



JK BUDGET 2025-26

12 Day Long J&K's Budget Session 2025-26 to Start from March 3rd

HT NEWS NETWORK

Srinagar, Feb: After a gap of seven years, Jammu & Kashmir's annual budget will be presented in the Legislative Assembly on March 7. According to the tentative calendar issued by the Legislative Assembly secretariat, the budget for the Union Territory for 2025-26 will be presented in the Assembly on March 7 during the session commencing from March 3 and culminating on April 11.

The annual financial statement of expenditure for 2025-26 and the supplementary statement of expenditure for 2024-25 will be presented in the House on March 7. This will be the first time in seven years that the budget of J&K will be presented in the Assembly. Following the imposition

of central rule, the budget for successive financial years was presented in the Parliament.

The budget session will have a total of 22 sittings. According to the calendar, the session will commence on March 3 with the LG's address to the House. There will be discussions on the LG's address on March 4, 5, and 6, concluding with the Chief Minister's reply on March 6.

As per the calendar, there will be general discussions on the budget on March 8, 10, and 11. The Finance Minister, who is also the Chief Minister, will conclude the general discussion on the budget on March 11 with his reply. According to the timetable worked out by the LA secretariat, demands for grants will be discussed on March 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, and 24. After the demands for grants,



the budget will be approved on March 25, with the passage of Appropriation Bills. The Legislative Assembly will

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

CM Omar Abdullah holds pre-budget consultation with public representatives from Rajouri, Poonch

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 14: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, as part of his ongoing pre-budget consultations, held deliberations today with public representatives from Poonch and Rajouri districts at the Civil Secretariat. The discussions were attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary and Minister Javed Ahmad Rana, who represented their respective assembly constituencies. Chairpersons of District Development Councils and Members of the Legislative Assembly from the twin districts of Rajouri and Poonch who participated, both in person and through virtual mode. Addressing the participants, the Chief Minister reiterated that the purpose of these consultations was to gain firsthand insight into the priorities and aspirations of the people through

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

NEWS BRIEF

3 IAS officers get one year extension in J&K

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 14: JAMMU, Feb 13: Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) today extended deputation of three IAS officers to Jammu and Kashmir by one year. Jammu travel guide They are Athar Aamir, Bashir Ahmed and Akshay Labroo. One year extension in tenure of these three officers in Jammu and Kashmir had been sought by the UT Government. The extension has been granted in relaxation of rules, official sources told the Excelsior. The DoPT is headed by Union MoS in PMO Dr Jitendra Singh.

Police attach property worth lacs under UAPA in Sopore

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 14: In a significant operation, Police in Sopore on Friday said to have attached a single-storied house along with a single-storied poultry farm and two kanals of land under Survey No. 529/1 in the estate of Rakhi Sultanpora Sumbal.

"This action, taken under Section 25 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) of 1967, is linked to Case FIR No. 307/2023 of Police Station Sopore. The attachment was carried out in the presence of a duly constituted police team and the Executive Magistrate, ensuring strict compliance with all legal procedures," a police spokesman said in a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer

Sajad Lone Urges Govt to Intervene as 22 Students Face Exam Crisis

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 14: Srinagar, Feb 15, KNT: The future of 22 students hangs in balance as the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) has rejected their 10th-class examination forms due to their school's non-registration.

The students, who had submitted their forms through Islamic Global School, Padshahi Bagh Srinagar, two months ago, are now unable to obtain their roll number slips, preventing them from appearing in the upcoming exams starting Monday. Expressing concern over the issue, Peoples Conference Chairman Sajad Lone took to X (formerly Twitter) to criticize the authorities, stating that it is the government's responsibility to prevent

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

J&K sees 79% deficit rainfall, all districts record large deficiency from January

MeT predicts no significant weather activity till Feb 18

HT News Network/KNO

Srinagar, Feb 14: With no forecast of any weather activity in Jammu and Kashmir, all the districts across the Union Territory have recorded a large deficit of rainfall in the last one and a half months. Kathua tops the list with 97 per cent deficiency from January 01 to February 12, 2025. According to details obtained by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), J&K has recorded a deficit rainfall of 79 per cent as against the normal precipitation of 140 mm, the rainfall of just 29.8 was recorded during the period. As per the data, Jammu has recorded a deficit rainfall

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

PM Modi, Amit Shah pay tributes to Pulwama martyrs

HT News Network/UNI

New Delhi, Feb 14 (UNI) Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday paid tributes to the martyrs of the Pulwama terror attack in 2019.

In his message on the social media platform 'X' on Friday, Modi wrote, "Tributes to the brave heroes who lost their lives in Pulwama in the year 2019. Generations to come will never forget their sacrifice and



dedication to the nation. In his message, Shah said, "On behalf of the grateful nation, I pay my heartfelt tribute to the

soldiers who lost their lives in the cowardly terror attack in Pulwama on this day in 2019.

Terrorism is the biggest enemy of the entire human race and the whole world is united against it. Whether it is surgical strikes or air strikes, the Modi government is determined to eradicate terrorists by running a campaign against them with a policy of 'zero tolerance'.

It is noteworthy that on February 14, 2019, terrorists of terrorist organization Jaish-e-

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Colleges in Kashmir to reopen today

Over 2 Lakh students to appear in 10th, 12th exams today

HT News Network/KNO

Srinagar, Feb 14: Colleges in Kashmir valley are all set to resume academic activities from Saturday following a fifty days of winter vacations.

The Jammu and Kashmir Higher Education Department on December-20-2024 had announced 50-days winter vacation for degree colleges falling in the winter zones of Kashmir division.

According to the news agency—the



government had said that the degree colleges in the Kashmir Division and those in the winter

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Er Rashid Calls on Nitin Gadkari in Parliament Chamber, Discusses Key Infrastructure Projects for North Kashmir

HT News Network/KNS

New Delhi, February 14: Member of Parliament Er Rashid, during his two-day parole, met Nitin Gadkari, Minister of Road Transport and Highways of India, in the Parliament Chamber on Thursday. The meeting

focused on key infrastructure demands crucial for the development of North Kashmir.

During the discussion, Er Rashid strongly advocated for the construction of the Karnah, Machil, and Gurez Tunnels, stressing their critical importance as these regions remain cut off from the rest of the country

for nearly six months every year due to heavy snowfall. He emphasized that these tunnels would provide all-weather connectivity, improving the socio-economic conditions of the people and strengthening national integration. Additionally, he highlighted the need for Lolab-Bandipo

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Lieutenant Governor, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment inaugurate Divya Kala Mela

J&K Administration has made a number of assistive devices accessible to differently abled: LG

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 14: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha and Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr Virendra Kumar today inaugurated the 11-day long Divya Kala Mela, a unique initiative of Government of India towards the



economic empowerment of Divyangjan, at Gulshan Ground.

Divya Kala Mela being organised by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) (DEPD) under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment in collaboration with the National Divyangjan Finance and Develop

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Kashmir observes Shab-e-Baraat, historic Jamia remains shut

HT News Network/UNI

Srinagar, Feb 14: (UNI) Shab-e-Baraat (night of salvation) was observed with religious fervour across the Kashmir valley, even as no congregation was allowed at the historic Jamia Masjid. Shab-e-Baraat is observed by the Muslims on the intervening night of the 14th and 15th days of Sha'ban, the eighth month of the Islamic calendar. Officials said the biggest congregation was held at the Hazratbal shrine which houses the holy relic of Prophet Mohammad.

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

CM urges doctors to serve beyond cities 'Rural areas too deserve better healthcare'

HT News Network

Jammu, Feb 14 Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today emphasized the need to improve handling of emergency cases and capacity at various Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) to ease the burden on major hospitals.

He also stressed the importance of ensuring that doctors serve beyond urban centers.

"We need to augment and



improve the emergency handling capability and capacity in

new GMCs so that the pressure on GMC Jammu and GMC Sri-

nagar is automatically reduced. Similarly, we must ensure that our doctors don't just practice in cities. I know it's not a popular thing to say, but rural areas also deserve proper healthcare access," he said.

The Chief Minister was addressing JK MediCon-2025, the first ever National Conference-cum-Workshop, at Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu.

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

BMO-led committee formed to inquire death of woman at CHC Hajan

HT News Network/KNO

Srinagar, Feb 14: The Block Medical Office (BMO) Hajan has constituted a committee to inquire into the death of a woman at CHC Hajan in north Kashmir's Bandipora district on Friday.

As per an order issued by BMO Hajan, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), officials involved in medical negligence will face disciplinary action.

"In view of the maternal death that occurred today, 14-02-2025, at CHC Hajan, it is imperative to conduct a thorough

TURN ON.....PAGE 02



@HEADLINESTODA17



@headlinestodaydaily



@headlinestoday



@headlinestodaynews

CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

BUDGET

ister, who is also the Chief Minister, will conclude the general discussion on the budget on March 11 with his reply.

According to the timetable worked out by the LA secretariat, demands for grants will be discussed on March 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, and 24. After the demands for grants, the budget will be approved on March 25, with the passage of Appropriation Bills. The Legislative Assembly will go on recess for 12 days after the budget is approved.

The second part of the budget session will begin on March 7, which has been earmarked for private members' resolutions. The House will take up private member bills on March 8 and private member resolutions again on March 9. As per the calendar, government business will be taken up on March 11—(KNO)

CM

Assembly from the twin districts of Rajouri and Poonch who participated, both in person and through virtual mode.

Addressing the participants, the Chief Minister reiterated that the purpose of these consultations was to gain firsthand insight into the priorities and aspirations of the people through their elected representatives.

"When we undertake new projects, it is our duty and responsibility to ensure that ongoing projects are completed with as much priority as new ones. Every project belongs to the people, and all ongoing works need to be completed on time," the Chief Minister said.

He assured that the issues and priorities raised by the representatives had been duly noted and would be considered for inclusion in the upcoming budget.

"You are the primary stakeholders—you meet people daily and understand their most pressing concerns. Our aim is to involve you in planning and development so that the voices of the people find a place in our governance," he said.

The Chief Minister emphasized the crucial role of elected representatives in grassroots governance, stating that their feedback and inputs were vital in ensuring effective administration.

"Nobody understands the people and their issues better than you. We want to take Jammu and Kashmir to new heights of development and progress," he added.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioners of Rajouri and Poonch presented district-wise updates on capex works that would be prioritized in the upcoming budget session of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly.

On the occasion, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, who represents the Nowshera assembly segment, highlighted several key issues in his constituency, including issue of shortage of doctors and paramedical staff, drinking water supply challenges, mobile network issues, bridges, road upgrades, and the four-laning of the Rajouri-Poonch Road beyond Akhnour.

He also emphasized the need for tourism development in the region.

Similarly, Minister Javed Ahmad Rana, representing the Mendhar assembly segment, raised concerns related to drinking water supply, identification of new water sources, electricity, tourism development, employment and education.

Other MLAs from the respective constituencies also presented their demands and issues, covering a broad range of sectors, including tourism, agriculture, horticulture and urban development.

WEATHER

of 94 per cent while Udhampur and Samba districts have recorded a deficiency of 92 per cent each.

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, has recorded a deficit rainfall of 82 per cent during the period while seven other places including Shopian, Reasi, Ramban, Kulgam, Doda, Budgam and Anantnag have recorded a deficiency in between 80 to 89 per cent.

Pulwama, Kupwara, Bandipora and Baramulla districts have a deficiency of between 70 to 79 per cent during the period, according to the data. Four districts including Poonch, Rajouri, Kishtwar and Ganderbal have recorded a deficiency in between 60 to 69 per cent.

All the districts across the Union Territory have been categorised in large deficiency, the data reveals.

Meanwhile, the weatherman here has predicted dry weather conditions till tomorrow.

Director Meteorological Department Dr Mukhtar Ahmad, said that on February 16, the weather would remain partly to generally cloudy with light rain and snow expected at isolated higher reaches of north & central Kashmir mainly towards evening and night.

On February 17-18, partly to generally cloudy weather is expected with the possibility of a brief spell of light rain and snow at isolated higher reaches, he said, adding that nothing significant is expected till February 18.

On February 19 and 20, generally cloudy weather is expected with the possibility of light rain and snow at scattered places during the 19th night and late night to 20th afternoon, Dr Ahmad said, adding that partly cloudy with a

possibility of light rain and snow is expected at isolated places on February 21 and 22—(KNO)

PM

Terrorism is the biggest enemy of the entire human race and the whole world is united against it. Whether it is surgical strikes or air strikes, the Modi government is determined to eradicate terrorists by running a campaign against them with a policy of 'zero tolerance'.

It is noteworthy that on February 14, 2019, terrorists of terrorist organization Jaish-e-Mohammed carried out a dastardly attack by targeting a convoy of the Central Reserve Police Force in Pulwama, Jammu and Kashmir. About 40 soldiers were martyred in this attack.

In response, India carried out surgical strikes and demolished terrorist hideouts in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, in which many terrorists were killed.

LG

ment Corporation (NDFDC) showcased the extraordinary talent, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit of Divyang artisans and entrepreneurs, and artists from across J&K UT and various other States and UTs.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor expressed gratitude to Government of India and all the stakeholders associated with the noble endeavour. He said the Divya Kala Mela reflects the Hon'ble Prime Minister's commitment to make Divyangian economically empowered and self-reliant.

Reiterating his resolve to bring qualitative change in the lives of Divyangian, the Lieutenant Governor said the Union Territory of J&K is committed to create a conducive environment to provide equal opportunities and protect rights of Divyangian.

"I always believe in God's gift and doing good for others. I have made administration's primary goal to take steps that will lead to mainstreaming of Divyangian in society.

In 2020 I had introduced a multi-faceted approach in Administration so that Divyangian can realise their potential and become active participants in the development process", the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted the dedicated efforts made by the J&K Administration to make assistive devices accessible to differently abled.

"I want to make sure every Divyangian has access to Assistive Equipments that empowers them and minimizes the disability impact.

Devices like hearing aids, wheel chairs, limb prosthetics and motorised Scooty, which improve functional capacity and help the differently abled to live independently has been made available to them in far flung areas of Union Territory," the Lieutenant Governor further added.

The Lieutenant Governor urged the individual and social service organisations to help Divyangian in procuring suitable devices as per their needs.

He also urged the innovators of J&K UT to invent more user-friendly aids and devices for Divyangian with the help of modern technology.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the Social Welfare Department to work on mission mode for skilling of Divyangians.

He further shared the dedicated measures taken by the administration to encourage the private sector to provide employment opportunities to Divyangian and the necessary changes made in the reservation policy in government jobs based on various benchmarks.

The Lieutenant Governor urged the Union Minister for organizing mega fair for Divyangian in Jammu division and Kashmir division.

He also thanked the Union Minister for his assurance to provide a platform for the Divyang Artisans and Entrepreneurs of J&K in fairs in other parts of the country.

The Lieutenant Governor and the Union Minister visited the stalls set up by Divyang artisans and entrepreneurs, various government institutions and civil society groups. They also handed over mobility devices and sanction letters to the beneficiaries.

The Lieutenant Governor assured all the support and necessary handholding by the administration to the participating artisans and entrepreneurs in scaling-up their business and marketing of their products.

Ms Sakina Itoo, Minister for Social Welfare J&K; Sh Jugal Kishore Sharma, Member of Parliament; Sh Sanjeev Verma, Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare Department, J&K; Sh Rajeev Sharma, Joint Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Gol; Sh Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; senior officials, representatives of various social organizations, artists, artisans and entrepreneurs, and people from all walks of life were present.

COLLAGES

zone of Jammu Division shall observe winter vacations from December-27-2024 to February-14-2025.

Besides, the government had also announced winter break for colleges of summer zones

of Jammu region from January-01 to January-10-2025.

In the meantime, More than 2 lakh students of 10th and 12th standard are all set to appear in the annual regular board exams. Pertinently, the schools in Kashmir division and winter zones of Jammu division will reopen on March-01. In a phased manner winter vacations, School Education Department had said that for students' upto 5th standard the vacations will begin from December-10 to February-28-2025 and in case of students from 6th standard to 12th standard, the vacation shall begin from December-16 to February-28-2025.

Besides, the department had ordered that the teaching staff of Government High and Higher Secondary Schools shall remain available at respective Headquarters from 10th of February, 2025 onwards for preparatory arrangements for the ensuing Board Examinations of classes 10th, 11th and 12th—(KNO)

ER. RASHEED

ra road connectivity, linking the Lolab Valley with Bandipora district, as well as the Takipora Lolab-Sopore road, which would enhance regional connectivity and facilitate better trade and transport. Responding to these demands, Minister Nitin Gadkari confirmed that the process for the Karnah Tunnel has already begun and assured that the other proposed tunnels and inter-district road networks would be taken up with the Defence Ministry for further consideration.

Furthermore, Er Rashid demanded ₹200 crore for the upgradation of National Highway roads and other road infrastructure in North Kashmir, emphasizing the urgent need to modernize road connectivity in the region. Minister Nitin Gadkari assured full support for the proposed projects, reiterating the government's commitment to improving infrastructure in remote areas.(KNS)

BMO

inquiry to assess the circumstances leading to the unfortunate incident and to identify any lapses in patient management," reads the order.

As per order, BMO Hajan has been appointed as the Chairperson of the committee while Shaheen Chalkoo, Consultant Anaesthesia CHC Sumbal, Dr Nisar Ahmad Medical Officer CHC Hajan, Nasreena Kounsar In-Charge Labour Room and Mohammad Yaqoob Ganaie BM&EO Hajan are its members.

The committee has been asked to do a detailed case analysis of the deceased patient, including medical history, antenatal care received, and any complications noted during pregnancy. It has been asked to examine the treatment protocol followed during admission, delivery, and post-operative care and also assess the role of duty doctors, nursing staff, and support staff in managing the case.

Identify any medical negligence, procedural lapses, or delays in providing emergency care, the committee has been told and also reviewing the hospital records, staff duty rosters, and patient monitoring sheets to evaluate adherence to standard protocols and also the recommendations for corrective measures to prevent future incidents and improve maternal care services at CHC Hajan.

The committee has been directed to submit its detailed report within 48 hours to the Block Medical Officer, CHC Hajan.

If any negligence or misconduct is found, appropriate disciplinary action shall be recommended as per norms, the order reads, adding that findings shall be forwarded to the Chief Medical Officer, Bandipora, for further action—(KNO)

DOCTORS

The event was organized by the J&K Medical Council in collaboration with the Student Research Development Council (SRDC).

The conference was attended by Minister for Health & Medical Education Sakina Itoo, former Chief Minister Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Secretary H&ME Dr. Syed Abid Rashid, Jammu West MLA Arvind Gupta, Principal & Dean of GMC Jammu Dr. Ashutosh Gupta, Chairman JK Medical Council Dr. Muhammad Saleem Khan, senior professors, doctors, faculty and students.

Omar Abdullah highlighted his government's commitment to improving healthcare accessibility across Jammu and Kashmir.

"Our challenge is to make healthcare more easily accessible. Professor Gupta pointed out the excessive pressure on GMC Jammu's emergency services, which stems from the fact that healthcare in peripheral areas is not of the required standard. This forces people to flood into cities," he noted. He emphasized that the solution lies in improving healthcare infrastructure in rural areas.

"The way to reduce this pressure is not just by expanding our infrastructure in Jammu but by strengthening facilities in peripheral areas. There was a time when we only had GMC Jammu and GMC Srinagar. Now, we have GMCs at the district level," he said.

Speaking about MediCon-2025, the Chief Minister acknowledged its importance in fostering debates and discussions on key medical issues.

"There are all sorts of debates surrounding

the topics that MediCon can address. The good thing is that students are involved through SRDC," he said.

He also highlighted that participants will earn 11 credits through MediCon, which will encourage greater engagement and enthusiasm.

"I hope the futuristic advancements in medical science will be part of our discussions—how much technology is beneficial, how much human contact should be replaced by machines. While some tasks may be better performed by AI, there are things that only human beings can do," he added.

Touching on the ethical dimensions of modern medical trends, Omar Abdullah raised concerns about the intersection of medicine and profit-driven healthcare.

"Where do we draw the ethical line in medicine? Is there such a thing as too much ethics? Does the pursuit of profit in medical care conflict with ethical responsibilities? Should hospitals treat patients as a means of revenue generation?" he asked.

He also noted the pressure on doctors working in corporate hospitals, where their performance is measured not by the number of patients they treat but by the revenue they generate.

Delving into the future of robotic surgery and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in medicine, the Chief Minister highlighted both the potential and concerns surrounding these advancements.

"One trend that seems to be catching on is the use of robotic surgery. Principal GMC Jammu mentioned that AI could one day take over medical procedures. Honestly, I can't imagine a scarier prospect than entrusting my life entirely to a machine. At the end of the day, there is immense value in human contact, and that's where doctors—who literally do God's work—play an irreplaceable role," he said.

He praised doctors for their dedication and lifelong learning. "You pull people back from the jaws of death. You give hope where all hope seems lost. You stand by patients and their families at their most vulnerable moments—whether in recovery or in times of loss," he said.

"As doctors, you never stop learning. You are always adapting to new techniques, medicines, and treatment methods. But no machine can replace the human touch when a doctor delivers a diagnosis or a prognosis. Patients and their families hold on to every word a doctor says," he added.

Chief Minister also acknowledged the growth plans for GMC Jammu and expressed his intent to contribute.

"Principal GMC Jammu presented several ideas for GMC Jammu's future growth. My colleagues and I will ensure at least one of those proposals is implemented so that I, too, can have a foundation stone here and not feel left out in future presentations," he said in a lighter vein.

He also underscored the significance of MediCon-2025, noting that it is the first of its kind in J&K and possibly in the country, where a state or regional medical council has organized such an event.

"This event brings together the best minds to share ideas, best practices, and research advances while discussing emerging trends in medicine," he said.

Earlier, Principal GMC Jammu gave a detailed presentation on the college's growth and future plans.

SAJAD

unregistered schools from operating. "It is not the job of the parents to verify school registrations. How would they know whether a school is registered or not?" he questioned.

Lone urged the administration, particularly JKBOSE, to take immediate steps to resolve the crisis. He suggested that the JKBOSE Chairman could intervene and facilitate a partnership with a registered school to ensure that the students do not lose a crucial academic year. "Anything to rescue the children," he emphasized, calling upon the government to act rather than "wash its hands off" the matter.

The affected students and their parents have appealed for urgent intervention from the authorities, fearing that their academic future is at serious risk if no remedial measures are taken in time. [KNT] has been granted in relaxation of rules, official sources told the Excelsior. The DoPT is headed by Union MoS in PMO Dr Jitendra Singh. unregistered schools from operating. "It is not the job of the parents to verify school registrations. How would they know whether a school is registered or not?" he questioned.

Lone urged the administration, particularly JKBOSE, to take immediate steps to resolve the crisis. He suggested that the JKBOSE Chairman could intervene and facilitate a partnership with a registered school to ensure that the students do not lose a crucial academic year. "Anything to rescue the children," he emphasized, calling upon the government to act rather than "wash its hands off" the matter.

The affected students and their parents have appealed for urgent intervention from the authorities, fearing that their academic future is at serious risk if no remedial measures are taken in time. [KNT] has been granted in

relaxation of rules, official sources told the Excelsior. The DoPT is headed by Union MoS in PMO Dr Jitendra Singh.

KASHMIR

Shab Khwani" (night long prayers) was held at the revered shrine throughout the night. The devotees were seen offering supplementary prayers throughout the night besides reciting the holy Quran and offering supplications.

Officials said nightlong prayers were also held at several other mosques and shrines across the valley.

However, no prayers were allowed at the historic Jamia Masjid in the old city.

The Anjuman Auqaf, the managing body of Jamia Masjid, last evening said police informed them that the night prayers for Shab-e-Baraat would not be allowed and the mosque was closed.

Anjuman said that it is for the sixth consecutive year in a row that Shab-e-Baraat congregation was disallowed at the Jamia mosque in Srinagar. The police had also put Kashmir's chief cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq under house detention.

J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had called the restrictions "very unfortunate" and said they indicate a "lack of confidence in law and order machinery."

"It is very unfortunate that the security establishment has taken the decision to seal the historic Jamia Masjid, Srinagar on one of the holiest nights in the Islamic calendar - #shabebaraat. This decision betrays a lack in confidence in the people & a lack of confidence in the law & order machinery that calm won't prevail without extreme measures. The people of Srinagar deserved better," Abdullah said in a post on X.

J&K Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) Working President Tariq Karra on Friday criticized the government's move, calling it a sign of insecurity despite repeated claims of normalcy.

"One fails to understand as to what forced the authorities to lock down Jamia , if they (authorities) are not confident then why there are claims that everything is going normal. Government should think seriously about such measures, which certainly create an atmosphere of discord leading to the disillusionment amongst the public," Karra said in a statement.

He said that the government should revisit its policy of banning the public from performing their religious obligations, from time to time, as such measures are neither in the public interest nor in the interest of peace initiatives or confidence building measures.

AG Mir Inaugurates State-of-

the-Art Library for Civil Services

Aspirants at ICP Rajbagh

SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 14: Additional Director General, ITBP, Abdul Gani Mir, today inaugurated a state-of-the-art library at the Initiative for Competition Promotion (ICP) Rajbagh here. The library is dedicated to Civil Services aspirants. The Centre is intended to assist candidates preparing for competitive examinations such as the IAS and KAS by providing them with extensive academic resources. ICP is a trust patronized by A.G. Mir and has been instrumental in guiding Civil Services aspirants through its residential coaching academy. The institution has successfully produced nearly 300 officers in IAS, IPS, KAS, and KPS, in last 15 years playing a pivotal role in shaping the future of public administration. The library has been established with financial support under CSR from Jamna Auto Industries Ltd., highlighting the company's strong commitment to assist students in their competitive exam preparation. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Founder Trustees Aziz Ahmad, KAS, and Syed Shah Nawaz Bukhari, KAS besides other senior officers associated with the Trust, Ahsan ul Haq Cheshi and Burhaan Hussain, KAS. Scores of students were also present in the occasion. Speaking on the occasion, A.G. Mir expressed concern over the declining number of candidates opting for competitive exams, particularly the IAS and KAS. He emphasized the need to motivate students in schools and colleges to consider careers in public service and underscored the importance of conducting seminars to create awareness. He urged college and university teachers to actively play their role in inspiring and guiding students toward Civil Services, highlighting their crucial contribution in shaping future administrators. The newly inaugurated library is expected to serve as a hub of knowledge, equipping students with the necessary resources and academic support to succeed in Civil Services. The event concluded with a special acknowledgment of Jamna Auto Industries Ltd. and other stakeholders for their generous support in making this project.





CM Omar Abdullah distributes appointment orders to Panchayat Secretaries at SKUAST-Jammu

Emphasises transparency, commitment in public service

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 14: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today highlighted the importance of honesty, transparency and dedication in public service while addressing an event at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology (SKUAST) Jammu. The event was organized to distribute appointment orders to newly appointed Panchayat Secretaries in the Rural Development Department (RDD), J&K. Congratulating the appointees, the Chief Minister reminded them of their crucial role in bridging the gap between the government and the people. "The appointment process was transparent, though not without its challenges. Despite difficulties, we ensured the process was completed fairly," he said. "Today, you receive your appointment orders not as a favor from anyone, but as a result of your hard work and merit." Recalling the historical evolution of the Panchayati Raj system in Jammu and



Kashmir, Omar Abdullah acknowledged the contributions of past governments, particularly former Chief Minister Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah, in strengthening grassroots governance. "The Panchayati Raj system was first introduced under the Jammu and Kashmir Village Panchayat Act. Over time, Panchayat system has evolved, with every government playing its part in strengthening it," he noted. Speaking about the significance of Pan-

chayat elections, the Chief Minister pointed out the high level of public participation in local governance. "We have observed that while voter turnout in parliamentary elections is relatively low, it increases in assembly elections. However, Panchayat elections see the highest level of engagement because these institutions are closest to the people," he said. Omar Abdullah urged the newly appointed Panchayat Secretaries to ensure that government funds allocated for rural

development are utilized effectively and without corruption. "The schemes—whether centrally sponsored or J&K-sponsored—must be implemented with honesty, ensuring maximum public benefit," he emphasized. "You will face pressures and attempts to influence decisions, but your duty is to uphold justice and serve the poor," he said. He reminded them that while governments change, the responsibility of public servants remains constant. "Don't worry about political shifts; your focus should be on serving the people with dedication," he added. The Chief Minister expressed hope that he would continue to interact with the appointees in the years ahead, pledging his government's support as they carry out their duties. "This will not be our last meeting. Today, we are here, but tomorrow, we will meet in the field, working together to improve governance. I look forward to visiting your areas and seeing the impact of your work firsthand," the CM said.

Coaching cum counselling for CUET aspirants

CUKashmir extends date till 19th February

■ HT News Network

Ganderbal, Feb 14: Central University of Kashmir (CUKashmir) is offering a one-week online coaching cum counselling to CUET aspirants for the academic session 2025 from 19th of February 2025. The aspirants are required to register online to avail the facility against a registration fee of Rs 200. Candidates would receive a zoom link through registered email id/ WhatsApp provided number at the time of registration. In case of any queries, candidates can contact dms@cukashmir.ac.in. The candidates are informed to visit the university website www.cuaskhmir.ac.in for any changes in schedule/updates about the programme. The registration process has started from 5th February, 2025 and the last date for registration is 19th of February 2025. The online classes will commence from 22nd February 2025.

Srinagar Patient Alleges Dental Blunder: Healthy Tooth Extracted Instead of Infected One

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 16, : In a shocking case of alleged medical negligence, a Srinagar resident has accused a doctor at Dental College Srinagar of extracting the wrong tooth during a dental procedure. Nadeem Ahmad, a 27-year-old patient, told Kashmir News Trust (KNT) that he had visited the Dental College seeking relief from acute toothache. However, instead of removing the problematic lower 8 (L8) tooth, the doctor mistakenly extracted his healthy upper eighth tooth. Expressing distress over the incident, Nadeem Ahmad said he was left in shock and disappointment over the incident. When contacted, Principal Dental College Dr. Aijaz confirmed that the matter has been taken up with Head of the Department (HoD) Dr. Irshad Misgar. "An investigation will be conducted, and if the doctor is found guilty, appropriate action will be taken," he assured. [KNT]

DIPR condoles demise of Manzoor Ahmad Mir's Maternal Uncle

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, February 14: The officers and officials of Information Department condoled the demise of Abdul Ahad Misger, maternal uncle of Manzoor Ahmad Mir Camera-man, who breathed his last today at his residence at Zindshah Mohalla Rainawari. In this regard, a condolence meeting was held under the chairmanship of Joint Director Information Kashmir, Syed Shahnawaz Bukhari at the Divisional Office at Exchange Road, Kothibagh. Deputy Director (PR), Dr Ahsanul Haq Chishti; Cultural Officer & other officers and officials of the department attended the condolence meet. On the occasion, Officers & Officials expressed solidarity & deepest condolences with the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul. Deputy Director (PR), Dr Ahsanul Haq Chishti; Cultural Officer & other officers and officials of the department attended the condolence meet.

DC Srinagar stresses on collaborative efforts to achieve target of TB-free district

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 14: In order to strengthen TB control measures by identifying and supporting those most susceptible to the disease, a TB screening camp under 100-days intensified TB campaign was organized today at the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Srinagar, witnessing active participation from a large number of employees. Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, stressed the importance of collaborative efforts from all Departments and the community, especially vulnerable individuals, to achieve the target of TB-free Srinagar. He urged greater participa-



tion in the campaign to raise awareness and promote early detection of tuberculosis. DC added that this intensified campaign is a crucial step in the fight against tuberculosis, ensuring early detection, timely treatment

Major Breakthrough In ATM Fraud Case

Police Arrests Accused in Card Swapping Scam in Srinagar

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 14, ANB: In a commendable breakthrough, Police in Srinagar have successfully apprehended an accused involved in an ATM card swapping fraud. According to the Associated News Bureau, on February 12, 2025, Police Post Bagyas received a written complaint from a lady namely Shaheena wife of Zahoor Ahmad Najar resident of Kupwara, stating therein that she along with her daughter, had visited Dental College, Shreen Bagh, for a dental checkup. While using an ATM located within the complex, an unknown individual inside the booth deceptively swapped her ATM card and subsequently withdrew 40,000 from her account. Acting promptly, a case FIR No. 14/2025 U/S 318(4), 305 BNS was registered in Police Station Safakadal and investigation



was taken up. During the course of investigation, a team headed by Incharge Police Post Bagyas was constituted. After strenuous efforts and with the help of technical input and analysis of CCTV footage from the ATM, it led to the identification of the suspect as Burhan Al Rah son of Gh Qadir Rah resident of Bonpora, Nowgam. The accused person has been subsequently arrested, and multiple ATM cards were recovered from his possession.

BJP Pays Floral Tributes to Pulwama Martyrs

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 14, ANB: Remembering the supreme sacrifice of the Pulwama martyrs on February 14, 2019, J&K BJP paid floral tributes to the 40 CRPF person-

nel across Jammu & Kashmir. Sat Sharma, President, J&K BJP along with Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma, MLAs Adv. Vijay Sharma, Rajeev Jasrotia, Satish Sharma, Darshan Singh, & Dr. Bharat Bhushan, former MLAs Jeevan Lal, & Kuldeep Raj, District

Presidents Updesh Andotra, & Gopal Krishan, former District President Gopal Mahajan, and others paid floral tributes to the martyrs in Hiranagar Mandal of District Kathua. According to the Associated News Bureau, Sat Sharma termed the Pulwama

terrorist attack as a heinous and cowardly act that targeted our soldiers. He said that the brutal attack, carried out by the Pakistan-based terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), resulted in the loss of 40 brave CRPF personnel, leaving the entire nation

in shock and grief. He said that the attack was avenged by the PM Modi led government giving a stern message to the enemy forces. The nation will never forget their supreme sacrifice, he added.

Week-long A-MDP on digital marketing GeM concludes at NIT Srinagar

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 14: A week-long Advanced Management Development Program (A-MDP) on Digital Marketing & DPR Drafting (Hands-on Training) and Govt. e-Marketplace & e-Office concluded on Friday at the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar.

The hands-on training workshop was organised by the Department of Mechanical Engineering in collaboration with the Department of HSS&M along with the Administrative Division of NIT Srinagar.

It was sponsored by the Ministry of MSME, Government of India and was attended by 60 participants including 30 Government Officials, entrepreneurs, business owners and aspiring startups.



Institute's Registrar, Prof. Atikur Rahman, was the Chief Guest at the inaugural session, while Saheel Allaqband, Assistant Director of MSME, was Guest of Honour during the valedictory session. In his key address, Saheel Allaqband spoke about the achievements the Ministry of MSME has made over the past two decades in fostering an entrepreneurial culture in the valley. He also acknowledged Mr. Velladurai, Joint Director of MSME, who oversees the divisions of Jammu &

Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Ladakh. Prof. GA Harmain also highlighted the remarkable growth that Kashmir has experienced across various sectors, from tourism to technology. He said there is a need to organize more such programs in a structured manner to ensure success. Prof. Harmain reiterated that NIT Srinagar remained committed to support and empower stakeholders by providing necessary guidance and resources to help them navigate the evolving

business landscape effectively. Mubashir Ahmad Wani, AR (Accounts) and Resource Person of GeM Workshop, appreciated the active participation of government officials and entrepreneurs. He also highlighted the importance of such sessions in helping participants understand marketing and the GeM platform. NIT Srinagar is always ready to provide support and guidance to those who need it, Wani said. Earlier this week, the inaugural session was presided over by the Registrar of NIT Srinagar, Prof. Atikur Rahman, who was the Chief Guest. Prof. Yaswanth Mehta, the Dean of Planning & Development, was the Guest of Honour. In his key speech, Institute's Registrar, Prof. Atikur Rahman, underscored the importance of the Viksit Bharat 2047 initiative.

Science & Technology integral to progress, prosperity: Satish Sharma

Addresses 3rd International Conference on "Emerging Trends in Biosciences, Chemical Technology

■ HT News Network

Srinagar /JAMMU, FEBRUARY 14: Minister for FCS&CA, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, Information Technology, Science and Technology, Satish Sharma, today attended the 3rd International Conference on "Emerging Trends in Biosciences and Chemical Technology", at SMV-DU Katra. Vice Chancellor, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Professor Pragati Kumar; Executive Director of SMVD College of Medical Excellence, Dr Yashpal Sharma; Head of the School of Biotechnology, Professor Ratna Chandra and Dr. Indu Bhushan Sharma, Convener of the conference were also present on the occasion. During the conference, the Minister also paid tributes to the martyrs of Pulwama attack, observing two minutes silence as token of respect for the brave soldiers. While addressing the gathering, the Minister asserted that this conference serves as a vital platform to discuss and deliberate upon ground-



breaking advancements and their applications in our ever-evolving world. Satish Sharma congratulated the SMVDU and the organising committee for bringing together some of the finest minds in the fields of biosciences and chemical technology. He emphasised that science and technology are integral to progress and prosperity of society; and in today's rapidly evolving world biosciences and chemical technology play a pivotal role in addressing global challenges, be it healthcare, agriculture, energy or environmental

sustainability. "In the field of biosciences, we are witnessing groundbreaking innovations, from genome editing and regenerative medicine to synthetic biology and personalized healthcare. These advancements hold immense potential for disease prevention, drug discovery and agricultural improvements, ensuring food security and better health outcomes for all", added the Minister. The Minister exhorted that Jammu and Kashmir is blessed with rich biodiversity, fertile land and immense natural resources.

EDITORIAL

GOI busy in framing business rules as people wait for restoration of statehood

The Government of India seems to be in no hurry to restore statehood to the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir. This can be gauged by the fact that even though the elected government led by chief minister Omar Abdullah is almost four months old the central government has given no hint to suggest that Jammu & Kashmir would become a state very soon. The delay in restoration of statehood has somewhat disappointed the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

The central government instead of taking steps to restore statehood to Jammu & Kashmir is busy in framing the business rules for the working of the government in the union territory. In this regard the Home Ministry has set the ball rolling and one can expect the business rules to be out soon. Once the business rules are finalized then the jurisdiction of both the chief minister and the lieutenant governor would be clear. As such one can expect that the CM and the LG would not be at the loggerheads as is the case these days.

The central government is buying the time and there seems to be no rush for them to make Jammu & Kashmir a state once again. Once the business rules for the governance are put into practice it would mean that the title of union territory would not go soon from Jammu & Kashmir. In other words it can be said that people of Jammu & Kashmir would continue to crave for the title of state and they would continue to be the residents of a union territory.

It would be in place to mention here that the 2024 assembly elections in Jammu & Kashmir were unique in the sense as there were many people who said that they are voting not for developmental purposes but for restoration of identity of the people. The elections were also somewhat different as there were many people who voted for the first time even though they were eligible for the same long time back.

Both the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah had time and again said that restoration of statehood would take place at the appropriate time. Interestingly, ever since the elected government has assumed office in Jammu & Kashmir, both Modi and Shah have not talked much about the same. Some other leaders of BJP have said that Jammu & Kashmir will become a state soon.

This is absolutely brilliant and only the War Wounded Foundation can think about such ventures!

BY M S NAZKI

Anything was better than the blood and carnage, the grime and filth, the impossible demands made on the body—anything, that is, except letting down their buddies. We time and again have said it and hence are repeating the same here because the man whom we are going to talk about is other than Brigadier Harcharan Singh VSM (Retd) !

The first man stepped up to the open door. All the men had been ordered to look out at the horizon, not straight down, for obvious psychological reasons. Harcharan believed in this adage!

During their two-day rally, an interaction was carried out in Jammu Cantonment between 110 disabled soldiers and prominent Citizens / Organizations of Jammu.

“This was a unique interaction, where the Citizens Felicitated the War Heroes and expressed their gratitude for the sacrifices made by the soldiers,” Jammu defence PRO Lt Col Suneel Bartwal said.

“Travel Agents Association, Jammu made commendable efforts to bring various Organizations under one umbrella, with the presence of imminent Citizens,” he said.

We firmly believe that only a combat soldier has the right to judge another combat soldier.

Brig Harcharan Singh, VSM (Retd) He has exper-

ience of various military operations at places like Siachen, Andaman, Manipur, Nagaland and J&K. During Army service, he was decorated with awards of VSM and COAS Commendation Card. In 1994, he was declared winner of the Gold Medal of the prestigious USI Essay Competition.

About War Wounded Foundation

Raised as a Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) at Delhi by Lt Gen Vijay Oberoi and Maj Gen Ian Cardozo, the War Wounded Foundation has been working to empower War Wounded Soldiers by converting Disability into Ability.

Presently, Lt Gen Asit Mistri (Retired) is the President of WWF.

Retired Army persons are appointed in different geographic zones, for maintaining intricate and close Liaison with the Disabled Soldiers.

“WWF has been able to provide a common platform to all the Injured Soldiers and is putting sustained efforts in a systematic and effective way to understand, analyze and project various issues related to Wounded Soldiers with the appropriate authorities.”

“Injuries have an effect on the physical and mental health of a soldier.”

WWF has set up a Chair of Excellence at USI, New Delhi, for research on issues related to Injured Soldiers, and the recommendations are put forward to the Government.



ward to the Government.

Lt Gen Asit Mistri (Retired) educated the gathering about the efforts of WWF, to help Injured Soldiers in various fields.

Mr. ID Soni spoke on the requirement of Sacrifices to maintain Freedom and the need to keep the Morale of Soldiers high by including stories of their valor in school text books to make the youth proud of the Armed Forces.

Vote of Thanks was delivered by Capt Anil Gour, on behalf of all Organizations of Jammu.

Officials of Chamber of Commerce, BBIA, Travel Agents Association, Raghunath Bazar Business Association, PHDCCI, Jammu Hills Club, NCCHWO, Rotary Club Jammu Tawi/ Jammu Elite/City, Old Age Home Amphalla, Agarwal Samaj, SS Jain Sabha Talab Tiloo/Trikuta Nagar, Jain Mahila Mandal Talab Tiloo and Greater Jammu Virtual felicitated the Brave Soldiers.

As a gesture to exhibit Jointness of efforts, officials of various Organizations extended their

support to find suitable Employment in Industries for Injured soldiers. The occasion was graced by Senior Army Officers from Nagrota and Jammu.

The GOC White Knight Corps presented 10 Modified Scooters to Injured Soldiers. “This would make them independent for their day today movements and help them to start new ventures.”

A Symposium was also held by experts in the field of Mental and physical health (Dr Vikas Padha, MD), Job Opportunities (Mr Anil Suri) and Motivation and Positivity (Col Ajay Raina, SM).

This happened in November in the year 2024!

Raised as a Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) at Delhi by Lt Gen Vijay Oberoi and Maj Gen Ian Cardozo, the War Wounded Foundation has been working to empower War Wounded Soldiers by converting Disability into Ability. Presently, Lt Gen Asit Mistri (Retired) is the President of WWF.

Retired Army persons are appointed in different geographic zones, for maintaining intricate and close Liaison with the Disabled Soldiers.

Government Self Employment Schemes under KVIB were covered by Brig Harcharan Singh, Director North WWF.

The Govt Policies and new additions were explained by Col Veteran from Pathankot.

Lt Gen Asit Mistri covered various initiatives of WWF providing support to Disabled soldiers through various schemes.

They are also visited, in the process, by officials of WWF, which cements the bond of brotherhood and Camaraderie further. Various initiatives undertaken by WWF are as under:-

(a) Provision of Modified Scooters/ Electric Wheelchair to Disabled Veterans.

(b) Modification of Bathrooms, to make them User Friendly.

(c) Financial Help for Daughter's Marriage.

(d) Help to Disabled Veterans to start a new Venture.

(e) Participation in various Sports events like Bombay Marathon by Disabled Soldiers, to motivate disabled soldiers to face the challenges of life and develop a positive outlook.

(f) Support other ventures/events connected with Disabled Soldier.

Few War Wounded Soldiers shared their experiences on initiatives taken by them in living life with a positive outlook, by active participation in Social life,

Sports ,Social Welfare activities and Business.

“There is a plan to start a helpline, which would enable Experts to provide Counseling to the Injured Soldiers. Ex HOD of Jammu University, Prof(Dr) Arti Bakshi was present to announce her support for the venture.”

3. Schemes include provision of Mobility Eqpt, Modification of Bathrooms in homes of war wounded personnel to make them disabled friendly, skill Trg incl for the wards, financial assistance for Daughter's Marriage and venture capital if a soldier wants to start a new venture etc.

4. Frequent get together of War Injured Soldiers conducted to elevate Spirit The Corps, inculcate Camaraderie and share experiences.

5. Support adventure & sporting activities by War Wounded personnel including participation in Mumbai Marathon, Veterans' Marathon etc.

6. Undertake research in conjunction with USI on issues affecting war disabled persons. WWF has established a Chair of Excellence in this regard at USI.

7. WWF is able to serve the War Wounded with active sp of the Army. The active involvement of the Army, other NGOs as well as civil society enables WWF to sp the soldiers through our schemes.

This is absolutely brilliant and only the Indian Army can think about such ventures!

India's AI diplomacy

KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visits to Paris and Washington, where he engaged with two of the most influential leaders from the developed world, come at a crucial juncture of shifting geopolitical dynamics. The central theme of these high-level bilateral discussions revolved around advanced technology cooperation in an increasingly fragmented world. India played a significant role as the co-chair of the AI Action Summit in Paris, alongside host nation France. This marked the third global event dedicated to artificial intelligence, drawing compar-

isons to the Kumbh Mela of technology—bringing together policymakers, corporate leaders, experts, and world leaders.

The summit's primary focus was on leveraging the transformative potential of AI, a technology that has been likened to groundbreaking human advancements such as the invention of the wheel and the mastery of fire. Meanwhile, China introduced DeepSeek, a nimble generative AI tool, posing a serious challenge to the near-monopolistic dominance of US tech giants that have invested billions in AI research and development. Compounding the complexities of global AI governance,

former US President Joe Biden, during his final week in office, passed an executive order known as the Interim Final Rule (IFR) on the Framework for Artificial Intelligence Diffusion.

This order imposed export restrictions on critical software and hardware essential for AI development, targeting nations deemed adversarial to US interests—chiefly China—but also impacting close allies such as India. Global technology stakeholders have since urged the new US administration to maintain consistency with the previously established Regulatory Freeze Order. They have called for the suspension of the AI Diffusion Rule until

further review and stakeholder consultations ensure that the regulations align with both national security and international trade interests.

Despite industry appeals, President Donald Trump has yet to overturn the executive order signed by his predecessor. However, his administration issued a fresh executive order on January 23, signalling a possible shift in approach. Within days of assuming office, President Trump reaffirmed the United States' commitment to AI leadership, stating that the country has historically been at the forefront of AI innovation due to its robust free-market economy, world-class research institutions,

and entrepreneurial drive. His directive emphasized eliminating barriers that could hinder American AI progress, revoking certain existing AI policies, and reinforcing the US's global leadership in AI. He further asserted that sustaining AI dominance was vital for human advancement, economic competitiveness, and national security. India, aiming for a prominent role in global AI governance, innovation and development, has set forth an ambitious AI mission of its own.

This vision, however, is heavily reliant on high-end semiconductor chips and Graphics Processing Units (GPUs) currently controlled

by US technology firms. Any restrictions on access to these critical processors could pose significant challenges to India's AI aspirations. Modi's engagements in Paris, India's announcement to host the fourth global AI summit in Delhi, and his discussions with President Trump and other world leaders signal a strategic move toward securing India's place at the forefront of global AI advancements. These diplomatic efforts mark an essential step in navigating the rapidly evolving AI landscape and ensuring India's stake in shaping the future of this transformative technology.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

Make in India & Atmanirbhar Bharat: PM Modi's push for self-reliance in manufacturing and defense

TAUSEEF AHMAD WAR

In the wake of globalisation and development in the ever-changing civilization in the contemporary era has brought multidimensional strategies throughout the world and each nation is striving towards building a self-reliant and economic independence. India has shown a phenomenal and an incredible shift in boosting its economic growth and overall development in the multifaceted areas. Since, its independence the country has shown a remarkable growth in each sector despite the hurdles coming its way, it continued pursuing its economic growth, stability, tranquility and equality for its citizens

thus, becoming the largest democracies in the world. As per the current data, India is considered as the 6th largest economy in the world by nominal GDP, and 7th largest country by landmass. India is currently ranked as the 6th largest economy globally, behind the United States, China, Japan, Germany, and the United Kingdom. While India is a large country, it is listed as the 7th largest country by land area, following Russia, Canada, China, the United States, Brazil, and Australia (APS). India is a rapidly emerging country in every sphere, be in the field of science, technology, economic stability, equality among the masses, prosperity for its citizens, peace and

coordination, tourism sector development, GDP growth, Agricultural sector, Manufacturing sector, Technology innovation, Renewable energy, Infrastructure development, Education improvement, Healthcare expansion, Foreign investment and Real estate growth. Undoubtedly, India is one of the world's fastest growing economies. It is estimated that India will become the second largest economy by 2050. India is an example of a country that has become richer and prosperous. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has witnessed a significant shift in its manufacturing sector and to develop its defense strengths. Two very important initia-

tives led by the Prime Minister of India “Make in India” and “Atmanirbhar Bharat” (Self-reliant India), have been remarkable and impressive in achieving the goal. Such initiatives are aimed to diminish its dependency on imports, increase domestic production and to uplift the nation as a global manufacturing hub. The “Make in India” initiative was led by the GOI in 2014 on September 25, with the primary aim of metamorphosing the nation into a global producing hub. This initiative was led to create and generate the job opportunities, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), facilitate investment, skill enhancement and to make India a preferred Global manufacturing destination. This

initiative by the Indian government intends to promote investment into the country by encouraging businesses to design, build, or assemble products in India. The overall approach adopted by the government's policy was to provide an incentive as well as encourage the investment into the country by developing the much needed infrastructure and modernizing the economy. It attracted Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), Defense Manufacturing, Renewable Energy and many more thus pushing India to be self-reliant at every crux.

“Atmanirbhar Bharat” :- Promoting Self-reliant India.

Since, Make In India cemented the position of India for being the Global

Manufacturing Hub, the world pandemic COVID-19 generated hurdles in the supply of global chains and diminished the importance of self-reliance. Pertinently, in May 2020, the Government of India under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi ji, introduced “Atmanirbhar Bharat” (Self-reliant India) initiative as a strategy to pursue economic self-sufficiency. The initiative was based on five things, Economy, Infrastructure, System, Vibrant demography, and demand. This initiative gave importance to the need for innovation, research and development and many more. It also worked to promote Micro, small and medium enter-

prises which for sure are the bricklayer of India's economy. Since, their inception both the initiatives have pursued magnificent achievements throughout various sectors, including Foreign Direct Investment, Innovation and growth, Economic boost and development, Defense manufacturing, Electronics manufacturing, pharmaceuticals and renewable energy. To achieve the aforementioned goals, several key factors are there to be focused on which includes, Infrastructure Development, Reforms in the policies for the betterment of the citizens, Skill and innovation development, sustainability and many more.

The writer can be reached at Babawar313@gmail.com



The true cost of 5G: Why prices are high now –but will not stay that way

GAURAV GANDHI

The 5G technology is widely recognised for its ability to deliver lower latency, faster speeds and improved connectivity, supporting a vast number of devices simultaneously. However, many consumers perceive 5G as an expensive innovation, primarily due to the high cost of chipsets, while overlooking broader cost factors. Although chipset expenses are a component, they do not represent the complete financial picture.

The Cost of 5G Hardware

When considering 5G, it is common to focus on the price of chips. While 4G chips are priced below \$10, 5G chips currently exceed \$100. However, focusing solely on chipset costs ignores the larger financial framework. The primary expense of 5G stems from the extensive infrastructure required to support the network. Telecom providers must invest in building new base stations, fibre-optic networks, and antennas to enable 5G connectivity.

Historically, new technologies such as cloud computing and smartphones were expensive when first introduced. However, as demand grew and adoption increased, prices gradually decreased. A similar trend is anticipated with 5G.

The Inevitable Drop in 5G Costs

Technological progress consistently follows a pattern: initial prices are high, but they decline over time. A case in point is the smartphone market, where the average cost dropped from \$443 in 2011 to \$372 in 2013. Similarly, cloud computing services have become significantly cheaper over the past decade. The same economic principles apply to 5G. As technology advances and adoption rates increase, costs will inevitably decrease.

Economies of Scale and Cost Reduction

One of the key drivers of cost reduction in 5G is economies of scale. As more telecom providers, businesses and consumers adopt 5G, the cost of deployment will continue to decline. The larger the

global 5G network, the more cost-effective its implementation becomes. Research by Juniper predicts that global 5G connections will surge from 5 million in 2019 to 1.5 billion by 2025. Mass production plays a crucial role in reducing costs.

Increased production volumes lead to lower prices for 5G hardware, including chips, antennas, and base stations. The 5G base station market is expected to grow from \$37.44 billion in 2025 to \$132.06 billion by 2030, at a CAGR of 28.67 per cent, according to Mordor Intelligence. These massive investments will drive economies of scale, further lowering the cost of private 5G network deployment for businesses.

Affordable 5G Handsets and Private Networks

The competition in chipset manufacturing is already pushing down 5G handset prices. As these prices drop, the overall cost of related hardware and services will follow, accelerating global 5G adoption.

5G's Impact on Business

As 5G technology becomes more affordable, businesses will have greater opportunities to enhance their operations. While early adoption may come with higher costs, the long-term benefits will far outweigh these expenses. 5G's ultra-fast connectivity and real-time data transfer capabilities will drive productivity, streamline processes, and facilitate better decision-making. Furthermore, 5G can revolutionise industries by enabling advanced applications in customer service, video streaming, and mobile capabilities.

The Future of 5G Affordability

As adoption scales up, deployment costs will decline, making 5G a more democratised technology. This affordability will allow businesses of all sizes to embrace 5G, fostering innovation in artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and beyond. The widespread availability of 5G will enable businesses to stay competitive in the digital world. **(The writer is Founder & CEO, Echelon Edge Pvt Ltd; views are personal)**

The Valentine Song

A night is nigh,
At her castle of dream
Little ones are exuberant,
Love is caring wild.
The music o'er my,
Strange soul that illumines,
And talks about you
In fever.
I dash my way upon,
The mantel of sun
As it speaks
In love for the earth.
I knew she's right,
To despair in her tears only
And that gaze falls
Like a sculpture falls in dust.

Sidharth P K
Kochi

Coaching centers are dominating the dreams of children



PRIYANKA SAURABH

Coaching centers have diminished the influence of student well-being and formal education. Students prioritize coaching sessions over their academic studies, thereby reducing the role of schools in providing comprehensive education. For example, many students attend school only to meet attendance requirements and use tuition facilities only to prepare for competitive exams. Students who compete hard by spending long hours at coaching centers experience stress, anxiety, and burnout. Reports of suicides of Kota students reflect the severe psychological damage caused by the coaching center environment. Coaching centers dominate academic focus and preparation strate-

gies, causing students to lose interest in their education. To attend coaching sessions, students in many CBSE schools skip regular classes during crucial academic years. High coaching costs further widen the gap in educational opportunities by preventing economically disadvantaged students from accessing high-quality preparation. Premium JEE preparation programs cost millions, separating those who can afford coaching from those who cannot.

The coaching industry has grown as a result of several factors. The need for coaching is driven by the emphasis on high-stakes entrance exams, such as the JEE and NEET. Due to the limited number of IIT seats, students enroll in coaching centers to increase their chances of getting selected. According to parents and students, coaching centers are essential for getting admission to prestigious universities. Because they feel it will improve their performance in competitive exams, many par-

ents spend large sums on coaching fees. The lack of advanced preparation for competitive exams in formal education often leaves a gap that coaching centers fill. State boards emphasize knowledge of state board and NCERT textbooks, while coaching centers provide specialized preparation for competitive exams. The coaching culture is growing rapidly as a result of peer and parental pressure on students to join coaching centers. Entire families are moving to places like Kota and Hyderabad for coaching opportunities. Coaching centers lure students with rank-focused advertisements and success stories. In their advertisements, coaching centers showcase their best students, creating the impression that success is assured.

This has an impact on education in general. Students neglect their regular academic studies as a result of coaching centers' emphasis on competitive exam preparation over curriculum. During Class-

es 11 and 12, students often skip school to attend all-day JEE or NEET coaching sessions. The validity of formal education is diminished as students turn their attention to coaching centers, reducing teacher motivation. Students only use coaching material, and schools in urban areas report low class participation. By encouraging rote learning to succeed in exams, coaching centers undermine the critical thinking and real-world application skills taught in schools. Entrance exam study guides often emphasize solving routine problems more than conceptual analysis. Sports, arts, and extracurricular activities are affected as students spend too much time in coaching classes. Students often miss out on school-sponsored athletic events and cultural programs while preparing for engineering or medical exams. Access to exam-focused resources is limited by high coaching costs, resulting in a dual system where only the poor can benefit from

mainstream education. Government schoolchildren rely on meager educational resources, while wealthier students attend prestigious institutions.

To improve learning in schools, introduce coaching sessions and advanced learning modules in schools to reduce reliance on private coaching facilities. Encourage online resources that provide high-quality education at more affordable prices to reduce the gap between test-taking costs and income. All students can access free resources offered by platforms like Napatal and Diksha for competitive exams. Prioritize competency-based assessments over knowledge-heavy exams to reduce the need for specialized coaching. The Common University Entrance Exam prioritizes aptitude and critical thinking over subject-matter knowledge. Spend money on teacher preparation programs to give school teachers the resources they need to provide advanced instruction and

mentoring. Enhancing the professional skills of teachers across the country is the goal of government programs like NISHTHA. Create guidelines that prioritize a well-rounded curriculum that combines academic, cultural, and athletic instruction with test-taking strategies for competitive exams. The National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 promotes interdisciplinary learning and reduces the stress associated with high-stakes examinations.

Dependence on coaching centers can be reduced by enhancing formal education through skill-based curriculum, personalized learning, and innovative teaching techniques. Strong laws, fair prices, high-quality education, and promoting student well-being will guarantee a fair, comprehensive learning environment. Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." The future is not in parallel educational systems but in closing the gaps.

Feeling The Missing Shadow Of My Mother's Presence



BY MOOL RAJ

Friday January 18, 1998 is the black day in my life when the cruel hand of death snatched my beloved mother Smt Nant Devi at 8:30 am from me for ever and ever. She left to Heavenly Abode but, I still feeling her absence in this world. The vacuum created by her absence is still breaking my heart and tears starts falling from my eyes like the rain.

Sometimes I wonder how profound the bond of motherhood truly is. No matter how fierce the battle may be, no matter how much has been lost, a mother will stake even the essence of her soul for her child.

It's hard to pinpoint when I started feeling so distant. Hunger, once a companion, now sits alongside something else loneliness. I didn't realize how much of a presence she had been in my life until her absence took her place like a shadow falling over me even though she is not here. I am not sure when it started,

but it's like time sped up the moment I left home. The days blend, a blur of hours stretching between one VOIP call to the next. Yet, still, the silence presses down like a weight, heavier every day.

I stare at her photos on my phone, the ones from before I moved away.

There's one where she's laughing, her face glowing with joy, the same one I look at every evening. I don't know what I am searching for when I look at it perhaps some piece of her that might reach across the miles, something to fill the aching hole left by the distance between us. It feels like a conversation we could have/had, but it's just me, and her smile on a screen that refuses to speak back.

I think about those evenings back home. How she used to ask me about my day, always wanting to know the smallest details.

I think she asked because she missed me, even though she never said it out loud. Now all I can do is talk to the screen, hoping somehow, she can still hear me.

I miss the warmth of her voice the way she could comfort me just by being in the same room.

Here, in a small apart-

ment on the other side of the world, I can't even make a cup of coffee without feeling like I have forgotten how to do it the way she always did.

Some nights I catch myself staring at the photo, the sound of my voice talking to her empty air and wonder if she feels it too. I have tried telling myself that I am fine and that I am getting used to the separation.

But some days it feels like there's a constant hum of longing beneath my skin the weight of it always with me even when I pretend it's not.

The hunger inside me isn't just for food it's for her presence, for the comfort I used to take for granted.

"What happened?" ruh my mother asks, her voice barely above a whisper.

I exhaled sharply, my words catching. It's about her AMMI that Charmer

My hesitant hand rests on my chest blades as I swallow hard and she asks again, "What happened?" ruh?

I am unsure what to do. I wonder if my love can be gentle enough to ease the gasps. I want to tell her that I understand. The questions consume me too.

My Son Like everything fades in this world and everyone else,

She too will fade ruh! This world is very beautiful, but the people living in it are extremely selfish, ruthless, and terrible. And day by day, people are becoming more worse. I knew from the beginning that this would happen. I even thought once or twice that Charmer would do this to you. But I held back from telling you because I didn't want you to see me as an enemy in your love. However, always remember this, my soul. It was divine orchestration, not a coincidence.

Ruh you know sometimes, I wonder if mothers gave birth to their anger, not their daughters. They pack every hurt feeling, every sharp remark, every desperate cry, and so much more into a space within themselves a womb designed to hold it all in. Then, they pass it down to us, forcing us to carry its weight. My own mother's womb, however, only had room for spite. Nothing else survived.

It's okay to feel exhausted, my son. You have been quiet for so long, carrying the weight of everything on your shoulders, pretending it doesn't hurt. But you are human, and even the strongest hearts grow tired.

All these years, you have

given your best your love your loyalty your sincerity. Was that not enough? Did it all mean nothing before they changed?

My son, they didn't love you they loved what you gave them. They loved the comfort, the care, the effort you were never the priority, only what you could offer. But listen to me, my child their love was not the measure of your worth.

Life was never meant to be a straight path, for a straight line means lifelessness. Even your heartbeat proves it its ups and downs are what keep you alive. So don't fear the rise and fall, my son. It's only shaping you for something greater.

And remember ruh! God is greater than our worries accept everything God knows the best.

I often find myself searching the streets here, walking around, hoping I might see someone who looks like her. But of course, I never do. The closest I come is the fleeting moment when someone smiles at me from across the street, and I catch a glimpse of the way her smile used to light up a room. But it's never enough.

I try to keep up with the traditions we have, even from

this far away.

I can't tell her how much I miss her with the same sincerity.

The calls are brief, but I catch her eyes through the screen, searching for something she can't put into words something she's too far away to share.

Some nights, I wonder if she is missing me as much as I miss her. If she is looking at my photos too, trying to hear my voice in the background of her quiet house. Sometimes, I feel like we are both just waiting for the day when we will meet again when this distance won't feel like such a stretch. But for now, I hold on to the photos, the memories, and the small moments we can share through the call. I talk to her the way I always have though it feels different now. It's more of a ritual than a conversation, but I suppose that's all we have for now. The hunger for her presence is something I can't name, but it's there, and so are her pictures. They will have to be enough, for now. Now days are converted into months and months into years, I remember my Beloved Mother in Silent Tear

The writer is a regular columnist and freelance writer

Natural farming: India's path to sustainable agriculture and food security



VIJAY GARG

Ending hunger, ensuring food security and promoting sustainable agriculture are the main objectives of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Agriculture plays a role in achieving all 17 SDGs directly or indirectly by supporting economic, social and environmental progress. Sustainable agriculture focuses on meeting the needs of a growing population while protecting the environment, fostering social equity and ensuring economic viability. By 2050, under current agricultural trends, 60 per cent of India's population - over 10 per cent

of the global population may face severe food shortages. Addressing the crisis requires increased production, but high input costs and price volatility are pushing farmers into debt. Natural farming offers a cost-effective alternative aiming to reduce dependency on chemical inputs while promoting sustainable practices.

Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) is a grassroots initiative aimed at enhancing farm viability by minimising costs. Over one million hectares in India are currently under natural farming. Natural farming represents an Indianised approach to sustainable agriculture, integrating local ecological principles and indigenous knowledge, in contrast to the European-origin organic farming practices. India is making significant strides in promoting natural farming, with leading states

including Andhra Pradesh (1 lakh hectares), Madhya Pradesh (0.99 lakh hectares) and Chhattisgarh (0.85 lakh hectares). Other notable contributors are Kerala (0.84 lakh hectares), Odisha (0.24 lakh hectares), Himachal Pradesh (0.12 lakh hectares), Jharkhand (0.034 lakh hectares) and Tamil Nadu (0.02 lakh hectares). ZBNF and the Andhra Pradesh Community-Based Natural Farming (APCNF) models are the most widely used approaches. A NITI Aayog report highlights the potential to double the share of chemical-free farming to 15 per cent immediately and expand it to 30 per cent by 2030, with no adverse impact on food security. The National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad, serves as the central agency for promoting natural farming. Natural farming reduces

cultivation costs by 60-70 per cent by eliminating chemical fertilisers and pesticides.

To promote natural farming, the Central Government introduced the Bharatiya Prakritik Krishi Paddhati (BPKP) scheme in 2020-21 under the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY). By 2023, the scheme covered 6.1 lakh hectares with a budget of Rs 49.8 crore.

Additionally, a five-kilometre natural farming corridor along the Ganges River was launched to cover 960,000 hectares. The National Mission on Natural Farming aims to form 15,000 clusters in Gram Panchayats, involving 1 crore farmers and covering 750,000 hectares. Natural farming optimises the use of resources such as soil, labour and equipment, leading to enhanced crop productivity. It eliminates the dependency on chemical fertilisers, herbi-

cides and pesticides.

This approach fosters rapid development of soil microbiota and improves soil aeration through the use of natural inputs. Sikkim achieved its 100 per cent organic status in 2016 through the "Sikkim Organic Mission," which began in 2003. With minimal chemical fertilizer use (5.8 kg/ha) and traditional practices already in place for crops like cardamom, the government phased out fertiliser subsidies, promoted water conservation and trained farmers in practices like vermicomposting and non-pesticide pest management. ICAR is currently studying Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) practices in states like Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Uttarakhand to assess productivity and soil health impacts. India's unique agro-ecological diversity and rich traditional knowledge sys-

tems position the country as a potential leader in the global transition to sustainable agricultural practices. However, careful planning, robust infrastructure and targeted training are essential to avoid the pitfalls observed in other nations like Sri Lanka. By integrating modern technologies with natural farming methods, India can further optimise resources, ensure resilience against climate change and bolster long-term food security for its growing population. In essence, natural farming is not just a return to traditional practices but a forward-looking approach that harmonises ecological balance with agricultural productivity, fostering a sustainable future for generations to come.

Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational columnist street kour Chand MHR Malout



Dy CM reviews progress on development projects at Shopian Directs for expediting completion of all vital projects

■ HT News Network

SHOPIAN, FEBRUARY 14: Highlighting the historical importance of Shopian district, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, today directed for fast pacing the work on development projects with special focus on connectivity and Horticulture sectors.

The Deputy Chief Minister was speaking during a review meeting held, to assess progress on various developmental projects and schemes being implemented in the district, here at Mini-Secretariat Shopian. The meeting was attended by MLA Wachi, Showkat Hussain Ganie and MLA Shopian, Shabir Kullay besides HoDs of different departments and sectoral officers.

Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta, presented detailed overview of developmental scenario and undergoing works in the district.

While reviewing status of projects of Public Works Department (PWD), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Roads and Buildings (R&B) department, JJM and others, the Deputy Chief Minister emphasised the importance of maintaining high quality standards and adhering to project dead-



lines, expressing concern over delays in certain works. He directed the officials to prioritise the pending projects and ensure their early completion.

The Deputy Chief Minister underscored the significance of timely and quality execution of infrastructure projects. He instructed the officers to strictly adhere to technical specifications and safety standards. He also emphasized the need for sustainable construction practices to benefit the people of the district in the long term.

He asked the officers to expedite developmental initiatives and enhance public service delivery mechanisms. He stressed the importance of being accessible to the public to ensure effective implementation of government initiatives. "We are com-

mitted for accelerating development process and improving infrastructure across the district. The suggestions and feedback of the elected representatives should also be taken into consideration while formulating schemes so that these could contain the local needs and demands", maintained the Deputy Chief Minister.

Assuring the officers of government's full support in addressing challenges, if any, the Deputy Chief Minister called for regular monitoring and evaluation of all ongoing works to ensure transparency and accountability.

While expressing concern over delays in certain works, the Deputy Chief Minister emphasized the importance of meticulous planning and execution. He stressed the need to

work with added dedication ensuring speedy and quality completion of all ongoing works. The Deputy Chief Minister had a detailed account of the works in progress, emphasising the need for maintaining high quality standards in all phases of project execution. He directed the officials to ensure strict adherence to deadlines besides addressing any bottlenecks hindering the timely completion of projects.

During the meeting, the officials provided updates regarding the progress on various projects and highlighted challenges, including funding constraints, land acquisition issues and technical difficulties. Legislators highlighted the issues of public importance concerning their respective areas. The issues inter alia included augmentation of roads under PMGSY and other developmental activities in Zainapora and Shopian, Cardiologist in District Hospital Shopian, beautification of Shopian Town, land compensation under Bye-Pass road constructions and other matters.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister inspected the pace of works on the Trenz Bridge being constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 39.41 crore.

Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Day celebrated at GDC & Hospital, Sgr

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, February 14: Government Dental College & Hospital Srinagar on Thursday celebrated International Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery (OMFS) Day under the theme "Early detection of Oral Cancer & Self-examination" by the patient themselves.

On the occasion, Principal/ Dean Prof (Dr) Ajaz Ahmad Shah, delivered a lecture on oral cancer screening methods and incorporation of AI technology into the early screening.

The faculty of OMFS department Dr Irshad & Dr Altaf H Malik rolled out the campaign for OMFS day with pledge to teach common masses about self examination of their oral cavity for any potential changes & early self referral for oral cavity examination to the concerned doctors for further follow-up.

The department of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery praised Prof. (Dr) Ajaz Ahmad Shah, for his role in upbrining the department to tertiary care level for treatment of Oral & Maxillofacial defects, disorders, disease and his role in starting the state of art care in this field.

The department awarded Prof. (Dr) Ajaz Ahmad Shah as celebrated 'Maxillofacial surgeon' of the state for his unparalleled and praiseworthy role in progressing the department and getting it at par with the other tertiary care institute of the country.

The problem was attended by faculty members, staff & students.

5 children forced into Labour rescued at Katra

■ HT News Network

REASI, FEBRUARY 14: The District Administration Reasi today launched a comprehensive drive to rescue and rehabilitate children and adolescents forced into child labour in Katra town. The drive was conducted jointly by the Departments of Social Welfare and Labour on the directions issued by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights. The Rescue team carried out inspections across various business establishments in Katra, including shops, restaurants, dhabas, street stalls, and workshops. Five minors were rescued during these inspections, highlighting the urgency and necessity of such drives. The drive was conducted under the supervision of District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) Sachin Sharma and Assistant Labour Commissioner (ALC) Annie Vaid in collaboration with members of different agencies. The Rescue team comprised members from multiple agencies, including the Department of Social Welfare, Labour, Health, Police, DLSA, and members of Child Helpline and Child Welfare Committee. Key contributors to the operation included Labour Officer Shivika Sharma, Child Helpline Coordinator Mohd Saleem.

Regional Transport Authority Kishtwar issues Route permits

■ HT News Network



KISHTWAR, FEBRUARY 14: A meeting of the Regional Transport Authority (RTA) was convened here today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan.

During the session, Member Secretary RTA (ARTO) Tasleem Wani presented a total of 26 cases of Letter of Authority (LAS) and 144 cases for All J&K Route Permits. Following the review, 11 cases for the purchase of Stage Carriage Mini Buses and 15 cases for four-wheeler Tata Magic/Maximo vehicles (including 10 under the MUMKIN Scheme) were approved. Additionally, 144 All J&K Route Permits were sanctioned.

The meeting also deliberated upon applications for change of route, which were deferred pending verification of the demand in under-served areas. The Chairman RTA emphasized the importance of public safety and directed the Member Secretary to assess route conditions before granting Letters of Authority to applicants.

Furthermore, strict directives were issued to the RTA officials to monitor and regulate traffic congestion in Kishtwar town. The Chairman instructed the ARTO to ensure proper parking arrangements for passenger vehicles across the district and implement measures to ease traffic flow. Chairman RTA, Kishtwar, Additional Superintendent of Police, Pawan Kumar (JKPS), along with other concerned officials, attended the meeting.

Udhampur: DLTC approves 30 JKREGP cases

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, FEBRUARY 14: A meeting of District Level Task Force Committee was held today under the chairmanship of Additional District Development Commissioner Udhampur Rajinder Singh to review applications seeking benefits under JK Rural Employment Generation Programme being implemented by Khadi & Village Industries Board. The committee, after scrutinizing 34 loan applications, approved 30 cases while the remaining 04 were deferred for next meeting. District Officer KVIB, Ashwani Kumar, Representative of DIC, LDM SBI, Cluster Head J&K Bank, Regional Manager of J&K Grameen Bank, Director SBI RSETI and Superintendent ITI attended the meeting.

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of KHUSHBOO GUL D/O ISHFAQ MAJEED GANIE R/O CHANDKOTE Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 18/05/2015 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of YAWER AHMAD DAR S/O MOHAMMAD MUNAWAR DAR R/O DOLIPORA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 15/10/2013 and event has been shown to be occurred at Home for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of SURAJ AIJAZ S/O AIJAZ AHMAD DAR R/O NAGBAL Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 01/07/2021 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of YAWER AHMAD DAR S/O MOHAMMAD MUNAWAR DAR R/O DOLIPORA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 15/10/2013 and event has been shown to be occurred at Home for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

ازنیات پہلگام

درخواست منجانب سال سیرت جان دختر محمد اشرف شیخ ساکنه فصلان پہلگام بمراد حصول RBA سرٹیفکیٹ بحق دختر

اشتہار بمراد آگاہی

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان میں درخواست سال سیرت جان زینکاروانی سے اس نسبت پٹواری علاقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول مطلوبہ نقوالات ریکارڈ طلب کے جس سے عیاں ہوتا ہے سال موقع سال فصلان پہلگام میں رہائش پذیر ہے۔ بذیل افراد مشغول ہیں

1. محمد اشرف ولد عبدل سلام 51 سال مزدوری

2. سید محمد اشرف 48 سال گھریلو کام

3. سیرت جان دختر محمد اشرف 17 سال / / تعلیم

اسکے علاوہ کوئی بھی افراد میں بتایا گیا ہے کہ کسی سال لا آمداری 106000 مطالب سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض سال سیرت جان کے اندر دائر پیش کریں معاذ گورنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

نائب تحصیلدار

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Barbara Hureem Butt to (New name) Barbara Hurrem Butt in future I will be known as (new name) Barbara Hurrem Butt if any body having objection he/she may contact passport office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objections will be accepted.

Name... Barbara Hurrem Butt

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of SALIM HAMEED RATHER S/O ABDUL HAMEED RATHER R/O CHECK DUBABUGH Tehsil WAGOORA Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 20/11/2020/ and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for the information of the general public that i have correction in name of my bank passbook now I want to change this correction as per my adhaar card I want change my name from Amir hussain rather to Amir shabir rather . If any body has any objection regarding this please contact jkbank singpora within 7 days no objection accepted after the stipulated time period.

Name , Amir shabir rather
S/o shabir ahmad rather
R/o matipora singpora

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of MANAN BASHIR S/O BASHIR AHMAD GANIE R/O SHRAKWARA Tehsil WAGOORA Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 17/11/2021 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR,
OFFICE OF THE CUSTODIAN EVACUEE PROPERTY
DEPARTMENT KASHMIR, SRINAGAR.**

Notice inviting of Quotations

Quotation affixed with revenue stamp worth Rs. 5/- are invited from the registered /authorized agencies dealing with Decoration (Zoo) for installation of Modern and New LED type Decoration fixal (Zoo) and lighting during functions to be conducted at Samanbal Marriage Hall Kathidarwaza Srinagar situated at Srinagar for the year 2025. The interested agency (Quotationer) should offer the rates to be charged from the concerned customers / parties within below mentioned limits.

S.No	Duration of function.	Rupees below
1	1. Decoration of exterior building (Roof top /side walls/front side facing Garden along with garden for 01 day function.	Rs.16000/-
2	2. Decoration of exterior building (Roof top /side walls/front side facing Garden along with garden for 02 days function.	Rs.18000/-
3	3. Decoration of exterior building (Roof top /side walls/front side facing Garden along with garden& theme(upto 50x 12 feet in area) for 01 day function.	Rs.18000/-
4	4. Decoration of exterior building (Roof top /side walls/front side facing Garden along with garden& theme(upto 50x12 feet in area) for 02 day function.	Rs.22000/-
5	5. Decoration of exterior building (Roof top /side walls/front side-facing Garden along with garden for additional day.	Rs.6000/

1. The Quotations should be accompanied with a CDR worth Rs.60000/- (Rupees Sixty Thousand Only) Pledged to Custodian Evacuee Property Kashmir Srinagar and quotations without CDR and Revenue stamp will not be entertained at all. (Cheques will not be accepted)

2. The quotationer shall have to provide Registration Certificate, pan Card, and GST/ TIN Registration and latest clearance certificate from GST 4B i.e, for the month of December 2024.

3. The quotations should reach to the office of undersigned by or before 25th of Feb 2025-4 PM and shall be opened on the same day or any other convenient day.

4. The successful quotationer shall have to pay an amount of Rs.7000/- for each functions towards the department.

5. The successful quotationer shall have to pay an amount of Rs.125000/- (Rupees one lac Twenty Five Thousand Only) in advance to the department against proper receipt which shall be adjusted at the time of expiry of the contract for the year 2025.

6. The successful agency holder shall take care of property and in case of any damage to the property. The contract shall be terminated without any notice.

7. The successful agency holder shall submit an undertaking duly authenticated for abiding terms and conditions.

8. The successful bidder is bound to make electrification of waza shed and waza tar during marriage function.

DIPK-12002/24
Date: Feb 14 2025

Tariq Hussain Naik KAS
Custodian Evacuee Property Kashmir Srinagar

DDC Pulwama chairs meeting on implementation of PMJVK

HT News Network

Pulwama, February 14: A comprehensive meeting was convened today under the chairmanship of the District Development Commissioner (DDC), Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, to deliberate on the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) in the district.

The meeting focused on a detailed review of sanctioned projects that remain unexecuted due to non-availability of funds as well as discussions on the augmentation and upgradation of existing initiatives with appropriate justifications. Also, new project proposals put forth by various departments, along with feasibility studies concerning land availability, office

accommodations and housing requirements, were thoroughly examined.

Dr. Qayoom conducted a meticulous sector-wise review, covering education, healthcare, horticulture, handicrafts, milk processing, sports, IT infrastructure and women-centric projects, underlining their significance in fostering socio-economic development.

DDC said the imperative of proposing projects that not only serve the broader community but also mitigate the reliance on rented accommodations for schools.

He urged the concerned departments to prioritize the development of robust, long-term infrastructure that fosters sustainability, enhances the quality of education and ensures



a more stable and conducive learning environment for students.

Discussions in the health sector focused on strengthening both hospital infrastructure and AYUSH facilities to improve healthcare services. The District Development Com-

missioner underscored the necessity of enhancing medical facilities under PMJVK to ensure better accessibility and quality healthcare for the local population.

Regarding Handicrafts as the Nodal Department for skill development,

the DDC suggested establishing integrated infrastructure that includes training centers along with dedicated selling facilities. Such initiatives would provide a platform for local artisans, creating employment opportunities and enhancing market accessibility.

The development of sports infrastructure was also a key area of discussion, with a focus on both indoor and outdoor stadium projects under PMJVK. The need for modern, well-equipped sports facilities was highlighted to encourage youth participation in physical activities and competitive sports.

Women-centric initiatives, including the construction of women's hostels at Government Degree College and working women hostels under

the Social Welfare Department, were reviewed.

The chair was informed that the women's hostel at the Government Degree College is 60% complete.

The District Development Commissioner stressed the need to expedite such projects to provide safe and secure accommodation for women pursuing education and employment.

In the dairy sector, Dr. Qayoom advocated for the implementation of milk processing projects under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model within the PMJVK framework. He emphasized that such initiatives would not only bolster dairy production but also modernize processing facilities, streamline marketing channels and create sustainable economic opportunities for local farmers.

HDFC Bank Celebrates V-Day By Encouraging Couples to Talk About Money

HT News Network

Srinagar: HDFC Bank has launched Financially Ever After - a unique campaign to educate couples about financial matters. The campaign introduces young couples to the idea of managing their money together - a crucial yet often overlooked aspect of modern-day relationships.

It endeavours to empower Gen Z and young millennial couples with the knowledge and tools to navigate money matters together. The Bank has created a dedicated microsite - <https://www.money-madeeasy.org/> - that features an interactive 'Financially Ever After' quiz, which enables couples to assess their financial compatibility in a fun and informative way. The quiz reveals their attitudes towards financial decisions, bringing to the fore areas of agreement as well as differences.

The website also features informative videos and articles, offering practical guidance on managing finances as a couple. The concepts are explained by FJ Moneysha, the Bank's Financial Jockey, who demystifies financial jargons. (KNT)

Police Arrests 04 Drug Peddlers, Contraband Substances Recovered

HT News Network

Srinagar, Feb 14, ANB: In continuation of its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Police have arrested 04 drug peddlers in Sopore, Budgam & Handwara and recovered contraband substances from their possession. According to the Associated News Bureau, in Sopore, a police party headed by Incharge Police Post Warpora under the supervision of SDPO Sopore Shri Sarfaraz Bashir-JKPS and SHO Police Station Sopore, at a checkpoint established at Dangerpora, apprehended two suspected persons. They have been identified as Farooq Ahmad Dar son of Ghulam Mohammad Dar and Hilal Ahmad Ganie son of Fayaz Ahmad Ganie, both residents of Dangerpora Sopore. During search, 140 grams of contraband charas like substance was recovered from their possession and the duo was subsequently arrested. In Handwara, a police party of police station Qalamabad headed by SHO PS Qalamabad at a checkpoint established at Audoora Near bridge intercepted a suspicious person identified as Mushtaq Ahmad Beigh son of Habibullah Beigh resident of Jahama Qalamabad.

DLC meeting under Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram held at Kulgam

Farooq Rather

Kulgam, February 14: District Level Committee (DLC) meeting under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) was today held at Kulgam with an aim to formulate a comprehensive plan under the scheme. The meeting was chaired by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan. The PMJVK scheme aims to improve the socio-economic conditions of people particularly weaker communities by providing them with basic amenities like education, health, infrastructure, skill development and employment opportunities for the youth.

The committee discussed various aspects of the scheme, including interventions required in education, health, infrastructure development and skill development sectors in the district.

During the meeting, the DDC instructed concerned to frame sector wise comprehensive plan under the scheme for holistic development of the district.



DDC emphasized the need of expediting submission of Project Proposal Reports (PPRs) and Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) to ensure the seamless execution of the PMJVK scheme in the district. He also impressed for effective implementation of PMJVK in district & urged the officers to work in synergy to maximize the benefits of the scheme for the people of district. The meeting was attended by Principals of GDCs of Kulgam, Kilam, DH Pora, Frisal; GM DIC, CPO, ACR, CMO, CEO, Principal Polytechnic, Superintendent ITI, DSWO, Executive Engineer R&B, AD Handicraft & Handloom, EO's of Municipal Committees of Kulgam, Yaripora & Devsar.

Certificate distribution ceremony organized by DE&CC Kupwara

HT News Network

KUPWARA, February 14: The District Employment & Counselling Centre (DE&CC) Kupwara, in collaboration with Wyath Service Pvt. Limited, successfully organized a Certificate Distribution Ceremony at the Counselling Hall, DE&CC Kupwara today following the completion of a three-month skill training program on GST Assistant with Tally, benefiting 30 trainees who received their certificates. Assistant Director Employment, Arshid Qadir graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, handing over certificates to the successful trainees. The event was attended by Saleem Ahmad, Director Wyath, officials from JKEDI Kupwara, officers/officials



from DE&CC Kupwara, highlighting the significance of skill development in empowering youth for better employment opportunities. Speaking at the ceremony, Arshid Qadir lauded the efforts of DE&CC Kupwara and Wyath Service Pvt. Limited for their commitment to skill development. He encouraged the trainees to utilize their newly acquired skills for professional growth and

self-sufficiency. Director Wyath, also emphasized the role of such training programs in bridging the gap between education and employability. Arshid Qadir emphasized the department's commitment to empowering youth with market-relevant skills, enabling them to earn a dignified livelihood. He highlighted the department's consistent efforts in running various skill

training programs, benefiting hundreds of youth across Kupwara district.

The event was moderated by Ishfaq Ahmad Wani, Employment Officer, DE&CC Kupwara, who highlighted the key objectives of the program and the impact of skill-based learning in enhancing employability among youth.

The Certificate Distribution Ceremony served as a testament to the ongoing efforts of DE&CC Kupwara in fostering skill development initiatives and creating avenues for youth employment in the region.

The trainees, who received certificates, expressed gratitude to the department for sponsoring the program and providing them with the opportunity to develop their skills in GST and Tally.

DC reviews functioning of Municipal Council Ganderbal Inspects various developmental projects in town

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, FEBRUARY 14: Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, who is also Administrator of Municipal Council Ganderbal, convened a meeting to review the functioning of the Municipal Council Ganderbal here today.

The meeting was conducted to evaluate the operational efficiency and performance of the Municipal Council.

Executive Officer, Municipal Council gave a detailed overview of ongoing projects, administrative processes, town pro-



file, and other key initiatives undertaken by the Municipal Council.

The DC gave necessary instructions on enhancing civic amenities, optimizing resource allocation, and ensuring streamlined governance for the benefit of locals. The DC emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts and trans-

parent communication to further enhance the impact of municipal services.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, EO Municipal Council Ganderbal, Executive Engineers of PMGSY, R&B and KPDC, besides, staff of various sections of the council. Later, the DC took an extensive tour of Gan-

derbal Town and inspected various ongoing development works including marriage hall at Duderhama, Clock Tower and Amphitheater in Ganderbal town, Bus Yard as well as Children Park and Open Gym behind bus yard. During inspection, the DC gave necessary instructions to the Executive Engineer R&B to expedite the progress of work so that all works get completed in stipulated time frame. During the visit, the DC was accompanied by EO Municipal Council, Executive Engineer R&B, AEE R&B and other officials of Municipal Council Ganderbal.

DC B'pora visits Hajin Hospital to assess Healthcare Services

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, FEBRUARY 14: In an effort to ensure the delivery of quality healthcare services to the public, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri on Friday visited Hajin Hospital to assess the facilities, patient care, and overall management.

During the visit, M.A. Qadri various sections of hospital besides interacted with patients to gather feedback on the quality of patient care services, availability of medicines, and other facilities.

The DC directed the staff to ensure quality patient care services and punctuality besides performing their duties with added zeal to serve the public effectively.

Speaking to the media, DC M.A. Qadri also assured the public that a thorough and impartial investigation would be conducted into the



recent Markundal incident, where a pregnant woman died after childbirth. He assured that if any negligence or lapse is found in the case, strict action would be taken.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by SDM Sumbal and other concerned. The DC directed the staff to ensure quality patient care services and punctuality besides performing their duties.

Kashmir winter games attract global athletes to pristine slopes of Gulmarg

HT News Network

Gulmarg, February 14: Amidst the crystalline air of Gulmarg, where Himalayas jut into the heavens, an unlikely assembly is taking shape.

The 2025 Khelo India Winter Games, to be held from February 22 to 25, has drawn an interesting cross-section of international players and fans, turning this premier skiing destination into a melting pot of cultures bound together by their passion for winter sports. "The beauty here is overwhelming," says Melania Anderson, a yoga instructor from the United Kingdom based in Hong Kong.

Anderson, who works with the Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) through her charity

'Yama', is enchanted by the double appeal of Kashmir as both a sporting challenge and cultural treasure.

"The Kashmiri cuisine alone would have made the journey worthwhile," she says.

Maybe nobody better illustrates this meeting's surprise demographics than Ben Hurst, an Australian commercial prawn fisherman who has swapped the spray of the Pacific for the powder of the Himalayas. "Standing in the mountains of Kashmir is safer than walking across the streets of Sydney," he says with the sort of assurance that comes from direct knowledge.

Hurst, who is from the small village of Iluka midway between Brisbane and Sydney, waves aside travel warnings.



"What we have experienced is just gorgeous and beautiful. It's unlike most skiing resorts around the world," he says and praises hospitality & friendliness of the locals.

The French team brings its own view to these games. Jean Marc Auge, who grew up in the French Alps, talks of the Himalayas with holy reverence.

"This is different," he says, sweeping his hand across the expanse before him and added "Altogether different".

His fellow-countryman Nabil El, who is now resident in Australia, nods assent. The locals, the athletes, see more in the games than sport. Firdous Ahmad Sheikh from Tangmarg, Yasmeen Sajad from Sopore, Mehak Mushtaq from Palhalan Pattan, and Aalima Zainab from

Tangmarg are in awe about meeting international ski and snowboarding experts.

"It's an out of this world experience," they say, with their enthusiasm clearly evident.

Others like Virginia Winstone, a New Zealander; Laura Thonton, from Wisconsin, USA; and Australian ski guide and patroller Bill Barker, too have been attracted to the games.

Their numbers have turned Gulmarg into an instant global village, where the snow is the lingua franca.

As preparations for the games enter the last leg, the air in Gulmarg is alive with expectation.

The untouched slopes look for their moment to shine, prepared to present not only athletic prowess but also Kashmir's hospitality.

Dir Information reviews performance, functioning of department

Emphasis on strengthening media coordination, improving public engagement through digital platforms

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 14: Director Information J&K, Nitish Rajora, emphasized enhanced public outreach, efficient communication strategies, timely dissemination of government initiatives as well as strengthening media coordination and improving public engagement through digital platforms. The Director made these remarks while chairing a meeting to review the performance and functioning of the Department of Information and Public Relations at Media Complex here today. Joint Director Information (Hqrs), Viveik Puri; Joint Director Information Jam-



mu, Atul Gupta; Joint Director Information Kashmir, Shah Nawaz Bhukhari; Deputy Director Information (PR) Deepak Dubey; Deputy Director Information (Central) Sunil Kumar; Deputy Director PR Kashmir Ahsan Ul Haq Chisti; Deputy Director PR Jammu Ankush Hans; Cultural Officers, Field Publicity Officers, Information Officers

and other concerned officers attended the meeting, either in person or through video conferencing.

During the meeting, the Director underscored the importance of proactive communication for the public good. He urged the officers to adopt innovative approaches to highlight developmental programs, welfare schemes and poli-

cy decisions of the government.

The Director laid special emphasis on leveraging social media and digital platforms for real-time updates and public feedback, ensuring transparency and accountability. He called upon the officers to adopt timely strategies for debunking fake news.

While reviewing manpower position and other issues of the department, he called upon the officers to speed up the process for filling of vacant posts. He also called upon the officers to organise regular training courses for staff of the department to abreast them with latest trends of public relations.

J&K Bank honoured with MSME Banking Excellence Awards

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, Feb 14: In recognition for its leadership in MSME awareness and empowerment Initiatives, J&K Bank has been honoured with two prestigious awards at the MSME Banking Excellence Awards-2024.

The Bank was adjudged as the winner in the category of Best Bank for Creating Awareness among MSMEs (Private Sector) and secured the position of Runner-Up in Best MSME Bank (Private Sector).

During a high-profile event organized by the Chamber of Indian Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (CIMSME) in New Delhi, Union Minister of State (Finance) Pankaj Chaudhary presented the awards to the Bank's Divisional Head (Rest of India) Rajesh Gupta and Zonal Head (Delhi) Suresh Kumar Chowdhary in the presence of President (CIMSME) Mukesh Mohan Gupta and other dig-



nitaries. Commenting upon the achievement, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said, "We are deeply honoured to receive these prestigious awards from CIMSME that reaffirm our commitment to fostering financial awareness and supporting the growth of MSMEs, which are the backbone of country's economy."

"At J&K Bank, we continue to strengthen our MSME-focused initiatives to empower businesses and entrepreneurs across the country. This recognition motivates us to fur-

ther enhance our services, deepen our engagement with the MSMEs and we remain committed to addressing their unique challenges through accessible banking solutions and robust outreach programs", he added.

Notably, the Bank has consistently played a pivotal role in enabling MSME growth through its specialized financial solutions and awareness programs, contributing significantly to the economic upliftment of people besides job creation particularly in its core operational geographies.

DC Ganderbal conducts surprise inspection of District Hospital

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, FEBRUARY 14: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore today took a surprise inspection of District Hospital (DH) Ganderbal to inspect its functioning and facilities being provided to the patients there.

The DC took round of various sections like emergency ward, IPD, XRAY unit, General medicine, Gyne ward and laboratory.

He interacted with the patients admitted in different wards besides enquiring about health care facilities and availability of medical staff there.

The DC directed the hospital authorities to ensure availability of medical staff for attending patients efficiently and ensuring proper medical attention is given to each patient.

He also stressed for proper segregation of bio medical waste and maintaining cleanliness in and around the hospital premises. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore today took a surprise inspection of District Hospital



(DH) Ganderbal to inspect its functioning and facilities being provided to the patients there.

The DC took round of various sections like emergency ward, IPD, XRAY unit, General medicine, Gyne ward and laboratory. He interacted with the patients admitted in different wards besides enquiring about health care facilities and availability of medical staff there.

The DC directed the hospital authorities to ensure availability of medical staff for attending patients efficiently and ensuring proper medical attention is given to each patient. He also stressed for proper segregation of bio medical waste and maintaining cleanliness in and around the hospital premises.

District Hospital Admin Snoops on Patients, Staff; Massive Privacy Breach Sparks Outrage

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, Feb 13 (KNS): In a shocking violation of privacy, the Medical Superintendent of District Hospital Bandipora, Dr. Masarat Iqbal, has allegedly turned the hospital into a surveillance zone, spying on doctors, staff, and even patients through illegally installed audio-visual CCTV cameras.

The unauthorized surveillance has triggered widespread outrage, with many calling it an attempt to snoop on employees and eavesdrop on confidential medical discussions.

According to official sources, Dr. Iqbal directed to install audio-enabled cameras across the hospital without following due procedure to avoid getting caught. CCTVs have also been installed in highly sensitive areas such as the minor operation theatre, casualty

ward, emergency doctors' room, Sick Neonatal Care Unit (SNCU), medicine ward, LSCs, post-operative ward, COPD ward, registration section, and the drug counter.

The move has raised alarm among doctors and paramedics, who argue that such surveillance compromises patient confidentiality and staff privacy.

A doctor (name withheld) recounted a disturbing incident recently where he was discussing a highly personal medical issue—the removal of an abscess from a female patient's breast—only to later discover that the entire conversation had been heard in the Medical Superintendent's office through the spy cameras. Enraged by the violation, the doctor confronted Dr. Iqbal, condemning the illegal and unethical practice.

"This is not just CCTV surveillance for security purposes. This is an outright breach of doctor-

patient confidentiality. Nowhere else in the country is patient privacy compromised in such a shameful manner," said a furious doctor.

Hospital employees are equally distressed. "Every conversation we have, even about personal matters, is being recorded in the MS's office. The next day, the entire hospital is gossiping about it. How can we work under such conditions?" said an agitated staff member.

Another employee added: "Instead of focusing on patient care, the administration seems more interested in spying on doctors, patients and staff. Are we criminals?"

Adding to the scandal, sources revealed that the CCTVs were procured in violation of government norms. Instead of following the mandatory procurement process via the Government e-Marketplace (GEM) Portal, the hospital author-

ities bought the cameras from the open market, allegedly to benefit a "blue-eyed" vendor.

"Apart from being a gross violation of privacy, this is a clear case of corruption. Who authorized these purchases? Who was benefited by procurement of equipment? This needs a thorough investigation," a hospital insider alleged.

With mounting anger among doctors and paramedics, hospital staff are now demanding immediate removal of these unauthorized surveillance cameras, strict action against those responsible, and an independent probe into the illegal procurement deal.

The incident has raised serious ethical and legal concerns, prompting calls for government intervention before patient trust in the healthcare system is irreparably damaged.

Labour & Employment Department organises awareness camp at Gool Provides card renewal, registration services to local workers

HT News Network

RAMBAN, FEBRUARY 14: In line with the Deputy Chief Minister's directives during his visit to Sana Panchayat, the Labour Department organized an awareness and registration camp at Gool.

The camp attracted workers from Gool A, Gool B, Gool Jaman, Gool C, Dedha and Kalimasta Panchayats, witnessing participation of around 150 workers.

To streamline the registration process on the JKBOCWVB portal, the Labour Department is working closely with Common Service Centres (CSCs) across the district.

During the camp, the Assistant Labour Commissioner Amit Kumar,



briefed workers on labour laws, including the Payment of Wages Act, Workmen Compensation Act, Child Labour Act, Maternity Benefit Act, Contract Labour Act, and Payment of Gratuity Act. He also highlighted the welfare schemes of the J&K Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board

(JKBOCWVB).

The workers were encouraged to register on the JK Samadhan App, a dedicated grievance redressal portal and sensitized about PM-Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, being implemented by JPDCL. A helpline number (9419192398) was shared for fur-

ther assistance.

The ALC also informed the workers about E-Shram, Mission Youth schemes like Mumkin and Tejaswini, the ESI scheme, and the Mission YUVA Survey.

During the camp, 15 on-the-spot registrations were done on the JK Samadhan App, facilitated by CSC VLE deputied by District Manager CSC, Nawaz.

Additionally, 20 labour card renewals and 7 new registrations were approved on the spot, with distribution of new labour cards.

Information brochures on various Labour, Employment, and Industries Department schemes were also distributed among the participating workers.

KOMAL SINGH MANHAS RECEIVES BHARAT KE ANMOL NATIONAL AWARD FOR SECOND TIME

HT News Network

Hyderabad 14 FEB : Komal Singh Manhas, Bureau Chief of News18 India Network 18 Broadcast Ltd Jammu, has been honoured with the prestigious "Bharat Ke Anmol" National Award for the second time. She received the award at the third edition of Bharat Ke Anmol, held at the Taj Deccan on National Women's Day. The event, dedicated to women, recognised unsung women achievers from diverse fields. Actress-politician Kusboo Sundar presented the awards, with dignitaries like Mr. Gaddam Prasad Kumar, Hon'ble Speaker, and Ms. Kalvakuntla Kavitha MLC, founder-chairperson of Jagruthi Foundation and Ms. Nerella Sharada, chairperson, Telangana State Women's Commission. Chairman of International Human Rights Association. Komal Singh Manhas had previously



received the award at the 1st Session of Bharat Ke Anmol Rattan in Delhi in 2023, becoming the first woman journalist from Jammu and Kashmir to receive the 'Bharat Ke Anmol' Award. This recognition is a testament to her exceptional work in the field of journalism. What's more, Komal was also awarded the prestigious J&K UT state Award this year on Republic Day. She's known in her circle as an "encounter specialist journalist," and her work has been recognized nationally.

Commissioner Secretary IT reviews implementation of National e-Vidhan App in J&K

HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 14: Commissioner Secretary, Information Technology (IT), Saurabh Bhagat, today chaired a high level meeting to review implementation of National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) in the Union Territory.

The Commissioner Secretary assessed various aspects of implementation of NeVA including conducting training programs for MLAs, Assembly staff and nodal officers from various departments, provisioning of high speed connectivity in Jammu and Srinagar Assembly complexes and procuring the necessary

hardware and related items.

He underscored the commitment of J&K administration to modernise legislative processes while ensuring successful implementation of NeVA. A detailed action plan has been outlined to ensure timely execution of the project, with all necessary support and resources being made available, he added.

The meeting was apprised that NeVA is a workflow system hosted on NIC's MeghRaj Cloud, designed to facilitate the smooth conduct of legislative proceedings. It will assist the Chair of the House in managing legislative sessions efficiently, enable members to perform their duties digitally and promote a paperless



legislative ecosystem in line with the 'Go Green' initiative. Launched in March 2020 as a Mission Mode Project under the theme 'One Nation, One Application,' NeVA aims to transform

all state legislatures into digital platforms.

Pertinently, the Law Department has been designated as the nodal department for NeVA implementation

in J&K. Efforts are underway to ensure seamless adoption of NeVA across the Union Territory, with key developments including infrastructure upgradation, capacity building and procedural refinements for transition towards a fully digital legislative framework.

It was informed in the meeting that, so far, 25 state legislatures have signed MoUs for NeVA implementation, with funds released to 22 legislatures. Among them, 14 have successfully adopted the platform and are conducting legislative business digitally. Besides, the NeVA Cloud Infrastructure has been enhanced to ensure seamless and uninterrupted legislative sessions across the states

and the UTs. Among others, the meeting was attended by Rupesh Kumar, CEO, Jammu and Kashmir e-Governance Agency; Jaskaran Singh Modi, SIO, NIC J&K; Minakshi Vaid, Additional Secretary, IT Department; Shafiq Hussain Mircha, Deputy Legal Remembrance, Department of Law besides other senior officers from the IT Department, NIC and SeMT. Pertinently, the Law Department has been designated as the nodal department for NeVA implementation in J&K. Efforts are underway to ensure seamless adoption of NeVA across the Union Territory, with key developments including infrastructure upgradation, capacity building and procedural refinements for transition.

Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan Poonch admin trains Master Volunteers to tackle substance abuse at grassroots level

■ HT News Network

POONCH, FEBRUARY 14: A comprehensive training program for Master Volunteers and resource persons under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan was conducted today here. This initiative aims to strengthen the district's efforts in combating substance abuse and promoting a drug-free society.

The event, held in the Auditorium Hall of the Government Degree College, was hosted in collaboration with the JKSLCA, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, and the District Administration Poonch.

Under the overall guidance of Deputy



Commissioner Vikas Kundal, and the Officer (DSWO) Wakeel Ahmed Bhat, the program focused on equipping volunteers

with essential knowledge and skills. Kimi Parihar from JKSLCA briefed the participants on strategies and interventions to tackle substance abuse at the grassroots level. She emphasized the role of Master Volunteers as key agents in spreading awareness, identifying vulnerable individuals, and mobilizing community support for de-addiction efforts. The training saw enthusiastic participation, empowering volunteers to engage effectively with the community.

The training program featured four comprehensive sessions, including: Information on Drugs, Drug Use and Its Consequences, District-Level Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, Intervention Spectrum in Drug Treatment and Prevention

improvised explosive device (IED) blast triggered by suspected terrorists near the Line of Control (LoC) in the Akhnor sector is a grim reminder of the volatile situation. Such tragedies underscore the urgent need for a stable and accountable governance structure that prioritizes security, strategic policymaking, and public welfare," he said.

"Besides, the growing unemployment crisis is further aggravating public distress, and only a popular government with full autonomy can effectively address these burning issues," he added.

Centre must understand without Statehood, J&K's development, peace & prosperity remain elusive, Says Rattan Lal Gupta

■ HT News Network

Jammu February 14th: Adv. Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President of Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC), has strongly reiterated the urgent need for the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, emphasizing that only the popular government can ensure peace, prosperity, and overall development of the region.

In a press release issued here today, the senior NC leader asserted that the aspirations of the

people of J&K can only be fulfilled when a fully empowered state government, with complete administrative and legislative control, is in place. He stressed that under the existing dual power system, the present J&K government headed by the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah remains handicapped, unable to function freely and effectively in addressing public grievances.

"The people of Jammu and Kashmir have already expressed their will through the democratic process by electing their representatives, yet the absence



of statehood continues to deprive them of their fundamental rights. Even the central leadership has

repeatedly assured the restoration of statehood, but those promises remain unfulfilled, leaving the people disillusioned," he remarked.

Highlighting the grave challenges faced by the region, he asserted that the lack of an independent state government has led to administrative inefficiency and a deepening crisis. "Our security forces continue to make the ultimate sacrifice on the borders, yet there is no concrete roadmap for stability and peace. The recent martyrdom of two Army personnel, including a Captain, in an

76 Bn CRPF organises Shradhanjali Programme to observe 6th anniversary of Pulwama Martyrs

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 14: The Sixth death anniversary of the Martyrs of Pulwama was observed today as "Shradhanjali Programme" at HQr 76 Bn Preet Nagar (Gangyal) to pay Tributes to soldiers who attained martyrdom in the Pulwama Bomb Blast.

Vezoto Tinyi, Commandant-76 Bn, CRPF, Rajesh Kumar, Second in Command, Jai Ram Prasad, Second in Command, Girish Chandra Singh Sontiyal, Second in Command, Anil Kumar, Asstt Commandant and other Subordinate Officers / Personnel of 76 Bn attended the tribute paying program.

Paying rich tributes, the officers recounted that 'On 14th February 2019, our 40 Brave soldiers laid down their lives at the altar of Duty when a Vehicle borne suicide bomber hit the CRPF vehicle carrying CRPF personnel in convoy on the Jammu-Srinagar National highway near Lethapora in Pulwama. They further recalled that 'During this cowardly incident, the bus that was blasted was of 76 Bn CRPF, Jammu in which our five brave soldiers attained martyrdom namely Shaheed HC/GD Naseer Ahmed, Shaheed, HC/DVR Jaimal Singh, Shaheed CT/GD Rohtash Lamba, Shaheed CT/GD Sukhjinder, Shaheed CT/BUG Tilak Raj.' "Although the Pulwama attack was a major setback for us, it exhibited the cowardice of militants who did not have the courage to face our brave soldiers. Ever since the Pulwama incident, we have neutralized many militants in gun battles in J&K. Our morale has never diminished and we are ever ready to neutralize the militants who shall try to harm our nation or the countrymen," the Battalion.

Kathua admin discusses action plan to reinforce Tobacco Control measure

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, FEBRUARY 14: Additional Deputy Commissioner Ranjit Singh today presided over a Training-cum-District Level Coordination Committee (DLCC) meeting to review the implementation of National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) in the district.

At the outset, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Vijay Raina highlighted the achievements in enforcing anti-tobacco measures. He also discussed key components of the NTCP, including the prohibition of smoking in public places, the ban on the sale of tobacco products within 100-yard radius of educational institutions, and the restriction on both direct and indirect advertising of tobacco products.

The meeting deliberated on the need for concerted efforts, incorporating a comprehensive set of activities such as conducting



Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaigns in schools and communities, declaring educational institutions as Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions (ToFEI), designating at least 50 villages as Tobacco-Free Villages by the next quarterly review, and conducting aggressive enforcement drives to ensure compliance with tobacco control regulations.

The ADC called for adopting all laid down procedures and guidelines in implementing the NTCP in the district. He directed the

Chief Education Officer to ensure that all educational institutions register on the ToFEI application and update the required 10-point Tobacco-Free attributes. He also called for random inspections by the police, civil administration, and officers designated under the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003.

The ADC further instructed Block Development Officers to educate all stakeholders and strengthen community-based efforts in combating tobacco use. It was also

decided to designate a Nodal Officer in all offices and institutions to ensure the smooth implementation of anti-tobacco measures.

Earlier, Nodal Officer NTCP J&K Shiveta Raina informed that under the NTCP, the Health Department has recorded 129 counseling and pharmacotherapy sessions in the Jammu Division.

The session also included detailed discussions on the provisions of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003, particularly sections 4, 5, 6, and 7, which focus on restrictions on smoking in public places, the sale and advertisement of tobacco products, and enforcement measures. The police and other designated authorities were directed to conduct enforcement drives at regular intervals to strengthen anti-tobacco measures across the district.

ADM Ramban imposes restrictions around examination centres

■ HT News Network



RAMBAN, FEBRUARY 14: Additional District Magistrate, Ramban, in exercise of powers vested under section 163 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, (BNSS), 2023, imposed restrictions on any sort of public movement, interference/public gathering within 100 metres of all examination centres established for Board Exams in the District.

Use of loudspeaker/any other form of public address system in and around the examination centres is also prohibited. Smoking is also strictly prohibited in the premises where the examinations shall be conducted.

This order shall take effect from 15.02.2025 and remain in force till the examination is concluded.

GDC Marh organises 2-day Career Counselling on Competitive exams

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 14: Career Counselling Cell of Government Degree College Marh organised two day Career Counselling to guide students regarding preparation for Competitive Examination.

The event was organized under the guidance of Principal of the College Dr. Rakesh Kumar Koul. The Principal highlighted the significance of career counselling in helping students to figure out their strengths and develop strategies for success.

The resource persons Shoaib Farid-Director (Wings -EkUdaan) and Shubham Sardhalia, Centre Head (SUNYA), both registered under Mission YUVA, provided insights into different career opportunities after graduation and the scope of competitive exams.

2 day District-Level Seminar cum Awareness Programme on Beekeeping concludes at Kishtwar

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, FEBRUARY 14: The two-day District-Level Seminar cum Awareness Programme on Beekeeping concluded today here in the Conference Hall, DC Office Complex.

More than 200 farmers, along with field officers and officials, participated in the seminar, gaining valuable insights into the latest advancements in beekeeping. To further support the farming community, essential Organic Inputs were distributed among the participants.

A series of lectures were delivered by the officers and officials from Agriculture and Allied Departments, besides Krishi Udyamis from different panchayats and progressive beekeepers of the district. The sessions focused on modern apiculture techniques, sustainable beekeeping practices, and commercial-scale honey production. Additionally, field functionaries from Agriculture and Allied Departments played a crucial role in ensuring the event's success. Officials encouraged farmers to adopt modern techniques in apiculture to enhance production levels and contribute to the sector's commercial success.

The program concluded with a vote of thanks, emphasizing the need for greater participation from the farming community to harness the full potential of beekeeping in the district.

The concluding event was presided over by the Chief Agriculture Office Amjad Hussain Malik. Among others present were DSHO, Dr. Jameel Nasir, District Manager JKEDI, Jatinder Singh Saffron Development Officer, District Agriculture Officer (DAO) and other Officers. The concluding event was presided over by the Chief Agriculture Office Amjad Hussain Malik. Among others present were DSHO, Dr. Jameel Nasir, District Manager JKEDI, Jatinder Singh Saffron.

Jashn-e-Jammu & Kashmir enthralls audience on Day 2

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 14: The second day of the Jashn-e-Jammu & Kashmir festival, organized by Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages (JKAACL) in collaboration with the J&K Artists Association, continued to be a grand celebration of the region's rich cultural heritage here at Abhinav Theatre.

Inaugurated yesterday by Lt. Governor of J&K Manoj Sinha, the festival captivated audiences with a spectacular lineup of tra-



ditional music, dance, and folk theatre performances. The event was graced by the esteemed presence of Member Legislative Assembly Yudhvir Sethi, who lauded the efforts of JKAACL and the J&K Artists Association for organizing such a vibrant cultural festival that beautifully showcases the artistic traditions of the region. He emphasized the need for continued support to local artists and performers, highlighting how such platforms provide them with the recognition they deserve while also fostering cultural exchange and unity.

Senior Journalist, Sohail Kazmi also addressed the gathering, appreciating the rich diversity of folk music, dance, and theatre presented at the festival. He underscored the importance of preserving and promoting Jammu and Kashmir's traditional art forms, which have been an integral part of its history and identity. Their presence and words of encouragement reinforced the festival's role in keeping the region's cultural heritage alive for future generations.

The day's performances featured Neeta Adarsh & Group from Ramnagar, presenting the soulful Geetru, followed by Sagib Ahad & Party from Srinagar, mesmerizing the crowd with Chakri.

The day's performances featured Neeta Adarsh & Group from Ramnagar, presenting the soulful Geetru, followed by Sagib Ahad & Party from Srinagar, mesmerizing the crowd with Chakri.

Kishtwar gears up for Shri Machail Mata Ji Yatra-2025 DC discusses Action Plan to fast track arrangements, development works

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, FEBRUARY 14: To enhance facilities in the Machail area for the upcoming Shree Machail Mata Ji Yatra 2025, Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan convened a review meeting here today. During the meeting, the DC reviewed various ongoing developmental works in the subdivision for the convenience of Yatris. Detailed discussions were held on the completion of Yatra Bhawan at Gulabgarh, floating of tenders for heli services,



repairing of various Yatra facilities such as sanitary complexes, development of the area around the Bhawan, provision of proper power and water supply during the Yatra, boarding

and lodging arrangements for Yatris, illumination from Darshini Dwar to Machail Bhawan, deployment of fire-fighting system at Machail, security arrangements, develop-

ment of roads and bridges ahead of Gulabgarh to Machail, and telecom connectivity along the Yatra route. Array of directions were issued to the concerned officers. The DC said that this year, we should expect 10 lakh pilgrims, as last year the Yatra crossed 3 lakh. He also stated that this would be possible only with proper publicity and by ensuring all necessary arrangements for the Yatris. The PMGSY Paddar was asked to work in double shifts to complete road connectivity work. In this regard, SDM Paddar.



India, US announce COMPACT to boost cooperation during PM Modi, US President Trump talks

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI, FEB 14

India and the US announced a new initiative - the US-India COMPACT - Catalyzing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology for the 21st Century - to drive transformative change across key pillars of cooperation - defence, investment and trade, energy security, technology and innovation, multilateral cooperation, people to people connection.

According to the joint statement, following talks between PM Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump, the two sides firming up a new 10-year Framework for the U.S.-India Major Defense Partnership in the 21st Century, which will be signed this year.

The US would expand defense sales and co-production with India to strengthen interoperability and defense industrial cooperation.

“The leaders welcomed the significant integration of US-origin defense items into India's inventory to date, including C-130J Super Hercules, C-17 Globemaster III, P-8I Poseidon aircraft; CH-47F Chinooks, MH-60R Seahawks, and AH-64E Apaches; Harpoon anti-ship missiles; M777 howitzers; and MQ-9Bs.

“The leaders determined that the U.S. would expand defense sales and co-production with India to strengthen interoperability and defense industrial cooperation. They announced plans to pursue this year new procurements and co-production arrangements for “Javelin” Anti-Tank Guided Missiles and “Stryker”

Infantry Combat Vehicles in India to rapidly meet India's defense requirements.”

India is to procure six additional P-8I Maritime Patrol aircraft to enhance its maritime surveillance following agreement on sale terms.

The two sides will review their respective arms transfer regulations, including International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR), in order to streamline defense trade, technology exchange and maintenance, spare supplies and in-country repair and overhaul of U.S.-provided defense systems.

They called for opening negotiations this year for a Reciprocal Defense Procurement (RDP) agreement.

They called for accelerating defense technology cooperation across space, air defense, missile, maritime and undersea technologies.

The US announced a review of its policy on releasing fifth generation fighters and undersea systems to India.

They announced a new initiative - the Autonomous Systems Industry Alliance (ASIA) - to scale industry partnerships and production in the Indo-Pacific.

[The Autonomous Systems Industry Alliance refers to India-US cooperation in the area of underwater domain awareness technologies.

The US has offered a few co-production and co-development opportunities for UDA technologies, on commercial basis.

India is the very first country with whom US defence industry has offered to work with on these sensitive technologies.

Discussions are ongoing

between concerned US companies and potential Indian partners in this regard. Some of the technologies offered are as follows:

- Sea Picket autonomous surveillance system with sonar acoustic array (produced by Thayer Mahan)

- Wave Glider unmanned surface vehicle systems (negotiations ongoing between Liquid Robotics/Boeing and Sagar Defence Engineering for co-production of 60 Wave Glider platforms in India)

- Low Frequency Active Towed Sonar (discussions ongoing with L3 Harris for co-development with Bharat Electronics)

- Multi-Static Active (MSA) sonobuoys (discussions ongoing with Ultra-Maritime for co-production with Bharat Dynamics Ltd.)

- Large Diameter Autonomous Undersea Vehicles (Dive LD) (produced by Andruil)

- Triton autonomous underwater and surface vehicle (produced by Ocean Aero).

ASIA covers all these areas of co-development and co-production]

The two sides announced enhanced logistics and intelligence sharing; and security cooperation engagements.

Trade and Investment

They two sides set up a new goal for bilateral trade - “Mission 500” - aiming to more than double total bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030.

The first tranche of a mutually beneficial, multi-sector Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) would be ready by fall of 2025.

They agreed to demonstrate mutual commitment to address bilateral trade barriers.

“The United States wel-



comed India's recent measures to lower tariffs on U.S. products of interest in the areas of bourbon, motorcycles, ICT products and metals, as well as measures to enhance market access for U.S. agricultural products, like alfalfa hay and duck meat, and medical devices. India also expressed appreciation for U.S. measures taken to enhance exports of Indian mangoes and pomegranates to the United States. Both sides also pledged to collaborate to enhance bilateral trade by increasing U.S. exports of industrial goods to India and Indian exports of labor-intensive manufactured products to the United States. The two sides will also work together to increase trade in agricultural goods.”

The leaders “welcomed ongoing investments by Indian companies worth approximately \$7.35 billion, such as those by Hindalco's Novelis in finished aluminum goods at their state-of-the-art facilities in Alabama and Kentucky; JSW in steel manufacturing operations at Texas and Ohio; Epsilon Advanced Materials in the manufacture of critical battery materials in North Carolina; and Jubi-

Technology and Innovation

The two sides announced the launch of the US-India TRUST (“Transforming the Relationship Utilizing Strategic Technology”) initiative - which will catalyze government-to-government, academia and private sector collaboration to promote application of critical and emerging technologies in areas like defense, artificial intelligence, semiconductors, quantum, biotechnology, energy and space.

The two sides put forward a U.S.-India Roadmap on Accelerating AI Infrastructure by the end of the year.

They will work together to enable industry partnerships and investments in next generation data centers, cooperation on development and access to compute and processors for AI.

They announced launch of INDUS Innovation - a new innovation bridge modeled after the successful INDUS-X platform, that will advance U.S.-India

industry and academic partnerships and foster investments in space, energy, and other emerging technologies.

Pharma: They announced expanding Indian manufacturing capacity, including in the U.S., for active pharmaceutical ingredients for critical medicines.

The two sides announced aunch of the Strategic Mineral Recovery initiative- a new U.S.-India cooperative program to recover and process critical minerals (including lithium, cobalt, and rare earths) from heavy industries like aluminum, coal mining and oil and gas.

An MoU was signed - for a new partnership between the U.S. National Science Foundation and the Indian Anusandhan National Research Foundation in researching critical and emerging technologies

[On February 11, 2025, Director of US NSF Sethuram Panchanathan, and Chief Executive Officer of ANRF, Abhay Karandhikar, signed a Memorandum of Cooperation between US NSF and ANRF.

The MoU will serve as a general framework of cooperation between both Participants to facilitate discussions and to chart out more specific programs of collaboration on critical and emerging technologies. This can include opening up funding opportunities for collaborative proposals between Indian and US researchers, joint peer-review of research projects and proposals between ANRF and NSF, joint conferences and workshops, etc.]

Energy Security

The two sides re-committed to the U.S.-India Energy Security Partner-

ship, including in oil, gas, and civil nuclear energy

US announced its support for India to join the International Energy Agency as a full member.

They agreed to fully realize the U.S.-India 123 Civil Nuclear Agreement - by moving forward with plans to work together to build U.S.-designed nuclear reactors in India through large scale localization and possible technology transfer

The two sides are to unlock plans to build large U.S.-designed reactors and enable collaboration to develop, deploy and scale up nuclear power generation with advanced small modular reactors.

People to People

There was recognition that the 300,000 strong Indian student community contributes to over \$8 billion annually to the U.S. economy which helped create a number of direct and indirect jobs.

They agreed to strengthen collaborations between the higher education institutions through efforts such as joint/dual degree and twinning programs, establishing joint Centres of Excellence, and setting up of offshore campuses of premier educational institutions of the U.S. in India.

They were committed to streamlining avenues for legal mobility of students and professionals, and facilitating short-term tourist and business travel, while also aggressively addressing illegal immigration and human trafficking

They agreed to strengthen law enforcement cooperation to take decisive action against organized crime syndicates, including narco-terrorists, human and arms traffickers as well as other elements who threaten public

and diplomatic safety and security, and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both nations

Multilateral Cooperation

They reaffirmed commitment to Quad and Indo-Pacific

During the Quad Leaders' Summit in India - PM Modi would host President Trump

They agreed on a plan to convene partners from the India-Middle East-Europe Corridor and the I2U2 Group within the next six months in order to announce new initiatives within 2025.

They announced launch of the Indian Ocean Strategic Venture - new bilateral, whole-of-government forum to advance coordinated investments in economic connectivity and commerce.

Meta's announcement of a multi-billion, multi-year investment in an undersea cable project - is to begin work this year and ultimately stretch over 50,000 km to connect five continents and strengthen global digital highways in the Indian Ocean region and beyond.

They announced plans to build new plurilateral anchor partnerships in the Western Indian Ocean, Middle East, and Indo-Pacific to grow relationships, commerce and cooperation across defense, technology, energy and critical minerals

The two sides condemned terrorism; called out Pakistan - to bring perpetrators of 26/11 and Pathankot to justice; and ensure that its territory is not used to carry out cross-border terrorist attacks

The U.S. announced that the extradition to India of Tahawwur Rana has been approved

PM Modi is a great friend of mine, he is a fantastic leader: President Donald Trump

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI, FEB 14

US President Donald Trump described Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a “great friend” and added that the two leaders have kept the relationship going during the four years Trump was out of office.

Answering questions during a media interaction ahead of their talks in the White House, President Trump said: “Prime Minister Modi is a great friend of mine; we've had a wonderful relationship, and we've kept the relationship during the four-year period (when he was out of office). And that was a very interesting period indeed. We've started off again, and we have some very big things to talk about.

“They (India) are going to be purchasing more of our oil and gas, we have more oil and gas than any



other country in the world by far, they need it and we have it. And we are going to talk about trade, and great many things.

“It's really an honour to see you, you've been a friend of mine for a long time, and congratulations on having done a great job,” he said, turning to PM Modi.

“He (Modi) is doing a great job in India, everyone talks about it, a really

fantastic job, a great leader!” President Trump added.

“We have great unity, great friendship. He and I, and I think it's only going to get closer. But it's very important that we remain united as countries. We are friends and we are going to stay that way,” he said.

“This is a terrific man, we are going to make some great trade deals, for India

and for the US,” Trump added. In his remarks, PM Modi said he was delighted to see Trump back in the White House.

He also said that he is happy that in his third term as PM he has the privilege to be working with President Trump again. He also recalled the enthusiasm, warmth and trust between the two sides during President Trump's first term. PM Modi also recalled the Howdy Mody event in Houton and the Namaste Trump event in Ahmedabad and added that the resounding echo of those mega events can still be heard across India and the world.

“President Trump has a made great contribution towards strengthening bilateral ties and giving them new scope and taking them to unprecedented heights. And I firmly believe that in your second term we will work with even more speed,” PM Modi added.

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, FEB 14

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday chaired a review meeting here on the implementation of three new criminal laws in Maharashtra and asked the state government to implement them in all the commissionerates as soon as possible.

The meeting, attended by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, reviewed the implementation and present status of various new provisions related to police, prisons, courts, prosecution, and forensics in the state, a Home Ministry statement said.

Stating that the government is committed to provide a speedy and transparent justice system to the countrymen, he said that to strengthen law and order, it is essential for crimes to be registered, so there should not be any delay in filing FIRs.



Shah said that Maharashtra should establish a model Directorate of Prosecution system in line with the new criminal laws. He emphasized that efforts should be made to achieve over 90 percent conviction rate in cases with sentences of more than 7 years, and that the police, government lawyers, and judiciary should work together to ensure that the guilty are punished as swiftly as possible.

The Home Minister reiterated that senior police officers should regularly monitor cases of organized crime, terrorism, and

mob lynching to prevent the misuse of the sections related to these crimes. He noted that there should be a system for recording evidence through video conferencing in facilities such as prisons, government hospitals, banks, Forensic Science Laboratories (FSL), etc.

Shah stated that the police should provide information about individuals held in custody for interrogation on an electronic dashboard and stressed on need to improve internet connectivity in police stations.

He urged the Maharash-

tra government to integrate state's fingerprint identification system with the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS) and mentioned that the police should establish a system to return the property recovered from criminals to its rightful owner as per the provisions of the new criminal laws.

The Home Minister said that the Chief Minister should conduct a bi-weekly review of the implementation of the new criminal laws in the state, while the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police should carry out a weekly review. The meeting was also attended by Union Home Secretary, Chief Secretary and Director General of Police of Maharashtra, Director General of the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD), Director General of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), and other senior officials.

Security beefed up in Manipur after imposition of Prez rule

AGENCIES

IMPHAL, FEB 14

After bringing troubled Manipur under President's rule, the authorities on Friday tightened security around the Raj Bhawan and other important locations, while discussions continued within the

ruling BJP to find a successor to N Biren Singh, who quit as Chief Minister last week.

N Biren submitted his resignation to Governor A K Bhalla on Sunday and the BJP hasn't so far been able to choose a new leader of its legislative party.

The Central government on Thurs-

day imposed President's rule in the northeastern state where the legislative Assembly has been kept under suspended animation.

Ksh Santa, Manipur state Secretary of the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) has demanded fresh election rather than keeping the state under

President's rule.

BJP leader Sambit Patra, who is campaigning in Manipur to hold talks with party MLAs and leaders, has also been given Z category security by the Union Home Minister.

A notification issued by Ministry of Home Affairs said President of India

Droupadi Murmu received a report from Manipur Governor Bhalla and after considering the report and other information she was satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the Government of the state could be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of India. So she imposed President's rule.

Pariksha Pe Charcha: Home-cooked food, less sugary drinks key stress-busters, say experts

Eating home-cooked food, and reducing intake of sugary items and drinks can help boost energy and cut down stress during exams, said experts during the fourth episode of Pariksha Pe Charcha 2025 on Friday.

In the episode, experts “share nutrition tips to boost memory, stay energised and improve concentration during exams,” said Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a post on social media platform X.

The experts explained the need to cut down the intake of sugar which can increase stress levels.

Gut expert Shonali Sabherwal stressed the need to eat home-cooked foods and to include millet in meals, especially breakfast. “Millets can support you for eight hours and



also control sugar cravings,” she said.

Rujuta Diwekar, author, nutrition and wellness expert said that eating peanuts can be a good stress buster while energy drinks can increase stress.

“Children often face digestive issues due to stress, leading to problems like loose motions or constipation. One fruit

that works wonders in both cases is a banana, which is available everywhere...” Diwekar said.

She also stressed the need to avoid packaged food that contributes to obesity and other related diseases like diabetes and hypertension.

Health and nutrition influencer FoodFarmer aka Revant Himatsingka

also stressed the need to be aware of what one is eating and how it can affect the health.

Sabherwal called for eating high-fibre food, which can boost good microbiota, and to also include nuts.

Water intake and proper sleep also was mentioned as an essential stress buster.

Diwekar suggested the need for physical activity even during exams, which can not only cut down stress, but will also improve posture.

Earlier, Sabharwal told IANS that “children are nowadays eating food more from outside than from home. Their foods which majorly include pizza, burgers, and chocolates significantly increase the sugar levels in the body”.

Health Ministry urges stricter monitoring of pesticide residues in food

Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Prataprao Ganpatrao Jadhav on Thursday called for a nationwide strategy for stricter monitoring of pesticide residues in food.

All stakeholders must work collectively in promoting best practices for food safety and sustainability, said Jadhav, while inaugurating the National Stakeholder Consultation on Challenges in Monitoring Pesticide Residues in Food Commodities organised by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), under the health ministry.

The stakeholder consultation on pesticides is the first in a series of such consultations with stakeholders on emerging issues like sustainable packaging, nutraceuticals, antimicrobial resistance etc.

Appreciating the initiative of FSSAI to strengthen food safety frame-



works, the Union Minister stressed the need to review existing practices in pesticide monitoring. He suggested creating “a robust mechanism to address the challenges of pesticide residue”, in the country.

Jadhav also emphasised the importance of agriculture in sustaining millions of livelihoods and ensuring food security.

Jadhav added that today’s farmers are more adaptive towards the use of new technology, so it is

easier to educate them on the use of pesticides and about Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs).

He also advocated for collaborative efforts from all the stakeholders to devise a concrete action plan to minimise pesticide residues in food commodities.

Meanwhile, Union Health Secretary Punya Salila Srivastava noted how the indiscriminate use of pesticides poses significant risks to public health.

She stressed the importance of strengthening monitoring systems and raising public awareness about pesticide use, ensuring that every person has access to safe food.

She also advocated for the development of actionable strategies aimed at protecting public health, underscoring that the primary goal of this consultation is to ensure that everyone can enjoy safe and healthy food.

Study shows how space-stranded Sunita Williams can prevent cartilage damage

Jumping workouts may be key to thwart the risk of cartilage damage and boost bone strength in astronauts during long space missions, claimed an animal study on Thursday.

The findings, although in mice, comes even as Indian-origin NASA astronaut Sunita Williams is stranded in space since June last year. Williams along with colleague Butch Willmore are stuck in space due to technical problems with Boeing’s Starliner which took them to the International Space Station (ISS).

Recent experiments by the European Space Agency (ESA) also showed evidence of cartilage degradation in astronauts who spend several months aboard the ISS. The reduced movement can lead to cartilage thin-



ning and cellular clustering -- early indicators of arthritis.

The new study, appearing in the journal npj Microgravity, showed that engaging in jumping exercises boosted knee cartilage in mice. Jump training thrice a week also led to thicker, healthier cartilage with normal cellular structure in the animals, said researchers from Johns Hopkins University, US.

Healthy cartilage is

essential for pain-free movement, as it cushions joints and decreases bone friction. Notably, cartilage damage heals slowly and does not regenerate as fast as other tissue.

Prolonged periods of inactivity -- as expected during space travel -- can accelerate cartilage breakdown. This damage can also be accelerated by space radiation.

“Since the next step in human exploration of

space is going to Mars and spending long periods of time in permanent bases on the moon, cartilage damage is a really major issue that space agencies need to address despite how very poorly understood it is,” said Marco Chiaberge, an astrophysicist at Johns Hopkins University, the Space Telescope Science Institute, and the ESA.

“The positive effect we saw in these mice is huge, and the magnitude of it was unexpected. They can basically make their cartilage thicker if they jump. Maybe astronauts could use similar training before their flight as a preventive measure,” he added.

In the study, a nine-week programme of reduced movement in mice led to a 14 per cent reduction in cartilage thickness.

Trying To Lose Weight? These Bedtime Rituals Can Ensure Weight Loss

Lifestyle changes play a crucial role in weight loss by improving metabolism, reducing stress, and promoting better food choices. Sustainable habits like eating nutrient-dense foods, staying active, managing stress, and getting quality sleep help regulate hormones that control appetite and fat storage. Incorporating bedtime rituals that support weight loss can help improve sleep quality, reduce stress, and optimise fat-burning processes overnight. In this article, we outline some of the best habits you can add to your bedtime routine for faster weight loss.

Bedtime rituals that ensure weight loss

1. Maintain a consistent sleep schedule

Going to bed and waking up at the same time every day helps regulate the body’s internal clock, improving metabolism and hormonal balance.



Poor sleep patterns can disrupt hunger hormones like ghrelin and leptin, leading to increased appetite and weight gain. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night.

2. Drink herbal tea or warm water

A cup of herbal tea, such as chamomile or peppermint, can promote relaxation and digestion before bed. Warm water with lemon or cinnamon helps detoxify the body,

stabilise blood sugar, and support fat metabolism while you sleep. Avoid caffeinated drinks that may interfere with restful sleep.

3. Avoid late-night snacking

Eating too close to bedtime, especially high-sugar or high-fat foods, can disrupt digestion and lead to weight gain. Late-night eating increases insulin levels and prevents the body from burning fat

effectively overnight. If you’re hungry, opt for a light protein-rich snack like Greek yogurt or a handful of nuts.

4. Limit screen time before bed

Exposure to blue light from screens before bedtime disrupts melatonin production, making it harder to fall asleep. Poor sleep quality affects metabolism and increases cravings for unhealthy foods the next day. Try reading a book, meditating, or listening to calming music instead.

5. Practice deep breathing or meditation

Stress and anxiety can elevate cortisol levels, leading to increased fat storage, especially around the belly. Engaging in deep breathing exercises, mindfulness, or meditation before bed helps reduce stress, improve sleep, and support weight loss.

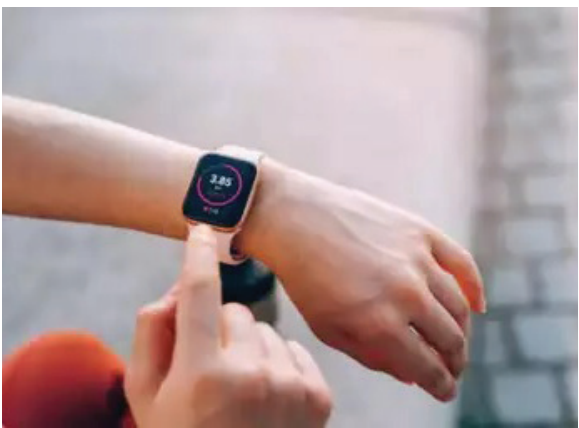
Is your fitness tracker increasing your anxiety levels? signs you need to take a Break

Fitness trackers are extremely popular among those who love to keep fit, as they give constant feedback on your step counts, sleep, and even heart rate. However, according to experts, these handy devices sometimes backfire, causing a lot of anxiety when the metrics go haywire, seriously affecting your mental health.

On social media, there are many posts about health tracker-induced anxiety that have caused a kind of stir in those battling heart issues. “When my stats are good, I’m happy,” wrote a user on Reddit, “but every once in a while a stat drops and I will go into an immediate panic.”

Those who wear trackers are more anxious, says study

According to studies,



people who have heart issues like atrial fibrillation—a condition that causes an irregular heart-beat—have also been diagnosed with high anxiety.

Experts say this does have a snowball effect—leading people to hyperfixate on numbers rather than overall well-being. And so, many mental health experts believe you must take a break from your wearable for a while,

at least.

How do tracker metrics lead to mood swings?

Fitness trackers count areas of health like heart rate and sleep, which most people check pretty regularly. However, this can lead to constant mood fluctuations as well since many times the numbers go up and down, depending on how well you slept or what physical activity you did.

If you have been fixed on a certain goal related to your daily step count and you fall short, it is natural to feel a little disappointed, which can in the long run lead to mood swings and anxiousness. Experts say fitness trackers also cause you to doomscroll and go down a rabbit hole of health metrics by trying to find out what the figures mean for your overall health on the internet—further deteriorating your mental health.

Fitness trackers are not foolproof

The highs and lows of your data can make you believe that you have certain underlying health conditions, which you may not have.

According to experts, fitness trackers are not foolproof as they can get glitchy and collect wrong data as well.

Low testosterone and heart attack: is there a connection? expert answers

Your lifestyle choices influence your heart health. Maintaining proper nutrition, getting quality sleep, managing stress and staying physically active have profound impacts on your heart. While following these wellness habits supports overall cardiovascular well-being, other factors that come into play are gender, genetics, body composition and hormones. Yes, hormonal imbalances can lead to heart ailments, which can sometimes be as serious as a heart attack. No, we are not making the claims but Integrative Lifestyle expert Luke Coutinho is. In his latest Instagram post, the wellness expert has linked testosterone levels to heart attacks in men.

According to Luke Coutinho, “Testosterone, an androgen hormone primarily produced in the testes and adrenal glands is known to influence various psychological processes



including the development and maintenance of male reproductive tissues, bone density and muscle strength. It also exerts significant effects on cardiovascular health.”

According to a study, low testosterone is associated with a “higher risk of both fatal and non-fatal coronary events.” It enhances endothelial nitric oxide (eNOS) activity, improves endothelial function and promotes vasodilation. It can also result in a pro-inflammatory state, which can contribute to atherosclerosis.

As per Luke Coutinho, some studies even indicate that testosterone “may play a role in modulating lipid profiles and influencing LDL and HDL cholesterol levels.” Since low testosterone often goes underdiagnosed, men should opt for regular screenings especially when they age. Also, lifestyle strategies must be considered “to mitigate cardiovascular risks.”

Luke Coutinho highlights some “simple ways” to maintain healthy testosterone levels.

1. Prioritising deep sleep as sleep deprivation will negatively impact testosterone levels

2. Chronic stress can elevate cortisol levels. Incorporate relaxation techniques like yoga, meditation, or deep breathing exercises to keep stress in check.

3. Maintaining excellent Vitamin D3 levels. Consuming nuts, avocados, olive oil and omega-3-rich fatty acids found in fish promotes hormone production. Incorporate zinc-infused foods such as beef, oysters, beans and pumpkin seeds for testosterone synthesis.

4. Engaging in strength training and high-intensity interval training to boost testosterone

5. Limiting drugs and alcohol as they can suppress testosterone production

Keep these tips in mind to ensure better testosterone levels and overall health.



Barcelona wants to keep Lewandowski, says sporting director Deco

AGENCIES

WARSAW, FEB 14 (UNI)

FC Barcelona sporting director Deco stated that the club authorities are extremely pleased with Robert Lewandowski and are keen for him to remain with the team.

The Polish forward's contract is valid until June 2026.

In 2022, Lewandowski signed a three-year deal with an automatic one-year renewal clause, triggered if he plays in at least half of the team's matches during the season. If he starts Monday's match against Rayo Vallecano and plays a minimum of 45 minutes, the clause will automatically extend his contract.

Deco emphasized that, regardless of the clause, the club is committed to continuing their collaboration with Lewandowski - but ultimately, the decision rests with the player.

FC Barcelona currently sits in third place in La Liga, trailing league leader Real Madrid by two points. Robert Lewandowski leads the scoring charts with 19 goals - three more than second-placed Kylian Mbappe.

OCA officials hail Harbin Asian Winter Games as benchmark

AGENCIES

HARBIN, FEB 14 (UNI)

Husain Al Musallam, director general of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), noted that the Harbin Asian Winter Games has set a benchmark for major multi-sport events in Asia.

With the Games to conclude on Friday night, Al Musallam highlighted the success of the Winter Asiad. Timothy Fok Tsun-ting, First Vice President of the OCA, stated that the Harbin Winter Asiad featured record-breaking participation, with over 1,200 athletes from 34 countries and regions marking the highest turnout in the event's history.

The Harbin event also saw the Asian Winter Games debuts of Saudi Arabia and Cambodia. During China's eight-day Spring Festival holiday, Harbin received more than 12 million visits, marking a 20.4 percent year-on-year increase.

Mendis, Wellalage star in SL's win over Australia



AGENCIES

COLOMBO, FEB 14 (UNI)

Kusal Mendis' brilliant century and Dushan Wellalage's four-wicket haul powered Sri Lanka to a resounding 174-run victory over Australia in the first ODI here on Friday.

Opting to bat first, Sri Lanka posted a formidable total of 281 for four in 50 overs, powered by an excellent century from Mendis (101 off 115, 11x4s) and a steady half-century from skipper Charith Asalanka (51 off 70).

In reply, Australia faltered under pressure as Asitha Fernando (3/23) ripped through the top order before the Sri Lankan spinners tightened the noose to bowl the visitors out for a paltry 107 in 24.2 overs. Wellalage was the chief destroyer with figures of 4/29, while Wanindu Hasaranga

chipped in with three wickets.

Head coach Sanath Jayasuriya was seen celebrating calmly from the dugout, as his side delivered yet another clinical performance under the leadership of Asalanka.

Sri Lanka lost Pathum Nissanka (6) early, but Mendis and Madushka steadied the innings with a crucial stand. While the Australian bowlers kept things tight with the new ball, the Sri Lankan duo showed patience before accelerating in the middle overs. Mendis, in sublime touch, dominated proceedings and notched up his century.

He found an able ally in Asalanka, who played a captain's knock, bringing up his fifty with fluent stroke play. Late fireworks from Janith Liyanage, who scored a brisk 32 off 21 with three boundaries

and two sixes, propelled Sri Lanka to an above-par total, aided by sloppy fielding from the visitors.

Chasing 282, Australia needed a solid start, but Fernando had other plans. The pacer wreaked havoc in the powerplay, dismissing three top-order batsmen and leaving the tourists in dire straits.

Skipper Steve Smith attempted to rebuild but kept losing partners as Sri Lanka's spin duo of Hasaranga and Wellalage dismantled the middle and lower order. Wellalage claimed four wickets, ensuring Australia were bundled out for just 107, handing Sri Lanka a commanding win.

With the Champions Trophy on the horizon, the Australians have much to ponder, while Sri Lanka will take great confidence from yet another dominant outing.

Successful conclusion of 2-Day District Handball Championship in Srinagar

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, FEB 14

The 2-Day District Handball Championship, organized by the Handball Association of Srinagar under the aegis of the Jammu & Kashmir Handball Association, successfully concluded on February 13, 2023. The event showcased the best local talent in handball, culminating in an exciting final match between the Indoor Handball Club Srinagar and the Gindun Strikers.

In a thrilling final, the Indoor Handball Club Srinagar emerged as the winners, demonstrating exceptional skill and teamwork throughout the championship. The match was attended by a



distinguished guest, the In-Charge of Gindun Stadium, along with various officials, coaches, and sports enthusiasts who gathered to support the teams.

The Handball Association Srinagar expresses heartfelt gratitude to the Jammu & Kashmir Handball Association for their unwavering support provided to the district association. Their commitment to fostering sports development in the region has been instrumental in the

success of this event.

We would also like to extend our thanks to the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council for providing exceptional sports facilities, which greatly contributed to the seamless execution of the championship.

The Handball Association of Srinagar is excited about the growing popularity of handball in the region and looks forward to continuing efforts to promote the sport among the youth.

Champions Trophy: NZ name Duffy as replacement for injured Sears

AGENCIES

WELLINGTON, FEB 14 (UNI)

New Zealand on Friday made a change to their ICC Champions Trophy squad after pacer Ben Sears was ruled out due to a hamstring injury.

In a like-for-like replacement, Jacob Duffy has been drafted into the squad. The 30-year-old right-arm pacer has played 10 ODIs for the Black Caps



since his debut in July 2022, claiming 18 wickets at an average of 25.94 and an economy rate of 6.25.

ICC announce prize money for Champions Trophy 2025

AGENCIES

DUBAI, FEB 14 (UNI)

The ICC have announced the prize money for the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 set to begin on February 19.

The return of the ICC Champions Trophy for the first time since 2017 will see eight teams compete for the grand prize of a whopping \$2.24 million (USD). The runners-up will receive \$1.12 million, while each losing semi-finalist will take home \$560,000. The total prize pool has increased by an impressive 53 percent from the 2017 edition, reaching \$6.9 million.

At the Champions Trophy, every match will matter as each group stage



win is worth over \$34,000 for the victorious team. Teams finishing in fifth or sixth place will receive \$350,000 each, while the seventh and eighth-placed sides will take home \$140,000.

Additionally, all eight teams will receive a guaranteed \$125,000 each for participating at the event.

This tournament marks

the first time Pakistan will host an ICC event since 1996. The 2025 edition features eight teams split into two groups of four, with the top two from each group advancing to the semi-finals.

The ICC Men's Champions Trophy will be held every four years, featuring the world's top eight ODI teams, while the Women's

Champions Trophy will debut in 2027 in a T20 format.

ICC Chair Jay Shah said, "The ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 represents a pivotal moment for cricket, reviving a tournament that highlights the pinnacle of ODI talent, where every match is critical. The substantial prize pot underscores the ICC's ongoing commitment to investing in the sport and maintaining the global prestige of our events."

"Beyond the financial incentive, this tournament ignites fierce competition, captivates fans worldwide, and plays a vital role in fostering the growth and long-term sustainability of cricket for future generations," he added.

Indian Hockey team ready for litmus test at FIH Pro League 2024-25

AGENCIES

BHUBANESWAR, FEB 14 (UNI)

The Indian Men's Hockey Team, currently ranked fifth in the world, is all set to kickstart their highly anticipated FIH Pro League 2024-25 campaign at the iconic Kalinga Hockey Stadium here.

Led by Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna awardee Harmanpreet Singh, the Indian squad will open their campaign with two

thrilling matches against World No. 7 Spain on February 15 and 16, followed by intense clashes against World No. 4 Germany on February 18 and 19.

India's campaign will open at home, thus offering a prime opportunity for the team to showcase their recent momentum. Following their encounters with Germany, India will take on Ireland on February 21 and 22, before facing the formidable

World No. 2 England on February 24 and 25.

With their Bronze medal triumph at the 2024 Paris Olympics, the Harmanpreet Singh-led side has proven their mettle on the international stage. The team was last seen in action during a two-match Test series at home against Germany in October 2024, where India bounced back from a 2-0 defeat in the first game to defeat the visitors

5-3 in the second.

Though Germany won the series via shootout, the competitive performances added confidence to India's preparations for the FIH Pro League.

Earlier, India showcased their prowess by successfully defending their title at the Asian Champions Trophy 2024 in September, winning all their matches and cementing their position as one of Asia's strongest teams.

Increasing business profitability

by reducing printing cost

LUBAAB PUBLICATIONS

ONE STOP SOLUTION FOR ALL PRINTING NEEDS

LUBAAB Printing services means I get my job back on time, always accurate and of the highest quality

When you need a Company that can handle a complex workload, save your money and deliver on time..... leave it to

LUBAAB PUBLICATIONS

Also visit us for: Newspapers & News Magazines

Specialists in: Non Woven & Paper Bags

Mobile: 9999038812
9419008414
Tel: 0194 2496287
Email: jahangirbukhari@gmail.com
Humhama, Budgam/Srinagar

■ Prepress
■ Sheet Fed
■ Bindery
■ Finishing
■ Promotions

Our Printing Services

- Flyers
- Posters
- Business Cards
- Envelopes
- Brochures
- Booklets
- Catalogues
- Post Cards
- Presentation folders
- letterheads
- Magazines
- Newsletters
- Raised printing
- Wedding Cards
- Invoices
- Note pad
- Forms
- Labels
- Scratch coupon
- Signs/Banners
- Pen/Caps
- T-Shirts
- Calenders
- Embroidery
- Door Hangers