

DDC reviews the implementation of Bio Medical Waste Management in the district.

DC Kupwara chairs NCORD meeting

PJ07



NEWS BRIEF

Omar stays silent on INDIA bloc's future 'if I say anything then my words are twisted'

HT News Network

New Delhi, Feb 10: After taking a dig at Aam Admi Party (AAP) and Congress, who contested the Delhi elections as rivals, and lost to Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday maintained silence on future of the INDIA bloc. It's in place to mention here that soon after the trends of Delhi

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Sonamarg among other areas receive fresh snowfall

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 10: The fresh snowfall was experienced in the higher reaches on Monday including Sonamarg, Doodhpathri and other places with the weatherman here predicting light snow at isolated higher reaches tomorrow. As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the fresh snowfall was experienced at Doodhpathri, Sonamarg, Zojila Pass, Z Gali, Yusmarg, Peer ki Gali and Sinthan top areas.

At Doodhpathri, a snowfall of 4-6 inches as recorded till this evening while 4 inches of snow was recorded at Sonamarg, 6 inches at Zojila pass, 5 inches at Z Gali, 4 inches at Yusmarg, 2 inches at Peer ki Gali and 4 inches at Sinthan top. The reports of light rainfall were also

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

J&K, Ladakh have best Student-Teacher ratios in India: UDISE+

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 10: Government schools in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh have some of the best student-teacher ratios in the country, the latest data from the Ministry of Education reveals. As per the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2023-24, Jammu and Kashmir has one teacher for every 9 students at the

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

7 houses gutted in twin Srinagar fire incidents

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 10: The Srinagar city witnessed two fire incidents on Monday, as about five residential houses were damaged in Noorbagh area and two more houses were damaged in the evening at Chanpora, Srinagar.

The city witnessed two different incidents of fire, damaging seven residential structures. An official from the Fire and Emergency Services (F&ES) department

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Restoration of Statehood, Other Issues Discussed in New Delhi
 CM Omar Calls on Home Minister Shah



HT News Network

New Delhi, Feb 10: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in the Parliament here on Monday.

After meeting the Home Minister, CM Omar Abdullah, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), told reporters that he discussed several issues, including J&K statehood restoration, security situation, governance and upcoming

budget session of the assembly. "I held a detailed discussion with the Home Minister on the important matters," he said.

Pertinently, the Home Minister last week had chaired a security review meeting at his residence in New Delhi. The meeting was attended by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha, top security and other officials.

Today's meeting was Omar's third engagement with Union Home Minister Amit Shah since taking over as

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

From The Parliament
In 5-yrs, J&K, Ladakh UTs record zero instances of industrial pollution violations: Centre

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 10: Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh have recorded zero instances of industrial pollution violations in the past 5-years, the Government of India informed the Parliament on Monday. According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Kirti Vardhan Singh in response to a query

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CS chairs 14th HLC meet of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board
 Directs for finalising arrangements ahead of commencement of yatra

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 10: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today impressed upon all the line departments including the Shrine Board to ensure all arrangements are made well before commencement of the annual Amarnathji yatra this year.

The Chief Secretary issued these directions while chairing the 14th High Level Com-



mittee (HLC) meeting of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB).

Present in the meeting were the senior officers of civil administration and secu-

rity establishments. The Chief Secretary urged upon all the departments including PWD, PDD, Jal Shakti, RDD, H&UDD, BRO, Telecommunication and others to complete the necessary tendering and other contract related processes in the upcoming month itself. He called upon them to make procurements so that there is no end-time rush in finalizing the requisite arrange

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Speaker chairs House Committee meeting to assess issues raised by legislators

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 10: A meeting of the House Committee was held here today under the Chairmanship of Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, to discuss issues raised by different members of the Legislative Assembly.

Legislators, Sunil Kumar Sharma, (Leader of Opposition); Ghulam Ahmad Mir; Nazir Ahmad Khan (Gurezi); Surjeet Singh Slathia; Ali Mohammad Dar; Javid Hassan Baig; Ch Mohammad Akram and Waheed Ur Rehman Para were present as members of the Committee.

The Committee discussed accommodation and other related issues being faced by the MLAs during their stay in



the twin capitals of J&K.

During threadbare discussions, the Legislators gave their suggestions regarding provisioning of suitable accommodation to them at Jammu/Srinagar. They also suggested that process should be initiated to identify the government quarters for allotment to the MLAs till new arrangements are made so that they won't face any inconvenience during public meetings and

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Misleading Medical Advertisements SC takes strong note of non-compliance
 Directs J&K, Delhi, AP, Goa, Gujarat Govts to submit affidavits

HT News Network

New Delhi, Feb 10: The Supreme Court has taken a strong note of non-compliance of orders on misleading medical advertisements by the governments of J&K, Delhi, and Andhra Pradesh.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan observed that these States and UTs had not implemented previous orders regarding Rule 170 of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1955.

The Apex Court, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) instructed the governments of Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Goa,



Gujarat, and Jammu & Kashmir to submit affidavits on enforcement of Rule 170 by the end of this month.

The court had earlier directed all states and union territories on May 7, 2024, to submit affidavits on action taken since 2018 against misleading advertisements violating multiple laws, including the Drugs

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Prolonged dry spell: After springs, forests drying up in Tral

HT News Network

Pulwama, Feb 10: The prolonged dry spell in Kashmir has led to significant environmental challenges, particularly in Tral area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

As per the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), earlier dozens of springs that were source to dozens of water supply schemes have dried up and now hundreds of trees in forests have started drying up.

Shabir Ahmad, a local resident of Tral told KNO that forest trees including Kairu have started drying up in different areas of Tral, causing worries among the locals.

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HT BOTTOM

Baramulla's Growing Parking Woes: Challenges and Solutions

"Baramulla's Parking -Tackling Congestion, Illegal Parking & Infrastructure Gaps Towards a Smart & Sustainable Parking Solution for the Future"

SHEIKH NAZIR

Baramulla, one of the most prominent towns in Jammu and Kashmir, has witnessed rapid urbanization and a significant increase in vehicular population over the years. While infrastructural development has brought progress, the town continues to struggle with a major urban challenge—insufficient parking space. The congestion on roads, unauthorized parking, and lack of organized parking facilities have become pressing issues that demand immediate

attention. The existing parking lots in Baramulla are inadequate to accommodate the growing number of vehicles, and most commercial and residential areas lack designated parking spaces, resulting in vehicles being parked haphazardly on main roads and marketplaces. This obstructs the smooth flow of traffic, causing frequent jams and making commuting difficult. Additionally, many streets and footpaths have been encroached upon by vendors and shopkeepers, further reducing available parking space, while unauthorized roadside parking exacerbates the situation. The absence of multi-



level parking structures in a busy town like Baramulla forces vehicle owners to rely on limited roadside spaces. With the rise in personal vehicles, the demand for parking has surged, but infrastructure development has not kept pace with this growth. Poor urban planning and ineffective enforcement of parking regulations contribute to the chaos, and the lack of designated spots and penalties for illegal parking only worsens the issue. This lack of proper parking facilities has several negative consequences, including persistent congestion on main roads, longer commute times, increased risk of

accidents for both drivers and pedestrians, reduced space for pedestrians and street vendors, adverse impacts on businesses, and overall deterioration in urban aesthetics. Additionally, increased vehicular congestion leads to higher fuel consumption and air pollution, while traffic jams and parking difficulties discourage consumers from visiting local markets, negatively impacting businesses and the town's economy. To address these challenges, a well-planned and coordinated approach is necessary. Authorities should consider constructing multi-level parking structures

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

CM

The J&K Chief Minister. It may be recalled that soon after assuming office the J&K Chief Minister had met the Home Minister on October 23, 2024 during his first visit to New Delhi.

That meeting, according to the officials, was primarily a formal introduction. "Omar had briefed Shah about the situation and had exuded hope that J&K's statehood would be restored soon," the officials had said.

On December 19, 2024, the J&K Chief Minister had met the Union Home Minister for the second time and "discussed the restoration of statehood for J&K, and the hurdles faced by the UT's elected government."

In the December meeting Omar, according to the media reports, had sought clarification on the Transaction of Business Rules (TBR) to understand the authority of the elected government across various departments. "There are a lot of issues on which I need to talk with the Home Minister. Currently, J&K is a UT and we are expecting statehood. The Home Minister has a different role in the UT," Omar had told reporters before meeting Shah for the second time—(KNO)

ENG RASHID

the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in alleged terror funding case. He was elected as the Member of Parliament from the Baramulla constituency in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections—(KNO)

Custody parole to Er Rashid positive development, says his son Abrar

"Finally he has got a chance to raise issues of his 5 lakh voters"

KNO Correspondent

Srinagar, Feb 10 (KNO): Jailed Member of Parliament Engineer Abdul Rashid Sheikh's son, Abrar Rashid on Monday termed the two-day custody parole to his father as positive development and said that finally the voice of his voters will be raised in the Parliament.

"My father couldn't attend three parliament sessions. However, he has finally got a chance to raise the issues for which he was voted by over 5 lakh people in the last parliamentary elections," Abrar said as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

He said the people from across North Kashmir will be happy with this development. "I am thankful to all those who raised the voice for my father including Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who belatedly expressed his concern after 8-9 days. Now, we appeal to the Central Government to respect the mandate of the people," he said.

"The hearing for regular bail is scheduled on February 11 and we hope that a favourable decision will be taken in this regard likewise it was taken today," Abrar added.

He added that the MP from Baramulla constituency should be released in the larger interests of the people, who have voted for him.

Earlier today, the Delhi High Court granted custody parole of 2 days to Awami Ittehad Party chief and Member of Parliament from North Kashmir Er Rashid—(KNO)

POLLUTION

in the Lok Sabha, said, "As per the data provided by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), no industries in J&K and Ladakh have been found violating environmental norms between January 2020 and January 2025."

Referring to the data shared by the CPCB about other regions, the Minister said that other states such as Uttar Pradesh reported 39 instances of industrial pollution violations while Madhya Pradesh recorded 14 and Tamil Nadu 12.

The Minister further informed the Parliament that under the National Water Quality Monitoring Programme (NWMP), water quality is tracked at 124 locations in Jammu & Kashmir and nine locations in Ladakh. "The network assesses key parameters such as Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), Dissolved Oxygen (DO), and pH levels to evaluate pollution levels in rivers and other water bodies," he said, adding, "The CPCB data indicates that while industrial pollution is not a major concern, continuous monitoring remains essential to prevent potential environmental degradation."

He said that air pollution control in J&K is also part of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), a nationwide initiative aimed at reducing Particulate Matter (PM10 and PM2.5) pollution in urban areas. "Major cities like Srinagar and Jammu have been included in the program with the government implementing measures such as pollution control technologies, increased green cover, and stricter vehicular emission norms."

He said that Ladakh, with its sparse population and limited industrial activity, has lower air pollution levels, but concerns remain regarding emissions from tourism-related transport and construction activities—(KNO)

CS

ments. The Chief Secretary stressed on the Deputy Commissioners of Anantnag and

Ganderbal to ensure marking of the disaster prone areas on both the routes so that no utilities including tents are pitched in such areas. He directed the DMRR&R department to coordinate with the concerned district administrations regarding framing of SoPs for ensuring safe yatra for the pilgrims.

He asked the concerned Deputy Commissioners to facilitate all the service providers so that the facilities created at each location are appropriate and sufficient for both the devotees and facilitators. He advised them to work in coordination and use the work window efficiently so that every facility is made ready by June this year.

He enquired from each department and Deputy Commissioner about their role and responsibilities. He stressed on designating a nodal officer by each department to look after finalisation of arrangements to be made for smooth conduct of the pilgrimage.

The Chief Secretary also took stock of the budget requirements of all the departments to carry out the necessary works and procurements to be made for yatra. He asked the PDD for completing the job of under-grounding the HT/LT lines and anti-freezing pipeline system by the Jal Shakti Department. He also emphasised upon them to make a traffic plan so that there are no traffic snarls and people do not face any hurdles while commuting. He enjoined upon the Police Department to deploy their personnel in sufficient numbers for facilitating the yatra.

Other issued which came up for discussion was deployment of adequate manpower by the Health Department for making the base hospitals functional besides other health facilities enroute. He further asked them to initiate the process of inviting manpower from outside as per the practice in vogue.

The need for ensuring only RFID registered pilgrims having valid health certificates was discussed during the meeting. It was also enjoined upon the IMD to send daily weather updates to the registered pilgrims so that they can move accordingly.

Besides, proper sanitation by RDD and H&UDD in their respective areas was deliberated upon. Both the departments were advised to ensure requisite number of toilets/baths are established enroute the cave shrine besides availability of uninterrupted water supply and paraphernalia there. They were directed to install the dustbins and deployment of manpower for cleanliness purposes all across the transit camps, holding areas and along the track.

The departments like FCS&CA, Transport, Information, IT, Forest, BSNL and others were impressed upon to carry out their routine works as per the past practice enhancing the capacity wherever required with proper back-up plans in place. He termed their contribution as crucial for conduct of the yatra.

The Chief Secretary further directed the concerned to ensure that installation of lights, water tanks, toilets, back-up generators, Public Address System, communication towers is ensured at each camp location before commencement of the yatra.

CEO SASB, Dr Mandep Kumar Bhandari, informed the meeting about the past arrangements made by the departments and the scope for improvements. He gave out the details of works carried out after the culmination of yatra-2024.

Bhandari also highlighted the works to be undertaken by BRO for upgradation of yatra tracks besides for availability of reliable power and water supply to the devotees. He informed about the disaster management mitigation measures, prepaid hiring system, holding capacity of camps, registration of labour and pony besides other requirements for successful conduct of yatra this year.

The divisional administrations assured that foolproof arrangements would be made. They informed that power and water supply, health facilities, installation of toilets/baths, telephone, ration, fire fighting equipment, firewood, shelter sheds, helpalaps, mobile connectivity, langar, tents and SDRF/NDRF personnel deployment would be done at each spot identified for the purpose.

They informed the meeting that every facility required for the event would be created as per the standard practice besides taking all measures as per the directions given in this meeting.

SPEAKER

legislative sessions.

The Speaker assured them that all their genuine suggestions including accommodation issues would be taken up with the government for early resolution. He showed his optimism that these issues would find resolution in a time-bound manner.

Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Manoj Kumar Pandit and other senior officers were present in the meeting.

SC

and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954.

During the hearing, Senior Advocate Shadan Farasat (Amicus Curiae) referred to an August 27, 2024, Supreme Court order staying a Central notification that omitted Rule 170, which prohibits advertisements of Ayurvedic, Siddha, or Unani drugs without licensing

approval.

The Supreme Court had previously sought an explanation from the Centre on an AYUSH Ministry letter from August 29, 2023, advising states not to enforce Rule 170. The Centre later issued a notification on July 1, 2024, omitting the rule, which the court stayed.

The Amicus argued that enforcing Rule 170 would address misleading advertisements. The court noted that proper implementation of the rule could resolve the issue.

The case originated from a petition by the Indian Medical Association (IMA) against misleading advertisements by Patanjali Ayurved Ltd—(KNO)

TRAL

He said forest trees have started drying up in Doodhmarg, Branpathri, Nagbal, Hajan, Zovastan and many other areas.

Abdul Rashid, another local, said that they have witnessed it for the first time that forest trees at a large scale have started drying up and it is because of the prolonged dry spell.

"It seems that the concerned authorities are watching all this as a mute spectator but they need to wake up and take immediate steps in this regard," he said.

Locals said that there are chances that some disease might be in these trees that need to be ascertained at an earliest, adding that the government must constitute a committee of experts to ascertain the causes of drying up of these trees.

They said that the numbers of affected trees is increasing with each passing day and authorities must take up immediate steps in this regard at an earliest.

Meanwhile, an official of the forest department said that this is all because of the prolonged dry spell and these trees will recover on their own in the coming days.

He said that they have already submitted report to the higher ups in this regard and whatever is required will be done on priority—(KNO)

BARAMULLA

sumers from visiting local markets, negatively impacting businesses and the town's economy. To address these challenges, a well-planned and coordinated approach is necessary. Authorities should consider constructing multi-level parking structures in key areas of the town, such as markets and commercial hubs, to significantly increase parking capacity. These complexes should be equipped with modern facilities, including automated ticketing systems and surveillance cameras for security. Clearly marked parking zones should be established across different parts of the town to prevent random and unauthorized parking, with designated sections for two-wheelers, four-wheelers, and commercial vehicles. Strict enforcement of parking regulations, including stringent penalties for illegal parking, is essential to control the issue, and traffic police should be empowered to monitor and take action against violators, including the introduction of a towing system to remove illegally parked vehicles from congested areas. Government and municipal authorities should also identify and convert vacant land into temporary or permanent parking areas to provide additional space without requiring extensive infrastructure development. Improving public transport facilities can reduce dependence on private vehicles, thereby decreasing parking demand, while encouraging the use of bicycles and pedestrian-friendly pathways can contribute to the solution. The implementation of modern parking solutions, such as smart parking systems that allow vehicle owners to check real-time parking availability through mobile applications, can enhance efficiency, and digital payments along with pre-booking options can streamline parking management. Public awareness campaigns should be conducted to educate citizens on responsible parking practices, designated parking zones, fines for illegal parking, and the benefits of alternative transportation methods. Collaborating with private entities for the development and management of parking facilities can improve efficiency, as private investments can facilitate the construction of multi-level parking structures and the adoption of smart parking solutions. Additionally, introducing time-bound parking slots in certain areas can ensure a fair distribution of available parking spaces and prevent prolonged vehicle occupancy in high-demand zones. During Touseef Raina's tenure as the President of the Municipal Council Baramulla, he played a crucial role in addressing the parking crisis by recognizing the long-standing demand for proper parking infrastructure and initiating multiple measures to improve the situation. His key contributions included actively pursuing the establishment of structured parking spaces to ease congestion, removing encroachments on roads and sidewalks to create more space for pedestrians and vehicles, collaborating with traffic police and municipal authorities to improve traffic flow by introducing designated parking spots and one-way routes, and conducting awareness campaigns to educate people on the importance of disciplined parking and urban planning. His efforts marked a significant step toward resolving

Baramulla's parking crisis, though continued action and investment are required to establish long-term solutions. His vision for an organized and efficient parking system laid the foundation for future improvements. Addressing the parking issue in Baramulla is crucial for ensuring smooth traffic flow, enhancing public convenience, and boosting economic activities. A collaborative approach involving the administration, traffic police, and the local community is essential to bring about effective and long-lasting solutions. Proper planning, strict enforcement, and infrastructural improvements can transform Baramulla into a model town with efficient parking management. By implementing the suggested measures and continuing the initiatives started by leaders like Touseef Raina, Baramulla can overcome its parking challenges and pave the way for a more organized urban future.

OMAR

polls came to fore last week, Omar took to X and wrote: "Aur lado aapas mein (fight more)."

Replying to a query about INDIA bloc unity Omar, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "I have nothing to say about it. If the INDIA bloc convenes any meeting in future, I will discuss the issues there. If I say anything in the media, then my words are twisted."

Asked about his recent sarcasm "Aur lado aapas mein" Omar said, "It was my reaction to poor results of Delhi elections."

SNOW

received from some plains of north Kashmir.

Overall nothing significant is expected till 15th February, said an Independent Weather Forecaster, Aadil Maqbool.

Meanwhile, generally dry weather with possibility of light snow expected at isolated higher reaches tomorrow, said Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said.

He said that generally dry weather is expected from February 12 to 14 while generally cloudy weather with possibility of light rain and snow is expected at isolated places on February 15 & 16.

Director MeT also said that on February 17, the weather would remain generally dry while generally cloudy with possibility of light rain and snow is expected at isolated places on February 18 & 19—(KNO)

J&K

foundational level (preschool to Class 2), one for every 7 students at the preparatory level (Classes 3 to 5), one for every 8 students at the middle level (Classes 6 to 8), and one for every 17 students at the secondary level (Classes 9 to 12).

Ladakh, with its small population and unique geographical conditions, has even better ratios. The region has one teacher for every 3 students at the foundational level, one for every 2 students at the preparatory and middle levels, and one for every 6 students at the secondary level, reads the data, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

These figures are among the lowest in the country, ensuring a high level of teacher availability. In contrast, states like Bihar and Jharkhand face severe teacher shortages at the secondary level, with one teacher handling 43 and 46 students on average, respectively. This overcrowding makes personalized learning difficult and affects overall education quality—(KNO)

HOUSES

told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that they received a fire call from Gat Colony, Noorbagh, Srinagar, at about 11:20 AM.

He said that in the incident about five residential houses were damaged while the cause is under investigation.

However, on the other hand, locals alleged that the fire was caused due to a short circuit in an electric smart meter.

Also, in another late evening fire incident, two residential houses were damaged in Chanpora, Srinagar, while the cause is under investigation, he said, adding the fire call was received at 05:54 PM.

Meanwhile, officials said the cause of the fire at both places is under investigation and is being ascertained—(KNO)

PM

He added that in India, most things like crops, fruits were linked to our heritage and cited an example where every new crop or season was dedicated to God and festivals were celebrated in most places across India. He further mentioned that the offerings to the God were distributed as Prasad. Shri modi urged the children to eat seasonal fruits. He encouraged the children to avoid junk food, oily food and food products made of Maida. Touching upon the importance of how to eat food correctly, the Prime Minister encouraged

the children to chew their food at least 32 times before swallowing. He also shared tips to the children to take small sips of water and savor its taste, whenever they drink water. On the topic of eating the right food at the right time, Shri Modi citing the example of farmers, said that they had a hearty breakfast in the morning before going to the fields and completed their supper before the sunset. He encouraged the students to follow similar healthy habits.

Mastering Pressure

On the topic of Mastering Pressure, the Prime Minister remarked that it is unfortunate how our society has ingrained the idea that not scoring high marks in school exams like 10th or 12th means life is ruined. This, he said, added to the pressure on the children. Citing a reference to the batsman's concentration on the ball in a cricket match, Shri Modi encouraged the children to evade the outside pressure like the batsman and focus and concentrate on their studies which would help them overcome the pressure.

Challenge Yourself

Asking the students to be well prepared and keep challenging themselves every time, the Prime Minister remarked that many people do not fight their own battles against themselves. He remarked on the importance of self-reflection, urging individuals to frequently ask themselves what they can become, achieve, and what actions will bring them satisfaction. He highlighted that one's focus should not be swayed by daily external influences like newspapers or TV, but rather should be steadily cultivated over time. The Prime Minister pointed out that many people often let their minds wander without direction. He advised them not to be frivolous in their decisions and make up their mind to find stillness on something which will help them to tackle the challenges.

The Art of Leadership

On being asked by a student to share tips on effective leadership, Shri Modi said that outer appearance does not define a leader but a leader is one who leads by setting an example for others. To achieve this, he said that individuals must change themselves, and their behavior should reflect this change. "Leadership is not imposed, but accepted by those around you", said the Prime Minister. He remarked that preaching to others will not earn acceptance; it is one's behavior that is accepted. He cited an example, noting that if one gives a speech on cleanliness but does not practice it, they cannot be a leader. Shri Modi emphasised that teamwork and patience are essential for leadership. He underlined that when delegating tasks, it is important to understand the challenges faced by the team members and helping them through difficulties will build their confidence and trust in leadership. The Prime Minister illustrated this by sharing a childhood story about a child holding a parent's hand at a fair. The child preferred the parent to hold their hand, ensuring a sense of security and trust. This trust is a significant strength in leadership, he emphasised.

Beyond Books - 360° Growth

On the topic of balancing hobbies with studies, while the general belief is that academics is the only path to success, the Prime Minister stated that students are not robots and emphasized the importance of holistic development. He noted that education is not solely for advancing to the next class but for comprehensive personal growth. Reflecting on the past, he highlighted how the lessons from early schooling like gardening might have seemed irrelevant, but they contribute to overall development. The Prime Minister urged parents and teachers not to confine children to a rigid academic environment, as this stunts their growth.

Finding Positives

The Prime Minister remarked that people often question advice given to them, wondering why it was said and if it reflects a flaw in them. This mentality hinders one's ability to help others. Instead, he advised identifying the good qualities in others, such as singing well or dressing neatly, and discussing these positive traits. This approach shows genuine interest and builds rapport. He further suggested offering assistance by inviting others to study together. The Prime Minister also highlighted the importance of developing the habit of writing. He noted that those who develop the habit of writing would capture their thoughts effectively.

Find your Uniqueness

Recounting an incident in Ahmedabad where a child was about to be expelled from school for lack of attention, the Prime Minister said however, the child excelled in a tinkering lab and won a robotics competition, showcasing unique strengths. The Prime Minister emphasized that it is the teacher's role to recognize and nurture unique talents and strengths of children. Shri Modi proposed an experiment for self-reflection and understanding relationships. He suggested recalling 25-30 childhood friends and writing their full names, including their parents' names. This exercise often reveals how little we know about those we consider close friends. The Prime Minister encouraged identifying positive traits in people and cultivating the habit of finding positivity in others. This practice, he noted, would be beneficial for personal growth.



DC Srinagar distributes Rs 80 lakh financial assistance among beneficiaries under PMMSY

Also releases Rs 1.25 crore livelihood & nutritional support in favour of 4181 beneficiaries of District

HT News Network

SRINAGAR FEBRUARY 10: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat along with Director Fisheries, A. M. Tak distributed financial assistance among the fishermen community for various activities under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) during the fiscal year 2024-25 here today in a programme held at Fisheries Aquarium Gagribal, Nehru Park. On the occasion, financial assistance of over Rs 80 lakh under PMMSY was provided to the beneficiaries for establishment of live fish vending centers, fisheries help Desks, fish Value added enterprise and procurement of Auto/e-Rickshaws with Ice Boxes, ensuring improved market accessibility for fish farmers. Additionally, an amount of Rs 1.25 crore was also released as livelihood and nutritional support under the scheme in favour of 4181 beneficiaries (fishers). Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner lauded the initiative and



hoped that it will have a positive impact on fishermen community and improve socio-economic conditions of the fishers besides boost fisheries sector in the District. He encouraged beneficiaries and asked them to avail benefits from the

Government scheme launched for welfare and benefit of the fishermen community. The programme was also attended by senior Officers of the Fisheries Department and a large number of fishermen community of the area. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat along with Director Fisheries, A. M. Tak distributed financial assistance among the fishermen community for various activities under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) during the fiscal year 2024-25 here today in a programme held at Fisheries Aquarium Gagribal, Nehru Park. On the occasion, financial assistance of over Rs 80 lakh under PMMSY was provided to the beneficiaries for establishment of live fish vending centers, fisheries help Desks, fish Value added enterprise and procurement of Auto/e-Rickshaws with Ice Boxes, ensuring improved market accessibility for fish farmers. Additionally, an amount of Rs 1.25 crore was also released as livelihood and nutritional support under the scheme in favour of 4181 beneficiaries (fishers).

J&K Bank Brings Sound of Hope With Free Hearing Aids, Speech Therapy for Needy

HT News Network

Srinagar, ANB, Feb 10: Reinforcing its social commitments, J&K Bank has launched a widespread campaign to support individuals with hearing and speech impairments in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Funded under the Bank's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the campaign is being implemented by Voluntary Medicare Society (VMS) - a non-profit organization dedicated to healthcare and rehabilitation. The Bank's General Manager (S&IT/CSR) Imtiaz Ahmad Bhat formally inaugurated the campaign in the presence of Chairman & Patron (VMS) Dr. Mir Mohammad Maqbool, Deputy General Manager Manju Gupta, Zonal Head (Srinagar) Raja Zaffar Khan, Director VMS Dr Bashir Lone and senior functionaries from both organizations here at the VMS Complex in Bemina. As part of the project, the General Manager also handed over the keys of the mobility van to the Chairman VMS, the procurement of which has also been supported by the Bank to enhance outreach and expand the campaign's impact. Speaking on the occasion, General Manager Imtiaz Ahmad Bhat said, "At J&K Bank, we believe in nurturing an equitable and inclusive society by supporting those in need with means to improve their quality of life. By providing for the assistive devices and therapy to the individuals facing hearing and speech disabilities under the CSR initiative, we not only enhance their healthcare access through this campaign but are also empowering them socially and economically." "Through this initiative, we continue to uphold our mission of contributing to the welfare of the people we serve, reaffirming our role as a socially responsible institution dedicated to positive societal transformation", he added.

Upcoming Yarn Dyeing CFC to boost quality of Kashmir handicrafts

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 10 - In a major fillip to Kashmir's famed handicrafts, the Handicrafts and Handloom Department, Kashmir, is on the verge of commissioning a modern Common Facility Centre (CFC) for Yarn Dyeing in the premises of Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT) at Nowshera, here. Constructed at a cost of .2.59 Cr, the CFC shall adhere to all international norms and will dye different types of raw materials used in the handicrafts and handloom sector and go a long way in further improving the quality of craft products and boosting its saleability in niche global markets. In a statement released here today, a spokesman from the Handicrafts and Handloom Department, stated that CFC will use chemical dyes which shall be 100% Azo-free and have all necessary plant and machinery installed, such as dyeing machines with different capacities, ranging from 5kg to 20 kg, for dyeing of silk, woollen, cotton and viscose yarn. "It will also have Water Softening System, Dryers, Hydro Extractors, Washing Machines and 02 Mini Boilers along with Effluent Treatment Plant," he added. The spokesman further stated that the CFC shall also have a Dye House catering to a daily capacity to dye 250 kg of silk, wool and cotton, all in hank form, in different types of dyeing machines. "The CFC shall also provide natural dyeing facility to 07 kg of Pashmina per day through Soft Flow Dyeing Machine," he added. The spokesman advised the concerned stakeholders to approach Director IICT for availing the dyeing facility for all types of yarn in hank form against nominal rates.

Nitish Rajora assumes charge as Director Information

HT News Network

JAMMU: Nitish Rajora, assumed the charge of Director Information here today. After assuming the charge, the Director held a brief introductory meeting with the officers and officials of the department. He had an overview of working of each section of the department from the concerned officers. He expressed hope that all the employees would deliver their assigned services with utmost efficacy and proficiency while assuring complete support to them regarding their issues and concerns. He emphasised the need for further streamlining the social media platforms with the advanced technological innovations keeping pace with the emerging media trends.



The Director highlighted the significance of timely dissemination of accurate and objective information to the public, fostering transparency and enhancing communication channels between the government and the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir. The officers, present on the occasion, reaffirmed their commitment towards performing their assigned tasks with added zeal and zest. Joint Director Headquarters, Vivek Puri, Deputy Director PR/AV, Deepak Dubey, Deputy Director Central, Sunil Kumar and other senior officers and officials were present.

Scores of Daily Wagers Protest in Srinagar, Demand Justice

HT News Network

Srinagar, ANB, Feb 10: Scores of daily wagers under the banner of Jammu Kashmir Casual Labour's United Front staged a protest in Press Enclave Srinagar today, demanding the fulfillment of their long-pending legitimate rights. The protest, which saw participation from casual laborers across various government departments, was aimed at pressing authorities for regularization of their services and timely payment of wages. Carrying placards and banners, the protesters chanted slogans in support of their demands, calling for immediate government intervention. The demonstrators asserted that despite years of dedicated service, they continue to face uncertainty regarding their job security and financial stability. Speaking to the media, protestors expressed their frustration over the government's failure to address their grievances. "We have been working in different departments for years without any job security. Our families are suffering due to delayed wages and the lack of regularization," said a protesting worker. Another protester highlighted the unfulfilled promises made by previous administrations. "We have been continuously assured that our concerns will be addressed, but nothing has changed on the ground. We demand justice and recognition of our hard work," he added. Sharing details with Associated News Bureau, Chairman of Employees Joint Consultative Committee Aijaz Ahmad Khan took strong exception to the authorities' actions, alleging that they resorted to a cane charge and an arrest spree to quell the peaceful protest.

DC Kulgam reviews functioning of Nursing College Kulgam

Kulgam February 10: Following upgradation of GNM School in Kulgam as the Nursing College and its association with GMC Anantnag, Deputy Commissioner Kulgam Athar Aamir Khan today reviewed the upgradation of the infrastructure, academic arrangements, expansion plan and land allotment besides other aspects like sanitation arrangement and arrangements for support staff. To ensure smooth functioning of class work Chief Medical Officer Dr Showkat Parray was directed to engage additional teaching staff for the College on roster basis till the permanent faculty gets arranged.

Dir Law Enforcement J&K reviews fertilizer scenario in Kashmir division

HT News Network

Srinagar, February 10: To review the overall scenario of TSO/HMO in Kashmir Division, the Director Law enforcement J&K Balbir Singh today chaired a meeting of heads & responsible persons of TSO/HMO companies who are carrying out their business in Kashmir division.



While addressing the meeting, Singh said that enforcement wing is committed to safeguard the interests of farming community of the region. He exhorted upon the stakeholders including representatives of TSO/HMO companies to put in all the efforts and ensure that only the quality inputs including TSO/HMO reaches farming community. He highlighted the importance of transparency and accountability in the system to ensure smooth and timely distribution of tree spray oil to the growers and farmers. Speaking on the occasion, Joint Director Agriculture Kashmir Sartaj Ahmad Shah highlighted the significance of TSO/HMO and other agriculture inputs. He reiterated the

importance of collaborative efforts between the stakeholders to ensure the availability of quality inputs to the farming community of the region through proper sale outlets at appropriate time. He impressed upon the concerned officers to make sincere efforts for online service delivery to the farmers. Shah said that while functioning in the field, The concerned officers

must ensure that all the provisions of insecticides act, fertilizer control order are implemented in letter and spirit. The meeting was attended by Deputy Director Law Enforcement, Plant Protection Officer Kashmir, District Law Enforcement Officer North, District Law Enforcement Officer South, enforcement inspectors and other concerned officers of the Department.

GMC Anantnag set to make much-awaited Cath Lab functional

'TMT to be made functional today, cath lab in first week of March'

HT News Network

Anantnag, Feb 10 (KNO): In a major relief to hundreds of patients, the Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag is all set to make Cath Lab functional at the hospital next month.



Officials told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that cardiac catheterization lab, also known as a "cardiac cath lab," is a specialized area in the hospital where doctors perform minimally invasive tests and advanced cardiac procedures to diagnose and treat cardiovascular disease. They said that the cardiology unit is functional at GMC Anantnag but in the absence of the cath lab they had to refer patients with

minor or major heart attack to Srinagar but such facilities will be available at GMC Anantnag now. The first hour after a heart attack is known as "the golden hour." Taking appropriate action within this first hour can save a patient's life, they said, adding that most deaths due to cardiac arrest happen during this period. According to the Centres

for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly 47% of deaths occur due to sudden cardiac arrests before an individual reaches the hospital. "If a patient who has suffered a heart attack reaches the hospital within the golden hour, cardiologists and trained emergency physicians are in a better position to run the appropriate tests and scans to

confirm the occurrence of a heart attack and take the patient to the catheterization laboratory, where an interventional cardiac procedure called a primary angioplasty is performed to clear the cause of most heart attacks — plaque build-up that blocks the artery/arteries," they said. However, in the absence of the cath lab, patients from South Kashmir most of the time lose their golden time in reaching SKIMS or SMHS hospital. Doctors said that the establishment of a cath lab at GMC Anantnag can help in saving lives of dozens of patients, who lose their golden period in travelling to Srinagar. They added that this facility can help in easing load on Srinagar hospital as well.

EDITORIAL

First set your house in order then criticize others

The Jammu & Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee President Tariq Hameed Karra while commenting on the results of elections for Delhi assembly said that Aam Admi Party (AAP) refused to enter into an alliance with the Congress for such polls. The views of Karra seem to be more out of hope than conviction as his party failed to open its account in the elections for the Delhi assembly. The Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) came to power with 48 seats with AAP winning 22 seats.

There is no denying the fact that the Congress party failed to capitalize the gains managed by former Delhi chief minister and senior Congress leader Sheila Dikshit. For the third consecutive time the Congress party failed to win even a single seat in the Delhi assembly. Given this fact time it does not behove the Congress leaders to aim barbs at AAP with respect to the results for Delhi assembly elections. The party needs to set its house in order before criticizing the other parties.

Despite receiving setback after setback the leaders of Congress party are not ready to acknowledge that common masses have lost faith in the party, its leadership and above all the policies as well as programmes. The leaders of the party have been maintaining and harping that Congress is the grand old party and it does not need lessons from any other party or leader. The Congress leaders are rigid in their stand by saying that it should be allowed by other opposition parties to lead the INDIA bloc.

The J&KPCC President seems to have forgotten that the Congress party managed to win just six seats in the 2024 Jammu & Kashmir assembly elections. While the party won five seats from Kashmir valley the sixth one was won from the Pir Panchal range. The party failed to win a single seat from the Jammu division and as such it was forced to bite the dust against the BJP candidates. The party faced flak from its own supporters as well as the National Conference for their dismal performance in J&K assembly elections.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi carried out the Bharat Jodo Abhiyan across the country so as to garner public support. It is an established fact that the campaign was a hit among the people but the same failed to give the expected number of seats to the party in 2024 parliamentary elections and elections for the different assemblies. The party managed to win 99 seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

The practice of begging: A cry for help or a well-planned business?



PRIYANKA SAURABH

The practice of public begging in India is common even after the implementation of extensive welfare programs such as MNREGA and SMILE. According to data, over 413 lakh people still engage in the practice, underscoring underlying socioeconomic vulnerabilities such as chronic poverty, low literacy, and lack of work opportunities despite government intervention. Older children are taught to beg, while infants are drugged to appear sick. Some have never stepped foot in a classroom, and many have dropped out of school, risking their future to make quick money. Recent statistics show how common school drop-outs are in India, especially among adolescents. According to the Annual Status of Education Report 2023, 25 percent of children aged 18 struggle with basic reading skills, and 32.6 percent have dropped out of school. People with disabilities are taken advantage of because they are more likely to be targeted as beggars. When

mental health conditions go untreated, people are caught in a cycle of exploitation and dependency.

There are over 400,000 regular beggars living in India; their plight stems from a variety of factors, including organized begging gangs, poverty, disability, and displacement due to natural disasters. By preying on the most vulnerable members of society and operating with near impunity, these syndicates have turned poverty into a profitable enterprise. With over 81,000 beggars, West Bengal is the state with the highest number of beggars in India, followed by Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Poverty, rural-urban migration, and lack of easily accessible support networks are some of the socio-economic factors contributing to the growing number of beggars in these regions. In India, the practice of begging persists due to ingrained socio-economic weaknesses despite the existence of several welfare programs. This is because welfare programs often fail due to poor implementation, corruption, and lack of awareness among recipients. Schemes like Smile, which provide shelter and livelihood support, are not well known to many beggars.

Particularly in rural and urban slums, people living in abject poverty have no choice but to

resort to begging to survive. According to the 2011 census, even with poverty alleviation programs such as MNREGA, more than 413,000 people were begging. Individuals who beg often lack formal education and employable skills, which limits their access to formal employment opportunities. Vocational training offered under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana has not adequately reached beggars and other marginalized groups. Transgender people and people with disabilities are two examples of vulnerable groups who are neglected by society and excluded from mainstream economic opportunities. Many are forced to beg at traffic signals as they are not accepted even despite transgender welfare programs. Vulnerable people are kidnapped by criminal networks, who then force them into begging, making it difficult to break this cycle. Police in Delhi rescued fifty children in 2023 who were forced into begging by a trafficking gang.

One of the main reasons why begging persists in India is that there is no centralized database that can allow for focused interventions to help rehabilitate begging individuals. The NHRC's suggestion to use municipal records to create a national database draws attention to the lack of reliable infor-

mation about beggars. Generational poverty and dependence on begging persist when begging children are denied access to formal education. Due to a lack of outreach initiatives, many children are still not enrolled under the Right to Education Act 2009. Substance abuse and untreated mental health problems lead to people begging and living in poverty. The NHRC's advisory highlights the lack of de-addiction and mental health counseling services in shelter homes under the SMILE program. Due to urban overcrowding caused by rural-to-urban migration due to unemployment, migrants are forced to resort to begging. Laws against begging are either draconian or inadequate to tackle organized crime and provide rehabilitation. For example, the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act criminalizes beggars rather than addressing the underlying issues that give rise to forced begging networks.

Policies to tackle begging in India To facilitate targeted welfare interventions and track their rehabilitation, a national database of beggars should be established and updated frequently. To identify beggars, municipal corporations can work with NGOs, as suggested by the National Human Rights Commission, using standardized survey formats.

Enact special laws to prevent organized begging, punish offenders, and help victims get back on their feet. Adopting laws to make forced begging illegal, as recommended by the National Human Rights Commission, will curb trafficking and exploitative organizations. To enable people to find respectable jobs or pursue self-employment opportunities, shelter homes should provide skill-based vocational training. Programs such as the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana can work in collaboration with shelter homes to teach beggars skills in carpentry, tailoring, or other vocations that suit their aptitude. Provide mental health counseling services and mobile health units in shelters to address untreated illnesses, addictions, and disabilities.

NHRC advises shelter homes to integrate Ayushman Bharat benefits to guarantee health coverage for those who have undergone rehabilitation. Access to education for children: Under the Right to Education Act, enroll begging children in schools and ensure they receive food, clothing, and support. Enrollment in schools can be increased by running special awareness campaigns targeting parents of beggar children, especially in urban slums. Organize awareness-raising programs to encourage dona-

tions to rehabilitation programs rather than begging. Cities such as Hyderabad have run successful campaigns to encourage people to donate to government shelters rather than to beggars. Begging is a symptom of systematic neglect and organized exploitation in India, not just a reflection of poverty. Although legislation such as the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959, has attempted to curb the practice, it often criminalizes victims rather than perpetrators. Bold steps like the ban on begging in Indore, with its emphasis on accountability and rehabilitation, offer hope.

India's anti-begging campaign must aim at empowerment rather than punishment. As citizens, our responses to begging need to be rethought as steps towards systemic change rather than acts of charity. To end begging, we must empower people's lives. To end the cycle of poverty, social safety nets must be strengthened, inclusive education guaranteed, and skill development encouraged. A self-reliant India where each individual makes a meaningful and respectable contribution to the country's progress will be achieved through strict enforcement of anti-begging laws and community-driven rehabilitation.

Naxalism and India's Security: A Persistent Internal Challenge



YAWAR HAMID

In India Naxalism, often is being referred as Left-Wing Extremism (LWE), it is one of India's most pressing internal security threats. Originating from the Naxalbari uprising in West Bengal in 1967, the movement is driven by the belief that Indian society remains semi-colonial and feudalistic, necessitating a radical overhaul through armed struggle. The movement primarily finds support among marginalized sections, particularly tribal communities, landless laborers, and poor farm-

ers, who feel alienated from mainstream development and governance.

The Security Concerns of Naxalism

The Indian security apparatus views Naxalism as a major challenge to national stability and development. Despite, several counterinsurgency efforts, the movement continues to pose serious threats in regions known as the "Red Corridor," spanning parts of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand use, Odisha, Bihar, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. The security concerns regarding Naxalism can be categorized as follows:

1. Threat to Internal Security

Naxalite groups engage in violent attacks against security forces, government officials and infra-

structure, particularly targeting railway tracks, power lines, and police stations. Their guerrilla warfare tactics make them difficult to counter, leading to prolonged instability in affected regions.

2. Hindrance to Development

Many regions affected by Naxalism experience slow economic growth due to the disruption of development projects. Roads, schools, and health centers are often attacked, preventing basic services from reaching the local population. This further alienates communities, fueling discontent and creating a vicious cycle of underdevelopment and insurgency.

3. Radical Ideology and Recruitment

The ideology of Nax-

alism, inspired by Maoist principles, promotes violent revolution against the state. The movement actively recruits from marginalized communities, exploiting their grievances. The spread of radical ideology among the youth poses long term security risks, as it creates a new generation of insurgents.

4. Strain on Security Forces

India has deployed paramilitary forces such as the CRPF and state police to counter Naxal violence. However, the dense forests and difficult terrain provide a strategic advantage to the insurgents, making counterinsurgency operations challenging. The prolonged conflict results in high casualties among security personnel and requires continuous resource allocation.

Government Measures and the Way Forward

The Indian government has adopted a dual strategy of military operations and development initiatives to tackle Naxalism. The "Operation Green Hunt" launched in 2009 aimed at eliminating Naxal strongholds through coordinated attacks. Simultaneously, initiatives like the Aspirational Districts Programme and better road connectivity seek to address the root causes of Naxalism by promoting economic development.

However, the long-term solution lies in addressing socio-economic disparities, ensuring land reforms, and improving governance in tribal regions. Security measures alone cannot eliminate Naxalism; a comprehensive approach that

combines development, dialogue, and strict law enforcement is essential.

Conclusion

Naxalism remains a complex challenge for India's security, demanding a multi-pronged strategy. While military interventions help in containing violence, long-term peace can only be achieved by addressing the socio-economic grievances that fuel the insurgency. Strengthening local governance, providing education, and integrating marginalized communities into the mainstream economy will be key in eradicating Naxalism and ensuring India's internal stability.

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The new geopolitical communication era

CHAITANYA K PRASAD

One of the critical areas where visible changes will be witnessed post-January 2025 is the communication landscape geopolitically. This era is positioned to redefine the very speedways of global communication, with a pivotal question arising: Are we on the verge of a 360-degree transformation in communication delivery, content orientation, outreach mechanisms, and the tools we deploy? Geopolitically, the communication ecosystem will embrace a new language—a language of immediacy, focused messaging, results-driven delivery, and the prioritisation of measurable outcomes to identify realistic patterns and global impacts.

As the world steps

into this new chapter of geopolitical shifts, communication strategies are becoming more sophisticated, dynamic and multi-dimensional. The need of the hour is to analyse the shifting political landscape and the major geopolitical developments. The evolving political climate is challenging traditional paradigms, compelling communication specialists, diplomats, and policymakers to rethink how messages are crafted, delivered, and received on a global stage.

The era demands a communication framework that not only transcends borders but also bridges divides with precision, creativity, and authenticity. In 2025, the phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words" takes on greater resonance. Visual communication has become

the most impactful way to deliver messages. A single, well-composed image has the power to convey emotions, ideas, and narratives that words may struggle to encapsulate. Building on this, the explosion of short-form videos, and 30-second reels, for instance, has transformed the landscape further.

Their brevity and emotional depth make them tools of unparalleled influence in shaping public opinion, mobilising support, and even defusing tensions. This evolution places immense responsibility on communicators in the geopolitical arena. Diplomacy, once conducted primarily behind closed doors, is increasingly playing out in the public domain through curated visuals, symbolic gestures and strategic messaging

amplified by digital platforms. For foreign policy, the challenge is to balance transparency and strategy, using these tools to build trust while maintaining sensitivity.

As social media continues its rapid rise, many ask whether traditional media can still hold its ground in the face of this digital juggernaut. Social media has undeniably globalised and democratised communication, giving individuals, governments, and organisations a direct channel to their audiences.

It thrives on immediacy, engagement, and the power to go viral, making it an essential tool in geopolitical communication. However, traditional media is far from obsolete. In an era of information overload, its role as a trusted gatekeeper remains critical.

While social media is the messenger of the moment, traditional media provides depth, analysis, and context—elements that are crucial for informed decision-making. For communication to be effective in this new geopolitical era, the two mediums must complement each other, creating a holistic narrative that is both immediate and enduring.

The rise of artificial intelligence has added another layer of complexity to global communication. AI-driven analytics enable unprecedented insights into audience behaviour, preferences, and sentiments, allowing for hyper-personalised messaging. These tools are invaluable for diplomats and foreign policy experts, who can now craft messages with immense precision and predict

their impact with greater accuracy. However, with these advancements come ethical dilemmas. The line between strategic communication and manipulation can easily blur, necessitating robust frameworks to ensure accountability and fairness. As the communication landscape becomes more intricate, the demand for skilled specialists is growing. These professionals are not just channels for information, they are strategists, analysts, and creators who understand the nuances of messaging in a diverse and rapidly changing world.

Traditional media must evolve to remain relevant, embracing digital innovations and audience-centric approaches. Meanwhile, social media must grapple with issues of misinformation, polarisation, and echo chambers, striving

to become a platform that unites rather than divides.

In this era, communication is no longer just about delivering a message; it is about shaping perceptions, building relationships, and driving action. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the ability to communicate effectively will be one of the most powerful tools in navigating the complexities of a neo-geopolitical era. In an era marked by shifting alliances and evolving global priorities, multilateral institutions face both challenges and opportunities.

The reworking of commitments by key nations to international frameworks has drawn notice to the fragility of global consensus, raising questions about the role and relevance of these institutions in addressing shared chal-

lenges like public health, climate change, and economic inequality. This shifting landscape calls for a more nuanced approach to diplomacy within multilateral spaces, with a renewed focus on collective responsibility. For these institutions to thrive in a complex geopolitical climate, they must leverage communication technologies to foster transparency, engage diverse stakeholders, and amplify their ability to drive action. Whether through the lens of a camera, the reach of a tweet, or the depth of an investigative report, the stories we tell and how we tell them will shape the world in ways we are only beginning to understand.

(The writer is a former civil servant. Views are personal. Inputs by Vaishnavie Srinivasan and Zoya Ahmad)

Life is a mountain: Climb your peak, your way

O.P.SINGH

I have come to believe life is a lot like climbing a mountain. It's not a race or a competition, and it's not about finding a shortcut. The absolute joy of life isn't standing at the summit—it's in the climb. It's in slipping on loose gravel, feeling the burn in your legs, and wondering halfway through if you should turn around. But when you catch your breath at a ridge or find your footing after a stumble, you realise something powerful: the climb isn't about the mountain—it's about who you become along the way.

Each of us has a mountain to climb. It doesn't need to be Everest or Kilimanjaro. It doesn't have to impress anyone else. What matters is that your mountain challenges you, excites you and pushes you to grow. And yes, the climb will be messy. The trail will disappear just when you think you're getting somewhere. The air will get thin. You might even feel like quitting. But that's the beauty of it—the mountain shapes you with every step. Every great climb starts with a dream—one so audacious it gives you butterflies. Don't let its enormity overwhelm you. Focus on taking the next step, then the one after that. Progress isn't about giant leaps but small, consistent efforts.

Moving forward, even a little each day, builds the path to big dreams. Mountains don't reward the fastest or most competent climber—they reward perseverance. Talent may get you started, but resilience carries you through fatigue, failure, and seemingly impossible moments. You don't need to be perfect; you need to keep climbing. Your journey is unique; not everyone will understand or agree with it. That's okay. When the trail disappears, create your path, even if it's messy.

The best routes are discovered through improvisation and authenticity, not by

meeting others' expectations. Slips and falls are inevitable, and they hurt. Yet, each stumble teaches something valuable about the terrain, limits, and strength. Mountains don't demand perfection—they demand persistence. Learn from every fall, and rise stronger. The mountain doesn't care who reaches the summit first. It isn't about trophies or comparisons. The climb is about pushing yourself, growing beyond your comfort zone, and becoming someone who belongs at the summit.

True success is transformation, not competition. The best climbers don't focus solely on themselves. They lend a hand, share tools, and cheer others on. Life's peaks are more meaningful when shared. Those you help will often support you, making the climb richer for everyone. When you reach your summit, pause and reflect. Did your climb inspire others? Did you leave the path better for those who follow? Success isn't standing alone at the top; it's in the legacy you leave—the encouragement, improvements, and hope for others to climb higher. Ultimately, the climb makes life beautiful.

The summit is fleeting, but the slips, breakthroughs, lessons, and growth endure. These moments shape you into someone worthy of the top. If your mountain feels daunting, don't let the height scare you. Start small. Take one step at a time. You don't need to move fast or know the whole path. Just keep climbing. One day, standing at your summit, you'll look back and realise it wasn't about the peak. It was about the person you became along the way. That's the valuable reward of the climb—knowing every inch of it was unapologetically yours.

(The author is DGP & Head of Haryana State Narcotics Control Bureau, with three books to his credit; views are personal)

Inspire award MANAK a flagship programme-provides a great chance to students to a become scientist



SAHIL MANZOOR
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Students throughout the country can participate in idea competitions at the school level. The world is advanced enough in the field of innovations, technology, and so on. With the passing of years, the population graph in the world increases. Increase in day to day demands. It includes from a needle to giant space rock-ets, a toy to large water ships. One should have an observing, experiencing, and a mind with wandering thinking potential. We are living in an advanced era, where we are quite curious about inventions, technology. Throughout the world every leader talks about her country's atomic power, talks about its space crafts, war tanks and

several other weapons. "men power" hardly gets an appearance in the media. Every single person knows the importance of technology. Great scientists have laced the world with great, useful, wonder technology. Today we are able to know the moments of our internal body organs, we are able to know how long the network of our vessels in our body.

Innovations are neither myths nor lies. Behind every single innovation, there is a human mind, which collects, experiences, notices the happening around him/her and tries to resolve the difficulties faced by the world. It's being circulated on the television screen about new technologies, how countries are making their will in the field of technology. Space rockets, water ships and every country in the world is improving their science and technology sector for the upliftment of their country and wants to be powerful among the other countries. It is fortuitous that the science and technology sector in most of the countries are encouraging youths, motivating them, catering them scholarships, intro-

ducing fellowship programmes, attracting them towards science and technology.

It is well said that "necessity is the mother of invention". Today in this article I am going to explore the Inspire award MANAK. Our existing generation is wholly and solely involved with the technology experiencing bizarre things and there are attractions that they are getting so involved into this. Every invention has its own interesting story and fact as well, then it appears in front of the world. We know and we believe that our generation is full of potential and are possessing quite intelligent brains. I will let you know how you can contribute to mankind, how you can troubleshoot the difficulties, problems faced by the dears and nears. So let's get started knowing about the MANAK awards and how you can forward our innovative ideas to the Department of Science and Technology (DST).

All the educational institutes throughout the country (India) have a legitimate right and mandatory to take part in the inspire awards MANAK programmes

and forward their innovative ideas of their students to the Department of Science and Technology India. Schools, government and private, need to approach their concerned DIET's (District Institute of Education and Training), and they will collect information on how to go through the whole process.

The inspire awards-MANAK (Millions Minds Augmenting National Aspirations and Knowledge) briefs as: The inspire award is being executed by the DST (Department of Science and Technology) collaborations with National Innovation Foundation of India (NIF) is an autonomous body of DST aims to motivate students in the age group of 10-15 years and studying in class 6TH to 10th. How to conduct idea competition in schools. One more interesting thing is that the selected students get a cash reward of Rs10,000 (ten thousand only). School HOI's (Head of the institutes) select a computer known teacher as teacher in-charge of inspire awards in their respective schools, the in-charge teachers look after the whole process throughout the year. The teacher in-charge

Inspire awards MANAK should notice the following points: Keep in touch with THE district authority (concerned diet).

Conduct an idea competition in the schools, before the stipulated date of inspire awards nominations announced by the DST.

Select innovative/ are the modifying ideas from the students. 5 (five) students from middle school and 2 (two) students from secondary school.

Collect the details of the nominated students, like their bank details, Aadhaar details, kindly mention the name of the student, appear in the bank pass book and account execution must be in-dependable.

Search on google as " www. dst.gov.in" or simply search for Inspire awards.

Login as school authority considers the credentials provided by the District Authority.

In word format write the write-ups of the student, and insert a rough diagram picture of the idea of the student, then forwarded to the District Authority. In case any query contact me below mentioned on my mail id.

India's domestic workers: Why are they marginalized?



DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

In India, the majority of domestic workers are women, who form a large part of the unorganized labor force. According to recent estimates, the number of domestic workers varies from official estimates of 4.2 million to unofficial estimates of over 50 million. In January 2025, the Supreme Court drew attention to the widespread exploitation of domestic workers and the lack of legal protections for them and ordered the central government to examine the possibility of passing a separate law to protect their rights. The Supreme Court ordered the central government to enact a separate law for domestic workers. The Minimum Wages Act and the

Equal Remuneration Act, among other labor laws, do not apply to domestic workers. A separate law could offer organized regulation. Because there is no official framework, domestic workers often work without any set wages and are subject to arbitrary treatment.

Employers do not consider their homes a "workplace" or themselves an "employer," making domestic work largely informal and unregulated. Since their work is not officially recorded, workers cannot be granted basic rights such as social security or minimum wages. Women now make up the majority of those employed in domestic work, which is feminized and undervalued in society. This inequality on the basis of gender can be addressed by a special law. Due to social undervaluation, women are often paid less for domestic work than men. Domestic work conditions vary by region. A committed law can take into account regional issues and solutions. Regulations in Kerala and Delhi have

attempted to address regional issues such as wage rates and employment registration in different ways. Clear procedures to uphold workers' rights and provide legal recourse in case of violations could be mandated by a separate law.

Without employment documentation, domestic workers may find it difficult to receive their wages, which can result in exploitation. Exploitation of domestic workers in India through low wages is one of their challenges. The low wages that domestic workers often receive are inadequate for the amount of labor they perform. The absence of minimum wage regulation makes this problem even worse. Domestic workers in Mumbai may struggle to meet their basic living expenses despite long workdays if their pay falls below the minimum wage. Due to the lack of legal protection from harassment or unfair treatment, domestic workers are particularly susceptible to abuse. The worker in Delhi may face physical or verbal

abuse, but since there is no formal contract, they have no legal protection.

Since domestic work is performed in private homes, regulations become more complex, and the power differential between employers and employees increases. Since employees are often laid off without warning, there is a lack of job security, which exacerbates financial instability. After years of service, an employee can be suddenly fired without pay, leaving them with no financial support or legal options. Since domestic work is socially undervalued as "women's work" and often associated with marginalized communities, it renders workers voiceless and invisible. Rural migrant women may face social stigma and struggle to be accepted as legal employees. A specific legal framework can help address vulnerabilities. A specific law can set a minimum wage, guaranteeing that workers receive fair compensation commensurate with their working hours and duties.

A national law could establish a uniform minimum wage for workers across all states, guaranteeing that cooking, cleaning, and caregiving tasks are consistently paid for. A well-defined legal framework, with processes for resolving grievances, would enable workers to receive protection from harassment and abuse. The law could make employment contracts mandatory to prevent exploitation and provide workers with a legal basis to resist abuse. A national framework could improve workers' financial and health security by providing health insurance, pensions, and other social benefits. Workers in Kerala currently receive some benefits, but national legislation could guarantee consistent access to social protection for all domestic workers in India. To ensure that both parties are aware of their rights and responsibilities and to prevent exploitation, a law could require employers to register their workers.

Unions representing domestic workers have

pushed for registration as a way to prevent termination and provide legal aid when needed. Domestic work and care can be valued and acknowledged by a specific legal framework, increasing social recognition of domestic workers. Apart from ensuring that domestic work is socially valued and fairly remunerated, the law can also require respectful working conditions. Taking into account programs such as the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana and the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan Yojana, a specific legal framework for domestic workers should be created. This will ensure better safety at the workplace, enforce a minimum wage, and provide necessary social protection. Through resolving power inequalities, improving working conditions, and ultimately advancing their economic stability and human dignity, this law will empower domestic workers.

Research Scholar in Political Science, Delhi University

From Kashmir to Kharar, Punjab : Building Opportunities and Community



MUSAIB RAFIQ
FOUNDER M.A REAL ESTATE

Kharar, Punjab, has emerged as a significant hub for Kashmiri students and entrepreneurs seeking new opportunities. With its numerous colleges and universities, Kharar attracts a large number of Kashmiri students who come here for higher education.

This influx of students has led to a vibrant community, creating a demand for various services and businesses that

cater to their needs. The presence of Kashmiri students in Kharar has not only enriched the local culture but has also paved the way for many Kashmiri entrepreneurs to establish their businesses. Cafes and restaurants offering Kashmiri cuisine have become popular spots for both students and locals. These establishments provide a taste of home for the Kashmiri community while introducing the rich flavors of Kashmiri food to a broader audience. The success of these businesses highlights the potential for growth in the food and hospitality sector in Kharar. Additionally, many Kashmiri entrepreneurs have ventured into selling traditional Kashmiri products such as dry fruits and shawls. These businesses have thrived due to the

growing demand from both students and residents who appreciate the quality and uniqueness of Kashmiri goods. By bringing these products to Kharar, entrepreneurs not only generate income for themselves but also promote Kashmiri culture and craftsmanship. Kharar's strategic location near Chandigarh further enhances its appeal as an investment destination. The excellent connectivity and infrastructure make it easy for businesses to reach a larger market. This accessibility has attracted many Kashmiri individuals who are looking to expand their ventures or start new ones. The growing urbanization of Kharar presents lucrative opportunities for real estate investment, as the demand for residential



and commercial spaces continues to rise. Moreover, the local economy in Kharar is flourishing, with many Kashmiri individuals

finding employment in the private sector. This economic growth creates a robust consumer base, leading to increased

demand for various goods and services. The presence of a young, dynamic population drives innovation and entrepreneurship,

making Kharar a fertile ground for new business ideas. In conclusion, Kharar, Punjab, stands out as an ideal location for Kashmiri individuals to invest and thrive. The combination of a large student population, successful Kashmiri businesses, and job opportunities in the private sector creates a conducive environment for growth. By investing in Kharar, Kashmiri entrepreneurs can not only secure their financial future but also contribute to the local economy while staying connected to their cultural roots. This unique blend of opportunity and community makes Kharar an attractive destination for the Kashmiri diaspora. In recent years, Kharar has emerged as a prime location for real estate investment, attracting

attention from various communities, including the Kashmiri population. As a Kashmiri-based real estate firm, M.A Real Estate is dedicated to inviting our fellow Kashmiris to explore the vast investment opportunities available in Kharar. We encourage Kashmiri individuals and families to consider investing in apartments, plots, and commercial showrooms throughout. With Kharar's growing infrastructure and vibrant community, now is the perfect time to secure a valuable asset in this thriving area. At M.A Real Estate, we are committed to guiding you through every step of the investment process, ensuring a seamless experience. Join us in building a prosperous future in Kharar's real estate market.

DC Shopian chairs District Export Promotion Committee meeting

■ HT News Network

Shopian, February 10: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today chaired a meeting of the District Level Export Promotion Committee here to review and approve the District Export Action Plan (DEAP) for Shopian district.

The meeting comprehensively discussed the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative, with special attention to positioning Shopian as an Export Hub, particularly for products like apples.

It was informed that that 51000 MT CA storage is already functional in the district, 28000 MT under MSME and 14000 MT under PPP mode are in pipeline.

It was also informed that 17 KKG's are already functional in the district and another 33 KKG's will be made functional in the near future.

DC stressed for enhancing the export potential of Shopian district, contributing to its economic progress



and prosperity.

He also directed the Horticulture and Agriculture departments for preparing a plan for establishment of quality control labs in the district.

The meeting was attended by ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone, General Manager, DIC, Shopian, CPO, CHO, CAO and others.

Joint Director, DGFT, Joint Director, MSME, DDM, NABARD and others attended the meeting in virtual mode. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today chaired a meeting of the District Level Export Pro-

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DC Kupwara chairs NCORD meeting Recovered drug abuse victims to be provided self employment opportunities

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 10: To review the progress made to curb the drug abuse in Kupwara district, a meeting of District Level Committee of Narco Coordination (NCORD) was held today under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan here today.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner took a detailed appraisal from concerned members of NCORD Committee regarding the present scenario of drug related occurrences, various issues related to menace of drug addiction, its control and rehabilitation and areas of concern. The DC reviewed the implementation of the measures taken and progress achieved to eliminate drug abuse and its peddling



in the district. Deputy Commissioner took feedback from the members of the Committee who presented the latest report related to action taken against drug-addiction and drug trafficking in the District.

DC also emphasized the officers including Enforcement agencies for identification and close vigil of entry points, hot spots of drugs, public places and abandoned buildings.

Similarly, DC also laid thrust on further intensifying IEC campaigns (semi-

rallies and other programmes on the harmful effects of drug menace) at Schools and Colleges levels to sensitize students and common masses about ill-effects of drugs and close coordination between Health, Education and other line departments.

She reviewed the functioning of Drug De-addiction Centre Kupwara and Addiction Treatment Facility Centre (ATFC) Handwara and stressed for upscaling of the therapeutic management and proper counsel-

ing of the drug addicts which can help the addicts to come out of the menace.

Shre emphasized the need for providing self employment opportunities to the drug victims who have been recovered so that they can live a dignified life in the society. The DSWO was directed to provide IEC material among the departments for mass awareness about the ill effects of drugs.

Tehsildars were directed to provide a list of abandoned buildings in their respective jurisdictions which will be patrolled by the Police to check any activity of drug use.

DC said in order to combat this rising societal problem, multi-pronged Rehabilitation, Counseling and Guidance policy is indispensable to be implemented on ground to monitor drug abuse and take remedial measures to curb.

DLSA Organizes Awareness Program on Rights of Third Genders in Sumbal

■ HT News Network



Sumbal, February 8, 2025 - The District Legal Services Authority Bandipora (DLSA), in collaboration with Tehsil Legal Services Authority Sumbal (TLSA) organized an awareness program on the rights of third genders at Skill India Centre Sumbal Sonawari. The event aimed to educate the public about the legal protections and entitlements of transgender individuals, promoting inclusivity and social justice. Panel lawyers associated with TLSA, Advocate Naziya Parveen and Advocate Tasleema Jan, addressed the gathering, highlighting the constitutional and legal rights of third genders in India. They emphasized the significance of the rights of transgender individuals. The event witnessed active participation from community members, legal professionals, and social activists, all of whom expressed their commitment to advocating for the rights of third genders.

DLC approves 444 cases under HADP in Ganderbal

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, FEBRUARY 10: District Development Commissioner (DDC), Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore today chaired a meeting of District Level Committee (DLC) here at DC office to discuss and approve cases received under Holistic Agriculture Development Plan (HADP) in the district. After threadbare discussion on the cases of beneficiaries received, the committee approved all 444 cases of Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry,

Awareness prog on World Unani Day 2025 held at Anantnag

■ HT News Network

Anantnag, February 10: Department of AYUSH, District Anantnag, today organized an awareness programme at the Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag-affiliated hospital in Janglatmandi to commemorate World Unani Day 2025. The event honored the legacy of Hakeem Ajmal Khan, a stalwart of Unani medicine, and underscored the significance of this traditional healing system in contemporary healthcare.

The programme witnessed the participation of esteemed medical professionals, Unani practitioners, and scholars who deliberated on the relevance of Unani medicine in modern times.

In his address, Dr. Ali Mohammad Reshi, District AYUSH Officer Anantnag, highlighted the pivotal role of Unani medicine in holistic healthcare. He spoke about the achievements of the AYUSH department in the district and reiterated the government's com-



mitment to fostering research and integration of Unani practices into mainstream healthcare.

The event's Chief Guest, Dr. Rafi Ahmad Jan from GMC Anantnag, along with other distinguished experts, addressed the gathering, shedding light on the various dimensions of Unani medicine.

They emphasized the need to popularize this ancient system across the district to ensure its benefits reach a wider audience.

A dedicated technical session was also conducted, where experts demonstrated different Unani treatments for managing and preventing diseases. Attendees were educated about the holistic principles of Unani medicine.

PM National Apprenticeship Mela held at Govt. ITI Bandipor

■ HT News Network

Bandipora February 10: The Prime Minister National Apprenticeship Mela was held on Monday at the Government Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Bandipora, drawing participation from over 200 aspiring candidates along with representatives from various local industries and business units.

Vice Chairperson, District Development Council Bandipora Kousar Shafeeq, the chief guest of the event, highlighted the significance of skill development and apprenticeship opportunities for the youth,



equipping them with practical experience across diverse fields. Officials from the District Industries Centre Bandipora, Entrepreneurship Development Institute and Jamkash Vehicle leads Bandipora were also present, sharing valuable insights on the

increasing demand for skilled professionals in the industries. Speaking at the event, Sahil Rashid, Superintendent ITI Bandipora, underscored the crucial role of apprenticeships in addressing the skill gap. He said that the scheme has been launched by the Govt. of India in order to reduce the skill gap among the youth of the country and candidates who will register on the PMNAP portal, will be selected and called by the industry. He stressed that such programs not only enhance youth employability but also build a workforce essential for local industry growth.

BJP Pulwama Celebrates Delhi Victory as Political Leaders Convene in Pampore

■ MUSHTAQ ULISLAM

Pulwama, Feb 10 : The political scene in South Kashmir's Pulwama district was abuzz with activity as BJP leaders and opposition figures held parallel events, reflecting the region's evolving political landscape. BJP Pulwama district president Mohd Lateef Bhat led celebrations following the party's victory in New Delhi, rallying party workers and supporters in a show of strength. The event was marked by enthusiastic



slogans and expressions of confidence in the party's continued growth. Addressing the gathering, Bhat described the win as a "testament to the people's trust in the BJP's policies and governance model."

"This victory reaffirms our commitment to development, good governance, and empowerment at the grassroots level. We will continue working for the welfare of Pulwama's people and ensure that every

section of society benefits from our initiatives," Bhat said. Meanwhile, in Pampore's Kadilbal Clock Tower, a crucial political meeting saw prominent leaders, including Asif Ahmad Ganai, Raj Mohad Wani, Farooq Ahmad, and Zalikfar Ali, deliberate on regional political developments and future strategies. The gathering, attended by senior party functionaries, focused on challenges faced by local leaders, electoral strategies, and the need to strengthen.

HDFC Bank and CERSAI hosted an awareness programme on Central KYC Record Registry

■ HT News Network

Srinagar: HDFC Bank, India's leading private sector banks and the Central Registry of Securitisation Asset Reconstruction and Security Interest (CERSAI), a Government of India company, hosted a one-day awareness programme on Central KYC Record Registry (CKYCR). The objective of this programme was to provide comprehensive insights on Know Your Client (KYC), Anti Money Laundering (AML) and utilisation of KYC data available at CKYCR and process to be followed while using the

CKYCR data thus creating a secure and transparent financial ecosystem and protecting financial institutions from risks of fraud and asset duplication. The programme was attended by over 100 senior officials from private, public and co-operative banks and NBFCs pan-India, including senior officials from Govt. of India, Ministry of Finance, Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Financial Intelligence Unit, CERSAI and HDFC Bank. Mr. Bhavesh Zaveri, Executive Director - HDFC Bank spoke on the growth of CERSAI over the years to become a single point repository of data and customer's KYC documents.

JKEDI hosts workshop on Semiconductor Design Led ESDM

220 students of SMVDU, MIET, GCET, MBS College, SKUAST-K, NIT Sgr participate

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, FEBRUARY 10: Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) hosted a one-day workshop themed "Semiconductor Design Led ESDM: Exploring the world of Semiconductors & AI: J&K" here on Monday.

The workshop served as a crucial platform for industry experts, academicians, and innovators to discuss the future of semiconductor technology in India with an overall objective to propel Jammu & Kashmir into the digital age. The event was a testament to the vision and leadership of Director JKEDI, Rajinder Kumar Sharma,

whose unwavering commitment to entrepreneurship and innovation has positioned the institute as a center for cutting-edge technological discourse.

The workshop featured esteemed speakers, including Dr. M.J. Zarabi, Founder of R&Z Technologies and former CMD of SCL Mohali.

Former Chairman BOG at NIT Srinagar, Dr. Zarabi shared his valuable insights on the semiconductor industry and its growth prospects in India.

Other notable speakers included Prof. (Dr) B. L. Raina, Founder of R&Z Technologies, an eminent academican with experience at UNC (USA), TIFR (India) spoke on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its applications, and



Susheel Jalali, COO of R&Z Technologies, who discussed semiconductor-led AI applications and the benefits of using RISC-V, an open-source instruction set architecture.

With India's semiconductor market projected to reach \$63 billion by 2026, workshops like these play a pivotal

role in fostering research, innovation, and skill development.

Speaking at the event, the Director JKEDI emphasized the significance of semiconductor technology in shaping India's digital future. "At JKEDI, we are committed to nurturing an environment that fosters innovation

and entrepreneurship. The semiconductor industry holds immense potential for our youth, and it is imperative to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to be at the forefront of this technological revolution. This workshop is a step towards building a strong semiconductor ecosystem in Jammu & Kashmir."

The speakers and attendees lauded the Director JKEDI for his proactive approach in promoting entrepreneurship and technological advancement in the region. His leadership has been instrumental in making JKEDI a hub for innovation, aligning with India's broader vision of becoming a global semiconductor powerhouse.

The event saw enthusiastic participation from distinguished guests, industry professionals, academicians, and faculty members. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from 120 Engineering students from various Universities and colleges viz SMVDU-Katra, MIET-Jammu, GCET-Jammu, MBS College-Jammu etc and startups who attended physically, while over 100 participants joined virtually which include students and guests from SKUAST-Kashmir and NIT Srinagar. The workshop concluded with a vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to the esteemed speakers and participants who contributed to the insightful discussions.

DC Kupwara presides over seminar on Beekeeping

HT News Network

KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 10: The Agriculture Department Kupwara today organized a district-level seminar on the "Transformation of Beekeeping" at the Town Hall, Kupwara.

The seminar, aimed at promoting the growth and sustainability of the beekeeping industry, was presided over by the Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan.

The event brought together local farmers, beekeepers, and experts from the agriculture sector to discuss innovative methods, challenges, and opportunities in modern beekeeping.



The seminar also highlighted the importance of beekeeping for boosting agricultural productivity, enhancing biodiversity, and promoting sustainable farming practices in the region.

Speaking at the occasion, Deputy Commissioner emphasized the vital role that beekeeping plays in the district's agricultural ecosystem.

She said that more than 30000 applications have

been received in the district under HADP which signifies the motivation of the youth towards generating their livelihood under the Agriculture sector.

She highlighted different sources of income under Bee Keeping sector which benefits its growers and Agri-entrepreneurs. She emphasized the need for promotion and branding of the honey products made in the Kupwara district which will boost the industry.

The Chief Agriculture Officer and experts from the Agriculture department also highlighted the schemes for promoting the honey industry in the district.

The seminar also provided a platform for experts to share their knowledge on advanced beekeeping techniques, pest management, and honey production processes.

Various stakeholders discussed government schemes and support available to farmers to encourage the growth of this sector. The event witnessed active participation, with several beekeepers sharing their experiences and success stories.

DDC reviews the implementation of Bio Medical Waste Management in the district.

Farooq Rather

Kulgam February 10 District Development Commissioner Kulgam (DDC) Athar Aamir Khan (IAS) today reviewed the implementation of Bio-Medical Waste Management (BMWM) act and handling here in the district.

ADDC Kulgam, CMO, Medical Superintendent District Hospital, District Officer State Pollution Control Board (SPCB),

EO MCKulgam, District Veterinary Officer Sheep / Animal, DHO, Nodal Officer BMW Committee, representative from Lassipora private firm (CBMWTF) all BMO's and various concerned officers attended the meeting.

The DDC highlighted the importance of Bio-Medical



Waste Management for reducing the serious health implications.

He directed the Chief Medical Officer Kulgam, Medical Superintendent District Hospital Kulgam and all BMOs for ensuring proper implementation of the guidelines besides seg-

regation of Bio-medical waste that is collected in the hospital.

He further directed the hospital authorities to maintain a proper daily record of log book of Bio-Medical waste collected by the agency which has been engaged for the said pur-

pose. The members of the Committee were further directed to conduct awareness programs for the health staff to ensure the proper implementation of the Act.

The MS and DO (SPCB) was also directed to speed up monitoring cum inspections of the registered private clinics, pharmaceutical shops, pharmacies.

CMO Kulgam while briefing the chair informed the meeting that around 200 kgs of Bio-Medical waste is being collected on daily basis from entire district including DH Hospital, Sub District Hospital & NTPHCs.

DC while stressing on the strict implementation of the guidelines regarding phasing out of mercury based equipments.

BJP's Delhi win shows rejection of false promises: Sunil Sethi

Says it will have significant implications on national politics, including J&K

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 10: Terming BJP's victory in Delhi elections as "people's rejection of false promises," BJP National Spokesperson Advocate Sunil Sethi on Monday said that shift in mood of people will have significant implications on national politics, including Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a press conference here, Sharma, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "People have proven that false promises do not get their support. You can mislead them for some time, but not for long."

Sethi said that a shift is taking place where voters are backing political par-



ties that fulfill their commitments. Referring to the BJP's track record, Sethi stated that the party had fulfilled over 97% of the promises made in its 2014 manifesto and more than 99% of the commitments in 2019. "The BJP makes promises with a clear roadmap to fulfill them," he said. On Jammu and Kashmir, Sethi alleged that for the past 75 years, political parties in the region,

including the National Conference, PDP, and Congress, had engaged in what he termed "misleading politics." He claimed that these parties made promises they never intended to fulfill. "The people of J&K have now witnessed a change after the abrogation of Article 370. There is a new form of politics where commitments are being honoured," he said.

However, he maintained that some parties were still engaging in "misleading politics." Sethi also accused regional parties of competing in making statements on separatism. "If a statement is given by the PDP, the National Conference tries to make a bigger one. But no one thinks about the general public," he said.

Minister Javed Ahmad Rana advocates opening of Centre for tribal languages Attends national seminar on reciprocal relationship between Urdu, Gojri

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 10: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs Javed Ahmed Rana, today advocated opening of Tribal Languages Centre in Jammu University during a thought provoking seminar that delved into the intriguing reciprocal relationship between Gojri and Urdu languages. The event provided valuable insights on the beautiful exchange of words, phrases and cultural nuances. The proposed Centre would provide a platform for research, documentation and promotion of tribal languages in J&K. The Minister was addressing a mammoth gathering after inaugurating the seminar which was organised by JKAACL and Department of Urdu, Jammu University. The inaugural function was presided over by Professor Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor of University of Jammu while Professor



Shohab Inayat Malik, HOD Urdu, University of Jammu and Dr. Javaid Rahi, Divisional Head JKAACL besides renowned researchers were also present in the presidium.

In his address, the Minister applauded the department of Urdu for organising the seminar on a vital topic. He described Gojri as one of the main languages of J&K being spoken by large chunk of population. Urdu has not only influenced Gojri but also the other languages which are being spoken in J&K, he added. Tracing the history

of Gojri, the Minister also quoted some examples from Mahabarata and Ramyan where Gojri words have been used. While discussing the cultural heritage of Gujjars, the Minister discussed rich cultural heritage of Gujjar culture and informed that Urdu too has been influenced by Gujjar culture, language and civilisation. He further said that since the language is spoken and written by a large number of people of J&K, therefore, Gujjar and Pahari cultural centres need to be established in University of

Jammu for which he offered full support from Tribal department of the Government.

He also advocated constitution of a Research Committee which could make research on the life, culture and language of Gujjars throughout the world.

Professor Umesh Rai announced that interviews for the post of Gojri and Dogri which has been already advertised would be conducted soon. He added that Pahari and Gojri centre would also be made functional shortly by the University of Jammu.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Professor Shohab Inayat Malik, HOD Urdu, highlighted the development of Urdu and Gojri language in the region. He informed that both the languages have close relationship whether it is cultural or social. Urdu has produced good literature having a large number of respectable material.

Minister for Jal Shakti, FE&E and Tribal Affairs reviews progress on development works in Poonch

Asks for expeditious execution, completion of vital projects

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 10: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today directed the district administration, Poonch, to expedite ongoing developmental works, with focus on projects being executed under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

Highlighting that Jal Jeevan Mission is the top priority of Union Government and JK administration, Javed Rana enjoined upon the officers that no lackadaisical approach will be tolerated while



carrying out different works under this prestigious project.

Taking serious notice of delays in execution of certain developmental projects, he instructed

them to work in mission mode so that safe and adequate drinking water is made available to people of the district.

He further instructed the Dep-

uty Commissioner Poonch and sectoral heads to ensure timely completion of ongoing projects while maintaining quality standards. He asked the officers of the Jal Shakti to monitor execution of works in their respective divisions to ensure steady progress.

The Minister further instructed for adopting a proactive approach to resolve all bottlenecks in project execution including land acquisition, procurement, inter-departmental coordination and conducting field inspections to monitor progress, ensuring successful completion of projects.

SHEW, Health Department organise awareness camp on PC&PNDT Act at Shopian

HT News Network

Shopian, February 10: Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women, Shopian, in collaboration with the Department of Health, organized an awareness programme regarding Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PC&PNDT) under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative at SBGM college Arham, Shopian.

The programme aimed to educate participants on the PC&PNDT Act, which plays a crucial role in preventing gender-biased sex selection and ensuring the protection of the girl child.

Dr. Abiroo, guest speaker from the Department of Health, addressed the gathering and provided valuable insights into the PC&PNDT Act, stressing the need for strict enforcement to combat female foeticide and promote gender balance.

District Mission Coordinator, Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women, Shopian, sensitized the audience on the importance of the girl child, highlighting the need for collective efforts to create an environment where girls can thrive and achieve their full potential.

Adding to the discourse, Gender Specialist, Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women Shopian emphasized the significance of gender equality, advocating for a shift in societal attitudes to ensure equal opportunities and rights for all.

The programme concluded with a collective commitment to support the objectives of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, ensuring a brighter and more inclusive future for the girl child. The programme concluded with a collective commitment to support the objectives of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, ensuring a brighter and more inclusive future for the girl child.

Seminar on Punjabi poetry, culture organised at GDC Ramgarh

HT News Network

SAMBA, FEBRUARY 10: Government Degree College (GDC) Ramgarh, in collaboration with the Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages (JKAACL), organized a one-day seminar on Punjabi poetry and culture.

The literary event was hosted under the guidance and supervision of the College Principal Prof. (Dr.) Geetanjali Andotra.

The event began with an insightful introductory lecture by Prof. (Dr.) Snobar, Head of the Department, Punjabi. The seminar was attended by Secretary, JKAACL Harvinder Kaur; Sr. Editor Sheeraza Punjabi (JKAACL) Dr. Sukhwinder Singh; Eminent Punjabi Critic Popinder

Singh Paras; Senior Journalist/writer Jang S. Verman and Dr. Lekh Raj.

Prof. (Dr.) Geetanjali Andotra welcomed the guests and participants to the seminar. The inaugural session highlighted the significance of organizing such seminars to promote the Punjabi language, literature, and culture in particular and other local languages in general. The speakers emphasized the unique sweetness and impact of the Punjabi language and discussed the growth of Punjabi literature in J&K and the importance of sustaining and popularizing it across the region.

In her address, JKAACL Secretary Harvinder Kaur stressed the importance of reviving traditional languages for the



younger generation. "In the future, our aim is to conduct more seminars that will provide opportunities to the youth to showcase their talents," she asserted.

The event included a vibrant poetry recitation session, where writers presented their poetry,

celebrating the rich heritage of Punjabi language and culture. The participants, including college students, also recited poems during the event. Among the notable speakers who shared their poetic works were Dr. Sukhwinder Singh, Jang S. Verman, Dr. Lekh Raj, and Dr.

Snobar. At the end of the programme, a lively cultural program, featuring Gidda and Bhangra, was presented by the students showcasing the vibrant tradition of Punjab.

Convener of the literary club Dr. Snobar conducted the event along with the other members.

The programme was attended by Dr. Aditi Khajuria, Prof. Sandeep Kumari, Ashok Kumar (PTI), Prof. Brham Dutt, Dr. Shivali Pnajoetra, Dr. Neeraj, Priya Sharma, Anjali and Vikas and students of the college.

Popinder Singh Paras Sr., Editor of Sheeraza Punjabi, JKAACL, conducted the proceedings of the event. Prof. (Dr.) Geetanjali Andotra welcomed the guests and participants to the seminar. The inaugural session highlighted the significance of organizing such seminars to promote the Punjabi language, literature, and culture in particular and other local languages in general. The speakers emphasized the unique sweetness and impact of the Punjabi language and discussed the growth of Punjabi literature in

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Felicitation-cum-Awareness Program on Bima Sakhi Scheme held at Doda

HT News Network

DODA, FEBRUARY 10: A felicitation-cum-awareness program on the Bima Sakhi Scheme was held today here under the leadership of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Harvinder Singh.

The program, organized by the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), local Branch, marked the official inauguration of the scheme in the district.

The Bima Sakhi Scheme offers a new opportunity for self-employment and community support, empowering women by integrating them into the insurance sector. Under this initiative, 75 women from District Doda have been appointed as Bima Sakhis, taking on the role of financial facilitators to enhance insurance penetration at the grassroots level.

During the event, the DC alongside Senior Divisional Manager, LIC, gave away appointment letters to the newly induct-



ed Bima Sakhis, encouraging them to utilize this opportunity for economic empowerment and community service.

The DC highlighted the significance of the scheme in promoting financial inclusion and empowering women through sustainable livelihood options. He appre-

ciated LIC for bringing this initiative to Doda and urged the newly appointed Bima Sakhis to work with dedication in spreading awareness about the benefits of insurance. He also urged participants to avail the benefits of the government-sponsored schemes offered by Agriculture, Power

Development Department (PDD), and other departments. He emphasized the vast scope in Krishi Udyami and highlighted the significance of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) in promoting education.

He further stated that as Bima Sakhis, women can access various government schemes to improve their economic well-being. He also encouraged them to take advantage of the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP) for better livelihood opportunities.

Earlier, LIC officials provided a brief history of LIC India's development and highlighted important information regarding the Bima Sakhi Scheme.

The event was attended by Development Officer LIC Jyoti Parkash, the Heads of Government Degree Colleges (GDCs), officers, representatives from LIC and banking institutions, and other distinguished guests.

Training for Hajj Pilgrims of District Ramban scheduled on Feb 13, 2025

HT News Network

RAMBAN, FEBRUARY 10: As per the communication received from the Office of Deputy Commissioner Ramban and in accordance with the program devised by the J&K Hajj Committee, the training on Manasik-e-Hajj for the selected Hajj pilgrims of District Ramban has been scheduled on February 13, 2025.

The training will take place at Jamia Masjid Qadiem, where experts will guide the pilgrims on the travel procedures, and essential arrangements for their sacred journey. All selected pilgrims have been advised to attend the session to ensure a smooth and well-prepared pilgrimage.

District Administration Reasi hosts 8th edition of Pariksha pe Charcha 2025

HT News Network

REASI, FEBRUARY 10: Students from different parts of Reasi district today attended Prime Minister Narendra Modi's unique interactive program, "Pariksha Pe Charcha."

Organized by the District Administration, under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik, the live streaming of PM Modi's interaction was facilitated in the main Auditorium of the DC Office Complex in presence of ADDC Sukhdev Samyal.

Chief Education Officer Deepak Gupta and Principals of Educational and Professional institutions made meticulous arrangements to ensure students comfortably participate in the program.

Around 500 students and staff members from various Government educational and professional institutions attended the virtual program.

The students shared their positive feedback, highlighting the valuable information and tips provided by PM Modi. Tips and messages such as How to deal with stress, Start the habit of writing, Read the question paper beforehand, prepare a strategy, A balanced lifestyle is important, Healthy competition is important, but not jealousy, resonated with the attendees.

Industrial Lubricant Manufacturer fined Rs 1 lakh for misleading Net weight declaration

HT News Network

SAMBA, FEBRUARY 10: The Legal Metrology Unit Samba, on the instructions of Controller Legal Metrology Anuradha Gupta, conducted a comprehensive inspection drive to ascertain the adherence to mandatory labeling details on the industrial products brought from outside Jammu and Kashmir.

During the inspection, a case of misleading net quantity declaration on a pre-packaged lubricant was detected.

Upon further inquiry, it was established that a Haryana-based industrial lubricant manufacturer was supplying critical industrial products without declaring net contents, unit sale prices, and other mandatory labeling details. In some instances, the company mentioned approximate weights, which could not be verified, violating the Legal Metrology Act, 2009, and the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011. Taking strict action, the Legal Metrology Department registered a case and issued a notice to the defaulting company. In response, the company admitted to the violations and applied for departmental compounding, a legal remedy under the Act.

The case was compounded, and a penalty of 1 Lakh was imposed. The company assured immediate compliance with packaging and net content declaration requirements as per legal provisions.

As per the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011, manufacturers, packers, importers, suppliers, and sellers are legally bound to ensure that consumers receive the exact quantity for which they are paying. Mandatory labeling requirements include Exact Net Quantity, Maximum Retail Price (MRP), Unit Sale Price (USP), Manufacturer/Packer/Importer Details, Country of Origin (for imported products) Customer Care Information (name, address, contact number, email, etc.)

MLA Baldev Sharma assesses developmental requirements at GHSS Katra

HT News Network

REASI, FEBRUARY 10: Member Legislative Assembly, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi (SMVD) Constituency Baldev Raj Sharma today visited Government Higher Secondary School Katra to take stock of developmental works sanctioned for the School.

Accompanied by Executive

Engineer, PWD Division Katra Shakti Kumar Raina along with other staff, the MLA resolved the long pending issue regarding the site identification for additional accommodation, including staff residential quarters and two rooms in the school premises. The MLA issued on-spot directions to the concerned department to proceed further in this regard.



It was informed that the staff quarters for the school were sanctioned in the year 2022-23 at an estimated cost of Rs. 74.00 lakh, while construction of two changing rooms and leveling of the school ground were sanctioned in the year 2020-21 at a cost of Rs 20 lakh.

Additionally, the MLA issued directions to stakeholder departments to submit DPR for remov-

ing a big tree on the backside boundary of the school which may damage the school building in future. Moreover, the directions were also issued to submit DPRs for leveling and terracing at the back side of the school and for the construction of the girls toilet block after dismantling the old girls toilet block and cleaning & tiling of existing water tank at the lower most terrace.

3-month long district-wide anti-drugs campaign launched in Jammu

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 10: A massive three month long Information, Education and Communication campaign against drug addiction and abuse was launched across the district today.

Under the overall leadership of District Magistrate Sachin Kumar Vaishya, the campaign commenced with 40 panchayat-level events, marking the first phase of an extensive outreach plan that will continue over the next three months, covering every panchayat in the district.

A variety of activities, including nukkad natak, video testimonies, short films and rallies, are being incorporated to enhance audio-visual engagement with the masses.

The initiative is a collaborative effort involving multiple departments, including Health, Education, Social Welfare and Police, along with other stakeholders, ensuring a holistic approach to awareness and prevention. Additional District Magistrate Ansuya Jamwal, designated as the Nodal Officer, coordinated today's events and will continue overseeing their execution in the upcoming phases. A key highlight of the campaign was the motivational lectures by former addicts, who would be sharing their personal struggles and experiences, warning the public about the devastating impact of drug abuse on both personal and social lives.

With a total of 305 events planned, awareness drives will be held weekly at pre-decided venues, targeting the general public. The campaign aims to engage the public at the grassroots level, fostering dialogue and spreading critical awareness about drug prevention and rehabilitation.

Poonch: District Export Plan reviewed to optimise local potential

HT News Network

POONCH, FEBRUARY 10: Deputy Commissioner Poonch Vikas Kundal on Monday chaired a meeting of the District Export Promotion Committee to discuss modalities to optimise the export potential in the district.

The meeting was attended by the General Manager District Industry Centre, Chief Planning Officer, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, AGMO, Lead District Manager, Assistant Director Handloom and other stakeholders.

The discussions centered on developing the district as an export hub by exploring the global market for local specialty products. The meeting sought to promote the Pecannut under the "One District One Product" (ODOP) initiative.

Additionally, strategy for promotion of other local specialty products such as walnuts, Rajmash and Chikri woodcraft was discussed in detail, including their cultivation areas, annual production, associated farmers, and available e-marketplaces.

The tourism sector's potential to enhance the district's economic landscape was also a significant topic of



discussion. Speaking at the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised establishment of a strategic framework that includes enhancing the quality and quantity of local products, improving market access, and providing necessary support and infrastructure to local exporters. He highlighted the importance of collaboration with e-commerce platforms like Amazon to increase awareness and facilitate registrations for local products.

The meeting concluded with a commitment from all stakeholders to work diligently towards positioning Poonch as a key player in the export landscape, contributing to the overall economic growth and prosperity of the district. The meeting was attended by the General Manager District Industry Centre, Chief Planning Officer, Chief Agriculture Officer,

Chief Horticulture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, AGMO, Lead District Manager, Assistant Director Handloom and other stakeholders.

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The tourism sector's potential to enhance the district's economic landscape was also a significant topic of discussion. Speaking at the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner.

2-day seminar on Scientific Beekeeping commences at Reasi

HT News Network

Jammu, Feb 8: 'Wings Ek Udaan', in collaboration with 'Sunya IAS Institute', has been conferred with the title of "Most Trusted Brand in the Field of Education for Civil Services Exam Preparation" at the prestigious Big Impact Awards. The award was presented by the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir Omar Abdullah at a ceremony held at Radisson Blu, Jammu. The function was attended by a host of dignitaries including a former DIG, several MLAs, prominent industrialists and



entrepreneurs. A communique in this regard stated that the accolade reflects the commitment of 'Wings Ek Udaan' and 'Sunya IAS Institute' for providing top-tier educational services and their consistent efforts in preparing aspirants for civil services

examinations. "We are truly honored to receive this recognition," said Shoaib Farid, Director of Wings Ek Udaan. "This award is a testament to our team's dedication and the trust our students have in us. Our mission remains to make quality education

accessible to all aspirants and to equip them with the skills required to succeed in competitive examinations," he further added.

Over the years, 'Wings Ek Udaan' and 'Sunya IAS Institute' act as the pioneers in Civil Services coaching by incorporating innovative teaching methodologies, structured study materials and result-oriented strategies to meet the evolving demands of aspirants. Pertinently, the Big Impact Awards recognize excellence across various sectors highlighting institutions that demonstrate innovation.

PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana DC Rajouri orders door-to-door campaign to encourage registration

HT News Network

RAJOURI, FEBRUARY 10: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma chaired a meeting at the Conference Hall, DC Office to review the progress made in the promotion and registration for PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana. The scheme aims to promote solar energy adoption and provide affordable electricity to consumers.

During the meeting, the DC directed officials to identify beneficiaries paying electricity bills exceeding 2,000 per month and prioritize them under the scheme after imparting adequate awareness. He



emphasized the need for an intensive door-to-door awareness campaign to educate the public about the benefits of the initiative. To strengthen enforcement, ADCs, ACD, and SDMs were instructed to

increase monitoring in their respective jurisdictions to keep check on power pilferage, theft. Additionally, they were directed to inspect commercial units, including crushers and welding

shops to check compliance with electricity regulations.

The Deputy Commissioner also stressed the installation of smart meters to enhance transparency and efficiency in power consumption. He further instructed JPDCI to assign daily targets to JEs for registering beneficiaries and mandated their on-boarding to expedite the registration process.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Rajouri, Dr. Raj Kumar Thapa, ACR Mohammad Jahangir Khan, CPO Maqsood Ahmed, SE PDD, Ex En PDD Abdul Rasheed and other district and sectoral officers.

FM focussed only on income tax and Delhi elections in Budget, says Chidambaram in RS

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10 (UNI)

Senior Congress leader and former Finance Minister P Chidambaram on Monday slammed Union Budget 2025-26 and said that Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman while presenting the Budget focussed only on income tax and Delhi elections while offering little to boost consumption in the economy.

Participating in general discussion on the Budget in Rajya Sabha, Chidambaram welcomed the government's move to provide income tax relief to the middle class but also pointed out that the tax concessions have also been given to those having annual income in crores.

"Income tax cut is the Finance Minister's main thrust in the Budget. The House should know that only 3.2 crore persons pay income tax. My rough calculation is about 80-85 lakh taxpayers will go out of the tax net from next year and 2.5 crore will benefit. The 2.5 crore (taxpayers) not only includes Middle class which the FM passionately champions, it includes 2,27,315 persons who returned the total income of more than 1 crore (as per latest income



tax data)," he said.

The former Minister further said, "It includes 262 persons who returned a total income of more than 100 crore and it includes 23 persons who returned a total income of more than Rs 500 crore."

"So, this is not benefitting the middle class alone, which I welcome, but is benefitting very rich and the richest in the world," Chidambaram said in his pointed attack.

The senior Congress leader said that the Finance Minister had claimed that she has foregone Rs 1 lakh crore yet she claimed that the net tax revenue to the Centre will grow by 11.1% in 2025-26.

"After foregoing Rs 1 lakh crore in this Budget how would she claim that the net tax revenue to the Centre would grow by the same 11% (as in 2024-

25). This is pure magic, not mathematics. I will reserve (my comment on) how this magic unfolds and I will comment on it later," Chidambaram said. He claimed that the tax relief provided in the Budget would not be sufficient to boost the economy as it accounted for a fraction of the total size of India's GDP (gross domestic product).

"The Finance Minister says that Rs 1 lakh crore will go into consumption and that consumption will boost economy. I find, initially, a lot of cheerleaders accepted that claim, but in the last 2-3 days even the finance minister's cheerleaders are becoming skeptical about that," he said.

"I ask the Finance Minister. Will not part of Rs 1 lakh will go into savings. SBI (State Bank of India) Chairman has hoped that

part of it will come to him and the banking system. Will not the part of Rs 1 lakh crore go into repaying old household debts? Will not the part of Rs 1 lakh crore go into travel abroad? Will it not go for educating children abroad and will it not go into consuming imported goods? If you deduct all this, how does the Hon'ble Finance Minister claim that the entire Rs 1 lakh crore will go into consuming domestic goods and services. It's only consumption of domestic goods and services will boost the GDP rate," Chidambaram said.

"Besides, what is Rs 1 lakh crore when compared to the size of the GDP. The size of the GDP this year is Rs 324 lakh crore. Rs 1 lakh crore of Rs 324 lakh crore is 0.3%. Are you seriously saying and are you asking this House to believe that 0.3% will boost the economy?" he said while launching sharp attack on the Finance Minister.

"My humble advice to the Finance Minister is don't rely on only one engine of growth -- consumption. Look at other engines of growth like exports, capital investment. Those are the engines which must be revved up," Chidambaram said.

Look forward to meeting my friend President Trump: PM Modi as he leaves for US, France

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10 (UNI)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he looks forward to meeting "my friend, President Trump" during his visit to the US, and has very warm recollections of working together in Trump's first term. He also said he looks forward to co-chairing the AI Action Summit along with President Emmanuel Macron during his France visit. In his departure statement on Monday, as he left for France and the US, the PM said his US visit will be an opportunity to build upon the successes of their collaboration during President Trump's first term and develop an agenda to further elevate and deepen the bilateral partnership, including in the areas of technology, trade, defence, energy, and supply chain resilience.

The statement reads: "At the invitation of President Macron, I will be visiting France from 10 to 12 February. In Paris, I look forward to co-chairing the AI Action Summit, a gathering of the world leaders and global tech CEOs, where we will exchange views on collaborative approach to AI technology for innovation



and larger public good in an inclusive, secure and trustworthy manner.

"The bilateral segment of my visit will provide an opportunity to review the progress on 2047 Horizon Roadmap for India-France strategic partnership along with my friend President Macron.

"We will also travel to the historic French city of Marseille to inaugurate the first Indian Consulate in France and also visit the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor project, in which India is a member of the consortium of partner countries including France, to harness energy for the global good. I will also pay tribute to the Indian soldiers who laid down their lives during World Wars I and II at the Mazargues War Cemetery.

"From France, I will proceed on a two day visit to the United States

at the invitation of President Donald Trump. I look forward to meeting my friend, President Trump. Although this will be our first meeting following his historic electoral victory and inauguration in January, I have a very warm recollection of working together in his first term in building a Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership between India and the US.

"This visit will be an opportunity to build upon the successes of our collaboration in his first term and develop an agenda to further elevate and deepen our partnership, including in the areas of technology, trade, defence, energy, and supply chain resilience. We will work together for the mutual benefit of the people of our two countries and shape a better future for the world."

In a post on X, the PM

said:

"Over the next few days, I will be in France and USA to take part in various programmes.

"In France, I will be taking part in the AI Action Summit, where India is the co-chair. I will be holding talks with President @EmmanuelMacron towards strengthening India-France relations. We will also be going to Marseille to inaugurate a Consulate there.

"In Washington DC, I look forward to meeting @POTUS @realDonaldTrump. This visit will further cement India-USA friendship and boost ties in diverse sectors. I warmly recall working with President Trump during his first term and I am sure our talks will build on the ground covered then."

The MEA spokesperson said in a post on X:

"Further deepening India-France Strategic Partnership.

"PM @narendramodi emplanes for Paris, France to co-chair the AI Action Summit along with President @EmmanuelMacron of France.

"PM will also hold talks with President Macron and jointly undertake several bilateral engagements."

Oppn in Lok Sabha slams govt for ignoring common man's interests in budget

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10 (UNI)

The Opposition on Monday criticised the Union Budget 2025-26 for ignoring the interests of the common man and said that on one hand the government is not making any provision to control inflation and unemployment and on the other hand it has cut the budget of public welfare schemes.

Participating in the discussion, DMK member Dayanidhi Maran said that the needs of the common man have not been kept in mind in the budget.

He said that this budget has failed to solve the real problem of Indians. Nothing has been said about controlling unemployment and inflation in the country. Maran said that the government is deliberately turning its back on reality. The DMK member said that the rupee has



slipped down to a historically low against the dollar.

Maran said that before the Delhi Assembly election, populist announcements were made in the budget but the Election Commission remained silent.

Congress member Manish Tiwari said that demonetisation was an achievement since the last ten years under the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) tenure. Some of the goals that were set in demonetisation have not been achieved, but the economy has deteriorated. He said that every

economist had said the same thing that instead of giving money to the capitalists, give money to the common people of the country, but this was not done. Due to this, the country's economy was stuck for five years.

Tiwari said that there is a severe crisis in the agricultural sector, but the government is not providing the correct data. He said that in 2014, the unemployment rate was 5.44 percent, which has now increased to around 8 percent.

BJP MP Anurag Thakur said that this is not just an

annual budget but a resolution for a developed India.

"As soon as we talk about a developed India, the opposition starts feeling uncomfortable," he said.

Thakur said that the loot and corruption that was going on in Delhi has been shown the way out by the people of Delhi.

He said that we have not just one but many schemes to build a developed India.

"For us, the nation is our priority, not family. The opposition sees the middle class as taxpayers, which is why they are troubled with the tax relief given to them. The country's GST collection is reaching record levels, benefiting the states. The Modi government has lifted 25 crore people out of poverty, which is being discussed worldwide," he said. TDP's Lavu Sri Krishna said that the

country currently has the lowest NPA. He thanked the Finance Minister for making an income of Rs 12 lakh tax-free for the middle class. He said that the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme has greatly benefited the manufacturing sector in the country.

NCP's Supriya Sule said that India's GDP growth rate is declining, dropping from 8.2 percent to 6.4 percent. The value of the rupee is continuously declining, while the British Pound, Euro, and Singapore Dollar are strengthening.

She said that India's young and talented people are leaving the country. The trade deficit is at billions of dollars. In the name of maintaining fiscal health, the government has cut funding for health, education, and its ambitious Jal Jeevan Mission.

Karnataka HC questions Waqf Board's authority on marriage, divorce certificates

AGENCIES
BENGALURU, FEB 10 (UNI)

The Karnataka High Court on Monday raised doubts over the authority of the State Board of Waqf to issue marriage and divorce certificates to Muslim couples, questioning whether such powers were vested under the Waqf Act.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice MI Arun, while hearing a petition challenging a government order (GO) authorising the Waqf Board to issue marriage certificates, observed that the Board appeared to have no statutory authority for such actions.

"The Waqf (Board) is granting marriage and divorce certificates also? We will not grant much time for a reply, as this is a very important matter.

You apparently have no authority under the Waqf Act," the Bench remarked.

The High Court had, in November last year, stayed the GO dated August 30, 2023, issued by the Under Secretary of the Minority, Waqf, and Haj Department. The order had permitted district Waqf Boards across Karnataka to issue marriage certificates, a move that was later challenged through a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by one Alam Pasha.

The petitioner contended that earlier, Kazis, who solemnise Muslim marriages, were authorised under the Kazi Act, 1988, to issue marriage certificates. However, the Act was repealed in 2013, and subsequently, the state government issued the GO permitting the Waqf Board to handle such certifications.

The PIL argued that the Waqf Act, 1995, primarily deals with the management of movable and immovable properties related to Waqf institutions and does not contain any provision allowing the Board to issue marriage or divorce certificates.

During a previous hearing in November 2024, the government had submitted that the GO was necessitated due to difficulties faced by Muslim couples travelling abroad in obtaining marriage certificates. However, the High Court had stayed the order, pending further deliberation.

On Monday, the Bench was informed that the state's arguing counsel was unavailable, prompting the adjournment of the case. The matter has now been listed for hearing on February 19.

Rajnath pushes for global defence ties beyond buyer-seller deals

AGENCIES
BENGALURU, FEB 10 (UNI)

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday urged the global defence community to move beyond transactional buyer-seller relationships and embrace deeper industrial collaborations in research, development, and production.

"Often, we interact as buyers and sellers, where our relationships remain at a transactional level. However, we must elevate our partnerships beyond mere buyer-seller engagements to the level of industrial collaboration. We should focus on

research and development as well as production collaborations. We already have many successful examples of co-production and co-development with like-minded nations," he said.

Addressing the inaugural session of Aero India 2025, the minister underscored India's commitment to becoming a global hub for defence manufacturing and technological advancement.

Rajnath highlighted the event's theme, "The Runway to a Billion Opportunities", as a reflection of India's vast potential in the aerospace and defence sectors. He

welcomed international delegations, stressing that India's defence industrial sector is now among the top five globally, playing a pivotal role in economic growth.

"Security, stability, and peace are shared constructs that transcend national borders," he stated, reiterating India's vision of 'One Earth, One Family, One Future.' He called for increased co-production and co-development initiatives with friendly nations, citing existing successful collaborations as models for the future.



The biennial Aero India exhibition, which brings together government officials, defence industry leaders, startups,

and Air Force officers from across the world, serves as a major platform to showcase India's growing self-reliance in

defence manufacturing. Rajnath noted that the event not only demonstrates India's industrial capabilities but also strengthens strategic partnerships globally.

With a strong push for indigenous defence production under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative, India is looking to expand its global footprint in the defence sector. As Aero India 2025 unfolds, all eyes are on new deals and collaborations that could shape the future of India's defence industry.

Rajnath likened Aero India 2025 to the Maha

Kumbh Mela, stating that the biennial aerospace and defence exhibition reflects the strength and resilience of Indian soil in a world marked by uncertainties.

Rajnath said, "Aero India is not just an exhibition but a testament to India's growing prowess in defence and aerospace. Just as the Maha Kumbh Mela brings together millions in spiritual unity, this event unites global defence and aerospace stakeholders on Indian soil."

The 15th edition of the premier air show, featuring leading global defence firms, aerospace compa-

nies, and military delegations, is expected to witness major announcements and partnerships aimed at bolstering India's self-reliance in the sector.

The event comes at a time when India is accelerating indigenous defence production under the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative, with a focus on enhancing exports and reducing dependency on imports.

Rajnath reiterated the government's commitment to strengthening the armed forces with advanced indigenous technology and fostering strategic collaborations with global partners.

Timely Action by Doctors at PHC Boniyar Successfully Managed Critical Cardiac Emergency

HT NEWS NETWORK BONYAR

With timely thrombolysis and referral during night around 9 pm, Doctors at PHC Boniyar Successfully managed Critical Cardiac Emergency.

A 55-year-old male patient, from Boniyar with no known comorbidities, reported to PHC Boniyar at 09:00 PM with complaints of chest discomfort for six hours, radiating to the left arm, along with diaphoresis. The doctor on duty, Dr. Aqib Hamid, quickly evaluated the patient and conducted necessary investigations as per protocol. The ECG confirmed Anterior Wall Myocardial Infarction (AWMI), and the Troponin test was positive. Realizing the urgency, Dr. Aqib



Hameed and his team immediately contacted BMO Boniyar, Dr. Ruqiya Shokat, for further guidance. Following her directions, the patient was loaded with Dual Antiplatelet Therapy (DAPT) and thrombolysed using Inj. Tenecteplase, a critical life-saving drug costing over 40,000. Meanwhile, Team 108 was placed on high alert, and an ambulance was kept ready for immediate referral. Under

direct supervision, the patient was successfully managed and referred to SKIMS Srinagar for Primary Coronary Intervention (PCI). At SKIMS, one stent was placed, and the patient is currently stable and doing well under observation in the Cardiology Department SKIMS. BMO Boniyar, Dr. Ruqiya Shokat, appreciated the entire Boniyar team, including 108 staff, for their efficient management of this case at the PHC level during late hours. She also extended her gratitude to Director Health Services Kashmir and CMO Baramulla for their continuous support in providing Inj. Tenecteplase at the PHC level, enabling timely interventions in critical cardiac cases.

Lumpy skin disease: CDSCO grants license to India's 1st vaccine for cattle, buffalo

AGENCIES NEW DELHI

The Central Drug Standards Control Organization (CDSCO) has granted license to Biolumpivaxin -- the country's first vaccine against lumpy skin disease (LSD) in dairy cattle and buffaloes, Bharat Biotech group company Biovet said on Monday.

The novel indigenous live-attenuated marker vaccine was developed using the LSD virus/Ranchi/2019 vaccine strain from Indian Council of Agriculture Research-National Research Centre on Equines (ICAR-NRCE), Hissar.

The technology was commercialised to at least four vaccine manufacturers, including Bengaluru-based Biovet, in 2022. "Biolumpivaxin is India's first LSD vaccine. It is also the world's safest and first-ever Differentiating Infected from Vaccinated Animals (DIVA)



marker vaccine," said Biovet, an innovative animal health vaccine producer based in Mallur, Karnataka, in a statement.

The vaccine, slated for launch soon, offers a high safety and efficacy profile while enabling serological differentiation between naturally infected and vaccinated animals with the DIVA concept in it. The quality, safety, and efficacy of the vaccine have been extensively tested at ICAR-NRCE and the Indian Veterinary Research Insti-

tute (IVRI), ensuring it meets the highest global standards.

"This DIVA marker vaccine is a game-changer for veterinary medicine for disease surveillance and eradication programmes. Epidemiologists and field workers can now distinguish if an animal received Biolumpivaxin or was previously infected with LSD," said Dr. Krishna Ella, Founder of Biovet, in the statement.

"The CDSCO licensure for this vaccine is a signif-

icant step toward India's self-reliance (Atmanirbhar Bharat) in veterinary healthcare, which avoids dependency on imported vaccines. As India moves towards a disease-free livestock population, this path-breaking vaccine will play a crucial role in ensuring the dairy industry's sustainability," Dr. Ella added.

The company noted that "Biolumpivaxin will very soon be commercially available. The Biovet Mallur facility can produce 500 million doses of Biolumpivaxin annually".

LSD is a transboundary animal disease that has gained significant attention in India due to its severe impact on cattle health and the dairy industry. The disease is characterised by the development of skin nodules across the body, fever, swollen lymph nodes, decreased milk yield, and difficulty in movement.

PMKSY cold chain scheme cuts wastages in vegetables, dairy, fisheries

AGENCIES NEW DELHI

The Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure Scheme of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries has resulted in a significant reduction in wastages in vegetables, dairy and fisheries sectors, apart from some benefits in other sectors as well, according to a NABARD study.

The Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) has been implementing Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY) since 2016-17 to create post-harvest infrastructure and processing facilities to boost the overall development of the food processing sector including reduction in post-harvest losses, according to information tabled in the Rajya Sabha by Minister of State, Ravneet Singh.

The component



schemes under PMKSY provide credit linked financial assistance (capital subsidy) in the form of grants-in-aid to entrepreneurs for setting up of food processing/preservation infrastructure which, inter-alia, includes cold storages and refrigerated vehicles to minimize post-harvest losses.

PMKSY was envisaged as a comprehensive package which will result in creation of modern infrastructure with efficient supply chain management from farm gate to retail outlet.

It aims to not only provide a big boost to the

growth of food processing sector in the country but also improve the capacity of food processing units which help in providing better returns to farmers and creating employment opportunities especially in the rural areas, reducing wastage of agricultural produce, increasing the processing level and enhancing the export of processed foods.

Apart from MoFPI, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has also launched the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) Scheme in July 2020 under the Atmanirbhar Bharat package in order

to improve post-harvest infrastructure and create community farming assets. The AIF Scheme facilitates sanction of medium to long term loans by Banks and other lending institutions for the setting up of cold storage facilities, warehouses and processing units, aimed at reducing crop wastage and enhancing value addition, the minister said.

Besides, the Food Corporation of India is implementing an action plan for construction of steel silos on PPP (public private partnership) mode to upgrade and modernise storage facilities in the country. Under this plan, Silos with capacity of 24.25 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) at various locations throughout the country are under implementation. Out of which, silos with a capacity of 17.75 LMT have been completed and remaining 6.5 LMT are under various stages of development.

Lymphatic Filariasis: Centre rolls out mass drug administration campaign in 13 endemic states

AGENCIES NEW DELHI

Reiterating its commitment to eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis by 2027, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare J P Nadda on Monday launched the annual nationwide Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign in 13 identified endemic States.

The MDA campaign will cover 111 endemic districts across 13 states -- Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.

Beginning today, the filaria prevention medications will be administered door-to-door and "free of cost to over 17.5 crore population across 111



endemic districts," Nadda said while launching the campaign via a video conference.

LF, commonly known as "Hathi Paon", is a parasitic disease transmitted by infected mosquitoes. It can lead to physical disabilities such as lymphoedema (swelling of the limbs) and hydrocele (scrotal swelling) and impose long-term burdens on affected individuals and families.

"An LF-free India is our commitment, and achieving this goal requires the

participation of every citizen and with active community involvement. With a shared sense of responsibility, we can eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis, ensuring protection for crores," said Nadda.

Led by the National Center for Vector Borne Diseases Control (NCVBDC) under the Ministry of Health, the MDA campaign involves medication regimens: double Drug Regimen (DA): Diethylcarbamazine Citrate (DEC) and Albendazole;

and triple Drug Regimen (IDA): Ivermectin, Diethylcarbamazine Citrate (DEC), and Albendazole.

The medicines work to reduce the spread of LF by eliminating the microscopic filarial parasites present in the bloodstream of infected individuals, thus preventing further transmission by mosquitoes.

The Union Health minister urged residents living in these areas "to consume the medicines, protecting themselves and their families from this debilitating disease".

"The endemic districts must ensure that over 90 per cent of the eligible population consume anti-filaria medicines. Our collective commitment and determination will help transform lives and ensure a future free from Lymphatic Filariasis," Nadda said.

POSHAN Abhiyaan, FSSAI's Eat Right School educating children on healthy choices: Experts

AGENCIES NEW DELHI

Amid concerns about unhealthy food habits and the consequent rise in diseases like diabetes and hypertension in India, public health experts on Monday said that the government's POSHAN Abhiyaan and FSSAI's Eat Right School initiative is educating children about the importance of balanced diets and sustainable eating practices.

Increasing consumption of ultra-processed foods (UPF) -- rich in sugar, salt, and unsaturated fats and nutrient deficient has become a major health concern in India.

According to the recently released Economic Survey 2024-25, it is leading to multiple chronic conditions and even mental health issues



in India.

The experts stressed that parents, schools, and the community play a larger role in educating children about healthy eating. This will not only help build a generation with better health but also reduce economic burden and increase productivity. "India's POSHAN Abhiyaan provides a structured approach on the role school, parents and communities can play, to help children develop healthy practices," Dr.

Anuja Agarwala, former nutritionist at AIIMS, New Delhi, and currently the Vice President of Indian Diabetic Association.

"Programmes like FSSAI's Eat Right School initiative teach students the importance of balanced diets and sustainable eating practices through interactive sessions and activities. The programme also encourages parental and school collaboration to instil healthy eating habits through interactive work-

shops and resources," she added. Launched in March 2018, POSHAN Abhiyan (Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme For Holistic Nourishment) is the government's flagship initiative which focuses on advancing nutritional outcomes for children under six years, adolescent girls, pregnant women, and lactating mothers holistically.

Eat Right School was launched by FSSAI to create awareness about food safety, nutrition, and hygiene among school children and through them among the community at large.

Agarwala called parent-school collaboration the key to sustaining nutrition education. This can include involving parents in food education by organising nutrition awareness workshops and cooking demonstrations.

Clot-busting meds can boost stroke patients' recovery by over 50 pc: Study

AGENCIES NEW DELHI

A team of Chinese researchers has found that clot-dissolving medication - alteplase - can be key to improving stroke patients' recovery by more than 50 per cent.

The team from Zhejiang University, presenting the research at the American Stroke Association's recent International Stroke Conference 2025, held in Los Angeles, US, reported that the medicine is effective when given up to 24 hours after the beginning of an ischemic stroke.

The golden hour for patients with stroke, which occurs when poor blood flow to a part of the brain causes cell death, is the first 60 minutes after symptoms begin, during which treatment is most effective. Till now the known window for effective treatment was up to 4.5 hours for some patients.



The study results show promise to patients suffering from stroke worldwide, who may not be able to access clot-dissolving medications within the time period, said Min Lou, Professor at the Second Affiliated Hospital of Zhejiang University's School of Medi-

cine in China. Their study was based on 372 stroke patients whose symptoms began 4.5 hours to 24 hours earlier. The participants were randomly split into two groups. While one group received the clot-busting medication alteplase, others were

prescribed standard stroke care of antiplatelet therapy.

About 40 per cent of participants treated with alteplase showed little to no disability after 90 days. Conversely, only 26 per cent of those who received standard care had no disability. The findings show a 54 per cent higher chance of functional recovery with alteplase.

However, the risk of brain bleeding was higher among those who received alteplase than among participants who did not (3.8 per cent vs. 0.5 per cent), but researchers believe this is a manageable risk.

Calling for more research, Lou explained, that the findings must be applied to other groups of people, especially in areas with different stroke risks and health care resources to understand the efficacy and safety of alteplase and other such medicines.

Shastri, Ponting weigh in on Pakistan's chances at Champions Trophy

AGENCIES

SYDNEY, FEB 10 (UND)

Cricketing greats Ravi Shastri and Ricky Ponting have shared their opinions on Pakistan's prospects at the upcoming ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025, with both saying they could have a big impact.

With Pakistan set to co-host a senior ICC event for the first time since the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in 1996, the stakes are higher than ever for the nation. Shastri, the former India head coach, has acknowledged the immense pressure that comes with playing at home, particularly in sub-continent conditions.

Despite this, Shastri believes Pakistan possesses the depth and potential to thrive on familiar turf.

"There's always pressure when you play at home in the sub-continent - whether it's India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, or Pakistan - the expectations are massive," Shastri remarked, when speaking with host Sanjana Ganesan on the latest episode of The ICC Review.

"But I think Pakistan are the kind of side that, with the exposure they've had in the last six to eight months in white-ball cricket, have put up some really strong performances, especially in South Africa."

Shastri also touched on the absence of talented young opener Saim Ayub, who is currently sidelined due to an ankle injury.



"They've missed Ayub at the top, and he's a crucial player," Shastri noted.

"But Pakistan have enough depth to be dangerous, especially in home conditions. I would say they should qualify for the semi-finals and from there, it's anyone's game," he said.

Shastri remains confident that, if they make it through to the knockout stages, Pakistan could pose a serious threat to any team.

"Pakistan are still very, very dangerous, and if they qualify, they'll be doubly more dangerous," he added.

Ponting echoed Shastri's sentiment while focusing on Pakistan's pace attack and the form of former skipper Babar Azam.

According to Ponting, Pakistan's fast bowling unit could prove to be a game-changer at the tour-

nament.

"I agree with Ravi. Saim Ayub is a high-quality player, and his absence is a massive gap to fill," Ponting told The ICC Review.

"But Pakistan's fast bowling brigade is very, very good. Led by Shaheen Afridi and Naseem Shah, who've been terrific in recent series, they have the pace and skill to trouble any batting lineup," he said.

Ponting also highlighted the importance of Babar and Mohammad Rizwan in anchoring Pakistan's batting.

"Babar has been a bit up and down in recent years, but if he and Rizwan can bring their A-games, that's when Pakistan becomes incredibly dangerous," he said.

The former Australian captain also acknowledged the added dimension that playing in front of a home crowd can

bring. "The pressure of playing at home can work both ways. It can be a real motivator, especially with the home crowd behind you. That support can sometimes help you cross the line in big moments," Ponting said.

Ponting emphasised that if Pakistan's key players perform to their potential, they'll be a force to be reckoned with.

"They've still got enough high-quality players to beat any team on any given day," he said. "If they play well, they'll be right in it."

Pakistan squad: Mohammad Rizwan (c), Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman, Kamran Ghulam, Saud Shakeel, Tayyab Tahir, Faheem Ashraf, Khushdil Shah, Salman Ali Agha, Usman Khan, Abrar Ahmed, Haris Rauf, Mohammad Hasnain, Naseem Shah, Shaheen Afridi.

Barcelona wins in Sevilla to close gap on Real

AGENCIES

MADRID, FEB 10 (UND)

FC Barcelona took advantage of the 1-1 draw between Real and Atletico Madrid on Saturday night to cut Real Madrid's lead at the top of the table to two points and move a point behind Atletico after a 4-1 win away to Sevilla on Sunday.

Robert Lewandowski, Fermin Lopez, Raphinha and Eric Garcia all scored, and although Barca also had to play for half an hour with 10 men after Lopez was sent off, Los Cules was able to control the rhythm of the game with relative ease. Lewandowski put Barca ahead with a clever finish after Inigo Martinez's header in the sixth minute, but the lead lasted just a minute before Ruben Vargas leveled with a simple finish



after Saul Niguez broke Barca's offside trap.

Niguez was then booked for a bad challenge on Barca defender Ronald Araujo, who had to leave the game with an ankle injury. Lopez replaced Gavi at half-time and put Barca back in front after less than a minute with his header from Pedri's ball into the penalty area.

Sevilla had the ball in the Barca goal almost immediately afterwards,

but this time it was ruled out for offside and Raphinha continued his excellent season with a low shot to score Barca's third. Lopez was then dismissed for a rash high challenge on Djibril Sow, leaving the Catalans the job of protecting their lead with a man fewer.

Garcia and Dani Olmo came on to help Barca control the game in the closing minutes, with Garcia nodding in Barca's fourth in the clos-

ing minutes. Elsewhere in Spain, Brais Mendez scored an 83rd-minute winner as Real Sociedad beat Espanyol 2-1 to keep its chances of qualifying for Europe alive.

Sheraldo Becker had put the side from San Sebastian ahead in the first minute, but Javi Puado's penalty in the 52nd minute leveled the score after the striker had been fouled. Espanyol then defended well and looked as if it could hold on for a vital point until Mendez's finish after the ball had been flicked on at the near post.

Elsewhere, Alaves slipped ever-deeper into trouble as it lost 1-0 at home to Getafe, and Valencia recovered from its 5-0 defeat at home to Barcelona in the Copa del Rey on Thursday, with a vital 2-0 win at home to Leganes.

China claims freestyle skiing mixed team aerials gold at Asian Winter Games

AGENCIES

HARBIN, FEB 10 (UND)

China dominated the freestyle skiing mixed team aerials at the 2025 Asian Winter Games on Monday, securing gold with 305.64 points. Kazakhstan claimed silver with 235.39, while Japan took bronze with 191.28.

The event, making its Asian Winter Games debut, featured three teams in a single-round



final. China fielded a star-studded lineup, including Olympic champions Xu Mengtao and Qi Guangpu

alongside Li Xinpeng, who had clinched the men's individual gold on Sunday. All three Chinese ath-

letes delivered steady performances without major errors to secure a commanding win over second-placed Kazakhstan.

"Having teammates by my side made me feel more relaxed compared to yesterday's individual event," said Xu, who collected her second gold of the Games. The veteran now has her sights set on Tuesday's women's aerials synchro event, where she will fight for a third title.

Ireland beat Zimbabwe by 63 runs in one-off Test

AGENCIES

BULAWAYO, FEB 10 (UND)

Ireland clinched a 63-run victory on a tense final day in the one-off Test against Zimbabwe here as Matthew Humphreys' seven-wicket match haul proved crucial.

Zimbabwe started day five requiring 109 runs for victory as they chased 292 but left-arm spinner Humphreys dismissed Newman Nyamhuri for the addition of only five runs.

Crucially Humphreys then bowled Wesley Madhevere for 84 in a massive



blow to the hosts' hopes of chasing down the Ireland tally, the BBC reported.

That left Zimbabwe still requiring 73 runs for victory but they only added 10 more before Andy

McBrine's dismissal of Richard Ngarava secured a third straight Test win for Ireland.

Humphreys' outstanding second-innings figures of 6-57 was his Test best

for Ireland.

The Irish defeated Zimbabwe in Belfast last July, which came four months after their first Test triumph over Afghanistan in Abu Dhabi in what was their eighth game in the format.

Ireland's latest victory looked unlikely on day one as they slumped to 31-5 but McBrine's unbeaten 90 and 78 from Mark Adair helped the tourists regroup and they largely controlled the remainder of the contest.

Brief Score: Ireland 260 & 298 Zimbabwe 267 & 228

South Africa batter Breetzke creates history on ODI debut

AGENCIES

LAHORE, FEB 10 (UND)

Matthew Breetzke became the first batter to score 150 runs on men's ODI debut in the tri-series match against New Zealand here on Monday

One of the four debutants for South Africa in their first match of the tri-nation series, Breetzke was excellent in crafting a beautiful innings that helped South Africa post a competitive total.

The 26-year-old opened the batting with skipper Temba Bavuma and made a rather cautious start as



he assessed the conditions, scoring his first boundary off an imperious drive.

He brought up his half-century off 68 balls and

stitched a fine partnership with Jason Smith (41), rotating the strike and ensuring that the scoreboard kept ticking.

The young opener

brought up his ton with a fine boundary behind point and soon accelerated after the landmark. He was eventually dismissed for 150 but not before becoming the first batter to score 150 runs on men's ODI debut, going past Desmond Haynes' record of 148, which was set in 1978,

an ICC report said. Breetzke's 148-ball knock consisted of 11 fours and five sixes.

After Breetzke's dismissal, a solid 60-ball 64 from Wiaan Mulder, pushed South Africa past the 300-run mark.

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