



DEO Srinagar holds
interaction session with
reps of Political parties

P|02



BUDGET SESSION 2025

No Punitive Action for Fair Journalism, But Misinformation Won't Be Tolerated:CM

Calls for End to Selective Advertising



■ HT News Network

Jammu, Mar 20, : Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has ruled out any "pick and choose" TURN ON.....PAGE 02

J&K Government to fill 7,253 vacant posts by year-end, says CM Omar Abdullah

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today informed the J&K Legislative Assembly that his government has planned to fill 7,253 vacancies—both Gazetted and Non-Gazetted—by the end of the year. He also stated that 11,526 selections have been made across these categories over the past two years. The Chief Minister, who holds charge of the General Administration Department

(GAD), specified that 1,502 Gazetted vacancies and 5,751 Non-Gazetted vacancies are targeted for recruitment this year. Responding to a query raised by MLA Satish Kumar Sharma, he provided a breakdown of the total 32,474 vacancies across 38 government departments as on January 31, 2025 include 2,503 Gazetted posts, 19,214 Non-Gazetted posts and 10,757 Class-IV (MTS) posts. The Chief Minister outlined various measures undertaken to address these vacancies: 13,466 Non-Gazetted

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Upgradation of 16.20 Km Sangrama- Sopore-Sagipora road under consideration: Dy CM'

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, informed the House that a comprehensive Detailed Project Report for upgradation of 16.20 Km Sangrama-Sopore-Sagipora road has been framed for an amount of Rs. 1811.54 lakh which is under consideration for sanction under NABARD RIDE. The Minister was replying to a question raised by Mir Mohammad Fayaz in the Legislative Assembly today. He informed that during 2024-25, 11.50 Km stretch road from Kulangam to Zandri Mode has been blacktopped under the Cities and Towns programme. He said that the road stretch from Kulangam to Kupwara is being managed by BEACON and is under upgradation to 2-lane with paved shoulder specifications. He further informed that the road stretch from Sangarma to Kulangam via Sopore, is being maintained by PWD, but the department has no plans for its upgradation. No DPR for 4-laning of the road has been prepared by the department, he added.



594 Lecturer posts in 27 disciplines referred to JKPSC: Sakeena Itoo

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: Minister for School Education and Higher Education, Sakeena Itoo, today informed the House that 594 posts of 10+2 Lecturers in 27 disciplines have been referred to the J&K Public Service Commission recently for recruitment to cope up with the



constraints of subject specific teachers in higher secondary schools

across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister stated this in reply to a question raised by Mehraj Malik. She informed that 367 posts of lecturers in different disciplines are lying vacant in various Higher Secondary Schools of Doda district.

The Minister further

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Panel Formed to Address Regularisation of Daily Wagers in J&K: Omar Abdullah

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MAR 20, : The Jammu and Kashmir government has set up a committee to examine the regularisation of daily wagers, with a report expected within six months, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah announced on Thursday.

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Legislative Assembly mourns demise of former Legislator Faqeer Mohammad Khan

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: The Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly today mourned the demise of former Legislator and BJP Leader, Faqeer Mohammad Khan. Speaker Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, while remembering

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Omar Abdullah says verification process cannot be used as weapon

CM grants one-time power amnesty to domestic consumers; enhances CDF to 4 Cr for MLAs

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: : The Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly today passed grants amounting to 59,431.23 lakh for the General Administration Department (GAD), 56,009.69 lakh for Planning, 14,183.38 lakh for Information, 12,477.27 lakh for the Power Development Department (PDD), 62,70,347.94 lakh for Finance, 7,083.77 lakh for Parliamentary Affairs, 76,284.53 lakh for the Law Department (excluding the



Election Department), 81,073.94 lakh for Revenue, 4,06,130.30 lakh for Housing & Urban Development (H&UDD), 61,280.18 lakh for Tourism, 46,683.86 lakh

for Hospitality, Protocol & Estates, 20,459.31 lakh for Culture, and 1,96,369.04 lakh for Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction (DMRRR). The grants were passed following three days of extensive discussions in the House.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah began his speech with a Kashmiri proverb: "Vanditxalli, sheen gallie, bai yee bahaar" (Winter will pass, the snow will melt, and spring will come again). Responding to discussions on the Demands

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LG Sinha highlights land reforms in J&K, says patwaris were more powerful than collectors

After digitization people have direct access to their land records

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said that when he took charge in 2020, patwaris (local revenue officials) wielded more power than collectors.

Speaking at the birth centenary celebrations of renowned writer Shrilal Shukla in Lucknow, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—, spoke about the sweeping reforms undertaken under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership to



digitize land records and empower farmers. "When I took over the reins of Jammu

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Absence of Statehood weakened role of MLAs: GA Mir

Calls resumption of Assembly after 7 years 'a positive step'

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: Senior Congress leader and General Secretary AICC, G.A. Mir on Thursday termed the resumption of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly after seven years a positive. He, however, expressed con-



cerns over the lack of autonomy for elected representatives in Jammu and Kashmir, attributing it to the current UT status. Speaking to the media on the side-lines of the ongoing budget session of the J&K Legislative Assembly, Mir, as per the news agency—, stated that while the resump

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CM Omar Abdullah extends greetings on Nauroz

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today extended his heartfelt greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the joyous occasion of Nauroz, a festival that marks the arrival of spring. In his message, the Chief Minister emphasized the significance of Nauroz as a symbol of renewal, hope, and harmony, bringing new life to nature and inspiring people to embrace positivity, peace, and prosperity. Highlighting the cultural and spiritual importance of Nauroz, he noted that the festival has been an integral part of Kashmir's rich heritage, celebrated with traditional enthusiasm and devotion. He urged people to use this occasion to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood, compassion and mutual respect, reinforcing the spirit of communal harmony.

Dy. CM greets people on Nauroz

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: The Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary today extended his heartfelt greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the eve of Nauroz. In his greetings, DY CM said that the festival marks the beginning of spring and symbolizes renewal and hope. He hoped that it would usher in an era of peace, progress and prosperity in entire Jammu and Kashmir.

Former Gurez Legislator Faqeer Muhammad Khan Dies by Suicide

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 20, : Former legislator from Gurez, Faqeer Muhammad Khan, allegedly ended his life using his licensed revolver at his government accommodation in Tulsi-bagh, Srinagar. The tragic incident has sent shockwaves across political circles, prompting an immediate investigation.

Khan, who unsuccessfully contested the 2024 Assembly elections

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Massive Fire Guts 20 Houses in Anantnag's Gujrag Kadipora, Scores Left Homeless

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, MAR 20, : A devastating fire incident in the Gujrag Kadipora area of South Kashmir's Anantnag district today reduced nearly 20 residential houses to ashes, leaving hundreds of people homeless in the holy month of Ramadan.

According to eyewitnesses, the fire started from the house of the late Nisar Ahmad Lulu and spread rapidly to adjacent houses. The densely packed structures and lack of adequate firefighting resources exacerbated the

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Legislative Jihad Being Waged to Shield Land Encroachers: Sunil Sharma

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma on Thursday alleged that a "legislative Jihad" is being waged in Jammu & Kashmir to shield land encroachers.

Speaking during the Grants of Departments session, chaired by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Shar-



ma, as reported by the news

agency—, claimed that legislative Jihad is being used to protect encroachers in the Union Territory.

"Why is Nazir Gurezi upset if a few people from Haryana construct houses here? A committee led by a judge found that 689 encroachers in the Tawi River area belong to a particular community and

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Tourists enchanted by almond blossoms at Srinagar's Badam Vaer

Picturesque garden welcomes visitors with mesmerizing floral display

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: For Suresh Kumar, a tourist from Gujarat, sitting on the steps of Srinagar's iconic Badam Vaer felt nothing short of heavenly. As the beautiful almond blossoms moved in the gentle spring breeze, he found himself lost in the mesmerizing beauty of the season's first bloom.

Badam Vaer, nestled in the foothills of Koh-e-Maran



in Srinagar, has once again become a hotspot for tourists and locals alike, signaling the arrival of spring with

its enchanting floral display.

As per the news agency—the visitors from different parts of the country are flocking to this historic garden, eager to witness the almond trees in full bloom.

"The sight of these blossoms, with their soft pink and white hues, feels magical. It is as if nature is celebrating a festival of colors," said Kumar, capturing the scene on his phone.

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Centre constructing 47 highway projects in J&K, 6 in Ladakh

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, MAR 20: As many as 47 highway projects spanning 810 km in J&K, costing Rs 41,735 crore, and six projects covering 159 km in Ladakh, costing Rs 2,076 crore, are currently under construction in both the Union Territories. According to the data shared by the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways J&K and Ladakh, as per the news agency— are among the key regions benefiting from the government's highway expansion plan, which has seen country's national highway length grow from 91,287 km in 2014 to 1,46,204 km in 2025. "These projects are expected to improve connectivity,

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

CM

approach in the allocation of government advertisements to newspapers in Jammu and Kashmir. Addressing concerns raised by MLAs in the Legislative Assembly, he assured that the distribution process would remain fair and transparent.

The Chief Minister emphasized that selective advertising must come to an end, asserting that publications overly dependent on government revenue cannot serve as true voices of journalism. He warned that such newspapers risk turning into mere government mouthpieces. "A newspaper that only carries press notes and my photograph on the front page is not a newspaper; it's a mouth-piece," he remarked.

Reaffirming his commitment to press freedom, Abdullah assured that no punitive action would be taken against newspapers for reporting the truth. However, he cautioned against the spread of misinformation, urging journalists to verify facts before publication. "Fake news spreads quickly, and by the time we clarify, the damage is already done," he said.

Abdullah encouraged media houses to move towards financial independence while reiterating the government's support in strengthening the media industry. He stressed that self-reliance is crucial for maintaining journalistic integrity.

Addressing concerns about accreditation delays, the Chief Minister directed the information department to speed up application reviews. He assured that applicants would be given opportunities to correct discrepancies rather than facing outright rejection.

On the issue of press clubs, Abdullah acknowledged the smooth functioning of the Jammu Press Club but noted that Srinagar's press body had become politicized, leading to its closure and the formation of a parallel club. To resolve the issue, he proposed that Kashmiri journalists hold elections to establish a legitimate press club. [KNT]

POSTS

vacancies were referred to the J&K Services Selection Board (JKSSB) in the past two years, with 9,351 selections already completed.

2,390 Gazetted vacancies were referred to the J&K Public Service Commission (JKPSC), resulting in 2,175 selections over the same period. 10,757 Class-IV (MTS) vacancies have been identified across departments and are under Finance Department scrutiny before being referred for recruitment.

More than 6,000 vacancies are ready for referral and will be sent to recruiting agencies shortly, he said.

To ensure faster and more transparent recruitment, he said, the government has abolished interviews for posts up to Pay Level 5 (29,200-92,300) through S.O. 180 (dated 28.05.2020).

Eliminated interviews for Level 6 posts, including Junior Engineers and Naib Tehsildars, via S.O. 36 of 2025 (dated 14.02.2025) and d departments to identify additional posts up to Level 6 where interviews can be removed to accelerate recruitment, the CM Omar Abdullah said.

He said the revised JKSSB regulations (notified on 22.11.2022) to introduce online CBT-based examinations and a single-exam system for multiple posts where feasible.

CM Omar Abdullah emphasized that the J&K Public Service Commission and JKSSB have been directed to adopt a proactive, target-based approach for timely recruitment.

He provided updates on key vacancies under recruitment: 150 Junior Engineer (Civil) posts have been referred to JKSSB for selection. Once the Cadre Schedule for Engineering Gazetted and Subordinate Services is finalized, the remaining engineering vacancies will also be referred. 150 Gazetted vacancies (Assistant Professors/Librarians/PTIs) in Higher Education are under process for referral. Of 840 referred vacancies, 476 have been filled, and 364 are in the final stages of selection. 116 Non-Gazetted vacancies in Higher Education have been forwarded to the Finance Department for concurrence before referral.

56 Gazetted and 660 Non-Gazetted vacancies in Health and Medical Education have been referred for selection.

597 Lecturer posts across 27 disciplines in the School Education Department were referred to JKPSC between November 2024 and January 2025.

Additionally, all Administrative Departments have been directed to refer available vacancies to recruiting agencies without delays, he said.

On the issue of regularizing Daily Wagers, the Chief Minister said the Government has announced a high-level committee, headed by the Chief Secretary, J&K, to examine humanitarian, legal, and financial issues related to the regularization of Casual, Seasonal, and Other Workers (CSLWs).

"The committee will propose a comprehensive policy for regularization," he reiterated. The Chief Minister also highlighted a key reform including J&K Government extended the deadline for notifying recruitment rules by six months in November 2024.

This decision, taken via Executive Orders, aims to resolve delays in formulating recruit-

ment policies and ensure timely hiring for critical government positions.

Furthermore, he said, the JKSSB's mandate has been expanded to oversee Non-Gazetted recruitment in Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), government companies, boards, and other state-controlled entities to streamline hiring processes.

ITOO

informed that during the academic session 2024-25, 140 Cluster Resource Coordinators (CRCs) had been hired on a temporary basis in Doda district to teach specific subjects. She added that after the expiry of their term, fresh hiring process shall be initiated in consultation with Samagra Shiksha, subject to the availability of grants from the Ministry of Education, GoI.

She added that for increase of Lecturers in Higher Secondary Schools of Doda district, rationalization process has been initiated to identify the understaffed schools and ensure the availability of surplus staff for deployment in these schools.

PANNAL

Addressing the Assembly in response to BJP MLA Satish Sharma's query, Abdullah stated that a formal order had been issued to establish the panel under the Chief Secretary's leadership. Once the recommendations are submitted, the government will take appropriate action, he assured.

The six-member committee, constituted on Wednesday, will study the concerns of daily wage workers and propose solutions for their regularisation.

On the issue of job recruitment, Omar Abdullah reiterated his government's commitment to filling vacancies efficiently. He highlighted that over 15,000 positions had been filled in the past two years, with 9,351 non-gazetted appointments completed through the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) out of 13,466 referred posts. Additionally, the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) has selected 2,175 candidates for 2,390 gazetted vacancies.

The chief minister emphasized that the recruitment process remains a priority to address unemployment in the Union Territory. [KNT]

FAQEER KHAN

the legislator, prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and forbearance for the family to bear this irreparable loss.

Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, while conveying this shocking news in the house, remembered the former Legislator as a grass-roots leader, who contributed significantly towards development of the people of Gurez. He expressed deepest sympathies with the family of late Legislator and prayed for peace to the departed soul.

Leader of Opposition, Sunil Sharma and MLA Gurez, Nazir Ahmad Khan (Gurez) also expressed deep grief over the shocking demise of Faqeer Mohammad Khan.

The House also observed two minute silence in memory of late Legislator.

FIRE

destruction, as flames quickly engulfed the entire row of homes.

Locals, assisted by firefighters and police, made desperate efforts to douse the blaze. However, they faced severe challenges due to a shortage of water and defunct fire hydrants. "We tried our best, but the unavailability of water and non-functional fire plugs made it impossible to control the fire in time," said a distressed resident.

The incident once again highlighted the vulnerability of Anantnag's congested old town areas to major fire mishaps. Kashmir News Trust had earlier reported that many localities in South Kashmir's Anantnag district lack a functional fireproof system, with most fire hydrants installed decades ago now lying defunct due to rust and lack of maintenance.

Locals lamented that despite repeated appeals, authorities failed to upgrade the firefighting infrastructure in the district.

"The fire plugs in our area were installed around 35 years ago. They have rusted and become useless. Very few new ones have been added over the years, leaving us at the mercy of such disasters," said another resident.

Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Fakhruddin Ahmad, along with police and civil administration officials, visited the area to assess the damage and assured immediate relief to the victims. "In this holy month of Ramadan, we will ensure that emergency assistance is provided to all affected families at the earliest," he stated.

Meanwhile, the victims, now homeless and struggling for basic necessities, have urged the administration to expedite rehabilitation efforts and strengthen firefighting infrastructure to prevent such tragedies in the future. [KNT]

LG

and Kashmir, patwaris were more powerful than the collector. All the land records

were in Urdu, and even the collector was unable to understand what was written," LG Sinha said, as per KNO.

"Earlier, patwaris were calling the shots, and locals were suffering. Now, people have direct access to their land records, and governance has become more transparent," he said.

He said that prior to digitization landowners faced significant hurdles, including requiring permission from the revenue minister to plant or cut an orchard. "To address these challenges, the administration launched a large-scale land digitization drive, ensuring transparency and ease of access to land records," LG Sinha said, adding, "Many outdated and regressive land laws were abolished to benefit farmers, removing obstacles that had long hindered agricultural activities."

LG Sinha also emphasized initiatives aimed at benefiting refugees who had come from Pakistan. "Under a new scheme, such displaced individuals were granted land and ownership rights, a move aimed at providing them with long-term security and stability," he said.

Referring to the 'Meri Zameen, Meri Nigrani' programme, under which land pass-books were distributed to landowners, LG Sinha said, "The initiative ensured clarity in land titles and prevented fraudulent transactions."

Highlighting the success of these digital initiatives, the Lieutenant Governor said that Jammu and Kashmir has now surpassed Madhya Pradesh in providing online services, emerging as a leader in land record digitization—(KNO)

MIR

tion of assembly proceedings after seven years was a positive development, in the current UT status most of the controls were under the limits of the Lieutenant Governor and the central government.

"People had no platform to voice their grievances for seven years. Now, at least discussions are taking place, and questions are being raised. But the real challenge is the execution," Mir said.

He stated that there was little control of the elected government over the decision-making. He said that efforts are on to get back the statehood and that the chief minister too is on it, stating that the MLAs from the BJP too were feeling 'degraded' in the absence of statehood.

Mir said that the absence of full statehood has weakened the role of MLAs, including those from the BJP, who, despite their numbers, have been unable to assert themselves in the assembly.

"Earlier, when the BJP had just 6 MLAs, they made their presence felt. Today, despite having a much larger representation, their role in the assembly seems lifeless," he said.

Mir said Congress stands committed on the demand for the restoration of full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, stating that only an elected government with full powers could address the people's concerns effectively—(KNO)

FOMERMLC

on a BJP ticket, was found dead in his official quarter. Authorities have launched a probe to ascertain the circumstances leading to his death.

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly mourned his demise, observing two minutes of silence as a mark of respect. Political leaders have expressed their condolences, recalling his contributions to public service in the region.

A statement from the Chief Minister's Office read, "Deeply saddened by the passing of former legislator Faqeer Mohd Khan. He was a true grassroots leader. My heartfelt condolences to his family. May his soul rest in peace. The House observed a two-minute silence in his honour."

SUNIL SHARMA

region," Sharma remarked. Reacting to these statements, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah urged caution, emphasizing the importance of avoiding remarks that could hurt religious sentiments. "What does the Leader of Opposition want to prove? That Muslims know nothing except Jihad?" Abdullah questioned—

BADAM VEAR

Known as one of the earliest indicators of Kashmir's changing seasons, Badaam Vaer holds cultural and historical importance. Its revival over the years has made it a must-visit destination, especially during March, when the trees burst into life, creating a beautiful view.

Similarly, local vendors and photographers are making the most of the tourist influx, adding to the beautiful atmosphere of the garden. "This is the best time of the year for us," said Mohammad Ashraf, a local photographer. He said people want to take home memories of this paradise.

It is pertinent to mention that Badaam Vaer, believed by some historians to have existed even before Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin's

15th-century rule, was once a royal retreat, renowned for its almond orchards and serene ambiance. Over the years, it fell into neglect before being revived as a public garden, restoring its lost glory. Today, it stands as a testament to Kashmir's rich heritage, drawing visitors not just for its beauty but also for its historical essence—(KNO)

CENTRE

enhance trade routes, and provide year-round accessibility to remote regions," the ministry said, adding, "Measures such as mandatory road safety audits, rectification of accident-prone black spots, and the introduction of advanced safety technologies in vehicles are being implemented."

The government has planned wayside amenities (WSAs) at 40-60 km intervals along national highways, with fuel stations, EV charging points, rest areas, and food courts. Out of 700+ planned WSAs, 393 have been awarded, with 94 currently operational, it said—

GRANTS

for Grants, the Chief Minister acknowledged concerns raised by members and emphasized the government's commitment to transparency and accountability.

"Some honorable members felt that I was too pessimistic in my previous speeches. So today, I decided to start differently. We are not afraid of discussions. We do not shy away from difficult questions. We answer them openly, no matter how tough these are."

Addressing remarks made by an opposition member comparing his political strategies to cricket, the Chief Minister said: "A smart player adapts to the game. I was bowling pace when conditions favored it; now, I am bowling spin. But I have not changed the game—I remain committed to my responsibilities."

On Equality and Legal Changes

The Chief Minister also addressed concerns regarding legal changes in Jammu and Kashmir. "Five years ago, we spoke of equality. Today, we are still demanding it. Ask yourself—are we truly equal to other states? The reality speaks for itself." He refuted allegations that his government had disrespected the legacy of Maharaja Hari Singh.

"The laws governing state subjects were not altered by us but by others. Before 2019, you practiced under the Ranbir Penal Code, named after Maharaja Ranbir Singh. Today, you follow a different law. Who, then, changed history?"

On Economic Development and Employment

The Chief Minister highlighted economic disparities and employment challenges, particularly for local youth. "If four people from Haryana can work here, then ensure the same opportunities exist for our people in Haryana, Himachal and beyond. Setting up industries in Himachal is difficult due to strict local policies. In contrast, we have no such restrictions.

Urban Development and Infrastructure Speaking on urban infrastructure, the Chief Minister acknowledged shortcomings in Smart City projects. "We built footpaths, yet people still walk on roads. We created cycle tracks, but motorcycles now occupy them. We constructed multi-level parking facilities, yet vehicles remain parked on the streets. Infrastructure alone is not enough; we need a collective shift in mindset."

He also stressed the importance of decongesting cities through planned residential townships. "We are not settling outsiders. When your government spoke of New Srinagar and New Jammu, no one objected. Our goal remains the same—to develop new residential areas and prevent urban decay."

Disaster Management and Cultural Preservation

Regarding disaster management and relief efforts, the Chief Minister reassured members about the government's commitment to providing proper rehabilitation and housing for displaced communities.

On cultural preservation, he highlighted ongoing restoration efforts at 33 heritage sites across Jammu and Kashmir, with a budget of 65 crore. Future plans include restoring 73 additional sites with an estimated cost of 170 crore. "Heritage defines our identity. Projects like the Mubarak Mandi restoration must be completed soon. We cannot let history fade."

The Chief Minister reiterated the need for efficient governance and accountability in planning and finance. "The Planning Department's role is crucial. It is not just about drafting policies but ensuring their execution. We must reconsider the decision to merge planning with finance and restore its independent role."

Hospitality, Protocol & State Infrastructure

The Chief Minister emphasized that government expenditure on state guests is a common practice and has been followed by previous governments as well. While he refrained from detailing the exact spending, he assured the House that steps are being taken to utilize existing assets effectively.

Addressing concerns about lost properties after the reorganization of J&K and Ladakh, he stated, "The properties that are gone can-

not be reclaimed, but we must make the best use of those that remain."

He highlighted ongoing efforts to convert the structure in Sector 17, Chandigarh, into a state guest house, which will cost approximately 13 crores and cater to patients, students, and public representatives. He reiterated the importance of vertical expansion due to space constraints, drawing parallels with Motibagh in Delhi, and assured the House that alternative accommodations for government officials are being planned.

Government Accommodation & Discipline in Allotment

The Chief Minister acknowledged the acute shortage of government accommodations, forcing many MLAs and ministers to seek private housing or live below their entitlement. At the same time, he pointed out the issue of unauthorized occupation, stating, "There are individuals who exceed their entitlement, and some who have no entitlement yet refuse to vacate. We are working towards enforcing discipline in this regard."

He assured that new infrastructure projects would be undertaken with comprehensive planning and strict adherence to Detailed Project Reports (DPRs).

Aviation & Mismanagement of State Aircraft

Responding to queries regarding government spending on chartered planes, the Chief Minister stated that 15 crores were spent over three years.

Expressing concern over the mismanagement of the state aircraft, he criticized its prolonged neglect, saying, "The plane purchased with taxpayers' money was left abandoned at Jammu Airport for five years, exposed to the vagaries of weather. This was an unnecessary and avoidable waste." He lamented the uncertainty over the cost of restoring the aircraft to make it airworthy and stressed that better management of public assets is crucial.

Tourism Development & Infrastructure Expansion

The Chief Minister highlighted the need for robust tourism infrastructure to fully exploit J&K's tourism potential. He noted that many MLAs had requested gondolas for their constituencies but clarified, "Building a gondola does not guarantee tourists will come. We need comprehensive infrastructure development."

He emphasized the importance of promoting pilgrim tourism in Jammu and proposed creating religious tourism circuits to enhance connectivity between different pilgrimage sites.

He invited MLAs to provide insights on their local religious sites to facilitate this development. He also acknowledged the suggestion of developing agri-tourism, particularly in regions known for Basmati rice cultivation, and assured collaboration on this front.

Media Advertisements & Transparency

Addressing concerns regarding the distribution of government advertisements, the Chief Minister assured transparency and fairness.

He stated, "Newspapers that rely solely on government ads cannot function as independent media. While we will support media houses, we must discourage mushrooming of newspapers that exist only to publish government press releases."

He also declared that the Srinagar Press Club would be re-established and a fair election would be held to elect its members. He emphasized the need for a unified institution, stating that journalists would be responsible for forming a managing committee to oversee its functioning.

Power Amnesty & Consumer Responsibility

Regarding power amnesty, the Chief Minister announced the extension of the amnesty scheme but stressed that frequent waivers are unfair to those who pay their bills on time.

He said, "We have given amnesty multiple times, but we must not continue this indefinitely. It is unfair to those who pay regularly."

He proposed a new scheme that would offer incentives on outstanding dues in proportion to future payments, encouraging a culture of timely bill payments. He also reiterated the importance of metering to improve revenue collection and reduce losses.

Legislators' Salaries & MLA Constituency Development Fund (CDF)

The Chief Minister addressed concerns over MLAs' salaries, noting that it had not been revised in ten years. He suggested forming a committee comprising leaders of political parties to implement a structured salary revision mechanism based on the parliamentary model. He also proposed aligning the CDF guidelines with the MPLADS framework for better fund utilization. While acknowledging the demand for an increase in CDF allocations, he stated that a reasonable enhancement crore would be considered to increase it from Rs 3 to Rs 4 crore for each MLA.

e-Governance & Judicial Reforms

The Chief Minister commended the successful implementation and functioning of e-office, which has improved efficiency and transparency in government processes. He highlighted efforts to integrate video conferencing in High Court proceedings, ensuring that virtual hearings remain a permanent feature.



Jamabandies of 6839 Revenue villages computerized in JK: Sakeena Itoo

HT News Network

Jammu, Mar 20: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, today said that the digitization of Jamabandies of 6839 Revenue villages has been completed in Jammu and Kashmir, under the computerization of Land Records undertaken through Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme. The Minister was replying on behalf of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, to a question raised by Ranbir Singh Pathania in the Legislative Assembly. The Minister said that various steps have been taken up for digitization of Jamabandis to make it error-free as per applicable rules and norms regarding the land records. She said that, among other steps, updation of latest Jamabandies, quality check of data entry of Jamabandies by inter Tehsil teams constituted by the DCs, vetting and certification of data by the concerned Tehsildar, digitization of revenue records by the concerned Patwari/Data Entry Operator/other Revenue Officials, quality check of digitized data by the concerned Girdawar/Naib Tehsildar/



Tehsildar and freezing of digitized Jamabandies jointly by the office of Deputy Commissioners and Regional Director Survey and Land Records has been taken to make the records error-free. The Minister said that web-based application has been developed for verification of digitized land records under URL "jkrevenue.nic.in/revenueplus" which has four modules including verification of scanned documents, verification of digitized

Jamabandies, QC of digitized Jamabandies and verification of Vectorized (digitized) maps. She said that all the field functionaries from (Patwari to Deputy Commissioner) have been given access to verify the record, in order to ensure that digitized Jamabandi verbatim copy of physical Jamabandi. She added that all the Deputy Commissioners have been authorized to address errors in the digitized Jama-

bandies like typographical errors and incomplete data entry. The Minister further said that the digitized Jamabandies have not been finally frozen yet as the same is subject to the authenticity of the Jamabandies by the Deputy Commissioners, who have to read these Jamabandies in the concerned village and certify the correctness of the same.

PHC Sonamarg does not meet criteria for full scale upgradation as per IPHS-2022 norms: Health Minister

HT News Network

Jammu, Mar 20: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, today said that PHC Sonamarg does not meet the criteria for full-scale upgradation as per IPHS-2022 norms, however, its capacity was enhanced during the annual Shri Amarnath Yatra. This was stated by Minister in response to a question raised by Mian Mehar Ali regarding upgradation of PHC Sonamarg. The Minister highlighted that during the peak periods as well as during the Amarnath Yatra, the

facilities at PHC Sonamarg are being augmented through temporary reinforcement of manpower and infrastructure to manage the surge in demand. She highlighted that PHC Sonamarg is a 10-bedded facility with minor OT, general ward, labour room, lab section and is an en-route healthcare facility to Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra catering to healthcare requirements of general masses. She informed that Sonamarg is a major tourist destination and Baltal is the base camp for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, adding that a semi-permanent 100-bedded hospital

No case of up-gradation of schools pending in Rajpora Constituency: Education Minister

HT News Network

Srinagar, March 20: Minister for School Education and Higher Education, Sakeena Itoo, today informed the House that there is no case of taking up up-gradation of schools to different levels pending in the Rajpora Constituency. The Minister stated this in a reply to a question raised by Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Mir. During the reply, the Minister informed that the government is presently focusing on consolidation of existing infrastructure as well as rationalisation of staff for smooth functioning of schools in the region. The Minister further informed that there is a set criteria being adopted for up-gradation of schools, adding that for promotion from Primary to Middle School, there should be a distance of 3 km from the nearest Middle School, besides 02 feeding Primary Schools and top class enrollment should not be less than 20. Likewise, for up-gradation from Middle to High School, there should be a distance of 5 km from the nearest High School and intake capacity for single section must be 20 while it should be 50 for double section, she added. The Minister further informed that for up-gradation from High to Higher Secondary School, there should be a distance of 7-10 km from the nearest Higher Secondary School and intake capacity for up-gradation must be more than 50. She added that the proposal for up-gradation of schools to their next higher level may be considered by the government strictly as per the feasibility report, existing norms and urgent requirement, wherever required.

Commissioner SMC inspects Dewatering Stations and Sewage Treatment Plants in Srinagar

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MARCH 20: Commissioner SMC, Dr. Owais Ahmed today conducted a comprehensive inspection of dewatering stations and Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) at various locations in Srinagar. Accompanied by senior officials from the Urban Environmental Engineering Department (UEED) and SMC, the inspection aimed to evaluate the operational capabilities and maintenance of these critical facilities. During the visit, Dr. Owais assessed the functionality of several dewatering stations that play a crucial role in managing excess water and mitigating flood risks in urban areas. He examined the equipment, processes,



and overall efficiency of these plants. Highlighting the significance of these facilities, Dr. Owais stated, "Our dewatering stations and STPs are essential for effective urban management. By ensuring their optimal operation, we can significantly reduce the risk of waterlogging and pollution in our beautiful city."

Throughout the inspection, Dr. Owais engaged with concerned officials, discussing the challenges they encounter and recognizing their contributions to the community. He emphasized the importance of continuous monitoring and improvements to enhance the performance of these essential services.

District Court Complex Srinagar mourns demise of Special Judge Raja Mohammad Tasleem

SRINAGAR, March 20: A condolence meeting was held in the Conference Hall of District Court Complex Srinagar in which all the Judicial Officers and employees posted in the District Court Complex Srinagar participated to mourn the demise of Raja Mohammad Tasleem, Special Judge, UAPA Court, Baramulla, who left for heavenly abode after brief illness. The participants also observed two minute silence to pay homage to the departed soul. The participants in the meeting prayed for the peace and tranquillity to the departed soul and also prayed for patience to the bereaved and grief stricken family to bear this irreparable loss.

Div Com Kashmir reviews arrangements for Navroz, Eid-ul-Fitr, Navratra & other festivals

Directs extensive arrangements to facilitate devotees

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MARCH 20: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today convened a meeting of officers to review arrangements for the forthcoming festivals including Navroz-e-Alam, Shab-i-Qadir, Jumat-ul-Vidah, Eid-ul-Fitr and Navratra to facilitate devotees of different communities to observe auspicious occasions with faith and devotion. The meeting was attended by all Deputy Commissioners of Kashmir Division and senior officers of Waqf Board, FCS&CA, PHE, PDD, R&B, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, Health, Traffic Police, Metrology and other line departments. Addressing the meeting, Div Com directed Deputy Commissioners and other officers to ensure seamless and adequate arrangements in view of all the festivals. He emphasized that there shouldn't be any shortfall of any arrangements regard-



ing basic amenities.

He directed concerned officers of KPDC, PHE to ensure uninterrupted supply of their services including electricity and water during festival days. Bidhuri enjoined for constitution of market checking teams to ensure reasonable rates of consumables to general public and take strict action against erring traders.

Similarly, he urged SMC and ULB for sanitation drives, fumigation and cleanliness at religious places including Mosques, Shrines and Temples. He also directed for deployment of dog catching team around Hazratbal Shrine for the safety of devotees.

Div Com also instructed RTO and SSCL for plying special bus services to ferry passengers during Shab-i-Qadir, Jumat ul Vida and Eid-ul-Fitr to Hazratbal.

FCS&CA was directed to ensure adequate supply of essentials in the market so that the people don't face any inconvenience

Budget Session 2025
Question Hour in LA

Stone Crushers established only after securing requisite NOCs: Dy CM

HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today said that the stone crusher/ Hot and Wet mix plants are established only after obtaining No Objection Certificate (NOCs) from the concerned departments. The Minister was replying to a question raised by Sheikh Khurshed Ahmad.

He said that to streamline the minor mineral based units, they have to secure consent from the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Board and obtain NoC from the Deputy Commissioner of the concerned district regarding title verification of the land.

Regarding installation of a crusher partially functional at Bi-e-Maidan Kralgund Qaziabad Langate, the Deputy Chief Minister said that a chunk of land measuring 05 kanal under Survey No's 33 min, 35 min has been identified in Bilmaidan village, Rasripura Lariganapora, Tehsil Qaziabad, for establishment of Batching Plant, Bitumen Plant and Main Store on temporary basis for a period of 30 months. This will meet the requirements for completion of RKCTC road, a National Priority Project by MORTH, he added. He informed that Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara has intimated that the final call in the matter is yet to be taken as various documents are still under process.

Left out family members being added in ration cards on regular basis: Food Minister

HT News Network

Jammu MARCH 20: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Satish Sharma, today said that the addition of eligible left out family members in ration cards is being done on regular basis in Jammu and Kashmir. The Minister was replying to a question raised by Balwant Singh Mankotia. The Minister said that, as many as, 98.52 lakh AAY, PHH and NPHH beneficiaries have been covered under the PM Ration Yojana in Jammu and Kashmir while 56,977 beneficiaries in Chenani Constituency. He said that the department is contemplating opening of new Fair Price Shops as per framework in vogue, which is part of Jammu and Kashmir Targeted Public Distribution System. The Minister said that since the elected government has assumed the office, it has been thought prudent to rope in elected members also to firm up requirements of new Fair Price Shops across Jammu and Kashmir, which necessitates relook of the existing framework. He said that bifurcation of ration cards has been stopped as necessitated for adhering to targets assigned for coverage of families under the Public Distribution System, particularly AAY households, by the Department of Food and Public Distribution, GoI, where the entitlement is at the scale of 35Kg per household.

Govt has no proposal for establishing Institute of Hotel Management at Pahalgam: Education Minister

HT News Network

Jammu MARCH 20: Minister for Higher Education and School Education, Sakeena Itoo, today informed the House that there is no proposal at present to establish Institute of Hotel Management at Pahalgam. The Minister said this while replying to a question raised by Altaf Ahmad Wani.

The Minister informed that Hotel Management is not offered as a degree program in colleges, adding that it is a professional qualification that requires a distinct academic structure, different from the four-year degree programme currently offered in colleges of the Higher Education Department.

Regarding establishment of Government Degree College at Aishmuqam, the Minister informed the House that Government Degree College with the nomenclature of Pahalgam-Siligam/Aishmuqam was sanctioned in February 2019 and same was established in a makeshift accommodation at Government Boys High School, Aishmuqam.

WSS Shopian taken under Amrut 2.0 to be commissioned by 2026: Javed Rana

HT News Network

Jammu MARCH 20: Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmad Rana, today said that Rs 5683.61 lakh have been spent on various Water Supply Schemes in Shopian constituency during the past two years. He was replying to a question raised by Shabir Ahmad Kullay. Regarding the water supply in Shopian town, the Minister informed the House that the tendering process for Water Supply Scheme Shopian Town under Amrut 2.0 is currently under financial evaluation and will be awarded within this week.

EDITORIAL

Think ahead of time so that developmental projects are not shelved

Few days back the Jal Shakti minister Javed Rana while replying to a question during the question hour in the ongoing budget session of legislative assembly said that a scheme taken up to augment water supply in the Srinagar district has been shelved. The minister said that the water supply scheme had to be dropped as there was a huge cost escalation adding that the government is not in a position to bear the escalating cost.

The union territory of Jammu & Kashmir is unique in the sense as the projects set out by the different government departments miss deadlines not once but on multiple occasions. It is due to this reason that the projects see unprecedented cost escalation and in some cases the projects are shelved. Drinking water is a basic necessity of life and it needs to be provided to every soul irrespective of the region the soul belongs to.

The planners need to think ahead of the times and they should keep the provision that a particular project may not meet the timeline set for the completion of the project. This would lead to proper projection of the costs and there are minimal chances that a particular project is shelved. Once the planning is done in a professional manner then the subsequent phases of a project would be meaningful and the same would be completed in a time bound manner.

In the Srinagar city there are many areas that face acute shortage of drinking water and over the years the administrators have failed to solve this problem. Areas falling at the tail end of the capital city witness protests from people against the shortage of clean drinking water. At the peak of summer season the Jal Shakti department makes use of tanker service so that the people heave a sigh of relief. There are areas where no up-gradation of the system has taken place and the water is supplied through rusted pipes.

Augmentation or up-gradation of the system is very important and this needs to be taken up after every five or ten years. In the Srinagar district and other districts of Kashmir valley the water supply pipes laid many decades back have not been replaced. The Jal Shakti department needs to look into this matter and take practical steps to replace the pipes. Once the new pipes are laid there would be an augmentation of the water supply with people being the ultimate beneficiaries.

Learn to Be Happy with What You Have!

Mornings turn into nights, weeks into years, and before we realize it, the hands of the clock have moved too far ahead. We plan for tomorrow, invest in dreams, and chase fleeting desires, assuming there will always be time for love, laughter, and peace. But does time ever wait?

AUBAID AHMAD AKHOON
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Life moves like a gust of wind—unseen, unstoppable. We run alongside it, believing we are in control, yet we are merely passengers in time’s grand design. In our relentless pursuit of success, recognition, and a future that always seems just within reach, we often fail to notice the present slipping away.

Mornings turn into nights, weeks into years, and before we realize it, the hands of the clock have moved too far ahead. We plan for tomorrow, invest in dreams, and chase fleeting desires, assuming there will always be time for love, laughter, and peace. But does time ever wait?

The late Anwar Sadeed, a renowned Pakistani critic, researcher, and columnist, beautifully captured this truth in his couplet:

“Sail-e-zaman mein doob gaye mashhoor-e-zamana log,
Waqt ke munsif ne kab rakha qaa’im un ka naam.”

“The tide of time has drowned even the greatest of names.

When has time’s judgment ever kept their legacy intact?”

The tide of time spares no one—kings, poets, warriors. Once celebrated, now forgotten. Their names, once etched in history, now fade like whispers in the wind. What, then, truly remains? Not wealth, for gold loses its luster. Not power, for thrones crumble into dust. What endures are the moments of kindness we shared, the love we selflessly gave, and the righteous deeds we performed—those that continue to benefit others, becoming our eternal legacy, our sadaqah jariyah.

Yet, in our relentless pursuit of success, we mistake motion for progress, forgetting that life is not measured by the milestones we reach but by the moments we cherish. We chase distant dreams, blind to the beauty already surrounding us—the rustling of leaves whispering secrets to the wind, the silent comfort of a loved one’s presence, the peace found in a whispered prayer.



True fulfillment lies not in the relentless race for more but in the quiet embrace of what is already ours.

Another poet beautifully expressed this sentiment:

“Haasil-e-zindagi hasrat ke siwa kuch bhi nahi,
Ye kiya nahi, woh hua nahi, ye mila nahi, woh raha nahi.”

“The essence of life is nothing but longing—

What wasn’t done, what didn’t happen, what wasn’t gained, what was left behind.”

How often do we count our losses instead of cherishing what we have? We mourn unfulfilled dreams, unsaid words, and untaken roads. But do we ever pause to appreciate the love we received, the small joys we lived, and the peace we found in quiet moments?

Live Now, Before Time Moves On

Why do we always believe happiness is waiting for us in the future?

We tell ourselves:

“Once I have more money, I’ll be happy.”

“Once I get my dream job, I’ll find peace.”

But what if that one day never comes? What if, in waiting for the perfect moment, we lose the only moments that truly mattered?

This endless pursuit of desires is nothing new. The great Ghalib already captured this reality in his timeless couplet:

“Hazon hovahishen aisi ki har hovahish pe dam nikle,
Bahut nikle mire arman lekin phir bhi kam nikle.”

“A thousand desires, each so intense that it could take my last breath away,

Many were fulfilled, yet too

few compared to those that remain.”

No matter how much we achieve, our hearts always long for more. We chase after dreams, forgetting to cherish what is already in our hands. But true fulfillment is not in accumulating more—it is in appreciating the beauty of the present moment. Life is happening now. Not in some distant future, not in the memories of the past, but in this exact moment—the laughter of a loved one, the gentle breeze on our face, the warmth of a hug, the beauty of the sky. These little things, often ignored, are the real treasures of life.

Fly High, But Keep Your Feet on the Ground

Soar with grace, embrace the sky,

Yet dust we are, and dust

we lie.

Ambitions and dreams are important, but not at the cost of losing yourself. Chase your goals, but don’t forget to cherish what you already have. No matter how high we fly, we must remember that one day, we will return to the same earth.

So why let ego and pride consume us? Why not walk with humility and gratitude? Why not focus on love, kindness, and the things that truly matter?

Time Invested in Relationships Is Never Wasted

We often take our relationships for granted, assuming people will always be there. We prioritize work over family, phone screens over real conversations, and status over emotions. But when time takes these people away from us, we realize too late that we should have given them more of ourselves.

Give time to your loved ones. Listen when they speak. Hold their hands while you can. Apologize before it’s too late. Love them fully, without conditions. Because once they are gone, no amount of regret can bring them back.

Gratitude: The Secret to a Fulfilled Life

Fate gives us what is meant for us, and no force in the world can change that. But are we grateful for what we have? Or do we always focus on what’s missing?

Instead of constantly wanting more, let’s appreciate what’s already in front of us. Let’s stop living in what ifs and somedays and start embracing what is.

Life is not about counting the years—it’s about making the years count. There’s a difference between merely surviving and truly living.

So, before life slips away, pause.

Take a deep breath. Look around. Feel this moment. Live it—because once it’s gone, it will never come back.

The writer is a columnist, motivational speaker, and Associate Editor of the weekly educational publication Education Quill.

Growing Cancer Burden in India with Oral and Breast Cancer on the Rise

DR SURENDER KUMAR DABAS

India faces a serious increase in cancer cases as Oral (Mouth) and Breast cancers stand out as primary sources of this health challenge. The Indian Council of Medical Research reported in 2024 that India will experience a 12.8% increase in cancer cases by 2025 end, which reveals a troubling growing trend. Improper access to screening facilities, along with lifestyle changes and cultural habits, has formed a perfect storm that has thrust these cancers into top public health priorities. A failure to implement decisive action will cause the healthcare system to become overwhelmed, while a large number of preventable deaths will occur.

Tobacco use, including smokeless products like betel quid, Ghutka, Khaini, Paan Masala etc remains the main factors in which Oral cavity cancer continues to hold the highest position in Indian cancer statistics. Cultural and behavioral patterns explain why Oral cancers strikes men at higher rates than women. Regulatory measures against tobacco use have not yet produced sufficient results because tobacco consumption still remains widespread in rural and semi-urban areas, which leads to growing Oral cavity cancer cases.

Breast cancer stands as the primary cancer affecting Indian women today. Urbanisation,



growth combined with sedentary lifestyle patterns together with delayed 1st childbirth beyond 30 years and Low awareness regarding screening programme creates

this alarming trend. The main problems in cancer detection persists because of Advanced stage at identification due to shortages in healthcare access and inadequate

public awareness campaigns. India expects cancer cases to rise from 1.46 million in 2022 to 1.57 million by 2025. Addressing this surge will require a multi-

pronged approach, including: Public Health Campaigns: Targeted educational initiatives should inform people about dangers of Tobacco use and emphasize early

detection importance for cancer prevention.

Enhanced Screening Programs: Implementing cost-effective and reachable cancer screening facilities throughout underserved areas which will lead to better cancer detection outcomes.

Policy Enforcement: Existing tobacco regulations must be strengthened while developing new policies that promote healthier lifestyle choices.

Research and Innovation: Research investment should support the development of regional treatment methods alongside enhanced availability of newer medical treatments

India faces an urgent public health challenge because both Oral and breast cancer cases continue to increase, which requires immediate and continuous intervention. India will make substantial progress against cancer if it boosts prevention efforts through education while increasing early detection capabilities and strengthening tobacco control regulations. Through combined policy efforts, healthcare innovation, and community outreach, the nation can build a future where cancer has reduced effects and millions experience improved health outcomes.

Dr Surender Kumar Dabas is Vice Chairman - Oncology & Chief - Robotic Surgery, BLK-Max Super Speciality Hospital, Delhi



Rise of Social Media Influencers: A Gateway to Glory or a Path to Peril



NAWAZZ IBN AHAD

The youth of Kashmir, the vibrant heartbeat of the valley, stand as an embodiment of unwavering spirit and boundless aspirations. Born amidst the whispering meadows and towering peaks, they carry within their souls the echoes of an ancient legacy, yet their eyes remain fixed on horizons brimming with possibility. With an indomitable resolve, they traverse the intricate tapestry of tradition and modernity, striving to carve out identities that resonate beyond the confines of geography. Each dream they nurture, each ambition they chase, is a testament to their resilience—a silent yet resounding rebellion against adversity, a proclamation that hope is not merely a fleeting whisper but an unshakable force. The youth of Kashmir, an embodiment of resilience and ingenuity, stand as the torchbearers of a new era, intertwining tradition with modernity in their pursuit of self-expression and progress. Their indomitable spirit, nurtured amidst the breathtaking valleys and the echoes of historical grandeur, has found a new canvas in the digital realm.

In the contemporary digital age, a transformative phenomenon has taken root within the scenic valleys of Kashmir, heralding the emergence of a new breed of cultural protagonists—social media influencers. These digital storytellers, armed with the power of the internet and the allure of visual narratives, have redefined the modes of communication, expression, and economic sustenance within the region. The ascent of these virtual luminaries is not merely a shift in entertainment or lifestyle but an emblem of an evolving society where the internet serves as both a medium of opportunity and a battleground of ideological conflict.

The omnipresence of social media has catalyzed a shift in traditional paradigms, empowering young individuals to craft their identities in an interconnected world. Platforms such as Insta-

gram, YouTube, , and Facebook have become digital amphitheatres where these influencers disseminate their content, attracting audiences both within and beyond the boundaries of Kashmir. This newfound influence has enabled them to establish a bridge between the local and the global, encapsulating the cultural, social, and economic nuances of their environment while simultaneously engaging in dialogues with the broader digital populace.

One of the most striking implications of this digital revolution is the economic renaissance it has heralded. The conventional employment landscape, often constrained by geopolitical complexities and limited opportunities, has been supplemented by the financial prospects of content creation. Influencers have harnessed brand collaborations, sponsorships, and monetized content to create independent revenue streams, effectively transforming personal passion into professional viability. The lucrative domain of influencer marketing has flourished, enabling individuals to build careers that were previously unimaginable within the traditional employment structure of the region.

Moreover, the digital space has provided a robust platform for the amplification of local culture and indigenous artistry. Social media influencers have taken upon themselves the responsibility of documenting and showcasing Kashmir's rich heritage, vibrant traditions, and evolving modernity. Whether through travel vlogs that capture the enchanting landscapes, culinary explorations that celebrate the gastronomic legacy, or storytelling that encapsulates the socio-political realities, influencers have emerged as custodians of Kashmiri identity in the digital realm. Their narratives have not only fostered pride within the local populace but have also attracted international curiosity, thereby placing Kashmir in a contemporary cultural spotlight. Beyond the economic and cultural dimensions, the social ramifications of this phenomenon are profound. The digital platform has given voice to narratives that were hitherto submerged under mainstream media biases or regional restrictions. Issues of mental health, gender equality, environmental conservation,

and youth empowerment are now being actively discussed and propagated by influencers who wield significant reach and engagement. This democratization of discourse has enabled previously unheard voices to find resonance, empowering individuals and communities to initiate constructive dialogues and drive social change.

Nevertheless, the meteoric rise of social media influencers in Kashmir is not devoid of complexities. While digital prominence has bestowed newfound opportunities, it has also invited the pitfalls of hyper-visibility. The allure of virtual validation has, in some instances, fostered a culture of superficiality, where aesthetics often take precedence over authenticity. The pressure to conform to ever-evolving digital trends has compelled some influencers to prioritize sensationalism over substance, leading to a dilution of meaningful content. This preoccupation with virality has, at times, overshadowed the ethical considerations of content creation, where misinformation and exaggerated portrayals have inadvertently contributed to misconceptions and socio-cultural distortions.

Moreover, the monetization of influence has introduced ethical dilemmas concerning transparency and accountability. With brand endorsements and sponsored content becoming primary sources of revenue, the integrity of influencer recommendations has come under scrutiny. Audiences, while engaged and impressionable, are often unaware of the commercial motivations behind promotional content, blurring the lines between genuine advocacy and paid partnerships. This has necessitated a more regulated and conscientious approach to digital influence, where trust and authenticity must remain at the core of content creation.

The psychological implications of digital fame further complicate the landscape. The relentless pursuit of online engagement, dictated by algorithmic preferences and audience interactions, has exerted considerable mental and emotional strain on influencers. The volatility of digital validation, characterized by fluctuating likes, comments, and shares, has engendered an environment of perpetual comparison and self-doubt. The vulnerability to cyberbully-

ing, trolling, and online harassment has further exacerbated the challenges of maintaining a stable digital presence, often compelling influencers to tread a precarious path between self-expression and self-preservation.

The socio-cultural implications of influencer culture have also been a subject of contention. While digital platforms have facilitated the dissemination of progressive ideals, they have simultaneously reinforced certain stereotypes and unrealistic aspirations. The portrayal of curated lifestyles, often characterized by luxury and unattainable perfection, has engendered a culture of materialism and escapism. Young audiences, enamored by the glamorized versions of influencer lives, have found themselves caught in cycles of aspiration and disillusionment, struggling to reconcile virtual portrayals with tangible realities. This digital mirage has raised concerns about the psychological well-being of impressionable minds, prompting discussions on the need for digital literacy and responsible consumption of online content.

Despite these challenges, the evolution of social media influencers in Kashmir remains an indelible testament to the transformative power of the digital era. Their rise signifies a paradigm shift in the modes of communication, self-expression, and economic independence. The digital platform, with all its paradoxes and complexities, has bestowed agency upon individuals to craft their own narratives, challenge stereotypes, and carve out spaces of representation in a rapidly evolving world. The onus now lies on both content creators and audiences to navigate this landscape with discernment and responsibility, ensuring that the digital revolution serves as a conduit for empowerment rather than a mere spectacle of ephemeral validation.

In essence, the phenomenon of social media influencers in Kashmir encapsulates a dual reality—an intricate interplay of opportunities and challenges, empowerment and exploitation, authenticity and artifice. The trajectory of this movement will be determined by the collective agency of its participants, where the conscious choices of content creators, the ethical engagement of audiences, and

the regulatory oversight of digital ecosystems will shape the future of influence in this region. As the virtual and the real continue to converge, the role of social media influencers will undoubtedly remain a defining aspect of Kashmir's contemporary socio-cultural landscape, heralding both promise and perplexity in equal measure.

The dawn of digital prominence has granted Kashmiri youth a stage upon which their voices resonate beyond the confines of their homeland. It has become a gateway to self-sufficiency, a medium where aspirations are no longer bound by conventional employment limitations. In a land where avenues of livelihood often remain constricted, the art of content creation has emerged as a source of sustenance, allowing young visionaries to sculpt their destinies through brand affiliations, promotional ventures, and entrepreneurial ingenuity.

Furthermore, this digital revolution has rekindled the essence of Kashmiri heritage, elevating its cultural magnificence onto the global stage. Through the lens of these storytellers, the world bears witness to the soul of the valley—the enchanting landscapes, the intricate craftsmanship, the culinary traditions steeped in history, and the melodic echoes of an ancient civilization. These modern-day narrators challenge preconceived notions, dismantling stereotypes, and offering a narrative sculpted by those who live it rather than those who merely observe.

Beyond cultural representation, the virtual sphere has ignited conversations of profound societal relevance. It has fostered awareness on issues long confined to whispers—mental well-being, environmental guardianship, gender parity, and communal upliftment. The digital domain, once a distant phenomenon, has become an arena where voices previously muffled now resonate with clarity, urging action and reform.

Yet, beneath the allure of influence lies the shadow of artifice. The relentless chase for digital admiration has birthed a culture where substance often bows to spectacle, where authenticity is sometimes sacrificed at the altar of fleeting trends. The pursuit of virality compels some to weave narratives laced with exaggera-

tion, where reality is diluted, and the essence of genuine storytelling is eclipsed by theatrical portrayals. This digital ascent, while illuminating, is not without its burdens. The quest for engagement, dictated by ever-shifting algorithms and audience whims, has given rise to psychological turmoil—bouts of self-doubt, relentless comparison, and the agony of fluctuating online approval. The veil of virtual prominence offers no sanctuary from the tempest of scrutiny, as cyber hostility and unsolicited critique gnaw at the emotional well-being of those under the digital spotlight.

Moreover, the monetization of influence raises moral quandaries. The distinction between heartfelt advocacy and commercial persuasion grows increasingly blurred, leaving audiences susceptible to curated endorsements masked as impartial guidance. This erosion of trust threatens the very foundation upon which digital influence is built. Alongside this, a culture of materialistic aspiration has emerged, where carefully staged portrayals of opulence incite yearning among impressionable minds, leading them into an abyss of unattainable ideals.

The ascension of social media influencers in Kashmir is neither an unbridled blessing nor an unequivocal downfall; it is a phenomenon demanding discernment, a force that must be steered with intent and integrity. When wielded with sincerity, ethical prudence, and a commitment to meaningful engagement, it serves as a beacon of empowerment, an instrument of economic self-reliance, and a custodian of cultural identity. However, if consumed by artifice, heedless commercial pursuits, and moral ambiguity, it risks degenerating into an ephemeral illusion that feeds disillusionment rather than enlightenment. The fate of this digital evolution rests in the hands of its architects and their audiences. If nurtured with responsibility, it has the potential to bridge the chasm between antiquity and modernity, to weave a narrative of hope, resilience, and ingenuity. But should it descend into a pursuit of transient applause, forsaking depth for spectacle, it may become a fleeting mirage—glittering on the surface but devoid of substance within.

The miseries of low paid workers time has come to uplift the low paid class laws should be made to prioritize their work culture

ER. ISHFAQ KHALIQ

Every day social media sites, blogging sites, newspapers, television channels etc. are complete with stories of empowering the low-wage workers of Indian industry actually we have kept a schedule of celebrating days like Labor Day, and Women's Empowerment Day but practically without the hot speeches and show-offs we do nothing for their betterment and vulnerability we don't have any idea how badly the low wage workers suffer how their families survive we all have ignored that.

Many nations commemorate this day for justice, equality and fairness for the Labourers or workers' class discussing workers' rights persists, with many facing unsafe working conditions and inadequate recognition it is good we do celebrate and recognize their efforts on the selected days but we should shed light on their social status as well what they are to society and what they are paying to society and how are they treated. These days should be celebrated but it should present the occasion to show appreciation for the efforts of workers in industrial and allied sectors it should also emphasize the worker's rights and advocate for better working conditions.

In the contemporary era, these

days should focus on social justice for these low-paid workers political parties and lawmakers should make some laws to serve something better lawmakers now the question is the concerns regarding the laborers, low-paid industrial workers which should be prioritized likewise: -

There should be laws to protect workers or low-paid workers: The law enforcing agencies should make and pass such laws where the lower working class or the low-paid workers are given free choice enough to recognize their toiling efforts the law should be a backbone to them if they are working with all their sweat out but later on their work is not recognized or they are harassed for no payments or if they raise the voice they will be expelled from their roles.

Holidays and weekend celebrations:

After all the hard work and tight duty schedules, low-paid workers should get enough holidays, like holidays on Sundays and week offs, to give time to their families to celebrate and enjoy themselves with their families and friends. They want fun and relaxation.

To have money when grown old:

When these low-paid workers or workers get old make sure they have earned enough to live on they should not beg for small pennies to live upon they should

have earned enough money on which they will rely for the rest of their lives.

Health care:

The workers should get health benefits that if they fall sick while working there should be health support for them so that they may not suffer and their salaries should not get halted during the unhealthy days.

Safeguarding kids:

The laws should be enforced that kids should not work at the working places but they should go to schools to get a good education and work not like the adults.

Safety first:

The Labourers laws should be enforced so that without safety equipment one should never work strict laws should be made so that workers working in any area though it can be tough or easy should have enough safety equipment and also they shouldn't get hurt while working.

Workers union:

There should be a group of workers to make unions and the unions should make associations the association should talk to the bosses about all the problems and do doughnuts or for any of the situations arising for the worker.

Discrimination:

A good signal to the working class who work with true enthusiasm and high spirit is loving the workers with above prejudice

and malice and recognizing their efforts despite what they love, their cast colour creed etc.

The struggles of Indian families of workers:

The Indian workers work in tough situations they mainly work in factories where basic amenities like hospitals, a balanced diet and education for them and their families are absent additional safety measures are very less they work late at night with their toiling efforts or work long hours and didn't get enough time to spend with their families they are just pressurized in between job and long busy working schedule so they didn't express their miseries as India is having job scarcity if they will utter some words against their bosses they may lose the small pennies which they earn to make things better so things could be altered if they are treated properly if they are paid properly and if they are considered important assets of the workplaces. What could be done is to make learning programs for these low-paid workers so that they may get better experience and skills to nurture their talents and this in turn can safeguard their jobs and make the future of the low-wage workers much better. We have to think of it and make things better for the working class which is tirelessly working for the betterment of the nation.

How to make Science an interesting



SAHIL MANZOOR

sahilmanzoorbhat1786@gmail.com

Science means to know about nature and may have other definitions in various different books. Science is one of the most interesting and practical subjects at school, college, or even at the university level. Science has great, vast diversity in various aspects. All the advancement in the world today is because of science, and people are fond of it as it deals with facts and is purely known and renowned among the intellectual class. Today, we are well aware of important natural phenomena like the water cycle and its importance, earthquakes and their mechanisms, how important sunlight is for us, and how vital it is for living as well as non-living things. Science has opened up most of the mysteries we never knew before. Opens doors for scientists, researchers, and students, as it has great importance and plays a vital role in developing the world in different ways.

Why science is important: Science is quite interesting and plays a vital role in our lives. It is with the blessings of science that I am able to write this article on my smart phone. Every day we observe a gallery of inventions in our surroundings, and this all happened due to the blessings of science and technology. Science has blessed most of the living creatures on this earth in various beneficial ways, like in the medical field, where science has played an immense role in providing respite to the thousands of humans who are suffering from different illnesses and are getting well due to treatment with the help of different machines. Most illnesses are diagnosed after undergoing a number of tests like TSH (thyroid stimulating hormone), CBC, HB, ultrasound, etc. These are all facilities we are getting due to the advancement of the science field.

One of the most useful social media applications is Youtube, where one can get various tech-

niques that have already been used by teachers for effective learning pedagogy (teaching learning processes). Most of the time, a teacher should follow the best and most effective methods instead of a syllabus. Repeating things may help learners learn things in a very proper way, like repeating them about various important phenomena, like the water cycle, how rain falls, how snow falls, and how earthquakes cause damage, and telling them how they cause damage.

How to make science interesting among the students at the middle level in schools: At the middle level, which includes the 6th, 7th, and 8th standards, students are supposed to learn basic concepts. Biological mechanism in our body, functioning of different organs of the human body like the digestive system, skeleton system, nervous system, circulatory system, excretory system, digestion of food how vital components of food reach our body parts from the complex food items we eat in different forms, like solid or liquid form. How is waste material removed from our body, and what are the organs responsible for this whole process? If a teacher teaches students the parts of plants, he or she should provide a small plant to every student and then tell them the names of the different parts of the plant. Show them plant leaves and explain how stomatal pores take part in transpiration (transpiration is a process by which a plant expels excess water through stomatal pores). Where there are dense plants, forests may cause a cool environment due to the presence of an adequate amount of water in the environment. A teacher has to teach the learners in a very simple way by using TLM (teaching learning material). Today, one of the most useful social media applications is Youtube, where one can get various techniques that have already been used by teachers for effective learning pedagogy (teaching learning processes). Most of the time, a teacher should follow the best and most effective methods instead of a syllabus. Repeating things may help learners learn things in a very proper way, like repeating them about various important phenomena, like the water cycle, how rain falls, how snow falls, and how earthquakes cause damage, and telling them how they cause damage.



"BBSS2 Kashmiri Authors Workshop begins at CUKashmir"

HT News Network

Ganderbal, Mar 20: Under the guidance of University Grants Commission (UGC), Bhartiya Bhasha Samvardhana Samiti (BBSS-II) Kashmiri, kick-started a two-days "Authors Workshop on Academic Writing to Develop Textbooks for Higher Education in the Kashmiri Language" at the Central University of Kashmir (CUKashmir), Tulmulla here on Thursday.

Inaugurating the workshop, CUKashmir Vice Chancellor, Prof. A Ravinder Nath stressed upon the use of local language in academics. He highlighted the need for a collaborative approach to elevate the language to an international level. Prof. A. Ravinder Nath acknowledged the dedication of the university in fostering linguistic and cultural heritage, stressing, "collective efforts from scholars, linguists, and the com-

munity are essential for achieving this goal." He expressed gratitude to the guests for their presence and valuable contributions, making the event a grand success.

Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir, Prof. Nilofer Khan, who was the chief guest on the occasion, emphasized the need to integrate Kashmiri into the modern period, and said "Publishing work in local language is one of the ways to promote and modernize our language." Prof. Khan stressed the importance of teaching children in their mother tongue, citing research that suggests children who learn in their native language develop stronger cognitive and critical thinking abilities. Our roots are weakening as we increasingly adopt foreign languages while communicating with our children," she added.

Noted Kashmiri author, Sahitya Academy awardee, poet, and broadcaster, Dr. Satish Vimal, who was the



guest of honour spoke about the significance of the Kashmiri language. He emphasized that it is the collective responsibility of society to preserve and promote their mother tongue. He reflected on the declining use of the language and urged linguistic enthusiasts, students and academicians to take proactive steps in its revival. "It is unfortunate that there are no textbooks for Geography, Physics, Mathematics, or other

such subjects available in Kashmiri. The language has been limited to literature and poetry," Dr. Vimal also mentioned his recent work in translating the Constitution of India into Kashmiri and urged students, academicians, and language enthusiasts to take proactive steps in preserving the language.

Prof. Sandhya Tiwari, Dean School of languages, the Organising Secretary and the Nodal coordinator of

BBSS-II (Kashmiri) in the opening remarks and concept note presented the holistic approach and initiatives of GoI, MoE and UGC, in line with the objectives of NEP2020, and project is to render the originality, importance and ingenuity of work in regional languages and specifically mother tongue that people understand and connect with emotionally. She also reminded the participants that anyone's language is the foundation of identity and cultural heritage and if a language is forgotten then there are chances of losing the rich rubric of culture itself. "Due to fascination for foreign languages, local languages have been heavily impacted. This project aims to revive the significance of local languages aligning with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by focusing on preserving indigenous languages and cultures," said Prof. Sandhya Tiwari in her speech. She further added that

the workshop aimed to emphasize the importance of the Kashmiri language and its cultural significance.

The day also marked the Foundation Day of CUKashmir and during the workshop, Deans of various Schools and Controller of Examinations were felicitated by the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, CUKashmir. In order to appreciate the notable contributions of Prof. Aijaz, in translating the Indian Constitution into Kashmiri, the Organising Secretary and HVC felicitated him with a memento and stroll.

The inaugural culminated with vote of thanks by the Dean Academic Affairs, Prof. Shahid Rasool who also expressed his concern over the manner in which people of this region have lost their interest in Kashmiri language. "Kashmiri language has lost its essence due to the insensitivity shown by Kashmir's own people by prioritizing other languages over their mother tongue.

District Level Sports Event as part of inclusive Education organised by IE wing of CEO Kupwara:

HT News Network

Kupwara, MARCH 20: Chief Education Officer Kupwara Mr M.D Shah along with ZEO Kupwara, I/c Principal BHSS Kupwara & Faculty members, IE team, PET team showed their longtime presence to encourage CWSN students during different sports activities held at BHSS Kupwara and sets a positive tone towards uplifting this sensitive community and their inclusion parallel to normal students.

The Inclusive Education wing of the CEO, Kupwara, worked tirelessly for last 03 days with these students at Resource centres to bring out their hidden talent and enable them for appreciation and participate in district-level sports event that promoted inclusivity and encouraged participation from Children with Special Needs (CWSN).

CEO Kupwara Mr Mehraj udin Shah said during the event told the gathering, involving in sports, felicitating the participants with trophies, medals, and certificates of participation is a great way to recognize their efforts and boost their confidence". Such initiatives help create a supportive and inclusive environment,



allowing CWSN students to showcase their talents and develop their skills. CEO Kupwara appreciated the hard-work, sympathy and high morale of Inclusive Education team for their

role and commitment in performing their best for Children with Special Needs and achieving the goals aimed under Inclusive Education component of SAMAGRA SHIKSHA J&K.

20th Death Anniversary HAJI ABDUL REHMAN WANPOH (1931-2005)



"Death Keeps No Calendar and the Destiny of a Person is fixed at the time of Birth. We All belong to Allah to whom we shall return".

It was exactly two decades back when our beloved father Haji Abdul Rahman Wanpoh left for heavenly abode on 23rd March 2005 leaving the entire family in deep shock and pain. But we still do not forget him and his ideal principles of life, foresightedness, love, affection, and sincerity. We pray to Allah for his eternal peace and a place in Jannat-UI-Firdous (Ameen). The Fateh Khawani will be held at Raja House, Rose Lane(I) Colony, Chanapora, Srinagar on Saturday 23rd March, 2025 at 10:00 am and at Raja House Opp SKUAST Khudwani Kulgam at 02: 00PM on the same day.

All bereaved family members through (Son)
Mohammad Rouf Rahman (JKAS)
Additional Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am applying for Retail Fertilizer License before Chief Agriculture Officer Pulwama under the name and style M/S Phytocare Agri Services, Near Govt. HSS Pinglena District Pulwama. If any body has any objection he/she may submit the same to the Chief Agriculture Officer Pulwama within 7 days from the date of issue of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name. Sakeena Akhter
C/O: Nazir Ahmad
R/O Pinglena Tehsil: Pulwama
District: Pulwama

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of MOHAMMAD ANNAS MIR, RABIYA JAVID & ANEES UL ISLAM MIR S/O JAVID AHMAD MIR R/O SALOOSA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 09/12/2017, 17/04/2016 & 04/10/2014 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 has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of SADIYA BANO & ADFAR RAMZAN S/O MOHAMMAD RAMZAN GANIE R/O KHOLINA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 25/09/2010 & 14/12/2014 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 has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of MOHAMMAD MAQBOOL RATHER, S/O GHULAM MOHAMMAD RATHER R/O KHISIPORA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 05/04/2008 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

ABRSM District Unit Jammu Welcomes Newly Posted DEPO Jammu and Facilitates CEO Jammu

HT News Network



Jammu, March 19, 2025: The Akhil Bhartiya Rashtriya Shaikshik Mahasangh (ABRSM) District Unit Jammu, under the leadership of District President Sh. Pawan Sharma and General Secretary Sh. Ved Parkash Sharma, warmly welcomed the newly posted District Education Planning Officer (DEPO) Jammu, Sh. B.D. Sharma. As a token of respect, a bouquet and the organization's official calendar were presented to him. On this occasion, ABRSM also extended its felicitations to the esteemed Chief Education Officer (CEO) Jammu, Sh. J.K. Padha. During the event, a productive discussion was held with the CEO regarding key educational matters, including the Annual Transfer Drive (ATD) of teachers and the promotion of teachers to Masters and Masters to Headmasters. The delegation emphasized the importance of fair and timely promotions to enhance the efficiency and motivation of the teaching fraternity. The event was graced by the presence of several distinguished members, including Sh. Rahul Sharma (UT Seh Media Prabhar), Sh. Rakesh Sharma (UT Working Committee Member), Sh. Narotam Sharma, Sh. Ashok Kumar, Sh. Rattan Lal Shastri, Sh. Charanjeet Singh, and Sh. Bachan Lal.

اطلاع عام

رخاص وعام کو اطلاع دی جاتی ہے بنک اکاؤنٹ زیر نمبر
Mohammad Jabbar میرانم S B 4 5 1 4
Sheikh اندراج ہوا ہے جب کہ میرا اصل نام مطابق ادھار
کاڈ Moht Jabar Sheikh ہے اب اسکی دستگی کرانی
مطلوب ہے کسی کو کوئی عذر ہو تو وہ سات یوم کے اندر اندر
دفتر ہز س مین پیس کرے بعد از معاد کوئی عذر قبول نہیں ہو
گا

المستہر

Mohd Jabar sheikh
Ama Sheikh
Frishana Pahlagam

اطلاع عام

ہر خاص وعام کو اطلاع دی جاتی ہے کہ مجھے اپنی والدہ رتی بیگم زوہر عبدل
سلام بیگم ساکن فصلن پہلگام کی ڈیٹ سرٹفکٹ ہلاک پہلگام سے نکالی
اس بارے میں کسی کو کوئی 29/10/2023 مطلوب ہے مطابق تاریخ
عذر ہو تو وہ سات یوم کے اندر اندر ہلاک ڈولٹ آفس پہلگام میں پیش
کرے بعد از معاد کوئی عذر قبول نہیں ہوگا

المستہر

سکیہ بانو دختر رتی بیگم ساکن فصلن پہلگام

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of TANVEER, AHMAD KHANDAY, S/O BASHIR AHMAD KHANDAY R/O KHISIPORA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 15/04/2004 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

Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR TOURISM, GULMARG Telefax: - 01954254439/87 Email: - gulmargtourism@gmail.com

Subject: - Transfer of Registration Certificate "M/s Ishrat Adventures" and Change of Title situated at Kalantra Bala Gulmarg."

Public Notice.

Whereas, Mr. Mohammad Arif Malik S/o Mr. Ab Hamid Malik, owner of the Adventure Tour Operator unit namely M/s Ishrat Adventures, has requested this office for transfer of registration certificate of his Adventure Tour Operator unit from Mohammad Arif Malik to Mrs. Aazra Nabi W/o Mudasir Ahmad Malik R/o Kalantra Bala and change of title from Ishrat Adventures to Gulmarg Skylinks in the Registration Certificate of the said Adventure Tour Operator unit under the J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas, the said Adventure Tour Operator unit is registered with this office under the Jammu & Kashmir Registration of Tourist Trade Act, /Rules, 1978/82/2011-12 under No. ATO00002979 dated 31.12.2020 valid upto 31.12.2027.

Whereas, the applicant has submitted the following documents in support of their claim with regard to transfer of registration:-

1. Original Registration Certificate.
2. Affidavit from Proprietor.
3. Character Certificate of New owner
4. Non conviction Affidavit from new owner.
5. Qualification certificate of new owner.
6. Experience certificate of new owner.

Now therefore, in exercise of powers conferred on me under section 39 of Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12, before the request of the applicant is considered for Transfer of Registration and change of Title in the Registration Certificate, the matter is hereby notified for information of General Public/ Financial Institutions/ Bank/ Organization, etc for objection if any. The same should reach this office within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in the local newspaper. Objections received beyond a period of 7 days will not be entertained and changes in the Registration/ records shall be made under rules.

DPK-13261/24
Dated :20-03-25

Sd/-
Assistant Director Tourism,
Gulmarg.



Govt. of U.T. of Jammu & Kashmir

Office of the Executive Engineer Water Works Division Srinagar

"Tel: 0194-2452047, 2477207" email ID: xenwwd@gmail.com



APPEAL FOR PAYMENT OF WATER TAX

The department of Jal Shakti - Water Works Division Srinagar endeavors to provide un-interrupted potable water supply to all its consumers which includes Govt., Semi-Govt. Offices and departments there-under, Private and Commercial Units, PSU's, Banks in District Srinagar and adjoining areas.

In this behalf, an APPEAL is being circulated through the medium of this Notice to all the esteemed consumers that outstanding dues (Water Usage Charges) may kindly be paid through any branch of J&K Bank or through Net-Banking on our official website www.jkphedwaterbilling.jk.gov.in and / or visit this office (Water Works Division Srinagar) for any query / complaint related to the outstanding dues before 31st March 2025, failing which the department will be constrained to initiate legal action against defaulters. Moreover, those consumers who have been using water supply illegally without registering their connections are requested to get their water connections registered / regulated failing which the department shall be constrained to disconnect their illegal connections forthwith without further notice.

DPK-13253/24
Date: Mar 20 2025

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Water Works Division Srinagar





DEO Kulgam convenes meeting with representatives of Political parties

Seeks cooperation for strengthening electoral mechanism

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, MARCH 20: In order to further strengthen electoral processes in District within legal framework, District Election Officer (DEO) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today convened a meeting with representatives of different Political Parties at Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex, here.

At the outset, the DEO sought cooperation from all the Political Parties in further improvising the electoral process and emphasized the importance of maximizing the registration of newly eligible electors in electoral roll of the district.

The DEO urged the representatives of Political Parties to provide feedback to concerned Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) for further strengthening the existing electoral processes and to make elections in future more inclusive and participatory.

On the occasion, the representatives of the political parties across the party lines raised various issues and gave suggestions for the betterment of the electoral process.

He assured the participants that such interactions will continue to be held in future as well in order to make our democratic process stronger and more inclusive.

He further emphasized that the suggestions and issues raised by the



political parties will be deliberated upon and would be considered for the advancement of democratic pro-

cess of elections and electoral participation.

Besides, representatives of different

Political Parties like BJP, INC, CPIM, JDU, JKNC, PDP, the meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ERO-40 Devsar), Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ERO-39-Kulgam-), SDM D.H Pora (ERO-38), Deputy Election Officer and other officers. The DEO urged the representatives of Political Parties to provide feedback to concerned Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) for further strengthening the existing electoral processes and to make elections in future more inclusive and participatory. On the occasion, the representatives of the political parties across the party lines raised various issues and gave suggestions for the betterment of the electoral process.

He assured the participants that such interactions will continue to be held in future as well in order to make our democratic process stronger and more inclusive. He further emphasized that the suggestions and issues raised by the political parties will be deliberated upon and would be considered for the advancement of democratic process of elections and electoral participation. Besides, representatives of different Political Parties like BJP, INC, CPIM, JDU, JKNC, PDP, the meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ERO-40 Devsar), Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ERO-39-Kulgam-), SDM D.H Pora (ERO-38), Deputy Election Officer and other officers.

Indian Army Hosts Iftar Party in Langate to Foster Communal Harmony

■ **DR.AB QAYOOM**

Langate, Mar, 20: In A heartwarming display of unity and brotherhood, the Indian Army organized an Iftar party for the local residents of Langate in Kupwara district. The event, held during the holy month of Ramadan, aimed at strengthening ties between the security forces and the people, promoting goodwill, and reinforcing the region's cultural heritage. The gathering witnessed the presence of people from all walks of life, including local elders, youth, religious leaders, civil society members, and elected representatives. As the sun set, the event commenced with prayers, followed by the breaking of the fast



with traditional Ramadan delicacies. The atmosphere was filled with warmth and mutual respect, reflecting the spirit of the

holy month. Community members expressed their gratitude for the initiative, appreciating the Army's continued

efforts to build trust and foster understanding. Many attendees highlighted that such events play a crucial role in bridging gaps and promoting a sense of togetherness among different sections of society. The Indian Army has been actively engaging in various outreach programs across Jammu and Kashmir, focusing on social and cultural inclusivity. The Langate Iftar party stands as yet another example of its commitment to fostering communal harmony and peace in the region. By organizing such gatherings, the Army continues to reaffirm its role not just as a security force but also as a pillar of support for the local communities, working towards a future of unity, peace, and shared prosperity.

DEO Shopian holds interaction session with representatives of political parties

■ **HT News Network**

SHOPIAN, MARCH 20: District Election Officer (DEO) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today held an interaction session with representatives of various political parties at Mini Secretariat here to discuss mechanism aimed at strengthening the electoral process in the district.

Various issues including conduct of monthly meetings for discussing election matters, appointment of BLAs for polling stations, submission of details of party offices, promoting ethical voting and rationalisation of polling stations were discussed and proposals sought from them on rationalisation of Polling stations along with list of Booth Level Agents (BLAs).

During the meeting, the



DEO said that participation of political parties is crucial in strengthening the electoral processes at the ground level viz a viz purification of Electoral Roll, promotion of ethical voting, ensuring voter literacy and education.

DEO advised all the recognised political parties to identify and appoint BLAs in all polling stations to assist the BLOs in summary revision and provide suggestions for more efficient electoral manage-

ment. On the occasion, Dy. DEO, Jahanger Ahmad informed the representatives of political parties about ECI instructions on various other electoral processes. He encouraged them to coordinate actively with EROs and AEROs for any concerns.

They were also encouraged to promote ethical voting among the voters, support BLOs in registering of new voters and endorse voters literacy and awareness. The meeting was

attended by ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, ACR, Shakoora Ahmad Dar, DIO Shopian, representatives of various national and regional political parties. Various issues including conduct of monthly meetings for discussing election matters, appointment of BLAs for polling stations, submission of details of party offices, promoting ethical voting and rationalisation of polling stations were discussed and proposals sought from them on rationalisation of Polling stations along with list of Booth Level Agents (BLAs). During the meeting, the DEO said that participation of political parties is crucial in strengthening the electoral processes at the ground level viz a viz purification of Electoral Roll, promotion of ethical voting, ensuring voter literacy and education.

Baramulla district netball concludes successfully

■ **HT News Network**



Baramulla, 20 March The Netball Association of Jammu and Kashmir is delighted to announce the successful completion of Baramulla District Netball Championship in all events, held at the PM SHRI GOVT. HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL GUND KHAWAJA QASIM, PATTABARAMULLA. The championship witnessed enthusiastic participation from nearly 120 budding players representing various schools across the Baramulla district. The event was graced by several esteemed guests who contributed to its success. Miss. Sofia Gull, Head of Govt. Middle School Pattan Baramulla blessed the participants. We were also privileged to have Miss Haneefa Akhtar Teacher GMS, Mr Bashir Ahmad Baba PTI Madina Public School, Mr Firdous and Mr. Sajad Physical Education Teacher as our Special Guest and Other official members namely Mr Akshit Arora, Mr Arjun Soni, Mr Abhishek and Mr Suraj Maurya. Their support and encouragement greatly motivated the participants and underscored the importance of sports in building character and fostering teamwork among young individuals. Throughout the championship, players showcased remarkable talent, determination, and teamwork. The Netball Association of Jammu and Kashmir extends its heartfelt thanks to all the participants, coaches and supporters who contributed to making this championship a grand success. We also express our gratitude to the guests who honored us with their presence and added immense value to the event.

Police launches plantation drive in Parihaspora APC complex

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar March 20: A plantation was carried out by 20th Battalion of IRP at Parihaspora APC Complex, where more than 500 saplings of various plant species were planted. This initiative is part of a broader effort to foster environmental awareness and community responsibility. The event was graced by the presence of several key officials, including the Commanding Officer of 20th Bn IRP, Shri. Shamsheer Hussain, Dy CO Shri Muneer Ahmad, and DySP Shri Farooq Ahmad and DySP Shri Mussadiq Abas, along with other officers and officials from the battalion.

DC Kulgam reviews functioning of Distt Ayush Society Governing body

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM MARCH 20: Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today reviewed the functioning of the District Ayush Society governing body here at the meeting hall of Mini-Secretariat.

The meeting aimed to assess the society's performance in implementing various Ayush-related programs and services in the district.

The governing body discussed several key aspects like AYUSH Services at H&WC's, Primary Health Centers (PHCs) and District Hospital.

The meeting also discussed the implementation of National Ayush Mission (NAM) in the district, focusing on enhancing AYUSH health services, education, quality of drugs and IEC.



The formation and functioning of the District Ayush Society, which oversees the implementation of AYUSH programs and services in the district, was also discussed.

The DC was apprised that five Ayush Centres in the district have been nominated for National Accreditation Board for Hospital (NABH) Certification this year.

During the meeting the Nodal Officer Ayush presented a detailed District Annual

Action Plan for the year 2025-26 through power point presentation.

The meeting emphasized on importance of inter-sectoral coordination and collaboration to strengthen AYUSH services in the district besides augmentation of Ayush Mobile Medical Unit in far-flung areas.

The Deputy Commissioner urged the governing body members to work together to achieve the goals of the National AYUSH Mission.

DLC approves 4 units of fisheries sector under PMMSY

■ **HT News Network**

BANDIPORA, MARCH 20: District Level Committee (DLC) under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri today conducted draw of lots at mini secretariat here for sanctioning of "Boat and Net" units under Centrally sponsored Scheme Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).

Out of 30 group applications, 25 group applications were found eligible by the technical committee after scrutinization.

Through the draw of lots, four units, comprising of 16 fishermen were selected for assistance, with each unit having a cost of Rs 5.0 lakh with subsidy of Rs 2.0 lakh (40% of the unit cost) per unit under PMMSY. Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted that PMMSY is designed to strengthen the fisheries sector

through various measures, including providing essential infrastructure like boats and nets to traditional fishermen.

He emphasized that the scheme helps to boost fish production and contribute to the economic stability of the fishing community.

The Deputy Commissioner said that the District Administration is committed to support the fishermen by facilitating access to government schemes and providing technical guidance to them.

He urged the beneficiaries to make the best use of the assistance provided under PMMSY to enhance their productivity and improve their income levels.

Among others the meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioner Development, Irfan Bahadur, Chief Planning Officer, Mohammad Maqbool Lone, Chief Agriculture Officer, AD Fisheries, Head KVK Bandipora, Progressive fish farmer, applicants and other concerned.

IUST Hosts Seminar to Mark the 1st World Day for Glaciers

■ **HT News Network**

Awantipora, March 20: The Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), in collaboration with the Centre of Excellence for Glacial Studies, University of Kashmir, Kashmir chapters of the Indian Meteorological Society (IMS), and the Indian Society of Geomatics (ISG), organized a one-day seminar titled "Melting Himalayan Cryosphere and Its Implications" on the eve of the 1st World Day for Glaciers. This global event, coordinated by UNESCO and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) as part of the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation (IYGP 2025), aims to raise awareness about the accelerating retreat of glaciers worldwide and its cascading effects on water, energy and food security, and as well as the livelihoods. The seminar, held at IUST, brought together leading scientists, researchers, policymakers, and academicians to dis-



cuss the critical state of the Himalayan cryosphere under changing climate conditions. The event featured keynote addresses by eminent experts, including Prof. Shakil A. Romshoo, Vice Chancellor, IUST, and Head, National Cryosphere Lab, KU, Prof. Anil V. Kulkarni, Distinguished Scientist at the Divecha Centre for Climate Change, IISc Bangalore and and Mr. Arji-

mand Hussain Talib, a noted Development Economist. Addressing the gathering, Prof. Shakil A. Romshoo emphasized the urgent need for scientific research, policy interventions, and community engagement to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change on snow and glaciers. He highlighted that the Himalayan glaciers, a crucial source of fresh-

water for millions, are melting at an accelerated pace due to rising temperatures and black carbon deposition, posing significant threats to water security, agriculture, and disaster risks in the region. Prof. Anil V. Kulkarni, in his address, elaborated on the scientific insights into climate change and its impacts on snow melting and stressed the importance of national and international collaborations to preserve and monitor the rapidly depleting cryosphere. He highlighted the vulnerabilities of mountain regions associated with climate change, particularly in high-altitude communities that depend on glacier-fed resources for agriculture, energy, water, and daily sustenance. Mr. Arjmand Hussain Talib, in his keynote talk, provided a socio-economic perspective on glacier retreat and its far-reaching consequences on regional development, livelihoods, and food security. He further emphasized the need for inclusive climate policies.





Satish Sharma inaugurates Centralized DL/RC Printing Centre at TC Office, Jammu PVC Card Type RCs to be issued first time in J&K

HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: Minister for Transport, Satish Sharma, today inaugurated Centralized Driving License and Registration Certificate Printing Centre at Transport Commissioner Office, Jammu for printing of DLs and RCs.

While inaugurating, the Minister said that this is the first time in the history of J&K that PVC Card type RCs will be issued to the vehicle owners. He said that the pending DLs will be cleared in 90 days.

The Minister appreciated the efforts of MVD in providing rapid services to the public and expeditious



redressal of their grievances.

The Minister also highlighted the achievement of Motor Vehicles Department like providing of Rs 5 lakh subsidy for replacement of old, polluting buses/mini buses; issuance of Aggregator Licenses under which licenses have been issued including national players

also like OLA and Uber; Modern Institute of Drivers Training & Research (IDTR) and Automated Vehicle Inspection & Certificate Centre (ICC) are near completion at Kot Bhawal, Jammu and Samba respectively.

Satish Sharma further highlighted the forthcoming initiatives of MVD

under MoRTH guidelines. These included Automated Testing Station (ATS) under which Preliminary Registration Certificates have been issued to JKRTC for establishment of ATS at Jammu and Kashmir Valley; Vehicle Location Tracking Platform (VLTP) under Nirbhaya Framework for safety and security of women and children in Public Transport Vehicles; Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facility (RVSF) for which J&K RVSF Policy is at the final stage of Notification under which old, obsolete, end of life vehicles shall be scrapped in a scientific and non-polluting manner; Accredited Drivers Training Centre (ADTC).

DC Bandipora chairs meet with Political party representatives to strengthen Electoral coordination

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, MARCH 20: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, who is also the District Election Officer (DEO) today chaired a meeting at the Mini Secretariat here to discuss measures for strengthening coordination between election machinery and political parties.

The meeting was attended by representatives of various political parties like BJP, INC, Samajwadi Party, PDP, JKNPF, JK Apni Party, AIP and other concerned stakeholders.

During the meeting, the participants held detailed discussions on the role of DEO, EROs and BLOs in ensuring smooth conduct of the electoral process.



Speaking during the meeting, the DEO said that as per the directions of Election Commission of India (ECI), meetings with political parties are conducted at both constituency and district levels to review

mechanisms related to electoral roll updation and other essential processes.

He urged the party representatives to submit list of booth-level agents, counting agents and other concerned personnel to the

respective EROs for proper training on electoral procedures.

The DEO stressed on importance of facilitating the enrolment of all eligible voters in the electoral roll, ensuring that no eligible voter is left out of the election process.

The representatives also shared their feedback and put forth various suggestions, particularly emphasizing the need to enhance public awareness regarding the electoral process, including the use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).

The Deputy Commissioner assured that all genuine suggestions would be taken up and necessary steps would be implemented to maximize voter awareness, especially in remote areas.

DC reviews arrangements for Rajouri Day celebrations

HT News Network

RAJOURI, MARCH 20: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma, today chaired a meeting at the Conference Hall of PWD Dabanglow to review arrangements for the upcoming Rajouri Day celebrations, scheduled for April 13. The event will be organized by the District Administration in collaboration with Rotary Club Rajouri. During the meeting, a detailed discussion was held on various aspects of the event to ensure its smooth and successful execution. Several activities have been planned to highlight the district's rich culture and tourism potential. These include stalls set up by different departments to showcase government schemes, a display of prominent tourist sites, and sports events. A key pre-event activity will be the Talent Hunt Program, featuring competitions in singing, music, dance, and mimicry at the school, zonal, and district levels. The School Education and Culture departments have been



directed to ensure the smooth conduct of these competitions, with the top three students earning a chance to perform at the main event. Additionally, farmers will be sensitized about pesticide handling as part of the awareness initiatives. The celebrations will also feature a cultural program, showcasing the region's diverse traditions. A blood donation camp and a medical camp will be organized to promote health and well-being. Further, a mock drill exercise for disaster management and awareness sessions on drug abuse and mental health.

Full Court Reference held on transfer of Justice Atul Sreedharan

HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: A Full Court Reference was held today at Jammu Wing of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh to bid farewell to Justice Atul Sreedharan on his transfer to the High Court of Madhya Pradesh.

Chief Justice, Tashi Rabstan, in his address described Justice Atul Sreedharan a kind hearted person having great qualities of head and heart. He added that Justice Sreedharan was always in tireless search for delivering justice and has number of landmark judgments to his credit which will be of remarkable help and guidance. He further said that Justice Atul Sreedharan joined the High Court of J&K and Ladakh with a sense of purpose, bringing with him a steadfast commitment



to justice, a deep understanding of law and an unwavering dedication to fairness. The Chief Justice expressed heartfelt appreciation to Justice Atul Sreedharan for his exemplary services and contributions to the High Court of J&K and Ladakh. Monika Kohli, Senior Additional Advocate General described Justice Atul Sreedharan a gentleman par excellence and lauded his dedication and commitment towards his judicial responsibilities. His tenure at the High Court of J&K and Ladakh, though brief,

has been marked by judicial prudence, a keen sense of justice and a commitment towards upholding the rule of law. His insightful judgments and unwavering dedication to legal principles have left a lasting impression on the judiciary and the legal fraternity alike, he added.

Nirmal Kotwal, President, J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu in his farewell address, praised Justice Atul Sreedharan for his dedication and commitment both on judicial and administrative front. He also highlighted the

positive approach and respect of Justice Atul Sreedharan towards members of the Bar.

Justice Atul Sreedharan expressed gratitude to Judges of High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Officers of the Registry and Judicial Officers for their undaunted professional commitment and the support extended to him during his tenure. He also appreciated the talent of members of J&K Bar for their knowledge of Law and Professional competence. He also thanked his personal staff for their support and cooperation. He emphasised upon the young lawyers to display patience and work hard to ensure success in the profession.

Dignitaries present on the occasion included Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Justice Sindhu Sharma, Justice Rajnesh Oswal, Justice Vinod Chatterji Koul, Justice Sanjay.

DEO engages with political parties in Ramban

HT News Network

RAMBAN, MARCH 20: In a significant step towards ensuring a free, fair, and transparent electoral process in Ramban, District Election Officer (DEO) Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary conducted an interactive session with district-level representatives of political parties. The meeting aimed to foster collaborative efforts in strengthening electoral mechanisms within the legal framework, in line with the directives of the Election Commission of India (ECI).

The meeting was attended by Deputy District Election Officer (Dy. DEO) Abdul Jabbar, Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) 54-Ramban S. Harpal Singh, and senior representatives of various nation-



al and state political parties.

During the meeting, the DEO apprised the political representatives about the ECI's ongoing initiatives to enhance electoral participation and transparency. He emphasized that political parties are key stakeholders in the electoral process, as identified by the Commission, and encouraged

them to proactively utilize this platform for engagement. He urged the representatives to submit their suggestions in a structured and written format to ensure their concerns and recommendations are duly considered.

"Political parties play a pivotal role in the democratic framework, and their inputs are invaluable in

strengthening the electoral system. The Election Commission has established this decentralized mechanism to facilitate direct engagement and constructive dialogue with all stakeholders," the DEO stated.

During the meeting, political party representatives raised various issues and shared their suggestions, which were thoroughly discussed. The meeting served as a platform to address electoral concerns and streamline the process in a manner that upholds democratic values.

Similar interactive meetings were also convened at the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) level across the district to ensure wider participation and comprehensive feedback from all stakeholders.

Labour Commissioner issues notices to inactive Trade Unions for Non-Compliance

HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: In a significant move to streamline trade union activities in Jammu & Kashmir, the Labour Commissioner & Registrar Trade Unions Charandeep Singh has issued show cause notices to trade unions that have failed to comply with mandatory legal requirements, including the submission of Annual Returns. This action follows a first-of-its-kind interactive meeting held at Shram Bhawan, Jammu, where the Labour Commissioner engaged with trade union representatives from the Jammu division. During the meeting, he emphasized the importance of adherence to legal obligations under the Trade Unions Act, 1926, particularly the timely filing of Annual Returns under Section 28 of the Act.

The Labour Commissioner made it clear

that unions failing to fulfill their statutory duties risk cancellation of their registration. He urged trade unions to maintain proper records, abide by their by-laws, protect the rights of their members, and conduct elections in accordance with the prescribed guidelines. The show cause notices have been issued to inactive trade unions that have not submitted their Annual Returns for multiple years. These unions have been directed to provide an explanation within one month; failure to do so will result in the cancellation of their registration. Trade unions are required to submit their pending Annual Returns through the Single Window JK platform to ensure compliance with the Trade Unions Act, 1926, particularly Section 28, which mandates the timely filing of Annual Returns. Trade unions can visit the Single Window JK portal and follow the prescribed steps for online submission.

GCOE hosts awareness event on "One Nation One Subscription" Scheme

HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: The Library and ICT Department of the Government College of Education (GCOE) organized an informative awareness programme here today to educate students about the Government of India's "One Nation One Subscription" (ONOS) scheme.

Held in the ICT Department, the session was designed to introduce students to the platform and demonstrate how to access e-journals from thirty prominent publishers.

The "One Nation One Subscription" scheme, launched by the Government

of India, offers students and researchers nationwide access to a wide range of academic resources, providing an invaluable tool for enhancing their research activities. The initiative aimed to make quality academic content accessible to all, regardless of geographical location, significantly contributing to the academic growth of students across India.

The session, which was taken by the college's Librarian, Usha Kumari, featured a comprehensive online demonstration on how to use the ONOS platform. Students were guided through the steps of accessing e-journals, searching for specific academic content, and utilizing the



platform's resources to support their research. This session aimed to ensure students fully understood the potential of the platform in boosting their academic and research capabilities.

The event was hosted by Dr. Sonam Gandotra, Head of the ICT Department, who played an instrumental role in coordinating the programme. During the session, students expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to learn how to navigate this valuable platform, which will undoubtedly enhance their research skills. The Principal of GCOE, Dr. Jyoti Parihar, lauded the efforts of both the Library and ICT Departments for their initiative. "The One Nation One

Subscription scheme is a remarkable opportunity for our students. The efforts of the Library and ICT Departments in facilitating this awareness programme are truly commendable. It is an essential step toward equipping our students with the resources they need to excel in their academic endeavors," Dr. Parihar remarked.

The programme was a great success, with students leaving equipped with the knowledge to utilize this invaluable tool for academic growth. The Library and ICT Department remain dedicated to providing GCOE students with the resources and skills needed to excel in research and academic pursuits.





Capex Budget implementation reviewed in Poonch DC calls for timeline completion of projects, judicious fund utilization

HT News Network

POONCH, MARCH 20: District Development Commissioner Poonch Vikas Kundal reviewed the physical and financial progress of ongoing projects taken up under the District Capex Budget 2024-25 here at a meeting held in the conference hall of DC Office complex.

The meeting brought together officials of implementing departments for a comprehensive assessment of various initiatives. The Chief Planning Officer and executive engineers gave detailed presentations, providing detailed insights into sector-wise status of projects under the BDC, DDC, and PRI area development grants. The activities under Rural Development, Jal Shakti, Education, JPDCL, Municipality, Health sectors were highlighted, with specific focus on expenditure and progress of constructed versus unconstructed projects.

Block Development Officers (BDOs) participated virtually, offering extensive updates on their respective block-wise works, emphasizing the necessity for



timely execution of pending projects. They were directed to put in extra efforts to fast track completion of projects.

The Deputy Commissioner reiterated

the urgency of maximizing fund utilization across various schemes, calling on all departments and executing agencies to intensify efforts in meeting targets for

the financial year. The meeting underscored the critical importance of collaboration and accountability in ensuring the district's development objectives are achieved without delay.

The meeting was attended by the Superintending Engineer (SE) of the PWD (R&B), Assistant Commissioner Development, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Chief Planning Officer, Chief Education Officer, the Executive Engineer (Xen) of the PWD, as well as REW, FC & Irrigation departments, Block Development Officer Poonch, Accounts Officer from the Municipality, District Youth Services and Sports Officer, doctor from the Health Department, and other concerned officers. The Chief Planning Officer and executive engineers gave detailed presentations, providing detailed insights into sector-wise status of projects under the BDC, DDC, and PRI area development grants. The activities under Rural Development, Jal Shakti, Education, JPDCL, Municipality, Health sectors were highlighted, with specific focus on expenditure and progress of constructed versus unconstructed projects.

GCET concludes 140-Hour Intensive IT & Soft Skills Training Program

HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: Government College of Engineering & Technology, Jammu (GCET) on Thursday concluded the 140-hour Intensive Advanced IT & Soft Skills Training program aimed at enhancing students' employability. The program held under the mentorship of Principal Dr. Sameru Sharma was organized by ICT Academy in collaboration with Redington Foundation.

The program was designed to equip final-year students with both technical expertise and soft skills, empowering them to meet the demands of the competitive job market. Professor ECE Dr. Subhash Chander, in his address, expressed appreciation for the successful completion of the program. He emphasized the importance of such initiatives in bridging the gap between theoretical and practical knowledge, which is essential for careers in research, industry, and academia.

HOD CSE Prof. Simmi Dutta also congratulated the trainers, organizers, and participants, reaffirming her commitment to supporting similar skill development programs in the future. The program received valuable insights and hands-on training sessions from industry experts Mr. Adil Yousaf and Ms. Rashmi Rao, who worked closely with students to develop practical skills alongside their academic knowledge. The program was coordinated on-campus by Dr. Ajay Abrol, Program Coordinator and supported by Dr. Mekhla Sharma (CSE Department) and Dr. Taban Qayoom (E&C Department).

DC reviews implementation of District Capex Budget 2024-25 in Kishtwar

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MARCH 20: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Rajesh Kumar Shavan today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the sector-wise physical and financial status of projects undertaken under the District Capex Plan 2024-25.

The Chief Planning Officer apprised the meeting that the majority of the works taken up under the District Capex 2024-25 have been completed, with the work on remaining projects currently in progress.

Furthermore, it was highlighted that the financial progress under District Capex corresponds with the physical targets achieved so far, without any



hindrances. Speaking at the meeting, the DC underscored the significance of close monitoring and coordination among departments to overcome bottlenecks and ensure seamless project progress.

The officers were asked

to provide regular updates and promptly resolve issues to avoid delays, highlighting the need for efficient execution to benefit the General Public. The DC strongly warned against the operation of the camp offices of the departments,

including Agriculture, PMGSY, PWD, Soil Conservation, and others in the district headquarters.

The meeting was attended by ACD Phulail Singh; Deputy Registrar Cooperative Mirza Mumtaz Iqbal; Chief Education Officer Javed Ahmed; Ex-En PWD R&B, Ex-En Jal Shakti, Ex-En PDD, besides other officers and staff from concerned departments. The Chief Planning Officer apprised the meeting that the majority of the works taken up under the District Capex 2024-25 have been completed, with the work on remaining projects currently in progress.

Furthermore, it was highlighted that the financial progress under District Capex corresponds with the physical targets achieved so far, without any hindrances.

Awareness program on 3 new criminal laws held at Pargwal

HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 20: An awareness campaign on 3 new criminal laws was organised today in Tehsil Pargwal under the directions of District Administration Jammu.

Sub Divisional Magistrate Khour Satish Kumar Sharma was the chief guest. He explained the concept of zero FIR, E FIR, incorporation of audio visual evidence etc.

Senior Prosecuting Officer Rohit Tidyral was the guest faculty/Resource person who explained the three new laws in detail.

Manjeet Singh also highlighted key provisions of the three new laws including 7 day timeline for submitting medical report by medical officer in rape case, provisions for children etc. Principal GHSS Balbir Kumar explained three new laws through a Power point presentation.

Special booklets were also provided to General public by the Tehsil administration Pargwal which contain information on the new criminal laws.

Incharge Police Post Pargwal Amit Singh, Ex BDC Chairperson Pargwal, Sarpanchs, panchs and general public of Tehsil Pargwal participated in large numbers.

SWD hosts multifarious activities in Kishtwar to promote anti-drug campaign

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MARCH 20: The District Social Welfare Department organized a series of engaging activities under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) and National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) here across the .

The activities were conducted at Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Sarthal; GHSS Nagseni; GHSS Palmar and Adarsh Niketan HSS.

The events aimed to promote general awareness among students regarding ill effects of drugs on the life of students, youth and on the whole of the society.

The events included a variety of competitions and cultural activities, which saw enthusiastic participation from the students. The activities included General Awareness regarding drug abuse, Pledge on Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, drawing competitions to encourage artistic expression and creativity, besides Essay Writings competitions and Quiz competitions on drug abuse.

The events were conducted under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan and supervision of DSWO Zubair Ahmed..

Implementation of self-employment schemes reviewed in Rajouri

HT News Network

RAJOURI, MARCH 20: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Rajouri Abhishek Sharma today chaired a meeting of the District Level Review Committee (DLRC) here in the Conference Hall of PWD Dabanglow to assess the performance of banks and review the implementation of key government schemes in the district.

The DDC conducted a comprehensive review of the clearance of cases under credit linked schemes and directed banks to ensure timely financial assistance, particularly in priority sectors to boost economic growth. Emphasizing the need to improve the Credit Deposit (CD) ratio, which currently stands at 55 percent, he urged financial institutions to enhance their outreach and lending efficiency.

A key focus of the meeting was the implementation of the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme for Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, and Fisheries. The DDC stressed the importance of expediting the disbursement process to benefit farmers and entrepreneurs engaged in these sectors.

Reviewing the Prime Minister's Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) scheme, it was noted that out of 719 sponsored cases, 272 cases had been successfully disbursed. The DDC expressed concern over the low disbursement rate under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), and called for immediate corrective measures. Similarly, under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), out of 719 sponsored cases, 272 were disbursed, while the National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM) recorded 62 disbursements out of 126 cases.

DC chairs District Road Safety Committee meeting at Rajouri

HT News Network

RAJOURI, MARCH 20: To review and reinforce road safety in the district, Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma today chaired a crucial meeting of the District Road Safety Committee.

At the outset, District Rollout Manager Pankaj Sabharwal provided a comprehensive presentation on the Integrated Road Accident Database (i-RAD) and Electronic Detailed Accident Report (e-DAR). He highlighted the significance of i-RAD web portal in analyzing road accidents and formulating preventive measures. Additionally, he presented accident statistics, categorizing incidents based on road classification and month-wise trends. It was revealed that 840 road accidents have been recorded in the district since July 2022, with all cases documented and uploaded onto the i-RAD platform for further analysis. The meeting



extensively deliberated on awareness campaigns, identification of accident-prone black spots, and installation of crash barriers to strengthen road safety. Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma underscored the importance of public awareness and responsible driving behavior in reducing accidents, injuries, and fatalities. He urged all stakeholder departments to foster a culture of mutual respect among road users and emphasized the need for drivers to prioritize safety precautions. To ensure strict

enforcement, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Traffic and Motor Vehicle Department to conduct special drives against traffic violations and impose strict penalties on violators. The meeting concluded with a firm commitment to strengthening road safety measures in the district. The initiatives discussed during the meeting will be implemented with urgency to make road travel safer and more secure for all citizens.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Dr. Raj Kumar Thapa, SE PWD (R&B) Devi Dayal, CPO Maqsood Ahmed, ARTO Rajesh Gupta, XEN PWD (R&B) Rajouri, OC BRO 58 RCC Ankit Uniyal, CEO Education Iqbal Hussain, XEN PWD (R&B) Kalakote Mohd Aftab, XEN PWD (R&B) Thanamandi Rajesh Gupta, XEN PDD Rajouri Mohd Rashid, XEN PMGSY Rajouri Shahid Mustafa, XEN PMGSY Budhal Imtiyaz Mir, and other concerned officers.

FIR registered for overloading & endangering human life: Vehicle seized at Doda

HT News Network

DODA, MARCH 20: Continuing drives against Motor Vehicle Act violations, the Traffic Police National Highway under the supervision of SSP Rohit Baskotra registered a case FIR for overloading and endangering the human lives at Doda Sector.

A Traffic Police team of Traffic Sub-Division Doda-Kishtwar seized an overloaded passenger Vehicle (Mini Bus) bearing registration No.-JK06A/4027 during routine Traffic Checking at Doda. It was found that the vehicle was overloaded with 30 excess Passengers against the seating capacity of 24 as per R.C and hence endangering human lives. On this, a case FIR No. 64/2025U/S 281/125 BNS stands registered at Police Station Doda. The Vehicle has been seized on the spot and further investigation of the case is going on.

While sharing the details, SSP Traffic Rohit Baskotra said that stringent action is being taken against MV Act Violators amid a sustained drive launched by Traffic Police NHV.

"Traffic Police have published a detailed advisory for all types of commuters travelling on NHW in which parents were also advised not to send their wards to school in private vehicles being used for commercial purpose as it is in contravention to law and jeopardizes safety of the students" SSP Traffic said.

He urged the public to clear Traffic violation Challans pending in different courts the lists of which have been published in M-Parivahan Portal. He appealed commuters to follow Traffic rules and join hands to make the UT roads safe for all type of users, right from pedestrian to vehicle owners.

Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament-2025 concludes at GDC Rajouri

HT News Network

RAJOURI, MARCH 20: The vibrant and thought-provoking two-day Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament 2025, on the theme "One Nation, One Election: Paving the Way for Viksit Bharat", concluded today at Government Degree College (GDC) Rajouri.

The event, organized under the guidance of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports,

provided a platform to young minds to deliberate on India's electoral reforms and their role in national development.

The second day commenced with a welcome address by Prof. Iqbal Raina, who underscored the significance of such discussions in fostering informed political participation among youth.

The parliamentary session witnessed enthusiastic participation. Sixty students engaged in intense deliberations on how a



synchronized electoral process could enhance India's governance, reduce political instability, and accelerate national development.

Following an impressive display of debating skills, ten outstanding students from Rajouri and Poonch were selected to compete at the UT-level Youth Parliament competition. Their exceptional performances in the preliminary rounds showcased their leadership potential and in-depth understanding of electoral reforms. The event concluded with

a valedictory ceremony, presided over by Prof. Zamir Mirza (Principal, GDC Rajouri), who lauded the participants' exceptional oratory skills and appreciated the faculty's efforts in organizing the event. Certificates of appreciation were awarded to the organizing committee members, including Dr. Zakir Hussain Kalis, Prof. Ayaz Ahmed Chowdhary, Dr. Ahsan Ur Rehman Rizvi, Prof. Joginder Singh, Prof. Ajaz Nazir, Prof. Randeep Kumar, Prof. Mohd Shoket, Prof. Altaf Ahmed, Prof. Rabia Koser.





LS adjourned for the day after Opposition ruckus

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 20

The Lok Sabha was adjourned twice on Thursday first till 2 pm and later for the day, after members of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and other parties created a ruckus on the issue of delimitation of Lok Sabha constituencies.

As soon as the House re-assembled at 2 pm, DMK members wearing T-shirts came into the Well of the House raising slogans against delimitation.

Presiding officer Krishna Prasad Tenneti urged the members not to create ruckus and allow the House proceedings to continue.

He informed that a crucial topic was to be addressed, urging the



members to go back to their seats and allow the discussion to take place. However, the agitating members did not pay heed to the request of the Chair and continued with ruckus, forcing the Chair to adjourn the House for the day.

Earlier in the day, the Lok Sabha was adjourned until 2 pm after several Opposition MPs, including those from Congress

and TMC arrived wearing T-shirts with slogans criticising the government over the delimitation issue. They were also raising slogans. Meanwhile, Speaker Om Birla asked the Opposition members not to enter the House wearing T-shirts with slogans written on them. He called this as a "violation of Parliamentary decorum", thus leading to the adjournment of the House.

Commander of US Indo-Pacific Command meets PM Modi, EAM Jaishankar, Defence Minister

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Mar 20

Adm. Samuel J. Paparo, commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command, was in India to advance the US-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership. He met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

Paparo, who participated in the 10th edition of the Raisina Dialogue, also met with Armed Forces Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Anil Chauhan, Chief of Staff of the Japan Joint Staff Gen. Yoshihide Yoshida, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr., Australian Chief of Joint Operations



Vice Adm. Justin Jones, French Deputy Director General for International Relations and Strategy Lt. Gen. Eric Peltier, and United Kingdom National Security Advisor Jonathan Powell, a US statement said.

The Raisina Dialogue is an annual event hosted by the Observer Research Foundation in partnership with the Indian govern-

ment's Ministry of External Affairs. Participants from over 100 countries attended the multi-day event.

Paparo spoke on the Raisina Dialogue panel, "Deepwater Perils: Securing Trade Through Red Zones," alongside representatives from Australia, India, Japan and the Philippines.

They highlighted mari-

time threats, risks for global security and trade, the importance of working with allies and partners to ensure freedom of navigation, and integration of artificial intelligence, unmanned systems, and cyber capabilities into military preparedness.

Paparo also participated in a US-India Strategic Partnership Forum event where discussions focused on the future of the strategic and security partnership between the two nations, including integration of artificial intelligence and defense cooperation.

The US-India Major Defense Partnership has become a cornerstone of global peace, as the "2+2" Ministerial Dialogue and joint participation in mili-

tary exercises, including Tiger Triumph, Malabar and Rim of the Pacific, continues to advance comprehensive defense collaboration across all domains.

Paparo's trip advanced the US-India initiative COMPACT (Catalyzing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology) for the 21st Century, which President Trump and Prime Minister Modi launched in February.

COMPACT seeks to drive transformative change across multiple pillars of cooperation to include defense, trade and investment, energy security, technology and innovation, multilateral cooperation, and people to people cooperation.

Cabinet approves revised NPDD

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 19

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Wednesday approved the Revised National Program for Dairy Development (NPDD).

The revised NPDD, a Central Sector Scheme, has been enhanced with an additional Rs 1,000 crore, bringing the total budget to Rs 2,790 crore for the period of the 15th Finance Commission cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26). This initiative focuses on modernizing and expanding dairy infrastructure, ensuring the sector's sustained growth and productivity.

The revised NPDD will give an impetus to the dairy sector by creating infrastructure for milk procurement, processing capacity, and ensuring better quality control. It is intended to help farmers gain better access to markets, to ensuring better pricing through value addition, and improve the efficiency of the supply chain, leading to higher incomes and greater rural development.

The scheme is dedicated to improving essential dairy infrastructure, such as milk chilling plants, advanced milk testing laboratories, and certification systems. It also supports the formation of new vil-



lage dairy cooperative societies and strengthens milk procurement and processing in the North Eastern Region (NER), hilly regions, and Union Territories (UTs), especially in remote and backward areas, as well as the formation of two Milk Producer Companies (MPCs) with dedicated grant support

The second component "Dairying through Cooperatives (DTC)" will continue to foster dairy development through cooperation with the Government of Japan and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) as per agreements signed.

This component focuses on the sustainable development of dairy cooperatives, improving production, processing, and marketing infrastructure in the nine States (Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal).

The Revised NPDD

is expected to establish 10,000 new dairy cooperative societies, processing in the North Eastern Region (NER), as well as the formation of two Milk Producer Companies (MPCs) with dedicated grant support in addition to the ongoing projects of NPDD, to generate an additional 3.2 lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities, particularly benefiting women, which constitute 70 percent of the dairy workforce.

The Revised National Programme for Dairy Development will transform India's modern infrastructure, in sync with White Revolution 2.0 and will further support the newly formed cooperatives by providing new technology, and quality testing labs. This program will help improve rural livelihoods, generate jobs, and build a stronger, more resilient dairy industry that benefits millions of farmers and stakeholders across the country.

AGENCIES

PATNA, MAR 20

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar said that the state has lots of expectations from the 16th finance commission as its Chairman Arvind Pangariya was fully aware of the socio-economic scenario of the state.

While attending the meeting with the 16th Finance Commission here on Thursday Kumar said that Panagariya and other members of the commis-

sion with their expertise and experience would certainly fulfill the expectations of the people of the state. He said Panagariya, being the Chancellor of the Nalanda University Rajgir of Bihar was fully aware of the socio-economic scenario of the state.

Extending his gratitude towards the union government for earmarking special economic assistance to Bihar for roads, industries, health, tourism, and flood control after coming to power for the third



time in 2024 Kumar said that the centre while presenting its budget in 2025 announced for establishing the Makhana board in

Bihar, development of new Airports in the state, financial assistance to the Western Kosi Canal project and expansion of IIT Patna.

The Chief Minister said that the state government has prepared a memorandum keeping in mind the requirements of the state which would be handed over to the commission and expressed his confidence that the commission would seriously consider all of the points mentioned in the memorandum.

The Chief Minister also outlined the achievement of his government in various sectors after coming to power in Bihar on November 24, 2005.

Indian student in US detained over anti-Semitic posts, has visa revoked

UNI

WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI, MAR 20

An Indian postdoctoral fellow at Georgetown University has been detained by US immigration authorities for his alleged anti-Semitic posts on social media and close ties with a known senior advisor to Hamas.

Badar Khan Suri, who was studying and teaching on a student visa, was arrested by masked agents outside his home in the Rosslyn neighborhood of Arlington, Virginia, on Monday night, Politico reported.

His lawyer has filed a lawsuit seeking his immediate release.

The federal agents identified themselves as being with the Department of Homeland Security and told Suri that the government had revoked his visa.

Department of Homeland Security spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin confirmed that Secretary of State Marco Rubio issued a determination on Saturday that Suri's visa should be cancelled for foreign policy reasons.

"Suri was a foreign exchange student at Georgetown University



actively spreading Hamas propaganda and promoting antisemitism on social media," McLaughlin wrote on X.

"Suri has close connections to a known or suspected terrorist, who is a senior advisor to Hamas. The Secretary of State issued a determination on March 15, 2025 that Suri's activities and presence in the United States rendered him deportable under INA section 237(a)(4)(C)(i)," she wrote on X.

According to Suri's petition for release, he was put in deportation proceedings under the same provision of immigration law that the government has invoked to try and deport Mahmoud Khalil, the Columbia University graduate student and

green card holder who led pro-Palestinian protests on campus.

That provision gives the Secretary of State the power to deport noncitizens if the Secretary determines that their continued presence in the US would threaten foreign policy.

Suri's lawyer, Hassan Ahmad, argued in his petition that Suri is being punished because of the Palestinian heritage of his wife – who is a US citizen – and because the government suspects that he and his wife oppose US foreign policy toward Israel, Politico reported.

The petition says that Suri's wife, Mapheze Saleh, has been alleged to have "ties with Hamas" and once worked for Al Jazeera.

The petition mentioned a 2018 article about the couple that said Mapheze Saleh's father, Ahmed Yousef, served as a "senior political adviser to the Hamas leadership".

Suri's detention is the latest in a string of immigration-related arrests that Trump says are just beginning to ramp up.

The arrests, Trump says, target "terrorist sympathizers" or people who have "engaged in pro-terrorist, anti-Semitic, anti-American activity."

Suri's lawsuit was filed in federal court in Alexandria, Virginia, on Tuesday.

Suri's petition said he was taken to a facility in Virginia and expected to be transferred soon to a detention center in Texas.

Suri has a Ph.D. in peace and conflict studies from a university in India.

The detention of Suri comes a week after another Indian student, Ranjani Srinivasan, who was part of the pro-Palestine protests at Columbia had her visa revoked by the Trump administration for "advocating violence and terrorism". The student "self-deported" on March 11 to Canada, the Department of Homeland Security said.

6 crushed to death in Bikaner as trailer overturns on car

UNI

JAIPUR, MAR 20

Six occupants of a car were crushed under an ash-laden trailer that overturned on their vehicle near Deshnok on the Bikaner-Nokha road late Wednesday night, police said. The ill-fated car from Bikaner was heading to Nokha when the driver of the overloaded trailer, moving in the opposite direction, lost control on the vehicle, and hence the fatal fall.

Such was the gory incident that the victims were literally buried beneath the trailer and its load amidst the mangled remains of the car they were travelling in. Three JCBs had to strive hard to retrieve the bodies of the victims, a police spokesman said.

The victims were rushed to a nearby trauma center where all six were declared brought dead. The deceased, aged between 45 and 60 years, belonged to four related families, the police said, adding that they were returning home after attending some social ceremony. Senior police and district officials reached the spot late at night, the spokesman said.

SC grants interim protection to 19000 street vendors in Pimpri-Chinchwad

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 20

In a significant ruling, the Supreme Court recently granted interim protection from eviction to around 19,000 street vendors in Pimpri-Chinchwad, near Pune, Maharashtra.

A bench comprising Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta issued the order, stating, "The exercise to accommodate the 19,792 street vendors or 14,000 and odd street vendors, as pointed out by the learned counsel appearing for the respondent Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation, is continuing."

"Until the exercise is completed, the parties

shall maintain the status quo for possession and functioning of the street vendors," the court said.

The court directed the status quo be maintained until the identification and notification of hawking and non-hawking zones are completed under the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014.

The court also emphasised that hawkers should be treated with dignity and respect and cannot be evicted illegally.

In October 2023, the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation sought at least six weeks to complete the vendor identification process under the Street

Vendors Act. However, nearly a year later, in September 2024, the Corporation informed the court that the final list of 19,792 street vendors had been prepared as of February 7, 2024. Despite this, due to financial constraints and limited resources, it required additional time to accommodate all vendors.

Considering that the process is still ongoing, the Supreme Court directed that the status quo be maintained regarding the possession and functioning of street vendors until the exercise is completed.

Advocate Zain Haider appeared and argued for the petitioners. UNI SNG SSP

24 Maoists killed in encounter in Chhattisgarh

AGENCIES

RAIPUR, MAR 20

Security forces in Chhattisgarh dealt a major blow to left-wing terrorism by eliminating 24 Maoists in a fierce encounter at the Dantewada-Bijapur border here on Thursday.

Acting on intelligence

inputs regarding a significant Maoist presence in the Ganguwar region, joint forces launched an operation that led to a prolonged exchange of fire. The bodies of all slain Maoists have been recovered, while one District Reserve Guard (DRG) jawan, Raju Oyami, was martyred.

The encounter is ongoing, with intermittent gunfire reported from both sides. Bastar Inspector General Sundarraaj P confirmed that security forces have penetrated deep into the Maoist stronghold, while Bijapur Superintendent of Police Jitendra Yadav stated that the operation is progress-

ing as planned.

Dantewada SP Gaurav Rai reported that security personnel from Hiroli had advanced strategically to strengthen the siege.

In a parallel operation along the Kanker-Narayanpur border in southern Chhattisgarh, security forces have gunned

down four Maoist insurgents in a fierce ongoing firefight, triggered by intelligence of a significant Maoist gathering. The jawans have encircled a large insurgent group, recovering four weapons, including an automatic SLR, from the encounter site, underscoring the clash's intensity.

Maternal infection disrupts newborn brain development: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

A team of European researchers has in a pioneering study, released on Tuesday, found compelling evidence that maternal infections during pregnancy can have lasting effects on offspring brain function.

The findings, published in the peer-reviewed journal Brain Medicine, may have implications for neurodevelopmental and psychiatric disorders like autism, schizophrenia, and depression.

The team from the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Slovakia investigated the impact of maternal immune activation (MIA) on hippocampal pyramidal neurons in newborn rat offspring.

The hippocampus is a crucial brain region involved in memory, emotion, and cognition. They found that prenatal



inflammation significantly impairs neuronal excitability, which increases the risk of neurodevelopmental disorders associated with maternal infections.

“Maternal infections are a known risk factor for conditions like autism, schizophrenia, and depression,” said Dr. Eliyahu Dremencov, from the institute.

“Our research shows that early-life alterations in hippocampal neuron function could be a key mechanism linking prenatal inflammation to these disorders,” Dremencov added.

During pregnancy, infections trigger an

immune response that releases cytokines – chemical messengers that can cross the placenta and impact foetal brain development.

Using a well-established animal model, the researchers induced MIA in pregnant rats with lipopolysaccharide (LPS) – a bacterial component that stimulates the immune system. The hippocampal neurons of newborn offspring were then assessed to see how prenatal immune activation affected their excitability.

“We observed that neurons from MIA-exposed offspring had a significantly higher threshold

for activation, slower response times, and reduced firing rates,” explained lead author Dr. Lucia Moravcikova, of the study.

“This suggests a disruption in glutamatergic neurotransmission, which plays a critical role in learning, memory, and emotional regulation,” Moravcikova added.

Further, the team found major changes in hippocampal neuron function in newborns exposed to MIA.

They found that the neurons required a stronger stimulus to activate, suggesting impaired excitability; the neurons also took longer to respond to stimulation, affecting signal transmission.

Notably, male offspring showed a greater reduction in spontaneous neuronal activity, which may explain why conditions like autism and schizophrenia are more commonly diagnosed in males.

Study shows low doses of antibiotics can help treat a rare hair loss problem

AGENCIES
NEW YORK

Small amounts of a common antibiotic and anti-inflammatory drug can help treat a rare hair loss problem caused by a misplaced immune reaction, according to a study on Tuesday.

Low doses of antibiotics may also present fewer side effects than higher doses of the medication, said researchers at the New York University Langone Health.

The study explored lymphocytic scarring alopecia – a rare skin condition in which the body’s immune cells damage hair follicles, leading to hair loss and scarring.

Physicians typically treat this chronic disorder with relatively high doses of the antibiotic doxycycline – often for prolonged periods.

However, the drug can trigger nausea, vomiting, and rashes and may



discourage patients from continuing to take it, said the team, in the paper, published in the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology.

To determine whether lower doses could work instead, the team involved 241 men and women. The participants, who were treated for several forms of lymphocytic scarring

alopecia, revealed that lower doses (usually 20 milligrams taken twice daily) and higher doses (as much as 100 milligrams taken twice daily) of doxycycline were equally effective.

Specifically, no significant difference was seen between the two groups on evaluations of scalp inflammation, patients’

perception of the severity of their hair loss, and clinical measurements of hair density, hair-shaft diameter, and hairline recession.

In addition, while 23 per cent of those on the high-dose regimen experienced common negative side effects of doxycycline, only 12 per cent of those taking smaller doses of the drug did so.

Further, while 25 per cent of the high-dose group stopped taking doxycycline altogether due to gastrointestinal issues, only 16 per cent of the low-dose group stopped treatment due to this side effect.

“Our findings suggest that physicians can prescribe lower doses of doxycycline to patients struggling with lymphocytic scarring alopecia without compromising the efficacy and anti-inflammatory benefit of the therapy,” said Carli Needle, a medical student at NYU Grossman School of Medicine.

LIC plans to acquire stake in a health insurance firm by March 31: CEO Mohanty

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) is planning to acquire a stake in a standalone health insurance company by the end of the current financial year (FY25), its Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Siddhartha Mohanty said on Tuesday.

However, he did not disclose the name of the company in which LIC is looking to invest. Mohanty said that the discussions are in the final stage.

"We have plans. Discussions are at the final stage. It is a natural choice for LIC to enter the health insurance sector," Mohanty said in his speech at the Global Conference of Actuaries in Mumbai.

He added that "since regulatory approvals take time, I am hopeful that a decision will be taken within this financial year, before March 31".

However, he also clari-



fied that LIC will not be acquiring a majority stake in the company. "Entering the health insurance sector is a natural choice for the company," he mentioned. LIC had earlier indicated its interest in

the health insurance business and had stated in the first quarter of FY25 that it was looking to invest in a standalone health insurance firm.

Currently, there are seven such companies

in India, including Star Health & Allied Insurance, Niva Bupa Health Insurance, Care Health Insurance, Aditya Birla Health Insurance, ManipalCigna Health Insurance, Narayana Health Insurance, and Galaxy Health Insurance.

Apart from this, LIC has also requested the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to issue additional long-term bonds.

The insurance giant had earlier sought 40-year bonds, which the RBI approved. Now, LIC is in discussions for 50-year and 100-year bonds.

"We are long-term investors. We have contractual obligations to pay back as per the contract. So, I have to manage investments and asset-liability management properly... Western countries have long-term bonds," Mohanty said.

The RBI has already introduced 50-year bonds to meet the growing demand from insurance and pension funds.

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

India’s medical tourism industry is on a strong growth path, with projections indicating that the market will reach \$18 billion by 2027, growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 19 per cent, a new report said on Tuesday.

The country has become a preferred destination for international patients, offering world-class healthcare services at significantly lower costs than Western nations.

In recent years, India has positioned itself as a global hub for medical tourism, attracting patients seeking top-tier medical treatments along with the opportunity to experience the country’s rich cultural heritage.

According to Praxis Global Alliance, a global consulting firm, the industry has witnessed



rapid expansion, with the market valued at \$7 billion in 2022.

A major contributor to this growth is the increasing number of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) for medical purposes.

Between 2015 and 2019, the number of medical tourists visiting India grew at a CAGR of 31 per cent, rising from 234,000 to 697,000.

However, the Covid-19 pandemic caused a sharp decline in 2020, leading to a 74 per cent drop in

FTAs. Despite this setback, the sector has rebounded strongly, with FTAs reaching 504,000 in 2023, growing at an impressive CAGR of 40 per cent.

Bangladesh has been the leading source of medical tourists, with 327,000 patients visiting India in 2022, according to the report.

Other key countries include Iraq and Yemen, with significant contributions also coming from the Middle East and Africa.

The rise of India’s medi-

cal tourism industry can be attributed to several factors. One of the biggest advantages is cost-effective treatment.

Medical procedures in India cost significantly less compared to countries like the United States and the United Kingdom.

For example, a heart bypass surgery in India costs around \$5,000, compared to \$144,000 in the US, while a knee replacement procedure costs approximately \$6,000 in India, compared to \$50,000 in the UK, the report added.

Another key attraction for medical tourists is India’s traditional and alternative healing therapies, such as Ayurveda and Yoga, which complement modern medical treatments.

The availability of state-of-the-art healthcare infrastructure further enhances its appeal, the report concluded.

'1.4 bn Indians praying for Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore's safe return to Earth'

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

About 1.4 billion Indians are praying for the safe return of Indian-origin NASA astronaut Sunita Williams and her colleague Butch Wilmore – who spent about 285 days in the International Space Station (ISS) – to Earth, said experts.

Williams and Wilmore became the first to travel on Boeing's faulty Starliner spacecraft in June last year. What began as an eight-day trip, lasted 285 days in space.

After several delays, the astronaut duo is enroute to Earth. Their journey from Space aboard SpaceX's Dragon spacecraft began on Tuesday morning. They are expected to reach Earth on Wednesday morning.

"1.4 billion Indians praying and wishing for their safe return," former ISRO scientist Guru Prasad said while elaborating on the risks during the landing.



He stated that knowing the risks attached with such flights, space engineers will take much care on procedures and safety measures to be adopted.

"Looking at what has been done in the past 65 years after Yuri Gagarin's space flight, and the way in which humans have gathered experience makes me optimistic about William's safe return," Prasad said.

He also explained about the life of astronauts in space and the challenges they face due to weightlessness.

"The life of any astronaut is always very chal-

lenging, Sunita Williams has faced it. It's not easy but they are well trained to withstand," said Prasad, also the Director of the Association of Science Education, Nehru Planetarium. Further, the expert also highlighted health issues that can follow such a long stay in space.

"Long space stays can lead to calcium loss in astronauts. It can make their bones brittle, making them more prone to fractures," Prasad said.

Other health issues due to overstay in space include muscle atrophy, and impact on the heart,

immune system, gut, eyes and even the mind.

The spine also straightens, and one tends to become a little taller. "However, all these doesn't mean it's a danger to humans...over 500 individuals have been to space and back in the last many decades," Prasad said.

Prerna Chandra, Project Manager at Nehru Planetarium, also explained about the health risks that the astronauts are likely to face upon their return.

"When we talk about space, the astronauts live in microgravity. In space, there is no gravity of any kind inside the body. In such a situation, a lot of changes and problems come on return to Earth," Chandra said, while wishing Williams a safe landing.

"The astronauts need proper rehabilitation because it was a long time, 9 months was a long time, and they will need a long time for recovery as well," she added.

Drinking Cold Water from Fridge in Summer: Good or Bad? Here's what experts saying!

Drinking cold water may seem like a refreshing way to beat the heat, but it can have severe consequences on your health, especially during the summer season. According to experts, drinking chilled water can disturb the normal functioning of gastric juices, upset the balance of doshas, and even increase the risks of sore throat, nasal blockage, and other troubles.

Health experts recommend avoiding cold water during meals or at any time of the day, and instead, suggest drinking it during physical exercise to keep the body from overheating. But what's the best way to stay hydrated during the summer season, and how much water should you drink? Let's find out.

The Risks of Drinking Cold Water

Consuming cold water can have a serious effect on your digestion, particularly in the summer season



when digestion is already hampered because of the scorching heat. As per yoga and lifestyle guru Kamya, cold water can cause blood vessels to constrict and interfere with the natural process of nutrient absorption during digestion. In addition, consuming cold water can also raise the chances of

sore throat, nasal congestion, and other issues.

When to Have Cold Water

Though having cold water is not appropriate for daily use, it can come in handy during physical activities. In a 2012 study, it was found that consuming cold water while exercising helps prevent the body from overheating

and makes exercise sessions more effective.

The Best Way to Stay Hydrated

It is very important to remain hydrated, particularly during summer. But how much water should one consume? It depends on the temperature of the environment, body needs, age, gender, daily calorie intake, energy expenditure, and more. In a report issued by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, it is stated that consuming one cup of water every 15-20 minutes may be helpful if you have been exposed to heat for fewer than two hours and have done moderate work.

Conclusion

Although consuming cold water might appear to be a cool method of escaping the heat, it is important to be careful about its consumption. By knowing the dangers and advantages of consuming cold water and remaining hydrated, you can have a healthy and cheerful summer.



South Africa announce international fixtures for 2025/26 home season

AGENCIES

CAPE TOWN, MAR 20 (UND)

Cricket South Africa (CSA) have unveiled their schedule for the men and women's senior teams in the upcoming 2025/26 home season.

With the ICC Men and Women's T20 World Cup 2026 approaching, both the teams will be contesting in the shortest format. Both the Proteas sides had finished runners-up at the previous edition of the tournament last year.

Proteas Men will face off against West Indies in a five-match T20I series



starting January 27, 2026.

South Africa Women on the other hand, will face off against Ireland and Pakistan in three T20Is each in December 2025 and February 2026 respectively, an ICC report

said.

Proteas Women will also play as many ODIs against both touring sides - after the T20Is - which will follow the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup later this year in India.

Pakistan sets up training camp ahead of Women's World Cup Qualifier

AGENCIES

LAHORE, MAR 20 (UND)

The Women's National Selection Committee of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has called up 19 players to the training camp in preparation for the Women's Cricket World Cup Qualifier, which will take place in April here.

This camp is a continuation of Pakistan's preparations for the event. 33 players had gathered in Faisalabad last month for the first phase of preparations.

Among the personnel, Tuba Hassan has been ruled out of the tournament due to a fractured finger. On the other hand,



All-rounder Nida Dar returns to training.

Camp players: Aliya Riaz, Diana Baig, Fatima Sana, Ghulam Fatima, Gull Feroza, Muneeba Ali (wicket-keeper), Najiha Alvi (wicket-keeper), Nashra Sundhu, Natalia Parvaiz, Nida Dar, Omaidha Sohail, Rameen Shamim, Sadia Iqbal, Shawaal Zul-

fiqar, Sidra Amin, Sidra Nawaz (wicket-keeper), Syeda Aroob Shah, Tasmia Rubab and Umm-e-Hani.

The Qualifier will be played across two venues in Lahore (Gaddafi Stadium and LCCA ground), and will feature six sides. Apart from Pakistan, these will be Bangladesh, Ireland, Scotland, Thailand,

and the West Indies, an ICC report said.

The top two among these sides will make it to the Women's Cricket World Cup, all set to be held later this year in India.

Pakistan team will undergo a preparation camp at the Ghani Glass Academy in DHA, Lahore from March 21 to 30.

During the 10-day camp, the squad members besides undergoing net sessions, will feature in 50-over practice matches.

The head coach of Pakistan's women's side, Muhammad Wasim will work as camp commandant and will be assisted by other national women's team coaches.

Surrey sign Australia all-rounder Harris

AGENCIES

LONDON, MAR 20 (UND)

Australia all-rounder Grace Harris has signed for Surrey as this year's overseas player. The 31-year-old, who plays for London Spirit in The Hundred, will be available from the fixture against Hampshire Hawks at the Kia Oval on June 5 - the county's first home Vitality Blast fixture of the season. Harris has played 51 T20 matches for her country, averaging 22.19 with the bat and has nine wickets at an average of 19.77, the BBC reported. She plays for Queensland Fire in the Women's National Cricket League and for Brisbane Heat in the Women's Big Bash League, plus UP Warriorz in the Women's Premier League in India.

India secures record 19 paddlers in WTT Star Contender Chennai 2025

AGENCIES

CHENNAI, MAR 20 (UND)

India will field their largest-ever contingent at a WTT Star Contender event, with 19 paddlers - and 27 entries - in the main draw, after national champions Manush Shah, Diya Chitale, and more received wildcards for WTT Star Contender Chennai 2025.

In doubles, TT great Achanta Sharath Kamal and his partner Snehit Suravajjula also secured a men's doubles wildcard for the tournament, organised by Stupa Sports Analytics and Ultimate Table Tennis and scheduled to be played from March 25-31 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium.

All four women's singles

host-nominated wildcards went to Indian players, with the experienced Sutritha Mukherjee and Krittwika Sinha Roy joining Swastika Ghosh and national champion Diya.

In the men's singles, Snehit joins Manush as the second Indian wildcard entry. Among the foreign wildcard recipients, South Korea's Park Ganghyeon, a 2022 Asian Games men's team silver medallist, and Malta's Kim Taehyun have secured places in the main draw.

Wildcards were allocated to ensure broader representation and provide emerging talents with key opportunities. WTT nominated Suhana Saini and Taneesha Kotecha, recognizing their potential and talent.

Meanwhile, Ankur Bhat-

tacharjee (India) and Yoo Yerin (South Korea) earned WTT Youth Nominations, reinforcing WTT's commitment to fostering young talent.

Commenting on the wildcards, Stupa Sports Analytics' Co-founder & COO, Deepak Malik, said: "Wildcard entries are an important part of WTT events, allowing talented players to compete at the highest level despite ranking or eligibility restrictions. It's great to see promising young players like Taneesha and Suhana get this opportunity, and we are confident they will make the most of it. Their participation not only boosts Indian representation but also adds to the overall competitiveness of the tournament."

Doubles wildcards have

been allocated entirely to Indian pairings. Sharath, who will bid farewell to the sport after this tournament, partners with Snehit in the men's doubles, with Sathiyann Gnanasekaran and Harmeet Desai receiving the second wildcard.

Sathiyann has also secured a mixed doubles wildcard alongside Sreeja Akula, while Manika Batra and Manav Thakkar complete India's wildcard presence in the event.

For the women's doubles wildcards, Sreeja will pair up with Swastika Ghosh, while Syndrela Das will partner Suhana.

In the WTT-assigned wildcards, South Korea's Park Gyuhyeon and Robert Gardos of Austria have been awarded spots in the men's singles.

Bach named IOC honorary president for life

AGENCIES

COSTA NAVARINO (GREECE), MAR 20 (UND)

International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach was named Honorary Life President, marking a historic moment at the 144th IOC Session as

he prepares to step down in June after 12 years at the helm of the global Olympic movement.

The announcement came towards the end of the first day of the Session, held at the coastal resort of Costa Navarino in southwestern



Greece, where IOC members stood in unison, applauding to approve the proposal.

For a moment, the 71-year-old leading sports leader appeared taken aback, seated in quiet reflection as he took in the scene - a moment to relive the

journey he had led for over a decade.

Walking to the podium amid a standing ovation, Bach, his voice tinged with emotion, addressed the gathered members.

"I accept this great honor with deep humility, for two

reasons. First, as I have always said, today's achievements are not those of one individual, but of all of us together. Every single one of you has contributed in your own way to this success. Every one of you has helped build the unity that we ultimately achieved, without which we would not have come this far. If we had not been united in our commitment to the Olympic values, who knows where we would be today? That is why the honor you bestow upon me today, I return to you all," he said.

McGrath eyes strong finish to season against New Zealand

AGENCIES

AUCKLAND, MAR 20 (UND)

Australia skipper Tahlia McGrath, who has stepped into the leadership role in the absence of regular captain Alyssa Healy, is relishing the opportunity to guide the team alongside vice-captain Ash Gardner.

"I'm really excited for the opportunity to lead the side again," McGrath told reporters ahead of the first T20I here at Eden Park.

"I always enjoy working with Ash Gardner as vice-captain as well, and for us as a group, just really excited to kick off what's been a long season for us and hopefully finish on a high with a series win over here in New Zealand," McGrath said.

With Australia's attention largely on the upcoming ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in India later this year, the three T20Is present a unique challenge to McGrath's side. However, the skipper sees them as a valuable chance to refine their approach in the shortest format.

"It's an odd one for us. Just three T20s at this stage, with our focus being at a 50-over World



Cup and also a bit of a break," she said.

"But it's also a really good opportunity for us, with not many T20s on the international schedule before the World Cup coming up soon. Every time we get to pull on the Australian shirt, it's always a really good opportunity to go out there and keep getting better as a group," McGrath said.

Australia come into the series on the back of a thumping Women's Ashes series sweep against England, where they came out on top in every single game across the three formats, an ICC report said.

McGrath expects a stern challenge from a near full-strength New Zealand side, with T20 World Cup winning big names, Sophie Devine, Melie Kerr and Lea Tahuhu making a return to the White Ferns'

squad.

"They're pretty much back at full strength, New Zealand. We're expecting a really hard-fought contest, hopefully a nice crowd being double headers, and hopefully a few Aussies in the crowd. But we're going to have to be at our best," she said.

"They've got some world-class players - Devine, Kerr, Tahuhu - all back in the side, and superstars throughout their list. We're going to be at our best and really looking forward to the challenge. Just can't wait to get started tomorrow," McGrath said.

Australia have built a reputation for playing an aggressive and fearless brand of cricket over the years, an approach that has fetched them global honours over the years, and McGrath intends to continue.

"We're always talking about how we can get better. There is no limit to our game. Really looking forward to taking the game on, playing our style, playing our brand of cricket, and like I said, finishing the season on a high is what's in front of mind for most of us," she said.

"Brave, fearless, aggressive. We bat so deep that we can showcase our talent, play with no fear, knowing that if it doesn't come off, there's someone ready to walk out to the wicket to do the job. And same with the ball - attacking field sets, attacking mindset, aggressive nature. And yeah, just trying to push the game forward as much as we can," McGrath said.

The series opener will mark a significant milestone for Beth Mooney, who is set to play her 200th international match for Australia, and McGrath was full of praise for the wicketkeeper-batter's immense contribution to the team.

"Crazy milestone for Moons [Beth Mooney]. 200 games representing your country is a very special achievement," she said.

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