopian and District Youth Services and Sports Officer Shopian delivered inspirational speeches; urging students to break barriers, challenge negative societal norms, and embrace education as a tool for empowerment.

The event concluded with a felicitation ceremony during which winners were honored for their outstanding performance.

07 persons booked for assaulting Forest Staff in Kangan

■ HT News Network

Srinagar February 05: The Forest Department has filed a First Information Report (FIR) against seven residents of Mamer Kangan, Ganderbal for assaulting forest officials during a plantation project.

According to the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Sindh Forest Division, "The incident occurred in compartment 69 of the Sindh Range, where the forest team was carrying out plantation work on an 08-hectare forest land."

This project, funded by the Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), was approved by the Regional Office of the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change in 2022 as compensation for forest land diverted for the Thune to Badipathri road.

Work commenced in early February, but was disrupted by the accused, who allegedly instigated villagers to attack the forest team with stones and sticks.

The accused have been booked under sections 115(2) and 132 of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita, pertaining to provoking individuals to causing harm and assaulting government employees performing their duties.

DFO Sindh Forest Division emphasized the importance of the project for environmental balance and appealed to local residents for cooperation and constructive dialogue to ensure its peaceful completion.

Training prog for Hajj pilgrims of Ganderbal on Feb 15

■ HT News Network

Ganderbal, February 05: The Executive Officer, J&K Hajj Committee Srinagar has scheduled the Haj orientation cum training programme about Manasik-e-Hajj for the selected Hajj pilgrims of District Ganderbal on 15 February 2025 at Markazi Hanfia Jamia Masjid Sharief Beehama Ganderbal at 10:00 A.M. Accordingly, all the selected Hajj pilgrims of the district Ganderbal are informed to attend the said training programme on the scheduled date and time. Accordingly, all the selected Hajj pilgrims of the district Ganderbal are informed to attend the said training programme on the scheduled date and time.

DLSA G'bal organizes awareness prog on Right to Free Legal Aid, Legal representation

■ Farooq Rather

Kulgam, February 04: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today chaired a comprehensive meeting with officers from various departments to review the progress made under several key centrally sponsored schemes and programmes.

During the meeting, he reviewed Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U), Mission Indradanush, PM -JAY, PM- UJWALA, PM-Sawa-Nidhi, PM-Mutru Vandana Yojana, PM-Vishwa Karma, PM- Mudra, PM-Poshan and KCC.

On the occasion, DC emphasized for achieving 100% saturation in all the schemes and programmes.

He directed the officers to meet the weekly targets to reach out the left out households so that all eligible beneficiaries are covered by the end of February.

While reviewing the progress of schemes, he interacted with the beneficiaries to know their on ground experience regarding the implementation of scheme in the district.

The importance of inter-depart-



mental collaboration, timely reporting, and rigorous monitoring was also underlined to ensure efficient implementation and to meet the desired outcomes.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Zahid Sajjad, Assistant Commissioner Development Syed Naseer, District Programme Officer, General Manager DIC, CEO, CHO, CAO, Executive Engineer of Jalal Shakti, ADCAPD, AD Handloom and other officers from various departments. While reviewing the progress of schemes, he interacted with the beneficiaries to know their on ground experience regarding the implementation of scheme in the district.

DC Baramulla reviews disaster preparedness response mechanism

Directs updating contingency plans, conducting mock drills

■ HT News Network

Baramulla, February 5: In a concerted effort to enhance disaster preparedness and response capabilities of district, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla convened a review meeting of concerned departments, including Police, SDRF, Fire & Emergency Services, Health, Education, PDD, PHE and other stakeholders.

The meeting aimed to assess the current state of readiness, identify gaps, and ensure a well-coordinated approach to disaster management across the district.

During the review, the DC underscored the critical importance of a robust and proactive disaster management mechanism, stressing that preparedness is the cornerstone of effective disaster response.

DC maintained that in



times of crisis, there must be absolute clarity regarding roles and responsibilities, and all concerned agencies and departments should function in a cohort to mitigate risks besides safeguard lives and property. Meanwhile, Sherpa underscored the need for strengthening coordination and communication between civil society organizations, NGOs, and Aapda Mitra volunteers with Tehsil and Sub-Division offices, District Emergency Operation Centers, SDRF, and Fire & Emergency Services to collaborate during

emergencies, enhancing disaster preparedness and mitigation efforts across the district.

He further highlighted that disaster response should not get affected by a lack of information. Instead, he said a well-documented plan must be accessible to all relevant stakeholders, which will serve as a guiding framework, ensuring that each department is well-equipped with predefined protocols and responsibilities.

Also, DC directed the R&B Department to con-

duct a comprehensive structural assessment of all school buildings in the district to determine their safety and suitability for use to safeguard students and staff in case of any disasters.

Further, departments were directed to update their contingency plans, conduct periodic mock drills, and ensure the availability of essential resources including emergency equipment, trained personnel, and communication networks.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Raina, ADC Sopore, Shabir Ahmad Raina, Superintendent of Police, Yasir Qadri, ACR Baramulla, Arshad Ahmad Khan, Executive Engineer R&B, Tehsildars from all the tehsils, Consultant DDMA, Rehana Fayaz, Aapda Mitra volunteers and others.

Empowering women farmers under HADP drives sustainable growth in J&K: Agriculture Minister

Reviews HADP implementation during extensive tour of Kathua

■ HT News Network

Langate, Feb, 04: In A hKATHUA, FEBRUARY 5: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development, and Panchayati Raj departments, Javed Ahmad Dar, today conducted an extensive tour of Kathua district to oversee progressive farming activities under Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP). The Minister emphasized that the hand holding of farmers particularly women farmers under HADP is driving progressive farming practices and ensuring sustainable growth in J&K.

During the tour, the Minister inspected the Krishna Millet Restaurant at Pathwal, a women-led initiative that promotes millet-based healthy cuisine. He appreciated the entrepreneurial spirit of the women involved, enjoyed the delicious millet dishes and



encouraged others to take inspiration from such ventures to promote nutritional awareness and self-reliance.

The Minister also visited the Jandi Mushroom Village, where he closely monitored the integrated farming practices, including mushroom cultivation, vermi-composting and wheat crop management.

The Minister interacted with the local farmers and women entrepreneurs including Neelam Devi, who has successfully installed 2,000 mushroom

bags and Rajni Devi, who has installed 1,000 mushroom bags and is actively managing a vermi-composting unit provided by the department under HADP.

The Jandi Panchayat has collectively installed over 10,000 mushroom bags, showcasing the region's potential in mushroom cultivation.

During the interactions, the Minister emphasised the importance of hand-holding support for aspiring entrepreneurs, particularly women. He urged

them to explore opportunities in exotic vegetable cultivation with the government providing necessary assistance through cluster-based polyhouse facilities, high-tech farming techniques and access to modern farm machinery. He also highlighted the significance of fodder cultivation to support livestock farming and improve rural livelihoods.

The Minister visited the Soil Testing Mini Lab and Kissan Khidmat Ghar (KKG) at Pathwal and took stock of their functioning. He stressed the need for massive awareness campaigns on soil health management, encouraging farmers to regularly test their soil for better crop yields and sustainable agricultural practices.

At the KKG center in Pathwal, the Minister interacted with the women entrepreneurs to understand their challenges and achievements.

Dir Fisheries distributes 3-Wheelers with Ice Boxes to Fishermen at Bandipora



■ HT News Network

Bandipora, February 5: In a significant step to support the local fishing community, the Department of Fisheries Bandipora today distributed Three-Wheelers equipped with Ice Boxes among beneficiaries at Mini Secretariat Bandipora.

The keys of three wheelers were handed over to beneficiaries by Director Fisheries, Ab Majid Tak along with Additional Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Zaffar Husson Shawl.

Speaking on the occasion, Director highlighted the government's commitment to empower fisher-

men by providing them with essential equipments to enhance their livelihood.

"The distribution of these specially equipped vehicles aims to improve the transportation and storage of fish, ensuring better market access and reduced post-harvest losses", he added.

During the event, the beneficiaries appreciated the initiative and expressed their gratitude for the government's continued efforts in uplifting the fisheries sector.

The event concluded with renewed commitment and reaffirmation of the administration's dedication to supporting the welfare of the fishing community in the region.

Com Secy Culture reviews functioning of Kala Kendra Jammu

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 05: Commissioner Secretary, Culture, K Ramesh Kumar, today reviewed the functioning of Kala Kendra, emphasizing the need to enhance its operations in line with its aims and objectives.

"All possible resources would be utilised to make Kala Kendra a center of excellence in promoting cultural heritage", maintained the Commissioning Secretary.

Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL), Harvinder Kour; Special Secretaries in Culture



Department, Trishla Kumari Kundal and Malikzada Sheeraz Ahmed; Secretary, Kala Kendra Society, Dr. Javaid Rahi; Deputy Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museums, Dr. Sangeeta Sharma besides other senior officials were present in the meeting. While deliberating on the initiatives required for further

development, K Ramesh Kumar directed the concerned officers to focus on landscaping, renovation and repair of various sections of the building to enhance its aesthetic and functional value. The Commissioner Secretary was briefed about various activities and programs being conducted by Kala Kendra.

Weekly Block Diwas: DC Udhampur convenes public outreach camp at Majalta to address local issues

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, FEBRUARY 5: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai conducted a public outreach program today at Manwal in Block Majalta as part of the Weekly Block Diwas initiative.

The program witnessed the participation of District Development Council Member Amit Sharma; Additional District Development Commissioner Rajinder Singh; Assistant Commissioner Development Dr. Ranjeet Singh Kotwal along with other district officers, former PRI members and a large number of locals from the adjoining areas.

During the interaction, the public raised several pressing issues, seeking augmentation of drinking water in the region, establishment of a Forest Depot at Majalta, constitution of Village Defence Committees members, especially in hilly areas, Up-gradation of Middle School to High



School and High School Thalora to Higher Secondary School level, up-gradation of PHC Majalta to a Sub-District Hospital, inclusion of left-out beneficiaries under

the Jal Jeevan Mission, construction of a playground in Block Majalta, development of a proper drainage system in Majalta market area, renovation of Battal-Mansar

Road, clearance of pending payments under MGNREGA works etc.

Responding to the demands, the DC emphasized that the primary objective of Block Diwas is to take a firsthand assessment of grassroots issues. She highlighted that such platforms enable the district administration to understand and resolve multifaceted public grievances through prioritization and optimal resource utilization. The Deputy Commissioner also sensitized participants about key government initiatives, including PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, JK Samadhan Portal.

Several grievances were addressed on the spot with the intervention of concerned officers. The DC assured the public that remaining issues would be addressed on priority by mobilizing available resources. She directed officers to work with dedication and commitment to resolve genuine public concerns efficiently.

Satish Sharma interacts with KNVB Dutch Football Association Coaches

HT News Network



JAMMU, FEBRUARY 5: Minister for Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, today interacted with instructors from the KNVB Dutch Football Association to discuss football development initiatives in the region.

Satish Sharma reiterated the government's commitment towards promoting grassroots football, women's participation and expanding the sport in rural, tribal and border areas. He welcomed international collaborations to strengthen coach and referee education, youth exchange programs and football infrastructure in J&K.

As part of the initiative, a refresher course for coaches and referees is being conducted to enhance their skills and align with international best practices.

The Minister reaffirmed the government's support for structured training programs and global partnerships, ensuring better opportunities for young footballers in J&K.

Refresher training in Basic Veterinary Practices imparted to Paravets

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 05: Disease Investigation Laboratory (S&G), Kartholi Sheep Husbandry Department Jammu organized a refresher Training Programme for Paravets on Basic Veterinary Practices and Diagnosis under CSS-ASCAD 2024-25.

The four day orientation started on Feb 4, 2025 and will continue till Feb 7, 2025, benefiting 35 Paravets from all the districts of the Jammu Division. They will be imparted training on different emerging diseases in Sheep and Goats, their diagnosis, treatments and preventive measures to be undertaken along with latest reproductive technologies being adopted to enhance the socio economic status of Sheep/Goat breeders. Director Sheep Husbandry Department Dr. Syed Moin ul Haq delivered a keynote lecture, discussing different schemes being implemented by the Department. He advised the trainees to learn advance techniques in disease diagnosis from this Refresher Training for the welfare of the livestock.

Breeders sensitized about scientific sheep husbandry practices

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 05: Department of Sheep husbandry Udhampur organised awareness camp for sheep and goat farmers/FPO members and SHGs under wool and pelt project of Holistic Agriculture Department Programme (HADP) at Panchayat Chiani, Block Majalta. More than 100 progressive sheep farmers, Farmers Producer organization members and ex-PRI members participated. The participants were educated regarding scientific sheep husbandry practices and different income generating schemes particularly HADP and Integrated Sheep Development Scheme through lectures, banners, posters and distribution of pamphlets containing resource material. District Sheep Husbandry Officer Dr. Farhat Bashir, while interacting with farmers, laid emphasis on rearing of improved quality Sheep and Goats.

DDC Poonch inspects developmental works in villages near LoC, across the fence

HT News Network

POONCH, FEBRUARY 5: District Development Commissioner Poonch (DDC) Vikas Kundal conducted an extensive tour of the villages along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district, assessing the progress of the developmental projects aimed at enhancing the socio-economic landscape of the region. During the visit, DDC Vikas Kundal inspected several key locations, including the Lift Irrigation and Water Supply Schemes coming up in village Dallah, construction of Panchayat Ghar in Degar Terwan, besides working of and Government High School

at Degar Terwan Government Girls Higher Secondary School at Degwar Maldiyana. He issued specific directives to expedite ongoing projects and ensure their timely completion. At the Zero Line of the LoC near Degwar Terwan, DDC Kundal interacted with local residents, who presented various demands and projected local developmental needs in the presence of district officers from multiple departments. He directed executing officers to address these concerns promptly. During his visit to educational institutions, DDC Kundal engaged with teachers and students. He inspected the quality of the mid-day meal and announced the construction.



Divisional Level Seminar on Scientific Beekeeping under NBHM commences at Kisan Kendra

HT News Network



JAMMU, FEBRUARY 05: A two-day Seminar on Scientific Beekeeping, organized by the Apiculture Development Scheme, Department of Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Jammu, commenced today here at Baba Jitto Kisan Kendra.

The seminar is being held under the auspices of the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM) and aims to raise awareness about the benefits of beekeeping among beekeepers, farmers, unemployed youth, women, and entrepreneurs from 10 districts of the Jammu division. The inaugural session was attended by Director Agriculture Jammu S. Arvinder Singh Reen as the Chief Guest. In his address, the Director Agriculture highlighted the crucial role of beekeeping in generating sustainable income and employment opportunities, especially for the youth of the region. He emphasized the immense potential of Jammu & Kashmir in beekeeping, given its diverse agro-climatic conditions, rich biodiversity, and the growing demand for honey due to its medicinal and nutritional properties.

Month long sports activities to promote Nasha Mukta campaign across Kishtwar District

DC reviews drug control, road safety measures, DRCS working at separate meetings

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, FEBRUARY 05 Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan today reviewed drug control and Road Safety measures in the District at District-Level NCORD Committee and District Road Safety Committee meetings held back to back here today.

He also reviewed the working of the District Red Cross Society at a separately held meeting.

While reviewing anti-drug measures, the DC discussed comprehensive strategies and reviewed the implementation of drug de-addiction measures to counter the menace in the district. At the outset, the DC took a detailed appraisal from the concerned members of the NCORD Committee regarding the present scenario of drug-related occurrences, areas of concern, affected age



groups, and hotspots of drug abuse in the district.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized intensifying testing across all educational institutions, public places, and Panchayats, especially in identified hotspots under surveillance. SSP informed the meeting that police have adopted a comprehensive strategy to tackle the drug problem from both the supply and demand sides, which is vital for containing

drug peddling and breaking the supply chain. He also assured stringent action against those involved in the hazardous trade of drugs.

The DC announced hosting of month-long sports activities across all 13 blocks of the district under the aegis of Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan. Additionally, he directed stakeholders to host awareness camps every Monday in all 156 revenue villages. The

DC stressed the need for painting "100% Nasha Mukta" slogans on school boundary walls. He also directed the ATF authorities to submit reports on patients taking medication and conduct periodic surveys of such patients.

A committee was formed, to conduct counseling and awareness programs at project sites. He also warned of strict action on drug abuse at all project sites in the district.

Enforcement agencies, including Police and Excise were instructed to ensure 100% technological surveillance by installing CCTV cameras for monitoring, computerized billing, containment, and mitigation at educational institutions, pharmacies, medical stores, and public spaces. The DC also reviewed the status of screening of blood pressure apparatus distributed to ASHA Workers and AWWs.

Working of Rural Development Department Kishtwar reviewed DC sets deadline for completion of works

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, FEBRUARY 05: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishtwar, Rajesh Kumar Shavan chaired a meeting and conducted a comprehensive review of the Rural Development Department (RDD), focusing on the implementation of MGNREGA and PMAY schemes.

At the outset, ACD provided detailed insights into the status of works under MGNREGA and PMAY. The DC directed the department to map the cardholders with the E-Shram portal and weed out passive job cards.



The BDOs were asked to publish notices in all Panchayats, urging eligible individuals to avail themselves of employment under MGNREGA and ensure that there was no

delay in wage payments. Reviewing PMAY implementation, the DC asked the BDOs to identify defaulters and share the lists with Tehsildars for further action. He set

March 31, 2025 as deadline for completion of all the PMAY houses sanctioned to date, while emphasizing on accuracy of ongoing AwasPlus survey.

He also directed BDOs to prioritize water conservation, soil conservation, and beneficiary-oriented projects under MGNREGA adding that women's empowerment should be a key aspect while framing development plans.

The meeting was attended by ACD Kishtwar Phulail Singh, Tehsildars, AD Planning, all BDOs, Panchayat Secretaries, Technical Assistants, MIS Operators, GRSS, Incharge Executive Engineer (REW Kishtwar)

Weekly Block Diwas organized across Doda District to address Public Grievances

HT News Network

DODA, FEBRUARY 5: In line with the directions of Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh, the Weekly Block Diwas were organized across multiple locations in the district, providing a platform for residents to voice their grievances and seek redressal. The main event was held at Government High School Chattra Bhalala in Sub-District Bhandarwah, where Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bhandarwah, Sunil Kumar presided over the proceedings. Officials from various departments,



including the Block Development Officer (BDO) Bhalla, Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) PHE, AEE PMGSY Bhandarwah and other concerned officers were present. The officers attentively listened to public concerns related to road

connectivity, drinking water supply, power supply, and other essential services. Several developmental issues were discussed and the concerned departments were directed to take immediate action to resolve the griev-

ances at the earliest.

The ADC Bhandarwah emphasized the administration's commitment to delivering prompt services to the people and ensuring equitable development in rural areas. He instructed the officials to expedite ongoing developmental works and address pending issues efficiently. The public appreciated the initiative and expressed satisfaction with the administration's proactive approach. The Weekly Block Diwas continues to serve as an essential forum for public participation in governance, fostering transparency and accountability in administration.

Himachal: Light snowfall, rain in high reaches

AGENCIES

SHIMLA, FEB 4 (UNI)

The high-altitude regions of Himachal Pradesh, including Lahaul-Spiti and Kinnaur, witnessed light snowfall and rainfall, while the rest of the state remained mostly dry.

The fresh round of snowfall in some parts has led to slippery road conditions, prompting the local administration to issue advisories for residents and tourists.

According to the district administration of Lahaul-Spiti, certain roads in the region are currently unsafe for vehicular movement due to snowfall accumulation.

The authorities have warned travellers about the potential dangers of driving on these roads and have urged people to avoid unnecessary travel.

Kalpa in Kinnaur recorded 4 mm of rain and 0.2 cm of snowfall, while Kangra and Dharamshala received 2 mm of rainfall. Trace amounts of rain were also reported in Shimla, Bhuntar, and Sundernagar.

Despite these sporadic showers, most other areas in the state experienced dry weather conditions.

The Lahaul-Spiti administration has issued a public advisory highlighting the risks posed by heavy snowfall in the region. Tourists and residents have been advised to refrain from travelling on slippery roads unless absolutely necessary. Police have urged people to take extra precautions.

Israeli army displaces 5,000 Palestinian families in West Bank in 2 weeks

AGENCIES

RAMALLAH, FEB 5 (UNI)

At least 5,000 Palestinian families have been forcibly displaced from Jenin and Tulkarm refugee camps in northern West Bank over the past two weeks, the Palestinian Authority said in a statement on Tuesday after a meeting.

The meeting was held in Ramallah, central West Bank, led by Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa and attended by representatives from various ministries and government agencies.

According to the statement, the meeting discussed ways to intensify joint efforts to enhance relief interventions in the northern West Bank.

It also noted an increase in home demolitions and widespread destruction of infrastructure and Palestinian properties.

Delhi polls concludes peacefully, records 57.89 pc voter turnout

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, FEB 5 (UNI)

Voting for the 70-member Delhi assembly, that witnessed a triangular contest, concluded peacefully, with the turnout recorded at around 57.89 per cent on Wednesday.

Thanking the people of Delhi for participating in the election, the Election Commission said the election process was "smooth, free, and fair".

As per the ECI's Voter Turnout App, the North East district recorded the highest voter turnout of 63.83 percent, while New Delhi registered 54.72 percent.

Voter turnout for the other



districts are -- Central 55.74%, East: 60.11%, North: 57.48%, North West 58.05%, Shadara 61.35% and South 55.72%.

Similarly among the assembly constituencies, Mustafabad witnessed a highest voter turnout of 66.68 percent and Karol Bagh had a lowest polling figure of 47.40 percent.

Meanwhile, multiple exit

polls have predicted BJP winning the tightly-contested Delhi assembly election comfortably while ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is seen losing the electoral battle.

As the voting came to an end, fate of 699 candidates including Chief Minister Aatishi, her predecessor and Aam Aadmi Party National Convener Arvind Kejriwal, former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, BJP leaders Parvesh Verma and Ramesh Bidhuri and prominent Con-

gress names like Sandeep Dikshit and Alka Lamba lay sealed in the EVM.

Earlier, amidst great enthusiasm and a festive spirit, polling began at 7 a.m. to elect a new government for the crucial Union Territory that comprises the country's national capital.

Prominent personalities including Union Ministers S Jaishankar and Hardeep Singh Puri, Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi, AAP stalwarts Kejriwal, Aatishi, Sisodia, BJP's Manoj Tiwari, Virendra Sachdeva, Praveen Khandelwal expressed their democratic choice.

Assembly polls: Delhi CM Atishi, Kejriwal cast their votes as voting progresses smoothly



AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, FEB 5 (UNI)

As voting for the 70-member Delhi Assembly progresses smoothly, Aam Aadmi Party leader and Delhi Chief Minister Atishi, party National Convener and the candidate from the New Delhi constitu-

ency Arvind Kejriwal have exercised their franchise on Wednesday.

Sharing a video in a social media post on X, Kejriwal urged people to cast their votes, stating that he voted for the progress of every Delhiite and a dignified life for every underprivileged family.

India services PMI drops to over two-year low of 56.5 in January

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, FEB 5 (UNI)

India's dominant services sector slowed down to over two-year low in January 2025 as demand softened during the month, as per a private survey released on Wednesday.

The HSBC India services Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) compiled by S&P Global fell to 56.5 in January 2025 from 59.3 in the previous month. The headline figure is the lowest since November 2022.

While a PMI reading above 50 means expansion, the print below 50 shows contraction.

Pranjul Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC said,



"India's services sector lost growth momentum in January, although the PMI remained well above the 50-breakeven level. The business activity and new business PMI indices eased to their lowest levels since November 2022 and November 2023 respectively."

"That said, new export business partly countered the downtrend and continued to rebound from a dip in late-2024, in line with official data which showed India's services

exports shining in December and capturing a larger share of global trade," added Bhandari.

One of the closely-watched high-frequency economic data, the survey said that in January this year new business intakes rose at the slowest pace since November 2023 curbing the upturn in business activity.

"Nevertheless, rates of expansion remained historically high and more jobs were created. Also, the degree of business sentiment was in line with its trend," it said.

As per the survey findings, several companies linked output growth to favourable demand conditions, new business wins and investment in technology.

EAM, UNGA 79th session President Philemon Yang discuss need for reformed multilateralism

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, FEB 5 (UNI)

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday met with visiting President of the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly (PGA) Philemon Yang during which they discussed issues related to the UN, including the need for reformed multilateralism.

In a post on X, the EAM said they also exchanged views on regional, global and developmental issues.

"Pleasure to meet @UN_PGA Philemon Yang this afternoon in Delhi.

"Discussed various issues on @UN agenda, including



the need for reformed multilateralism.

"Also exchanged views on regional, global and developmental issues.

"Appreciate his leadership and guidance at the UN."

Earlier, Yang in a post on X said on his arrival on Tuesday:

"Delighted to arrive in the vibrant city of New Delhi, marking the beginning of my visit to the Republic of India.

U.S. Senate confirms Pam Bondi as Attorney General

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, FEB 5 (UNI)

The U.S. Senate on Tuesday evening voted mostly along party lines to confirm Pam Bondi as the new attorney general, head of the Department of Justice (DOJ).

The nomination was approved by a vote of 54-46, with just one Democratic senator joining Republicans in supporting Bondi.

In late November, then-President-elect Donald Trump nominated Bondi, the former attorney general of Florida from 2011 to 2019, to replace Matt Gaetz, who had recused himself from consideration due to lack of support.

During her tenure as Florida's attorney general, Bondi



advocated for the repeal of the Affordable Care Act, supported restrictions on abortion, and opposed certain LGBTQ+ rights, including the legalization of same-sex marriage, according to American Oversight, a nonprofit ethics watchdog group in the United States.

She also served as a member of Trump's legal team during his first impeachment trial in 2020, representing him in the Senate proceedings.

104 Indians deported from US land at Amritsar airport

AGENCIES

AMRITSAR, FEB 5 (UNI)

A US military plane carrying 104 Indians deported from the US landed at Amritsar airport on Wednesday afternoon.

The US Army's C-17 aircraft, carrying the illegal Indian immigrants, landed at Sri Guru Ramdasji International Airport, Amritsar.

According to sources, the 104 Indians included 25 women and 79 men, besides 13 children. Of the 104, 33 belonged to Gujarat, 33 to Haryana and 30 were from Punjab.

The US aircraft had departed from San Antonio, Texas, on Tuesday afternoon carrying the deported Indians. It is the first time the US is using a military plane to deport illegal immigrants.



All the immigrants were being identified and necessary paperwork was being done for verification, after which they will be sent to their respective states.

The Punjab government has arranged buses to transport the deportees to their respective locations.

Individuals without valid documentation will be handed

over to the Punjab Police for further processing.

The US has deported 205 Indians after the newly-elected President Donald Trump announced not to allow illegal immigrants. The US has also deported illegal immigrants from Brazil and Mexico.

Of the 30 from Punjab, five are from Amritsar, six from Kapurthala, four each from

Jalandhar and Patiala, two each from Hoshiarpur, Ludhiana and SBS Nagar, and one each from Sangrur, SAS Nagar, Fatehgarh Sahib, Gurdaspur and Tarn Taran.

The deportation of the Indian nationals comes days after US Secretary of State Marco Rubio voiced concerns over "irregular migration" during his first bilateral meeting with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in Washington last month.

During the January 21 meeting between the US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and EAM Jaishankar, the US readout of the meeting said that the US side "emphasized the Trump Administration's desire to work with India to advance economic ties and address concerns related to irregular migration".

4 members of Trust arrested for cheating over 200 depositors to the tune of Rs 4.3 cr

AGENCIES

CHENNAI, FEB 5 (UNI)

The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) in Salem have arrested four members of a Trust, including two women—both Founders—for cheating more than 200 depositors to the tune of Rs 4.3 crores. The EOW Team also seized Rs 12,68,42,850 cash, 3 kg gold jewellery and 13 kg silver articles from their possession.

An EOW release here on Wednesday said for the past two years, a trust named

Saint Mother Theresa Humanitarian Charitable Trust has been operating at Ammapet in Salem district of Tamil Nadu. It was functioning under the management of the accused individuals Vijayabanu, Founder of the Trust, Jayapradha, Co-founder of the Trust, Baskar, Participant of the Trust and Syed Muhammed, Member of the Trust. The Trust conducted free coaching programs for the general public in computer training, tailoring, english language courses, TNPS Group I to IV exam

coaching, free tuition classes for children and handicrafts, including wire bag making. They lured aspirants by providing lunch for Rs 10, including tea, coffee, and snacks during breaks.

Attracted by these, an increasing number of people started gathering daily. Additionally, the Trustees assured the public that those who invested money would see an improvement in their financial status, allowing them to establish their own businesses and help the poor.

Groundbreaking carbon footprint assessment tool unveiled at Leather conclave

AGENCIES

CHENNAI, FEB 5 (UNI)

A groundbreaking carbon footprint assessment tool designed to help industrial units quantify their carbon emissions and work towards achieving carbon neutrality was unveiled on Wednesday.

The tool aims to enhance industry transparency and enable consumers to make environmentally conscious choices.

The assessment tool was unveiled at the CSIR-Central Leather Research Institute (CSIR-CLRI), a pioneer in leather research and innovation, annual Leather Research, Industry, Government Conclave (LERIG) held in conjunction



with the India International Leather Fair (IILF) 2025 here.

This significant gathering focused on strategic advancements for the development of

the leather and footwear sector in India, a PIB release said.

Highlighting the importance of sustainability in today's consumer-driven market, Dr B.

Madhan, Chief Scientist, introduced the groundbreaking carbon footprint assessment tool designed to help industrial units quantify their carbon emissions and work towards achieving carbon neutrality.

Dr. R Aravindhan, Senior Principal Scientist, announced exciting developments during the event, including the introduction of protein fillers derived from chrome shaving waste and innovative specialty chemicals for upholstery leathers. "We believe these advancements will significantly empower our tanning community," he said.

Dr. K J Sreeram, Director of CSIR-CLRI, highlighted the critical need for collaboration between research institutions and industry stakeholders.

New test may predict which IBD patients have higher colorectal cancer risk

Previous research shows that people with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) – including ulcerative colitis and Crohn’s disease – are at an increased risk of developing colorectal cancer compared to people who do not have IBD.

People with IBD are at a higher risk of developing colorectal cancer, also known as bowel cancer, due to the chronic inflammation associated with IBD, which can cause the growth of abnormal cells – known as dysplasia – and cause the development of pre-cancerous polyps in the intestinal tract.

Currently, people with IBD are screened for colorectal cancer every one to three years through a colonoscopy. However, past studies show that detecting pre-cancerous cells in people with IBD can be difficult.

Now, researchers from The Institute of Cancer Research in London have developed a new test that they report can predict bowel cancer risk in people with IBD with more than 90% accuracy.

Details on the new test were recently published in the journal Gut.

A new colorectal cancer test

According to Trevor Graham, PhD, professor of genomics and evolution and director of the Centre for Evolution and Cancer at The Institute of Cancer Research in London and senior author of the study, although people with IBD have an increased risk of developing bowel cancer, there is no good way to predict that risk at the moment.

“For people who are thought to be imminently at risk of developing cancer, the only effective treatment is surgery to remove some or all of the large bowel,” Graham explained to Medical News Today. “This surgery can be lifesaving. But because we cannot, currently, be sure if someone really does need the surgery, people are having unnecessary surgery which has life changing consequences.”

“On the other hand, for people whose risk of bowel cancer we think is low and for whom we don’t operate, these people continue to have anxiety about the uncertainty of their cancer risk,” he added.

Increased risk of cancer with



cellular DNA changes

During the study, researchers found that people with IBD who had pre-cancerous cells that lost or gained multiple copies of DNA had an increased risk of developing bowel cancer.

From there, the scientists created an algorithm to calculate future colorectal cancer risk by using the exact pattern of the changed DNA in the pre-cancerous cells.

“In the UK, people with IBD have regular colonoscopies – a camera pushed up their bottom – to look for early signs of cancer,” Graham explained. “If something unusual is spotted, a biopsy – small tissue sample – is collected.”

“Our test is a genetic test that we perform on the biopsy. We compared the genetic signals from people who did go on to develop cancer to those who did not, and we have created a test to predict someone’s risk based on the genetic signals in their biopsy,” he said.

Early detection matters – test for colon cancer at home

Take charge of your health with our easy-to-use colon cancer screening test. Private, accurate results from trusted Labcorp labs.

Clinics 5 miles away (95% of the U.S.)

HSA/FSA Payments Accepted Walk-ins Welcome

4.8 ★’s on App Store

Test predicts colorectal cancer risk with over 90% accuracy

During the study, Graham and his team found that their new test was able to predict which study participants with IBD who developed pre-cancerous cells would go on to develop colorectal cancer within five years with more than 90% accuracy.

“We hope that the accuracy with which we can predict who really is at risk of cancer will mean that we can give treatment appropriately,” Graham said.

“For those at high risk of developing cancer, they can

have surgery to remove their bowel and their risk of cancer. For those at low risk, we can spare them unnecessary worry and unnecessary treatment. For patients to be able to benefit from this, we need to show that our predictions hold true in clinical trials that we hope to run in the future,” he explained.

A less invasive predictive test

MNT also spoke with Rudolph Bedford, MD, a board certified gastroenterologist at Providence Saint John’s Health Center in Santa Monica, CA, about this study, who praised the study as “wonderful, great, and amazing.”

“The fact of the matter is that our patients who have IBD, we’re doing frequent colonoscopies, biopsies looking for dysplasia or cells or tissue that can lead to cancer. Then we have to have these discussions with them. If they do have these low-grade dysplastic cells, do we take out your colon, or do we do more frequent surveillance? What do we do?” Bedford explained.

“If somebody is going to give me a test that has a 90% accuracy as to those patients with inflammatory bowel disease

that might develop cancer, then that’s a wonderful study,” he continued. “It makes my job a lot easier in terms of targeting my therapy, and patients won’t have to undergo these invasive procedures as frequently as we do them now, so I think it’s a great study.”

Determining who is at higher risk

MNT also spoke with Nilesh Vora, MD, a board-certified hematologist, medical oncologist, and medical director of the MemorialCare Todd Cancer Institute at Long Beach Medical Center in Long Beach, CA, about this study.

“I think this study is a really great look at more accurately predicting who may be at higher risk for colon cancer when they have inflammatory bowel disease,” Vora said.

“I think the next step is to see if this can be approved by the FDA as one of the ways that we can identify patients at higher risk. I think it’s a great test that can be used to help determine who needs colonoscopies every year, and who could go every three years, every four years if they have inflammatory bowel disease,” he added.

Could stopping NAD depletion be key to slowing down aging?

Nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD) is a molecule found in every living cell of the body. Made from vitamin B3 – also known as niacin – NAD plays an important role in creating energy in the body, as well as repairing DNA.

“NAD is an essential molecule that plays critical roles in all living cells – bacteria, plants, (and) animals,” Mathias Ziegler, MD, PhD, a professor in the Department of Biomedicine at the University of Bergen in Norway explained to Medical News Today.

“The fundamental role of NAD is in the retrieval of energy from food sources to make it available for cellular functions. Metaphorically speaking, NAD acts like a rechargeable battery storing energy retrieved from nutrients and then passing it on to fuel energy-demanding processes. The most important of such processes takes place in mitochondria, the cell’s powerhouse,” he continued.

Ziegler is the lead author of a new study that explains how mitochondria act as “reservoirs” to store NAD for cells to use.

However, as the amount of NAD in the mitochondrial “reservoirs” depletes with age, cells may not have enough NAD to function adequately.

Scientists believe this finding may lead to new therapeutic options aimed at raising NAD levels to combat aging and age-related diseases.

The study was recently published in the journal Nature Metabolism.

Reduced NAD levels and the aging process

For this study, Ziegler and his team developed cellular models to look at how cells might react when NAD levels are reduced during the aging process.

Past research shows that NAD levels decline as we age, potentially causing increased levels of DNA damage and decreased cellular metabolism, both of which are linked to the aging process.

“Throughout the cell, NAD is also used as a chemical messenger to transmit information and to set switches to regulate key events such as cell division and DNA repair,” Ziegler explained.

“Unlike in the energy transmission function, when acting as a mes-



senger molecule, NAD is degraded and needs to be resynthesized. In a variety of diseases, including neurodegenerative disorders, aging, and these NAD-consuming processes may be over-activated. This will diminish NAD availability and eventually affect the efficiency of energy-demanding processes – which may explain at least part of the observed symptoms,” he said.

“In our study, we established and investigated for the first time a cellular model system that resembled the situation of chronically diminished NAD levels, thereby enabling us to study the mechanistic consequences,” he added.

Linking dysfunctional mitochondria to aging-associated diseases

During the study, researchers found that mitochondria act as a “reservoir” to hold NAD and supply it to the cell as needed.

“Previous studies had demonstrated that mitochondrial NAD plays an important protective role in situations of cellular stress,” Ziegler said. “However, how NAD exerts this role has remained unknown. Our investigation revealed that mitochondria can supply NAD when the demand for this molecule is excessive in other parts of the cell.”

Ziegler and his team also discovered that if mitochondria does not have enough NAD stored up, it can have a fatal consequence for the cell.

“Our study has made an important contribution towards understanding the mechanistic basis for positive outcomes of various pre-clinical and some clinical studies of NAD supplementation approaches. Even though it is unlikely that such

supplementation approaches will be able to cure the pathology, they could have positive effects on disease progression (i.e. slowing down progression) and dampening the symptoms,” Ziegler explained.

“This is also likely to be the case in aging, when the mitochondrial NAD reservoir is still sufficiently functional. Since we were able to identify the key players in the buffering function of mitochondria, we unraveled potential molecular targets for the development of therapeutic approaches specifically supporting this mechanism,” he added.

More research on NAD+ and aging needed

MNT had the opportunity to speak to Manisha Parulekar, MD, FACP, AGSF, CMD, director of the Division of Geriatrics at Hackensack University Medical Center and co-director of the Center for Memory Loss and Brain Health at Hackensack University Medical Center in New Jersey, about this study.

“NAD+ (the oxidized version of NAD) is a crucial coenzyme involved in hundreds of metabolic reactions, particularly those related to energy production, DNA repair, and cell signaling. It is not surprising that dysregulation of NAD+ levels, specifically a decline with age, is increasingly recognized as a possible significant contributor to both aging and a wide range of pathologies,” Parulekar said.

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

“NAD (is) a supplement that is closely related to vitamin B3 or niacin, and niacin is a supplement that we use to lower cholesterol,” Segil said.

Taking longer to get to REM sleep could indicate Alzheimer's disease

Sleep is essential to physical and mental well-being. Experts are interested in understanding how sleep may affect or be affected by certain conditions, like dementia.

One study published in Alzheimer’s & Dementia: The Journal of the Alzheimer’s Association examined how the time it takes to get to the rapid eye movement (REM) stage of sleep is related to Alzheimer’s disease.

The study found that taking longer to reach REM sleep was associated with key plasma biomarkers related to Alzheimer’s disease.

The relationship between Alzheimer's disease and REM sleep

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke states that “Alzheimer’s Disease and Alzheimer’s Disease Related Dementias (AD/ADRD) refers to the most common forms of dementia.” Dementia does not have a cure, but research into potential risk factors and early detection remains ongoing.

The authors of the current study wanted to understand more about the timing of REM sleep and its relationship to Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias. is a stage in the sleep cycle when vivid dreaming occurs. REM sleep helps with information processing and consolidation.

REM latency is the amount of time it takes for someone to reach REM for the first time after falling asleep.

For this study, researchers examined REM sleep, and several biomarkers researchers noted were associated with Alzheimer’s disease and Alzheim-



er’s disease and related dementias.

This research included 128 participants. Sixty-four of the participants had Alzheimer’s disease, forty-one had mild cognitive impairment, and the rest had normal cognition. All participants were at least fifty years old. Aside from Alzheimer’s disease, researchers excluded participants who had other neurodegenerative disorders like Parkinson’s disease. They also had several other exclusion criteria, such as sleep-related movement disorders or the use of antipsychotic drugs.

Researchers collected data on participants’ medical histories, and all participants underwent cranial MRIs, bloodwork, and a number of cognitive tests before the start of the study.

Participants did an overnight sleep study called polysomnography, which can examine brain waves and other physical functions like eye movement and breathing during sleep. Researchers were able to identify when participants’ REM sleep occurred.

Participants underwent PET scans to look at amyloid beta levels, which can indicate Alzheimer’s disease. Researchers also examined the levels of three plasma biomarkers. Increases in

plasma phosphorylated tau at threonine 181 (p-tau 181) may indicate Alzheimer’s disease, and increases in neurofilament light (NfL) may indicate neurodegeneration. Decreases in plasma brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) can also indicate Alzheimer’s disease.

Researchers also conducted statistical analyses, adjusting for factors like body mass index, sex, and diabetes mellitus. They also adjusted for APOE 4 status, which is a gene that can increase someone’s risk for Alzheimer’s disease.

How delayed REM sleep affects the brain

The study’s results revealed that participants with the longest REM latency had higher levels of p-tau181 and amyloid beta and lower levels of plasma brain-derived neurotrophic factor compared to participants with the shortest REM latency. These results were independent of participants’ cognitive status or APOE 4 status.

Even after adjusting for the possibility of false positive results, the link between amyloid beta and plasma brain-derived neurotrophic factor – a protein involved in brain cell growth – remained significant. This suggests a meaningful link between these

two factors that could be significant for understanding Alzheimer’s disease.

Additionally, having less REM sleep and deep sleep (also known as slow-wave sleep) was linked to higher levels of p-tau181, a protein associated with certain neurological conditions such as Alzheimer’s. Slow-wave sleep is the stage of sleep when people experience the deepest rest. However, this association did not remain significant after considering the possibility of false results.

Study author Yue Leng, PhD, associate professor at the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Bakar Computational Health Sciences Institute (BCHSI), University of California, San Francisco, noted the following to Medical News Today:

“REM sleep, especially the time it takes to enter REM sleep, is potentially important for Alzheimer’s disease. The importance of this sleep metric has been largely ignored previously. We don’t know if the correlation is causal, but REM sleep latency can potentially serve as a marker and help with the early detection of AD [Alzheimer’s disease]. More research is needed to understand the biological underpinnings of REM sleep latency and its implications for AD (if the relationship is causal).”

Abhishek Sharma & Tilak Varma close in on T20I top ranking

AGENCIES

DUBAI, FEB 5 (UNI)

A pair of India's in-form white-ball players Abhishek Sharma and Tilak Varma have been rewarded for strong performances during the recent home series against England by making giant strides on the latest ICC Men's T20I Player Rankings.

Abhishek produced the best innings of his fledgling international career when he smashed a quickfire 135 in the fifth and final match of the series in Mumbai and shot up a whopping 38 places on the T20I rankings for batters as a result.

Abhishek's innings came from just 54 deliveries and was the highest individual innings made by an Indian men's player in the shortest format. As a result, the 24-year-old rose to second in the latest rankings for batters.

Australia star Travis Head remains out in front of the rankings for T20I batters, but Abhishek is just 26 rating points behind him following his record-breaking efforts at Wankhede as a trio of players from India hover inside the top five.

Tilak Varma is third and skipper Suryakumar Yadav is fifth and all within striking distance of Head, while India



teammates Hardik Pandya (up five rungs to equal 51st) and Shivam Dube (up 38 spots to 58th) also make big moves up the rankings for T20I batters following some good scores against England.

It's a similar story on the latest rankings for T20I bowlers, with spinner Varun Chakravarthy moving up three places to equal second on the back of his 14 wickets and Player of the Series effort against Jos Buttler's side, according to ICC media statement.

Teammate Ravi Bishnoi (up four places to sixth) also climbs the list for T20I bowlers following five wickets for the series against England. There is yet another change at the top as West Indies

spinner Akeal Hosein reclaims his spot as the No.1 bowler after he lost the mantle

to Adil Rashid a week earlier. The latest Test rankings see a host of Australian players gain ground and that should come as no surprise given their impressive effort in defeating Sri Lanka by an innings and 242 runs during the recent first Test in Galle.

Stand-in skipper Steve Smith gains three places to move up to fifth on the updated rankings for Test batters following his 35th Test century, while opener Usman Khawaja gains six places to rise to 11th after contributing his highest Test score of 232 during the romp.

It's almost a carbon copy job in the rankings for Test bowlers, with veteran spinner Nathan Lyon improving two spots to jump to sixth overall and pacer Mitchell Starc up two places to 12th following their efforts in Galle.

Australia faces massive double injury blow for Champions Trophy 2025



AGENCIES

DUBAI, FEB 5 (UNI)

The Aussies may have to find three new players to include in their 15-member squad for the upcoming tournament in Pakistan and UAE, media reports said.

Australia's ICC Champions Trophy plans have been thrown into further disarray with news that skipper Pat Cummins and key seamer Josh Hazlewood are unlikely to travel to feature at the tournament.

The Aussies have already been dealt a blow with the loss of experienced all-rounder Mitch Marsh due to injury and the absence of Cummins and Hazlewood could further dent the side as they seek a third Champions Trophy title in the 50-over tournament that commences in Pakistan and Dubai

on February 19, according to an ICC media release.

Andrew McDonald discussed the latest injury blow on Wednesday and the Australian coach revealed he may need a new skipper for the tournament given the likely absence of current ODI captain Cummins.

"Pat Cummins hasn't been able to resume any type of bowling so he's heavily unlikely, so that would mean that we do need a captain," McDonald told Australian radio station SEN.

"Steve Smith and Travis Head are the two that we've been having conversations with while we've been building out that Champions Trophy team along with Pat back home. They'll be the two that we look at for that leadership post.

"They're the two obvious

Head predicts Sam Konstas to return for World Test Championship Final

AGENCIES

GALLE, FEB 5 (UNI)

Australia batter Travis Head is expecting teenage opener Sam Konstas to return to the Test fold at this year's ICC World Test Championship Final against South Africa.

Konstas burst onto the scene with a flamboyant half-century when making his Test debut against India at the MCG on Boxing Day and showed glimpses of his best form in Sydney last month when the Aussies clinched the Border Gavaskar series and booked their place at this year's World Test Championship Final against the Proteas in June.

While Konstas has been on the outer for Australia's ongoing Test series in Sri Lanka as Head has been preferred as Usman Khawaja's opening partner, Head thinks the 19-year-old is likely to return

to the top of the order for the one-off Test at Lords's as the Aussies look to find the right balance to their batting line-up, an ICC report said.

ones. Steve has done a great job here in the (first) Test match (against Sri Lanka). He's done some good work in one-day international cricket across the journey as well. So it's between those two.

"But, as I said, Patty is hugely unlikely, which is a bit of shame, and we've also got Josh Hazlewood, who is battling (to be fit) at the moment. So that medical information will land over the next couple of days and we'll be able to shore that up and let everyone know the direction."

Teams have until February 12 to submit their final squads of 15 to the ICC for the tournament and if Cummins and Hazlewood join Marsh on the sidelines then Australia will be on the lookout for three new players.

Australia great Ricky Ponting recently threw up uncapped all-rounder Mitch Owen for Marsh's vacant role when speaking on The ICC Review, while Sean Abbott and Spencer Johnson are other pace options which may be considered, the statement said.

Ponting, Shastri share their stance on Bumrah Champions Trophy risk

AGENCIES

SYDNEY, FEB 5 (UNI)

Ricky Ponting and Ravi Shastri believe the potential absence of India's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah will significantly weaken the side's prospects at the upcoming ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025.

Bumrah had a sensational 2024, and took home the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year as well as the ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year at the ICC Awards 2024. It was the culmination of a year in which he played a key role as India secured the ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

However, the 31-year-old suffered back spasms in the Sydney Test against Australia in January, and hasn't played for India since. He has been included in India's initial squad for the Champions Trophy, but concerns around his fitness remain.

Notably, Bumrah is not in India's squad for a three-match ODI series against England, which starts on Thursday.

Former India head coach Shastri, speaking on The ICC Review, warned against rush-



ing Bumrah back, despite the boost he would provide India's Champions Trophy campaign.

"I think it's high risk. There's too much big cricket coming up for India," he told Sanjana Ganesan on The ICC Review.

"And at this stage of his (Bumrah's) career, I think he's too precious to be just called on for one game out of the blue and asked to deliver," Shastri said.

"The expectations will be so much. They'll think that he'll come in straight away and set the world on fire. It's never that easy when you come back from injury," he said.

Shastri added that Bumrah's potential absence in the Champions Trophy would leave

India with a massive hole to plug.

"Bumrah not fit will reduce India's chances of winning the Champions Trophy by 30%, literally by 30-35%," Shastri said.

"With a fully fit Bumrah playing, you are guaranteed of those death overs. It would've been a different ball game altogether," he added.

Ponting agreed, and believes the spotlight now shifts to Mohammed Shami, who made his return for India from injury in the ongoing limited-overs series against England.

It was his first outing for India since the final of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in November 2023.

Match officials announced for ICC Champions Trophy 2025

AGENCIES

DUBAI, FEB 5 (UNI)

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has confirmed the match officials for the upcoming ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025, set to be held across Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates from February 19 to March 9.

The tournament will take place in four iconic venues: Karachi, Lahore, and Rawalpindi in Pakistan, and Dubai in the UAE.

A distinguished panel of

12 umpires will officiate the 8-team event, with six returning officials from the 2017 edition, including Richard Kettleborough, who stood in the final of the previous Champions Trophy in the UK.

Kettleborough, a veteran of 108 Men's ODIs, will be joined by fellow umpires Chris Gafaney, Kumar Dharmasena, Richard Illingworth, Paul Reffel, and Rod Tucker, who also officiated in the 2017 tournament.

Dharmasena will be extending his stint of officiating 132

ODIs at the upcoming tournament, a record for an umpire from Sri Lanka in the One-Day format, an ICC media statement on Wednesday said.

Kettleborough and Illingworth, who both stood together during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup

2023 final in Ahmedabad, They are joined by Michael Gough, Adrian Holdstock, Ahsan Raza, Sharfuddoula Ibne Shahid, Alex Wharf, and Joel Wilson, all of whom officiated at the World Cup in India.

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