



CBI arrests forest guard in bribery case in Kathua

■ [HT News Network](#)

SRINAGAR, MAR 22): The Central Bureau of Investigation arrested an accused forest guard in the Bilawar area of Kathua district for demanding and accepting bribe Rs 35,000 from a complainant. In a statement, issued to news agency—a spokesperson said that a case was registered by CBI on 20.03.2025 against the accused on allegations that he demanded Rs 35000 bribe from a complainant for allowing him to execute construction and repair of road and release of a JCB forcibly taken by the accused.

The statement reads that the CBI laid a trap and caught the accused forest guard red-handed while demanding and accepting Rs 35,000 from the complainant.

"The accused was arrested and produced before the court of Special Judge, Anti-Corruption (CBI Cases), Jammu on 21.03.2025. He was remanded to judicial custody for 14 days."

Congress to Intensify J&K Statehood Demand with 15-Day March

■ [HT News Network](#)

SRINAGAR, MAR 22, : Congress party in Jammu and Kashmir has announced plans to intensify its demand for statehood by organizing a march starting March 24, which will continue for 10 to 15 days. Party President Tariq Hameed Karra clarified that the march is not a protest but a demonstration of their persistent demand to restore J&K's statehood.

"We will reiterate our statehood demand and remind the Government of India, the Prime Minister, and the Home Minister of their responsibility. The march will be peaceful and held daily," Karra said.

Massive Fire in Shaheed Gunj Engulfs Several Houses

■ [HT News Network](#)

SRINAGAR, MAR 22:- A massive fire broke out in the Shaheed Gunj area of Srinagar on Saturday morning, reducing multiple residential houses to ashes and causing panic among residents. The blaze, TURN ON.....PAGE 02

BUDGET SESSION 2025

Omar Abdullah-led Govt introduces its first legislation in J&K Assembly

Bill seek to align J&K's GST law with amendments carried out in CGST

■ [HT News Network](#)

JAMMU Mar 22: : The Jammu & Kashmir's elected government introduced its first bill in the Legislative Assembly on Saturday. After the Question Hour, as per news agency—, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, on behalf of Finance Minister Omar Abdullah, introduced the Jammu & Kashmir Goods and Service Tax (Amendment) Bill-2025 in the House. The bill seeks to align J&K's GST law with the amendments carried out in the Central Goods and Services Tax law. The amendments are regulatory in nature i.e. to regulate tax and as such the bill doesn't involve recurring and non-recurring expenditure.

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Sakeena Itoo briefs house on Anantnag fire relief efforts

■ [HT News Network](#)

JAMMU, MARCH 22: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, today informed the House that the government has asked the district administration Anantnag to provide immediate relief to

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Speaker announces formation of House Committee to probe into irregularities in JJM

■ [HT News Network](#)

JAMMU, MAR 22: The Speaker of Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly on Saturday announced formation of a House committee to probe into irregularities in implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in the Union Territory. As per the news agency—,

the Speaker announced formation of the House committee after Minister for Public Health & Forests, Environment Javed Rana replied to discussion on grants of departments headed by him.

"During discussion, members from both Treasury Benches as well as Opposition

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

15 Km 'Vijaypur-Ramgarh to SM Pura' road to be completed by June 2025: Dy CM

■ [HT News Network](#)

JAMMU, MARCH 22: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today informed the House that upgradation of 15 Km road from Vijaypur-Ramgarh to SM Pura, taken up under CRIF, has been targeted to be completed by June, 2025.

The Deputy Chief Minister, while replying to a question raised by Dr. Devinder Kumar Manval in the Legislative Assembly, informed that 65 percent progress has

TURN ON.....PAGE 02



J&K has 18000 MW estimated hydro power potential: Javed Rana

■ [HT News Network](#)

JAMMU, MARCH 22: Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmad Rana, said that J&K has an estimated hydro power potential of 18,000 MegaWatt (MW), of which, 14867 MW has been identified. The Minister was replying on behalf of the Chief Minister to a question raised by Mubarak Gul.

The Minister informed the House that the identified potential comprises 11283 MW in Chenab basin, 3084 MW



TURN ON.....PAGE 02

CS favours leveraging CITaG for future ready governance



■ [HT News Network](#)

JAMMU, MARCH 22: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired the Empowered Committee meeting of the Centre for Innovation, Technology Adoption, and Governance (CITaG) to review its functioning in Jammu and Kashmir.

Those who attended the meeting included Principal Secretary, Finance; Director, IIM Jammu; Commissioner Secretary, GAD; Secretary, Planning; Secretary, Law besides other concerned officers from IIM, CITaG and government departments.

During the meeting, Dulloo highlighted CITaG as a crucial platform for fostering coordination among the premier institutions such as IIT, IIM and AIIMS with the government. He emphasized the need for developing governance models aligned with future

demands, ensuring that J&K remains at the forefront of technological advancements.

Expressing urgency, he stated that rapid developments in Artificial Intelligence, Bioengineering, Climate Change and Quantum Computing necessitate immediate action. "If we fail to adapt to these transformations, we will be left behind with none to blame," he remarked.

He further stressed that solutions are available for addressing the physiological, biological and environmental concerns, but the key lies in adopting relevant technologies. He urged the Planning, Development & Monitoring Department (PD&MD) to explore technological solutions for bridging the governance gaps.

Citing practical applications, he noted that AI can enable doctors in remote areas to diagnose patients

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Rahullah Calls for Release of Kashmir's Political Prisoners Ahead of Jumu'atul-Wida

■ [HT News Network](#)

SRINAGAR, MAR 22:: Kashmir Parliament member Syed Rahullah has raised concerns over the prolonged incarceration of political prisoners from the region, calling for their immediate release. In a statement shared on social media ahead of Jumu'atul-Wida, he highlighted the plight of detained activists and

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Emissions from Khrew factories increase pulmonary, cardiac diseases among locals: Govt

■ [HT News Network](#)

SRINAGAR, MAR 22: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday said that emissions from cement factories in Khrew area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district have increased pulmonary and cardiac diseases among locals. Responding to the query of MLA Justice Hasnain Masoodi, Minister for Health and Medical Education Department Sakina Itoo as per the news agency—said that air pollution has shown an increase due to emissions from cement factories, resulting in pulmonary and cardiac diseases among the local population in Khrew area.

"Relevant interventions are being explored under the National Programme on Climate

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Budget Session 2025 :House passes grants of Forests, I&FC, PHE, Tribal Affairs Deptts

■ [HT News Network](#)

JAMMU, MARCH 22: The Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly today passed the Demands for Grants amounting Rs. 154531.84 lakh for Forest, Ecology & Environment, 157671.32 lakh for Irrigation & Flood Control Department, Rs. 350126.57 lakh for PHE (Jal Shakti) and Rs. 44,299.17 lakh for the Tribal Affairs Department.

The House passed the Demands for Grants through a voice vote on Saturday evening.

Earlier, during the day, the Assembly discussed the Demands for Grants



and Members of the House put forth their views and suggestions.

Winding up the discussion on Demands for Grants, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, extended his gratitude to the MLAs for their valuable suggestions and constructive observations on the demand for grants.

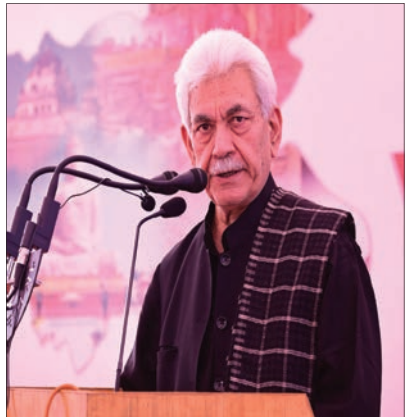
He said that inputs reflect the collective commitment of this House towards ensuring sustainable development, environmental conservation and welfare of the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

He said that the government is fully committed towards addressing

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

LG attends Bihar Diwas Celebration at Raj Bhavan

■ [HT News Network](#)



JAMMU, MAR 22: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha attended the Bihar Day Celebrations, hosted by Jammu Kashmir Raj Bhawan at Jammu.

The Lieutenant Governor conveyed his hearty greetings and best wishes to the people of Bihar on the occasion.

"Since ancient times, Bihar has been known for its spirituality, rich history and vibrant culture. Magadha was core part of Bihar, which was known as the centre of education and culture.

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

No increase in registered drug cases in reported J&K in last three years: Govt

■ [HT News Network](#)

SRINAGAR, MAR 22 The Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday said there has been no increase in newly registered cases of drug abuse in the Union Territory (UT) over the past three years.

Responding to a question from MLA Bani Dr Rameshvar Singh, Health and Medical Education Department Minister Sakina Itoo, as per the news agency—said the Health Department in Jammu and Kashmir has been actively working to combat rising drug abuse through various preventive and rehabilitative measures.

"IEC activities, seminars, work

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Govt Invites Bids for Ropeway Projects, Including Baltal-Amarnath Route

■ [HT News Network](#)



SRINAGAR MAR 22: The Jammu and Kashmir government has invited bids for preparing detailed project reports (DPRs) for the development of three major ropeway projects, including an 11.60 km stretch from Baltal to the Amarnath cave shrine, aimed at easing pilgrim movement during the annual yatra.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, in a written reply to the J&K Assembly, stated that the National Highways Logistics Management Ltd (NHLML) has also invited bids for DPRs of three additional ropeway projects—two in Budgam and one in Ramban district. This follows

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

LG

First empire of India, Maurya Empire in Bihar established a united India. From Education, Culture, Science, Literature, Enterprises to Spirituality, there is hardly any area of life where the people of Bihar have not left their mark with their innovative ideas and hard work," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted the cultural, educational and spiritual legacy of Bihar, and paid homage to the great personalities of the state.

The Lieutenant Governor said, "The presence of many holy places like Baba Baijnath Dham, Gaya, Vishnupad Temple, Janaki Temple, Bodhgaya, Takht Shri Harimandir Sahib Ji, Kundagram, Pawapuri in one state is no less than a divine blessing in itself.

In ancient times, Bihar had become a major centre of higher education. Students from all over the world came to study at Nalanda University and Vikramshila University. The library of Nalanda University was considered as the largest library in the world.

There is a long list of Buddhism pilgrimage sites, including Bodhgaya, Rajgir and Griddhakuta, where Mahatma Buddha gave most of his sermons.

Bihar is also considered one of the most prosperous states in the field of literature. From Chanakya, Banbhattacha, Aryabhattacha, Vidyapati to Phanishwarnath Renu, Ramdhari Singh Dinkar and Baba Nagarjun in modern times, Bihar has been the karmboomi of great writers".

The Lieutenant Governor also spoke on the development journey of Bihar, and its contribution to India's growth.

"If we look at the history of Bihar after independence, it was one of the most developed states of the country. The draft of the first five-year plan was prepared in July 1951. The report mentions that during that period, only three regions in the country were the best in providing the necessary training for small industries, financial support and better management of the industry and workers and they were - Bihar, Mumbai and Chennai.

For many decades, Bihar had maintained the glorious tradition of producing a large number of IAS, IPS and other administrative service officers, who have made immense contribution in the nation-building and inspired many generations", the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor hoped that the people of Bihar continue to work dedicatedly for a developed Bihar and a developed India.

"Bihar has once again become vibrant in the 21st century. Today, Bihar has not only emerged as a major power in developed India but is also competing with developed states in terms of industrial development. I pray for good health, well-being and prosperity of the people of this blessed land," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Senior officials, Heads of various Educational Institutions, Students and the residents of Bihar living in J&K UT were the special invitees on the occasion—

GST

After the imposition of central rule in J&K in 2018, the legislative powers of the J & K assembly were vested with the Parliament—

SPEAKER

wanted formation of a House Committee to investigate into the matter. I don't think the minister should have any reservation to formation of the Committee. If the House wants a probe into it, it should be done," he said, adding that the House is supreme.

Though the Speaker winded up proceedings, BJP MLA Sunil Sharma demanded that there should be a debate over the matter.

"Since morning the issue was being debated," Rather replied.

Talking to reporters outside the Assembly secretariat, Minister Javed Rana said that there is no wrong in constitution of a House committee to investigate the claims of irregularities in JJM.

During the discussion on grants of PHE department, several MLAs demanded a thorough probe into implementation of JJM scheme.

Congress Legislature Party leader Ghulam Ahmed Mir termed JJM as a major scam and demanded a thorough probe into it.

Another party legislator Nizamuddin Bhat said that a former administrative secretary has alleged a scam in its implementation.

He demanded the constitution of a House committee to probe these claims.

NCMLA Aijaz Jan even demanded a probe by NIA and CBI into JJM implementation in J&K—

SAKEENA

the fire victims of Kadipora, Anantnag, from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund as well as Disaster Management Relief fund.

"On the directions of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, I along with MLAs Peerzada Mohd Sayeed, Abdul Majeed Larimi and Altaf Ahmad Wani visited the site to take on spot assessment of relief measures besides damage caused by the devastating fire incident", the Minister apprised the House.

She said that the government is committed towards long term rehabilitation of the victim families of this devastating fire incident.

The Minister informed that the district administration has been asked to expedite the rehabilitation process and provide immediate relief, including temporary shelter, food supplies and financial aid for urgent help of the victims. She said that the government is committed towards long term rehabilitation of the victim families.

The Minister also informed that the administration has been directed to conduct a thorough assessment of damages and provide swift compensation to the affected households. She said that a meeting was held with the district administration to evaluate the relief efforts and ensure timely aid. She also informed that the timber will also be provided to the affected families on priority basis.

Pertinently, Speaker, J&K Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, had asked the Minister to brief the house about the ongoing relief efforts in wake of devastating Kadipora fire incident following the yesterday's visit of the Minister to the site.

Earlier, the issue of Kadipora fire incident was raised by Legislator Dr. Bashir Ahmad Veeri in the house.

DYCM

been achieved on this road and remaining work is in progress on war footing.

He said that three routes lead from NH44 to the Shrine of Baba Chambyal in Ramgarh constituency and the first road starts from Vijaypur NH to Chambyal via Ramgarh and SM Pura having length of 16.70 Km. He added that the second road starts from Swankha Morh NH to Chambyal via Swankha having length of 16.50 Km, 4 Km is being maintained by BRO and remaining 12.50 Km is with the PWD. "PWD has completed upgradation/ improvement of 12.50 Km road in 2023-24 under CRIF having intermediate lane of width 5.5 m. This road merges with the above mentioned first road 2 Km ahead of the Shrine", he informed.

Further, he also informed that the third road starts from Jakh Morh NH to Chambyal via Nandpur with a length of 15 Km. Out of this, 13 Km is with the BRO (double lane with 7 mtr width BT) and 2 Km patch is being maintained by PWD which is in good condition (single lane with width of 3 m BT) and traffic worthy.

Surjeet Singh Salathia raised the supplementary to the question.

RANA

in Jhelum basin and 500 MW in Ravi basin. He said that out of the identified potential, 3540.15 MW (23.81%) has been harnessed till date including 1197.4 MW in UT sector (JKSP-DC), 2250 MW in Central sector (NHPC) and 92.75 MW in IPP mode under 31 projects.

Regarding the Solar Power Projects, the Minister said that solar power plants with capacity of 41367 and 34300 have been installed in a total of 4648 government buildings and 5463 residential households respectively.

The Minister said that UT of J&K has an estimated solar potential of 111 GW, most of which is restricted to the UT of Ladakh. He added that the mega size solar power projects have not been developed in J&K till date as identification of feasible land banks (500 acres for 100 MW solar park) at a single location for its development is difficult because of the topography of the UT.

The Minister informed that, however, a cumulative capacity of 75 MW of Rooftop Solar Power Plants has been installed in the UT of J&K across all sectors under various schemes and projects mostly sponsored by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Gol.

He added that, presently, the Rooftop Solar Power plants are being installed on residential households by DISCOMS under PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojna in which 1 kWp Rs 55,000 with subsidy of Rs 36,000, 2 kWp Rs 1,10,000 with subsidy of Rs 72,000 and 3 kWp Rs 1,59,500 with subsidy of Rs 94,800 have been finalized.

The Minister also informed that Purchase of electric/utility poles, HT/LT wires and transformers is being made through the Procurement wing.

MY Tarigami, Balwant Singh Mankotia, Nizam-ud-Din Bhat, Tanveer Sadiq, Shakti Raj Parihar and Mehraj Malik raised the supplementaries.

DRUGS

shops, and programs are regularly undertaken in schools, colleges, and universities, in collaboration with district administration, NGOs, volunteers, and other allied agencies, to address the menace and ill effects of drug and substance abuse," Itoo said. "We have collaborated with J&K Bank under the project Najjath, which focuses

on drug abuse prevention and treatment. This initiative was successfully launched on November 10, 2023, covering the Jammu and Pulwama districts."

She said the project aims to raise awareness among individuals, families, and communities about the harmful effects of tobacco and drug addiction, as well as the available resources for prevention, treatment, and support.

To further facilitate treatment for drug victims, the government has established a call centre known as Tele Manas, which provides counselling, helps with stress management, and motivates drug users to quit.

When responding to a similar question from MLA Banihal Sajad Shaheen, Itoo acknowledged that there had previously been an increase in drug addiction among the youth of Jammu and Kashmir. However, she said that since the initiation of the Nasha Mukht Abhiyan in September 2022, there has been a slight decrease in the registration of new cases, according to available records.

"As per available data, there has been no increase in newly registered drug addiction cases in Jammu and Kashmir. A comparison of three years of data shows no rise in the number of registered cases," she clarified.

The health minister highlighted the steps taken to combat this issue, including the adoption of a drug re-addiction policy, the constitution of a State Level Policy Implementation Monitoring Committee, and the launch of a massive campaign—Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan. She said the Health Department has established standard operating procedures, divisional-level monitoring committees, and district-level monitoring committees for effective oversight and functioning of drug de-addiction centres.

Currently, there are 20 addiction treatment facilities (ATFs) operational in Jammu and Kashmir, with 11 in the Kashmir Division and 9 in the Jammu Division. Outpatient department (OPD) services are functional in all 20 districts, while inpatient department (IPD) services are available in all 9 Government Medical Colleges (GMCs), catering to both male and female patients, with psychiatrists available in all GMCs throughout the UT.

"Twenty-five medical officers, with 12 from Jammu and 13 from Kashmir, have been trained by NIMHANS, Bengaluru, and were deployed to their respective districts to strengthen de-addiction centres. They are also responsible for enhancing surveillance and data collection on a daily basis through Google Sheets for real-time reporting to monitor trends and measure the impact of interventions," the minister added.

Responding to a similar inquiry from MLA Khanyar Ali Mohammad Sagar, Minister Itoo said the Health Department's role is limited to managing medicinal preparations that fall under their purview, while the enforcement staff regulates the sale of habit-forming drugs governed under Schedule H1 and X of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act of 1940.

"The subject of narcotic drugs, as well as violations under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act of 1985, is primarily regulated by the Narcotics Control Bureau, Excise, Police, and the Revenue Department of the UT. Sale statements for habit-forming drugs are obtained from depots and C&F of various pharmaceutical manufacturers operating in the UT," she said, adding, "The supply chain of such drugs is monitored regularly up to the end-user level. We are continuously persuading state drug controllers in neighbouring states and UTs to exercise strict regulation regarding the sale of such medicinal preparations to restrict interstate smuggling."

The minister added that the Drug and Food Control Organisation conducts awareness programmes at the district level to educate the public about the ill effects of habit-forming drugs. Special drives, in addition to routine inspections, are being conducted to curb the menace of these drugs, including prosecutions and administrative actions such as the suspension of drug sale licenses under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act of 1940.

She said the department has also successfully implemented directives from various NCORD meetings regarding the installation of CCTV cameras and the adoption of computerized billing systems in drug sale establishments.

"This proactive approach has resulted in increased transparency, accountability, and responsibility in the drug regulatory mechanism," Itoo said—

CS

accurately and empower the teachers to provide personalized learning interventions.

To enhance CITaG's effectiveness, Dulloo directed the officials to make its verticals fully operational and strengthen the capacity of government officers to function optimally under this framework.

About the key achievements and progress made, so far, Commissioner Secretary, PD&MD, Talat Parvez Rohella made out that

a dedicated CITaG Cell, led by the Director General of PD&MD, has been established to oversee Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and state transformation initiatives. He added that the government has allocated 2.18 crore for CITaG's initiatives, with a proposed annual budget of 7.61 crore for the next fiscal.

Regarding the capacity building, he informed the meeting that training sessions have been conducted, equipping 197 officials with skills in governance transformation. An additional 200 officials are set to undergo the training in the coming months, he concluded.

Director IIM Jammu, Professor B.S Sahay besides giving the suggestions for prioritized uptake also informed about the plan for further streamlining the working of this centre. He gave out that it is being planned to initiate the recruitment drive completing the hiring process for CITaG, including the selection of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and domain experts.

He revealed the training modules for future ready governance covering the key areas such as AI and digital governance, Blockchain Applications in public services, Big data for policy development, cybersecurity and risk management, leadership and digital transformation in governance.

It was also informed that the State Institute of Transformation (SIT) concentrating on advancements in tourism, education, agriculture and urban planning is also going to be a reality soon.

Regarding implementation of PPP projects, the meeting was apprised that the bidding process for two Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects had been concluded.

Moreover, it was added that Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for four initiatives stands finalized besides completing feasibility studies for eight projects. It was also suggested that in order to overcome the shortage of professionals in the centre it is being planned that a student internship program offering a monthly stipend to the students involved in governance research projects.

Pertinent to mention here that the CITaG, a pioneering initiative under the Planning Development & Monitoring Department (PD&MD) in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu was established with the support of NITI Aayog, the Department of Economic Affairs (Ministry of Finance, GoI) and the UT government. It aims to drive the governance reforms through research, policy development and capacity building thereby building a conducive environment for investments and public-private partnerships (PPP) while strengthening future-ready governance structures here in the UT.

FIRE

which erupted in the early hours, spread rapidly, engulfing at least five houses before fire and emergency services could intervene. According to an official, the fire was reported in the early morning, and before emergency teams could arrive, the flames had already consumed several residential structures. "As soon as we received the distress call, fire tenders were dispatched to the area. However, by the time they arrived, around five houses were already in flames, and the fire was spreading," the official stated. The exact number of houses damaged is currently being assessed.

A coordinated effort by the Fire and Emergency Services, police, and locals played a crucial role in preventing further destruction.

Police have registered a case to ascertain the cause of the fire.

AGA

truth-tellers languishing in Indian jails.

Referring to cases of political prisoners, Rahullah mentioned Khurram, who has spent four years behind bars, separated from his children, and Irfan, who was arrested just a month after his marriage and has now completed two years in captivity. He lamented that these detentions continue while the world remains oblivious to their suffering.

"As Ramadan's sacred nights begin, let our duas rise to Allah SWT for their freedom and an end to oppression," Rahullah wrote. He urged people to remember the injustices faced by prisoners from Kashmir as well as others across India, including Sharjeel Imam and Umar Khalid, who remain incarcerated under various charges.

He linked their imprisonment to a broader pattern of oppression and repression, drawing parallels between the suffering in Kashmir and the situation in Gaza. Calling for prayers on Jumu'atul-Wida, the last Friday of Ramadan, Rahullah emphasized the significance of raising voices against injustice and standing in solidarity with the oppressed.

"Dua is our weapon. May Allah SWT hasten their release and grant them victory," he added.

His remarks have once again brought focus to the issue of political detentions in Kashmir, a subject that has frequently drawn criticism from human rights organizations. Civil society groups have repeatedly demanded the release of political prisoners, citing concerns over their health and prolonged legal battles. [KNT]

KHREW

Change and Human Health (NPCCHH) under NHM to strengthen preventive, diagnostic and treatment services at PHC Khrew. Strengthening of diagnostic facilities, screening for respiratory ailments and establishing an NCD (Non-communicable Disease) clinic is also being considered under NPCCHH," she said.

Sakina added that the proposal for upgradation of PHC Khrew has been submitted by the Directorate of Health Services, Kashmir. However, at present, the Health and Medical Education Department, J&K is not considering any up-gradations Institutions during of the Health current financial year (2024-2025), due to the austerity measures imposed by the Finance Department. Civil Secretariat, J&K vide Government Order No. 10-F of 2025 dated 11.01.2025 and is rather working on consolidation of existing health institutes at various levels. (Primary, Secondary and Tertiary)..

"Moving forward, any potential upgradations will be assessed as per the Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) Norms of 2022, as well as other relevant guidelines issued by the Government from time to time, ensuring that upgradations are carefully planned, adhering to established standards and fiscal guidelines once the austerity measures are revisited," she added.

"There has been a significant increase in the number of outdoor/indoor patients in SDH Pampore, PHC Khrew, and Kakapora. To address this, steps are being taken to improve healthcare facilities, including infrastructure, medical staff, besides providing necessary medical equipment to enhance patient care and meet the rising demand for healthcare services," she added.

"SDH Pampore, PHC Khrew and PHC Pampore are functional and well equipped in terms of infrastructure, manpower and Medical equipment," Sakina said—(KNO)

GANDOOLA

the March 15, 2022 decision by the Lieutenant Governor-led Administrative Council and the subsequent government order dated September 6, 2023, regarding ropeway development under the Parvatmala initiative.

The chief minister revealed that a list of 52 ropeway projects for J&K had been proposed, with bidding currently underway for a 1.05 km ropeway to the Shankaracharya temple in Srinagar. However, bids for a 2.12 km ropeway from Darshan Deopdi to Shivkhori temple in Reasi were annulled due to an ongoing court case.

As per the latest tender issued on January 25, 2025, the NHLML has invited bids for DPRs of the Baltal-Amarnath ropeway, an 8.80 km Bhaderwah-Seojhhar ropeway in Doda, and a 1.60 km Sonamarg-Thajiwas Glacier ropeway. These projects are expected to enhance accessibility for both pilgrims and tourists.

Additionally, DPR bids are being sought for the Parihas-Diskhal ropeway at Doodhpathri, Sutharan-Tosamaidan ropeway in Budgam, and Nashri Tunnel-Sanasar lake ropeway in Ramban. Meanwhile, a pre-feasibility study is underway for the Karchiall-Wasamarg ropeway in Ramban. [KNT]

HOUSE

the concerns raised while ensuring efficient utilization of resources to meet the aspirations of the people.

While speaking regarding the Jal Shakti department, Rana said that government is determined towards providing "Har Ghar Nal Se Jal" to all rural households and is utilizing resources from Jal Jeevan Mission, NABARD and UT Capex to provide fifty five (55) litres of clean drinking water per capita daily, conforming to BIS 10000 and 10500 standards.

"In order to achieve this objective, J&K has planned the execution of 3253 Water Supply Schemes at an estimated cost of Rs 13344.25 crore to provide new tap water connections as well as to upgrade the existing connections, provided under erstwhile programs, to make them JJM compliant by raising the new infrastructure as well as retrofitting the existing infrastructure, wherever required," informed the Minister.

Reflecting on the achievements, he informed that major strides have been made in implementation of the Mission during the past 02 ½ years and more than 1400 (43%) Water Supply Schemes have been completed till date and out of remaining 1853 schemes, about 1500 schemes have recorded a progress of more than 50 percent.

Regarding the expenditure incurred, he said that it has picked up from Rs 441 crore on ongoing works in initial 03 years to 6560 on new works, in the past 03 years.

"J&K which languished at the bottom is now figuring at 5th in the overall functionality assessment conducted by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, GoI, through a third-party agency. The overall functionality of J&K has improved from 53 percent in the year 2022 to 74 percent in 2024," he said. He added that J&K is ranking first in the Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance at the National level.



Director School Edu. Kmr launches ‘Week-long career guidance & counseling program’ at Srinagar

Mega sessions to be held in all 374 clusters of the valley, participation of the parents mandatory: Director Itoo

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MARCH 22: Director School Education Kashmir (DSEK), Dr. G.N. Itoo today formally launched a ‘week-long career guidance and counseling session 2025’ at Srinagar.

In this regard, an inaugural ceremony was held at Girls Higher Secondary School Kothibagh, in which around 200 experts from all districts of Kashmir province participated.

These experts will provide career guidance to parents and those students who have recently appeared in 10th and 12th class examinations in their respective districts. In his inaugural address, Director reiterated that career counseling will yield positive results only when you provide proper counseling to parents about the various career opportunities during these sessions. Dr. Itoo announced on this occasion that under this week-long program starting from March 24, mega sessions will be organized in all 374 clusters of the valley and in this regard all the cluster heads are directed to ensure the



participation of parents in these sessions. DSEK asked the counseling experts to familiarize themselves with the success stories related to different career opportunities and provide information about the latest innovative career fields to the students and their parents as well. He stressed that experts should adopt the tools of psychology and provide effective counseling to remove the career-related concerns of students and parents.

It is pertinent to mention here that formal monitoring will be carried out for the effective implementation of this program, which will be supervised by all the Joint Directors of the Department. In addition to this, the respective Chief Education Officers of the different districts have been asked to submit a detailed report to the Joint Directors of the Department on a daily basis. The experts who will provide counseling during these sessions belong

to psychology, sociology, social work and other fields. In his inaugural address, Director reiterated that career counseling will yield positive results only when you provide proper counseling to parents about the various career opportunities during these sessions. Dr. Itoo announced on this occasion that under this week-long program starting from March 24, mega sessions will be organized in all 374 clusters of the valley and in this regard all the cluster heads are directed to ensure the participation of parents in these sessions. DSEK asked the counseling experts to familiarize themselves with the success stories related to different career opportunities and provide information about the latest innovative career fields to the students and their parents as well. He stressed that experts should adopt the tools of psychology and provide effective counseling to remove the career-related concerns of students and parents. It is pertinent to mention here that formal monitoring will be carried out for the effective implementation of this program, which will be supervised by all the Joint Directors of the Department.

14956 Kanal transferred for establishment of Industrial Estate in Jammu, 6745 in Kashmir: Dy CM

HT News Network

Jammu, Mar 22, Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today said that 14956 Kanal and 15 Marla land in Jammu division and 6745 Kanal and 19 Marla land in Kashmir division has been transferred for establishment of Industrial Estates in Jammu and Kashmir. The Minister was replying to a question raised by Ali Mohammad Dar. He informed the House that the intends have also been placed for 9661.05 kanal of land and 5000.13 kanal for establishment of Industrial Estates in Jammu and Kashmir respectively. He said that among others, Education and Skill Development, figures in the Focus Sector List of J&K Industrial policy 2021-30 which is also part of Service Sector Positive List of New Central Sector Scheme (NCSS) 2021, issued by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. He added that 596 applicants have been registered under the Jammu and Kashmir Start-Up Policy notified vide Government Order No. 29-JK(IND) of 2024 dated 23.02.2024., of which, 436 applicants have been recognized as Startups. Besides, 26 of these applicants are in the Skill Development and Education Sector. The Minister asserted that the Industrial Estates have been designated as Sector Specific Industrial Estates in sectors like Education and Skill Development, Health and Medical education in Jammu division and H&ME, Technical Education and Information Technology and Information Technology in Service (IT/ITeS) sectors comprising more than 3628 kanal of land in both the divisions.

Full Utilization of Budget Achieved This Year at SKIMS: Director

HT News Network

Srinagar, Mar 22, KNT: The lapse of Rs 90 crore in capital expenditure funds over the past three years at the Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) has raised serious concerns about financial management at the premier healthcare institution. However, for the first time since 2021, all allocated funds have been fully utilized this year, including Rs 50 crore in central funding.

The issue was brought to light in the Legislative Assembly when MLA Tang-marg, Farooq Ahmad Shah, sought details on fund utilization at SKIMS. In response, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakina Masood



Ittoo, informed the House that a total of Rs 90 crore remained unutilized over the past three financial years. She provided a breakdown of the lapses, stating that Rs 34.16 crore went unused in 2021-22, Rs 21.72 crore in

2022-23, and Rs 34.22 crore in 2023-24. The revelation has sparked discussions over budgetary inefficiencies during the tenure of former SKIMS Director, Dr. Parvaiz Koul, under whom the lapses occurred. Sources said the inability to utilize allocated funds had hindered infrastructure development and procurement of essential medical equipment at the institute. However, the current administration at SKIMS has ensured the complete utilization of funds this year. "For the first time in years, we have successfully utilized the entire budget, including Rs 50 crore received from the central government," SKIMS Director, Prof. Muhammad Ashraf Ganaie told the news agency Kashmir News Trust. [KNT]

SMC observes ‘World Water Day’ with Pledge Ceremonies

SRINAGAR, MARCH 22: Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) marked ‘World Water Day’ with pledge ceremonies across all municipal wards, highlighting the importance of water conservation. The main event was held at the SMC Central Office, where Joint Commissioner, Syed Abul Qasim led the proceedings. In his address, Joint Commissioner Abdul Qasim stressed the urgent need for responsible water use. He stated, "Water is a precious resource, and its conservation is our collective responsibility. Today, we reaffirm our commitment to protecting it for future generations." Officials and staff across all municipal wards actively participated, taking a pledge to promote water conservation practices and raise awareness among residents. SMC urged all citizens to adopt simple water-saving measures, such as fixing leaks, reducing wastage, and using water efficiently in daily activities.

7 Day Advanced Entrepreneurship Skill Development Program concludes at IIIM Srinagar

HT News Network

Srinagar, March 22nd, 2025: The seven-day Advanced Entrepreneurship Skill Development Program on the theme, "Crop Diversification through Medicinal and Aromatic Plants in Rainfed Areas for Doubling Farmers' Income" concluded here today at the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), Branch Lab, Srinagar. The programme, which lasted for seven days was aimed at empowering the aspiring entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills needed to explore crop diversification, particularly through medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs), and to enhance their income through innovative agricultural practices.

The valedictory function was presided over by Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director of CSIR-IIIM Jammu, who congratulated & complimented all participants for successfully completing the program. In his address, Dr. Ahmed emphasized the importance of entrepreneurship in today's economy. He urged participants not to wait for government jobs but to instead



choose the path of startups and entrepreneurship, becoming job creators rather than job seekers. He shared valuable insights and experiences about agri-startups and encouraged participants to collaborate with CSIR-IIIM through its incubation centres. Dr. Ahmed also stressed the need for promoting crop diversification to more than double farmers' income, highlighting the potential of medicinal and aromatic plants in achieving this goal.

The program featured a series of lectures, interactive sessions, and success stories from experts, banking institutions, government officers, and successful entrepreneurs. Participants expressed their satisfaction with the training, particularly appreciating the opportunity to interact with successful business entrepreneurs in aromatic and medicinal plants, mushroom cultivation, apiculture, waste-to-energy, and other allied sectors. Giving detail of this weeklong Advanced

Entrepreneurship Skill Development Program, Dr. Nasir-Ul-Rashid, the co-ordinator informed that on day 1, after an impressive inaugural session, Dr. O.P. Sharma, IFS (Retd. PCCF), delivered a keynote address on "Forests & Food through Traditions & Techniques." The day also included discussions on marketing strategies for MAPs.

The day 2 focused on marketing opportunities for medicinal and aromatic plants, the scope of medicinal plant cultivation, and the cultivation of high-value aromatic plants. Successful entrepreneurs shared their experiences and success stories. On 3rd day, the deliberations included the lectures on mushroom cultivation, value addition, and entrepreneurship development. Participants also learned about the scope of medicinal and aromatic plant cultivation in Ladakh and financial inclusion for entrepreneurs. The day 4 was dedicated to beekeeping, processing, and value addition for entrepreneurship development. The day also included sessions on the propagation of high-value MAPs through tissue culture techniques and R&D in MAPs.

Budget Session 2025 Question Hour in LA

Health institution Batamaloo upgraded to PHC: Sakeena Itoo

HT News Network

Jammu March 22, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, today informed the House that Health institution Batamaloo has been upgraded to PHC and is functional with sufficient infrastructure.

The Minister said this while replying to a question by Tariq Hameed Karra.

The Minister said that the PHC Batamaloo is functioning with 12 sanctioned posts. She added that out of 12, 9 are in-position including two Medical Officers and two Dental Surgeons from the regular side, besides 16 sanctioned posts from NHM side are also in place.

The Minister further informed that PHC Batamaloo has sufficient infrastructure as a four storied structure required for smooth functioning of a UPHC and its bed strength had been raised to 56 during Covid time.

The Minister further said that the catchment area of PHC Batamaloo is approximately 50,000 as reported by the Director Health Services Kashmir. She added that PHC Batamaloo does not qualify for up-gradation to the level of Sub District Hospital (SDH).

She also informed that PHC Batamaloo is being served by the higher and tertiary level health institutions like GMC Srinagar, Super Specialty Hospital Srinagar, SKIMS Srinagar, SKIMS (JVC) Medical College, SMHS Hospital Srinagar, L.D Hospital Srinagar, NTPHC Lachmanpora Batmaloo and UPHC Bemina.

Govt completes all development works on Abhinav Theatre, makes it fully functional: Dy CM

HT News Network

Jammu, Mar 22, : Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today said that all development works on Abhinav Theatre, Jammu have been completed and the theatre is fully functional.

The Dy CM was replying to a question on behalf of the Chief Minister raised by Arvind Gupta in the Legislative Assembly.

Giving details of budget allocations made for various development works in the Abhinav theatre, he informed that Rs. 5.69 lakh had been allotted for repair of the rooftop during the current financial year under CAPEX and 100 percent work has been completed.

Regarding construction of the compound wall of the Theatre, he said that Rs. 37.41 lakh had been allotted during the current financial year under CAPEX and 90 percent of the work has been completed. He added that Rs. 41.60 lakh have been spent on upgradation/repair works during the current financial year under CAPEX.

The Dy CM further stated that upgradation of sound system, light system and curtains has been completed by the PW(R&B) department. An estimated expenditure of Rs. 101.93 lakh is being booked under the Grant in Aid for the J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages (JKAACL), he added.

SDH Kokernag gets 24*7 power supply through dedicated feeder

HT News Network

Jammu March 22: Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmed Rana, today said that a proposal regarding construction of a receiving station at Nowbugh Larnoo in Kokernag is under technical evaluation, including the survey and feasibility check.

The Minister, on behalf of the Chief Minister, was replying to a question raised by Zafar Ali Khatana. He informed the House that based on the outcome of the evaluation, an appropriate decision will be taken soon. He added that Sub-District Hospital Kokernag is presently being fed round the clock power supply, through a dedicated 11 KV feeder emanating from Receiving Station Kokernag.

Two Killed as Pickup-Truck Plunges into Gorge on Srinagar-Jammu Highway

SRINAGAR, Mar 22, : Two people lost their lives in a road accident at Battery Chashma along the Srinagar-Jammu Highway after a pick-up truck veered off the road and plunged into a deep gorge on Saturday. Police sources told the news agency Kashmir News Trust that the vehicle, a Tata Yodha (JK14H-2006), was carrying vegetables from Jammu to Srinagar when the driver lost control, leading to the fatal crash. The driver, identified as Seva Singh, and another occupant, Irshad Rashid, a resident of Ukhral, Banihal, died on the spot. The impact of the accident left the vehicle completely damaged. Rescue teams, along with police, rushed to the scene and retrieved the bodies. Authorities have urged drivers to exercise caution while navigating the treacherous stretches of the highway, especially during adverse weather conditions. [KNT]

EDITORIAL

GOI’s decision to reduce import duty on foreign apples pushes local apple growers to wall

The decision of the Government of India to reduce the import duty on the apples imported from the United States of America has led to heartburn among the fruit growers of the Kashmir valley. The apple growers of the valley have already voiced their concern over this development and have urged the union territory government to intervene in the matter. They have demanded that the step should be rolled back so that the fruit industry is saved from further losses.

Since Kashmir's economy is predominantly dependent on the horticulture sector the government move to reduce duty on imported apples is bound to cause disaster to the sector. Over the years the fruit industry of the valley faced serious challenges and the people involved in this sector at times feel that they have been pushed to the wall. This time around too the government decision to cut down duty on imported apples has not gone well with the apple growers and they want immediate rollback.

There is a trend in Kashmir that people tend to follow others as and when the other person tries to do something new. Same has been witnessed in the high density apple project launched some years back by the government. Many people converted their paddy fields into apple orchards and as such there is a food grain crisis in many areas of the valley. People randomly converted their paddy fields into apple orchards without looking into the repercussions of the same.

It is a well established fact that apple orchards cannot be set up in a random manner and there are many factors that determine the same. The soil and climate are the important factors in this regard and these need to be properly assessed before taking any decision to convert any type of land into apple orchards. The hush-hush manner in which the people took the decision and converted their fields into apple orchards speaks volumes about their lack of knowledge about the subject.

Most of the people in order to earn quick bucks converted their fields into apple orchards without caring for the consequences thereof. This resulted in a food grain crisis and due to the availability of more apples the apple growers and traders were forced to cut down the rates of their produce. Given this fact the apple growers and traders sold their stock at much cheaper price and at the end of the day these people suffered huge losses.

The begging mentality in Kashmir: Towards a culture of empowerment and self-sufficiency

Need to confront dependency and promote dignity through responsible charity and community support

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In Kashmir, a growing “begging mentality” threatens to shape the moral and economic fabric of society. This is not just a practice of charity but an ingrained habit that needs deeper reflection. To understand the roots of this issue and its long-term consequences, we must examine how it affects individuals, communities, and society as a whole.

Charity vs Dependency

It is a beautiful and noble act to help the poor and needy. Charity, as encouraged by religious teachings, especially in Islam, promotes compassion. However, in Kashmir, charity has often been confused with an obligation to give money to beggars, whether they are in need or not. People believe that giving to beggars is not just a voluntary act of kindness but a moral and religious responsibility. This sense of obligation can sometimes overshadow the true spirit of charity, which aims to uplift the poor and provide for the community in a sustainable way.

In Islam, giving charity (Zakat and Sadaqah) is not meant to support people in a way that they become dependent on others. Instead, it is about ensuring that people who are in genuine need can meet their basic needs and eventually find ways to support themselves. When charity is used to feed beggars, rather than helping those in real need, it can become an enabler of dependency. This creates a cycle where the beggar feels entitled to ask for help, and the giver feels obligated to provide, even if the person does not need it.

Entitlement and the Loss of Dignity

Another disturbing aspect of the begging mentality in Kashmir is the entitlement that many beggars feel. In many cases, beggars have come to believe that they have a right to beg. This sense of entitlement can strip them



of their dignity and humanity. Rather than empowering themselves to work and contribute to society, some have come to rely on the sympathy of others. This not only fosters a culture of dependency but also undermines the dignity of the beggar.

In a healthy society, the act of begging should be temporary and situational. It should not be a permanent solution to poverty or a way of life. The true goal of charity is not to create a permanent class of beggars but to help individuals break free from poverty.

The Economic Consequences

The most worrying impact of this mentality is the long-term economic consequences. If people in Kashmir continue to give money to beggars without understanding the larger societal impact, they are inadvertently contributing to an unsustainable economy. A society that is built on the idea that people should rely on the charity of others for survival will always struggle to thrive. Instead of investing in education, skills, or self-sufficiency programs, the focus remains on hand-outs.

This creates a vicious cycle. The more people give money to beggars, the less people invest in systems that can create lasting economic opportunities. In the end, the society becomes less productive, and the cycle of poverty and begging continues.

In order to create a healthy economy, it is essential to shift from a mindset of dependency to one of empowerment, where people are given the tools to build their own futures.

Helping Your Own Community: The True Spirit of Charity

One of the most important lessons in charity, especially in Islamic teachings, is the importance of helping those within your own community. Instead of giving to beggars on the street, the focus should be on supporting those who live near you – your neighbours, your relatives, and those in your immediate vicinity who are in genuine need. Charity that builds a stronger community is far more beneficial than charity that creates a wider, but less connected, network of dependence.

When we help our neighbours or people we know personally, we create a sense of solidarity and mutual support. This helps build a stronger, more compassionate community. It is much easier to know who truly needs help and who might be taking advantage of others' generosity. By focusing on local charity, we can ensure that the aid goes to those who truly need it and is used in the most effective way possible.

Charity in Secret: The Islamic Perspective

In Islam, charity is not

just about the act itself but also the manner in which it is done. It is highly recommended to give charity in secret, so the giver does not feel pride and the receiver does not feel embarrassed. Public displays of charity, especially when done to beggars who are not truly in need, can make both the giver and the receiver lose the essence of the act. Giving in secret ensures that the act is for the sake of God, not for personal recognition or to satisfy a sense of obligation.

When charity is given openly, it can also encourage others to beg, as they see that it's a way to get money without working for it. The emphasis should be on helping those who truly need it in a way that maintains their dignity, while also ensuring that the act of giving is not done for show but as a sincere act of kindness.

Religious Institutions and the Path of Begging

A particularly concerning trend in Kashmir is the rise of religious leaders and institutions that have adopted the same begging mentality. Many religious leaders, who run religious schools and institutes, go from door to door to collect donations for their institutions. While religious education is undoubtedly important, it is deeply troubling that these institutions have resorted to begging to fund their operations. This not only promotes the same culture of dependency among the religious leaders but also sends a harmful message to the public: that begging is an acceptable and even expected way of raising funds.

This approach not only compromises the integrity of the religious institutions but also encourages the common masses to adopt a similar mindset. Instead of teaching individuals the importance of self-reliance and sustainable means of support, it inadvertently spreads the idea that begging is a legitimate way to earn a living. Religious institutions should not have to beg to survive; instead, they should

be established with sufficient funds or mechanisms in place to generate income for their own expenses. This will ensure that they are not dependent on the charity of others and can continue to serve the community without undermining the values they aim to promote.

Sustainable Religious Institutions

Religious institutions should be founded with clear financial plans that do not rely on the continuous solicitation of donations. If they do need support, it should be through proper channels, such as fundraising campaigns or creating income-generating projects, rather than resorting to going door to door. This will teach the community the value of hard work, responsibility, and independence. Furthermore, it will ensure that the focus remains on providing quality religious education, not on the continuous need to gather funds.

Conclusion: Reclaiming the Spirit of Charity

The growing “begging mentality” in Kashmir is a dangerous trend that threatens the fabric of society. While charity is a beautiful practice, it is essential that we understand its true purpose. Charity should be a means to empower others, not to make them dependent. It should strengthen communities, help individuals stand on their own feet, and be done in a way that respects the dignity of both the giver and the receiver.

For the younger generation, it is crucial to learn the difference between charity that fosters dependency and charity that fosters empowerment. Let us focus on creating a society where people do not rely on begging but on self-sufficiency, dignity, and mutual support. By shifting our mindset, we can create a more sustainable and prosperous future for Kashmir.

The writer is a Gold medalist in Environmental Engineering from Aligarh Muslim University (AMU)

”Career after marriage: Flight or confusion?”



PRIYANKA SAURABH

Imagine a girl who worked day and night for her career, got degrees, and gathered experience and then... got married! And after marriage? Often the same thing happens, which has been happening for generations—the career either stops or slowly fades into oblivion. In our society, marriage is considered a “milestone” in the life of women. But the question is whether this milestone serves to advance the career road or puts a big brake on it.

Career or marriage: should there really be a choice?

In our society, marriage

is considered a “turning point” in women's lives. But the question is whether this turning point is for pushing forward or for pushing back. Many times, the family, society, and even women themselves think that a career is no longer a priority after marriage. Many times women are forced to think that career and marriage cannot go together. Family, society, and sometimes even women themselves believe that career becomes a lesser priority after marriage. Is this correct? Or is it just a social perception that needs to be changed?

“Now you have to take care of the house!”

How many times have we heard that after marriage, women give up their careers and start “taking care of the house”? If they were in a lucrative corporate job before marriage, then after marriage the question arises—“How will you manage both office and home now?” And the solution is often this—“Give up

your career!” After marriage, the family and society often expect women to give priority to household responsibilities over career. Why is this thinking? Is the same expected from men as well?

Sacrifice Sale of Dreams: Wedding Special Discount!

Women's dreams and careers go on discount like goods on sale. –“Your passion comes later; family comes first!” “Husband's job is more important; yours was just a time pass!” “If you stay at home, your children will get a better upbringing!”

Mommy Track: Career break or permanent stop?

As soon as motherhood comes, women's careers are put on the “mommy track.” That is, they are put out of the race for promotion in a side role. They are also given less importance in the workplace because it is believed that now they will not be as committed to a “full-time career.” Many women are forced to leave their jobs after motherhood, while men's careers

are not affected by it. Is this not a form of gender inequality? Can companies support women by adopting more flexible policies?

Are men asked after marriage, “What will you do with your career now?”

No, right? If the same question is asked of women, it itself tells where the problem lies. There are examples of women balancing marriage and career together. Isn't it possible that marriage brings new cooperation and support for a career? Many couples work together to advance each other's careers. Doesn't this require a new perspective?

Rural Women's Careers: Challenges and Opportunities

In rural India, the career situation of women becomes even more challenging after marriage. Due to traditional thinking, lack of education, and unavailability of opportunities, many women are not able to remain financially independent after marriage. However, change is now

coming through self-help groups (SHG), rural entrepreneurship, and government schemes. For example, women are running small businesses through Sakhi Mandal and self-help groups. Many women started their own businesses with the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana. Due to the Digital India initiative, women are now doing online business. Women are moving ahead in dairy, tailoring, embroidery, gardening, and agriculture-based businesses.

The effect of marriage on women's careers

According to the report, only 20% of women in India remain in the workforce, while their participation at the graduate level is equal to that of men. About 47% of Indian women leave their career after marriage. The earnings of married women decrease by 15-20%. 85% of Indian women believe that they face career obstacles due to marriage and children. Workforce participation of

women above 30 years of age in India is only 18%, while this number is 78% for men.

Inspiring Case Studies

Indra Nooyi managed to maintain her career despite being married. In her book “My Life in Full,” she has explained how she balanced her family and career and how companies need to create supportive workplaces for women. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw (founder of Biocon) built her biotech company despite marriage and society's expectations. According to her, women can successfully pursue their careers even after marriage if they get support from their family. Tennis star Serena Williams returned to the game even after motherhood and won many titles. She broke the myth that the only option after becoming a mother is to quit a career.

So what is the solution?

Families need to understand that marriage does not mean the end of women's careers. Men should play an equal role in the respon-

sibilities of the home and children. Companies should provide more flexible job options for women. Instead of looking at career and marriage as opposing poles, they need to be taken together. Men should also be equal partners in the responsibilities of the home and children. Companies should provide flexible working options so that women can easily play both roles.

Marriage can be a new chapter, not “the end”!

Marriage should not mean “the end” of any woman's career. Rather, it should be a stage from where she can move forward in a balanced way in her personal and professional life. The next time someone asks, “What about career after marriage?”, the answer should be, “What was before will remain the same—only better!”

Research Scholar in Political Science, Poet, freelance journalist, and columnist

Baramulla’s Transformative Journey

“A Model for Inclusive Growth”



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“Aspirational Success; Baramulla’s Path to Growth Earns NITI Aayog’s Recognition”

Mission Yuva and Employment Initiatives for Youth Empowerment.

Baramulla district has embarked on a transformative journey, emerging as a model of development and governance under the Aspirational District Program (ADP). Recognized by NITI Aayog with a Rs.3 crore award for its outstanding progress, the district has demonstrated significant advancements in financial inclusion, skill development, digital literacy, and infrastructure improvement. Under the dynamic leadership of District Development Commissioner (DDC) Minga Sherpa, Baramulla has strategically implemented numerous initiatives that have markedly enhanced the quality of life for its residents. The administration has focused on financial security by increasing registrations under the PMJJBY and PMSBY insurance schemes, ensuring that marginalized communities benefit from these social security programs. Additionally, skill development programs have been designed to empower women and persons with disabilities, promoting economic independence. To bridge the digital divide, digital literacy camps have been organized in remote areas, equipping citizens with essential digital skills that facilitate access to government services and promote digital inclusion. The Rs.3 crore award from NITI Aayog will further strengthen these ongoing development programs, introduce new projects, and address key challenges that hinder progress. In an effort to uplift landless families, the Baramulla administration has actively implemented the Pradhan Mantri



Awas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G). In 2023, five landless beneficiaries received 5 marlas of land, an initiative overseen by Additional District Development Commissioner Aijaz Abdullah Saraf and Assistant Commissioner Revenue Peerzada Mumtaz Ahmad. With additional cases under verification, the administration remains committed to ensuring that all deserving beneficiaries receive adequate support under the PMAY-G scheme. The district has also made remarkable strides in education through the establishment of 18 innovative laboratory schools that incorporate modern teaching techniques to improve learning outcomes. Recognized in the Economic Survey of India, these schools emphasize hybrid learning and ICT tools to prepare students for competitive exams. One of the most notable achievements is the development of a School Voting Machine (SVM) by students at Government Boys Higher Secondary School, Bomai Sopore, reflecting the district’s commitment to fostering innovation in alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Youth empowerment has been another focal area for the administration, highlighted by the

launch of Mission Yuva in January 2025. This initiative, spearheaded by DDC Minga Sherpa, involved a comprehensive baseline survey conducted by 75 supervisors and 1,500 investigators to identify unemployed and aspiring entrepreneurs across all Panchayats, Blocks, and Villages. Mission Yuva is structured around four key pillars: Culture, Capital, Capacity, and Connectivity, ensuring that youth are provided with financial resources, skills development, cultural identity preservation, and networking opportunities. An Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaign is also in progress to enhance awareness and encourage participation. Another significant milestone in rural development is the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Baramulla administration and the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) for the development of five model border villages. With a budget of Rs.2.5 crore, this project aims to upgrade essential infrastructure such as schools, health centers, Anganwadi centers, sanitation facilities, and electricity supply through transformer installations. Set for completion within

eight months, this initiative is expected to significantly improve the living conditions of rural communities. Healthcare has remained a priority for the administration, with NHPC’s collaboration playing a pivotal role in strengthening medical facilities. Key healthcare initiatives include the installation of a high-capacity DG set at PHC Mohura, ensuring uninterrupted power supply for round-the-clock medical services, and the provision of a 4x4 ambulance for PHC Boniyar to enhance emergency response times in challenging terrains. Furthermore, the establishment of a dialysis center at the Government Medical College, Baramulla, has eliminated the need for long-distance travel for kidney patients. Speaking at the MoU signing ceremony, DDC Minga Sherpa emphasized the importance of public-private collaborations in enhancing healthcare infrastructure. In addition to healthcare, employment generation has been a critical area of focus, with the Baramulla administration taking substantial steps under the Jammu & Kashmir Rural Employment Generation Program (JKREGP). The District Level Task Force Committee approved 115

cases for the 2023-24 financial year, providing loans to unemployed youth to establish income-generating units in sectors such as dairy farming, poultry, tailoring, automobile repair, and bakery businesses. During 2022-23 alone, Rs.20.96 crore in subsidies facilitated the establishment of 1,065 units, creating widespread employment opportunities. To further support small business development, the administration organized an orientation program for Small Business Development Units (SBDUs) and Business Help Desks (BHDs) under Mission Yuva. Inaugurated by DDC Minga Sherpa, this program aims to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with mentorship, direct business support, and financial assistance. A comprehensive baseline survey mapped 57,000 potential entrepreneurs, ensuring targeted support reaches those in need. In its next phase, Mission Yuva will focus on structured assistance, including funding, skill development, and market linkages, with Yuva Doots deployed across Panchayats to guide entrepreneurs and promote economic growth. Agriculture and horticulture have also been key priorities for the administration, with col-

laborative efforts from the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments leading to the successful implementation of the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP). This program comprises 29 projects aimed at improving farming practices, infrastructure, and productivity. Key initiatives include the introduction of controlled-atmosphere mushroom cultivation units, attracting young entrepreneurs and diversifying income sources. Additionally, efforts to rejuvenate old orchards with high-density plants are expected to boost fruit production and sustain livelihoods. Mobile Soil Testing Lab stationed in Baramulla provide timely soil analysis to farmers, optimizing fertilizer use and improving crop yields. These efforts collectively aim to modernize agricultural practices, increase productivity, and create sustainable economic opportunities for the farming community. In the wrap up, Baramulla’s transformation under the Aspirational District Program is a testament to visionary leadership and strategic governance. The district’s remarkable progress in financial inclusion, skill development, digital empowerment, healthcare, education, and employment generation underscores its commitment to holistic development. With ongoing initiatives such as Mission Yuva, model border villages, and agricultural advancements, Baramulla is setting an exemplary precedent for other districts across the country. The concerted efforts of the administration, supported by collaborative partnerships and community participation, continue to propel Baramulla towards a brighter and more prosperous future. Baramulla’s developmental journey is a story of resilience, vision, and dedicated governance. From empowering the youth and improving healthcare to enhancing education and fostering economic growth, the district is setting an example for holistic and inclusive development. With continued efforts and strategic planning, Baramulla is well on its way to becoming a model district, showcasing the power of targeted interventions in transforming lives.

The critical need for moral education in today’s society

KOUSAR AHMED RATHER
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Nowadays, we are witnessing selfishness, dishonesty, crime, corruption, inhumanity, disrespect, and a lack of empathy in our society. Gone are the days when morality was considered the best human attribute. A child is disrespecting his/her parents, a student is misbehaving with their teacher, a younger person is shouting at an older one, and a spouse is harassing their partner. Dishonesty in trading is at its peak, deception has become a way of life, hatred and harm are prevalent, and gender discrimination is customary. The reason behind all this is the lack of moral education. While we are imparting social and scientific education to our students, we are lagging in the development of moral and ethical values in the younger generation. We have forgotten the need and importance of moral education in developing a pious society. The need of the hour is to impart moral education, particularly to students, so that our future generations will be morally sound.

Moral education is the process of teaching individuals about a code of conduct for life. It inculcates ethical values, principles, and behaviours. It develops human values such as empathy, honesty, justice, compassion, brotherhood, respect, sacrifice, tolerance, and truthfulness. It cultivates an individual’s understanding of the distinction between right and wrong.

It aims to develop a solid moral character, integrity, and a commitment to ethical conduct. Ultimately, it encourages individuals to be active and responsible citizens of society.

Moral education plays a crucial role in shaping individuals and society as a whole. In today’s fast-paced, technologically driven world, traditional values can sometimes be overlooked. Moral education helps reinforce these values.

With increasing exposure to diverse and sometimes conflicting information, individuals need a strong moral compass. Issues like corruption, crime, and social inequality highlight the need for ethical decision-making.

Moral education can help foster a sense of social responsibility and promote positive behaviour. Modern life presents complex ethical dilemmas. Moral education provides the tools to navigate these situations with integrity. It helps individuals understand the consequences of their actions and make informed choices.

Moral education helps build strong character traits like honesty, integrity, empathy, and compassion. It fosters a sense of personal responsibility and accountability. It promotes respect for others, tolerance, and understanding, contributing to a more harmonious society. It helps build strong communities based on shared values.

Moral education equips individuals with the ability to distinguish between right and wrong. It empowers them to make ethical



choices in their personal and professional lives. It fosters a sense of civic duty and encourages active participation in society. It helps create responsible and engaged citizens.

By helping people act in ways that align with their values, moral education promotes a sense of inner peace and well-being. It also helps people develop empathy, which is a key component of healthy relationships. Ultimately, moral education is vital for creating a just, compassionate, and responsible society.

Inculcating moral values in students is a multifaceted endeavour that requires a consistent and integrated approach. Teachers should embody the values they wish to instil, demonstrating honesty, respect, empathy, and fairness in their interactions. This includes how they handle conflicts, treat students, and uphold school rules. A positive and supportive school environment should be fostered, where ethical behaviour is valued and rewarded.

Specific time should be allocated for moral education, whether

through dedicated classes, discussions, or integration into existing subjects. The focus should be on teaching fundamental values such as:

- Honesty and integrity
- Empathy and compassion
- Responsibility and accountability
- Respect for others
- Fairness and justice
- Ethical decision-making

Students should be taught how to analyze ethical dilemmas, consider different perspectives, and make responsible choices. Real-

life scenarios, case studies, and role-playing can be used to practice these skills. Stories, fables, and literature can illustrate moral principles and their consequences.

Engaging students in community service projects fosters empathy and social responsibility. Teamwork and collaborative projects should be promoted to teach cooperation, respect, and conflict resolution. Students should be encouraged to reflect on their own actions and behaviours and to consider their impact on others.

A safe space should be created for students to discuss ethical concerns and ask questions. Effective conflict resolution skills should be taught so that students can handle disagreements peacefully and respectfully. Positive moral behaviour should be recognized and rewarded.

Collaboration with parents is essential to reinforce moral values at home. Resources and guidance should be provided to parents on how to have conversations about ethics with their children.

Moral education should be an ongoing process, not a one-time event. It should be tailored to the developmental stage of the students. Cultural differences and perspectives on moral values should be considered.

By implementing these strategies, schools can play a vital role in shaping students into responsible and ethical individuals.

The writer is a teacher at Higher Secondary School, Nehalpora, Pattan



JKPDC to initiate, conclude promotion of eligible employees under recruitment rules shortly: Javed Rana

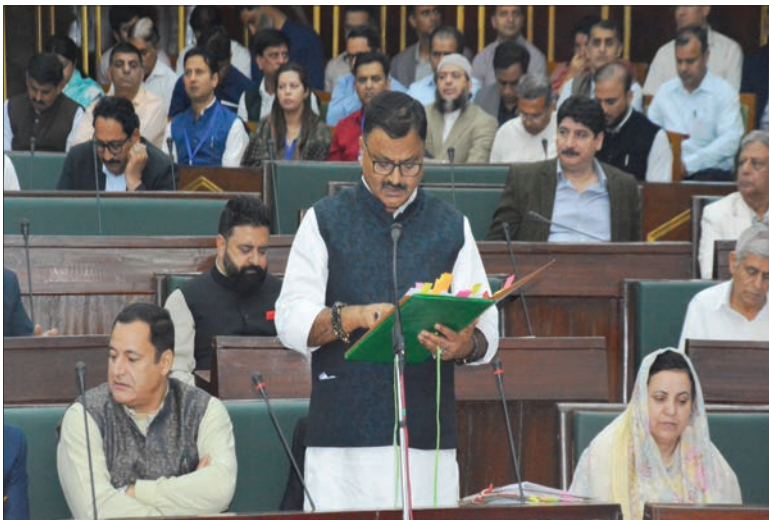
HT News Network

Jammu, 22 Mar, 2025:Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmad Rana, today said that the Jammu and Kashmir State Power Development Corporation (JKSPDC) has made departmental promotions of JKSPDC employees since 2010.

The Minister was replying to a question raised by Muzaffar Iqbal Khan.

He said that the promotions/ release of higher grades have been granted to categories, other than Engineering and AGM (Finance), which included Chief Geologist, Company Secretary, Geological Assistants, Technicians, Finance Assistants and Computer Operators. The Minister said that no category of employees working as computer operators, Junior Assistants, Senior Assistants and Finance Assistants have been ignored in promotions by the Corporation. He said that the agenda for promotion of Finance Assistants to the level of Assistant Accounts Officer (AAO) was considered in the DPC meeting held on 5th/9th August, 2024, but because of mismatch between the Finance Department rules adopted by the JKSPDC for such promotions and eligibility of the candidates, it was deemed appropriate to seek Board of Directors (BoDs) approval to dispense with the requirement of passing SAC-I and SAC-II exams stipulated in the Finance Department rules for their promotion.

The Minister said that the matter



is being placed before the BoDs for appropriate decisions facilitating

their promotion.

The Minister said that in case of

Computer Operators (currently at Pay level L-4), there is no higher post available in consecutive pay level of L-5 in the sanctioned strength issued by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir vide Government Order No: 56- JK(PDD) of 2023 dated 02.05.2023.

The Minister said that having regard to the fact that the functioning of the Corporation, a distinct corporate entity under Companies law, does not conform to the functioning of a government department and requires different skill sets, job profiles and hierarchical pattern, the Corporation is in the advanced stage of finalizing stage recruitment rules.

These recruitment rules once notified shall provide a clear career progression for all those cadres includ-

ing computer operators. Promotions for other cadres including Junior Assistants and Senior Assistants, will however, be initiated shortly against vacant promotion quota posts after following relevant recruitment rules currently in vogue i.e. J&K Subordinate Service Recruitment Rules, SRO- 381 of 1981 Dated. 26.08.1981.

The Minister said that as it is evident from this information that no discrimination with non-gazetted employees has ever been made in past nor shall be made in future while as promotions against vacant promotion quota posts of all cadres, where the employees are eligible under relevant Government recruitment rules in vogue, shall be initiated and concluded shortly.

Higher Secondary School Bhalra Organises Two Days Field Tour

Amir Iqbal Khan



Bhadarwah, March, 22: In order to acquaint the students with the knowledge pertaining to historical places and sites of social importance, Government Higher Secondary School Bhalra, Bhadarwah organised a field tour with effect from 22nd to 23rd of March 2025 in which students from different standards participated. A press release said that the students of PM Shri Govt. Higher Secondary School Bhalra, Bhadarwah, embarked on an Exposure Tour/Field Visit exploring various renowned and historical sites in Jammu. "The tour aimed to provide practical knowledge and insight into the diverse fields of science, technology, education and biodiversity enriching the students' with academic understanding," it added. Earlier, a flag off ceremony was held in which staff and prominent citizens took part. On this occasion, Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Koul (Associate NCC Officer & Zonal Cultural & Counseling Incharge) briefed the students and NCC cadets about the itinerary and the significance of the sites included in the tour. He emphasized the importance of maintaining discipline throughout the journey and encouraged participants to actively engage in learning about the historical, educational and environmental importance of the places of visit. During their tour, the students visited IIT Jammu and gained exposure to cutting-edge technological advancements, research facilities and ongoing academic projects inspiring them to explore the world of innovation and research. They also visited Jambu Zoo to observe and understand the biodiversity and wildlife conservation efforts being undertaken fostering a sense of environmental responsibility and respect for nature. Other prominent sites which were visited included Fish Aquarium, Bagh-e-Bahu, Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Jammu, Dr.

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Syama Prasad Mookerjee Tunnel, Bahu Fort, India's longest road tunnel, which connects Chenani with Nashri, thereby gaining knowledge about modern engineering marvels and infrastructure advancements. "The primary objective of this tour was to broaden the horizons of the students by giving them real-world exposure to academic institutions, wildlife and scientific developments. It was an enriching and memorable experience that encouraged students to aim higher in their academic pursuits," Dr Kaul stated. The tour was spearheaded by Om Parkash (Lecturer/Incharge PM Shri Centrally Sponsored Scheme) and Irshad Ahmed (I/c Principal) under the supervision of Rajinder Singh Bhall- Principal of the institution along with the faculty members.

Sopore Town receives 24x7 power supply under PMDP, RDSS schemes: Javed Rana

HT News Network

Jammu, Mar 22 ;Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmad Rana, today said that Watlab Receiving Station has been upgraded from 1x6.3 MVA to 2x6.3 MVA under PMDP and completed in 2019. The Minister was replying on behalf of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, to a question raised by Irshad Rasool Kar. He said that the upgraded Watlab Receiving Station has been supplying power to the Warpora area through the 11KV Warpora feeder, however, with increasing load demand, the feeder load reaches 460 Amps during the peak hours. He added that to address this, the department has initiated a fresh technical feasibility survey to assess the need for a new Receiving Station at Warpora and a decision on the new Receiving Station will be taken based on the survey outcome.

He said that the 10MVA 33/11KV Receiving Station at Warpora was initially proposed as part of a prospective plan. The Minister said that Electrical infrastructure development is underway under various centrally sponsored schemes like PMDP/RDSS. He said that some areas of Sopore Town (Model Town, Court Road, Galabad) have been completed and 24x7 power supply is being provided there. He said that there has been an appreciable improvement in power supply hours, quality of supply in completed areas and work is in progress for the remaining feeders and planned shutdowns are being avoided for execution of works safely, with prior information to the public.

He said that once the project works are completed and the loss level of feeders decreases to the desired level, the feeders will qualify for 24x7 power supply.

The Minister said that the work on shifting/re-aligning the entire 33 KV line is not being covered under any existing projects. However, a separate tap line was taken up from Substation Sopore-1 to River crossing under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme R-APDRP Part-B to partly shift the line.

IPD, OPD, immunization facilities available at all Healthcare Centers of Chanapora Constituency: Sakeena Itoo

HT News Network

Jammu, Mar 22: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, today said that all the dispensaries including PHCs, NTPHCs and Sub Centers in Chanapora Constituency are functioning properly with IPD, OPD as well as immunization facilities.

The Minister said this while replying to a question raised by Mushtaq Ahmad Guroo.

He informed the house that the Chanapora Constituency has different healthcare facilities at various locations like PHC Chanapora, PHC Laloo, PHC Nowgam, UHC Natipora, NTPHC Rawalpore, Sub Centre Rawalpore, Sub Centre Gungbugh, Sub Centre Hyderpora, Sub Centre Nadirgund, Sub Centre Peerbagh and Sub Centre Sanatnagar. She added that apart from OPD, IPD, immunization facilities for the Children and Pregnant Mothers, some PHCs/UHCs/NTPHCs are also providing USG, X-RAY, lab services, TB tests, eye test (Ophtho.) facilities.

The Minister further informed that the department is presently working on consolidation of existing healthcare facilities and no future creations and upgrades have been planned, as of now.

She also informed that the department aims to strengthen the existing healthcare facilities strictly as per IPHS norms and extend support to common man seeking medical attention by developing robust e-Sanjeevani/ Tele-medicine facilities through a well-designed hub and spoke model to fill the critical gaps.

Kot Bhalwal village site being developed into Scientific Solid Waste Management plant: Sakeena Itoo

HT News Network

Jammu Mar 22: The Kot Bhalwal village site in Jammu North Constituency is being developed into a Scientific Solid Waste Management plant through NAFED for scientific processing of waste.

Minister for Health, Sakeena Itoo, stated this while replying on behalf of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, to a question raised by Sham Lal Sharma.

The Minister further said that the government is keen to resolve the issues of solid waste and steps are being taken to address those expeditiously particularly in urban areas.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from old name FAROOQ AHMAD SHAHEEN to new name FAROOQ AHMAD SHAHEEN Gajri . In future i will be known as new name Farooq Ahmad Shaheen Gajri .if anybody having any objection He/She may contact Passport Office Srinagar within aperiod of seven days .After that no objection will be entertained

Name:-Farooq Ahmad Gajri

PUBLIC NOTICE

I intend to rectify the date of birth (DoB) of my son namely, Syed Mohammad Sarfaraz Bukhari which was wrongly mentioned in Adhaar and DOB certificate issued by Block Development Officer (BDO). Now i have applied for its correction. In this regard if any one is having an objection, he/she may file the same at BDO Wagoora within seven days, after which no claim whatsoever will be accepted.

Syed Tahir Bukhari
R/O: Kreeri, Baramulla

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 ABU BAKAR BIN TAHIR S/O TAHIR HASSAN WANI R/O KALANTRA BALA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 09/03/2022 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

PUBLIC NOTICE

My son's name has been wrongly written as ZEYAN S/O MOHD SHAFI TELI in date of Birth certificate bearing ID no 101002436554 while his correct name is MOHAMMAD ZAAMIN TELI S/O MOHAMMAD SHAFI TELI R/O CHANDERSEER which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of BMO / SDH KREERI within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained .

Name. MOHAMMAD ZAAMIN TELI
S/O MOHAMMAD SHAFI TELI
R/O CHANDERSEER

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 HAFSA TARIQ S/O MOHAMMAD IQBAL MAGRAY R/O KAREWA KREERI Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 01/01/2020 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of 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 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER IRRIGATION

CONSTRUCTION DIVISION PAMPORE

Stage Contract e-NIT No. 17 of 2024-25

For & on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Union Territory of J&K Fresh e-tenders on percentage rate basis are invited from approved & eligible Contractors for the below mentioned works: -

S N o	Name of work	Adv. Cost in Lakhs	Ernest Money in Rs. @ 2% of advt. Cost	Cost of tender document in Rupees	Time of completion	Class of contract	Head of A/C	Position of funds	Tender Receiving Authority.
1	Observation of discharge on Doodganga Nallah at Barzulla & Brenwar, Tailbal Nallah at Tailbal, shuknag Nallah at Kawoosa & Arizal, Gogaldara Nallah at Aripathen, Shaliganga Nallah at Raithen, Dachigam Nallah at Head & Tail, River Jehlum at Pampore and Padshahi Bagh, Sindh Nallah at Duderhama & Narayin Bagh, for the year 2025-26 (April 2025-March 2026) of P&D Sub-Division Srinagar	1.90	3800	200	2025-26 and validity of contract up to 31-03-2026	DEE	M.H 2711- (M&R)	Budgetary Provision 2025-26	Executive Engineer Irrigation Constructi on Division Pampore
2	Discharge Observation of River Jehlum and its various tributaries under the jurisdiction of P&D Sub-Division Anantnag for the financial year 2025-26	1.69	3380	200	2025-26 and validity of contract up to 31-03-2026	DEE	M.H 2711- (M&R)	Budgetary Provision 2025-26	Executive Engineer Irrigation Constructi on Division Pampore
3	Observation of discharge of River Jehlum and its various tributaries under the jurisdiction of P&D Sub-Division Baramulla for the financial year 2025-26	1.61	3220	200	2025-26 and validity of contract up to 31-03-2026	DEE	M.H 2711- (M&R)	Budgetary Provision 2025-26	Executive Engineer Irrigation Constructi on Division Pampore
4	Observation of discharge on River Jehlum and its tributaries under the jurisdiction of P&D Sub-Division, Kadalabal Pampore for the year 2025-26 (April 2025 - March 2026)	0.66	1320	100	2025-26 and validity of contract up to 31-03-2026	DEE	M.H 2711- (M&R)	Budgetary Provision 2025-26	Executive Engineer Irrigation Constructi on Division Pampore

(four Items only)

Position of AA: - Accorded Position of IS: - Accorded Position of funds: - Budgetary 2025-26

Terms and conditions: The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specification, drawings, set of terms and conditions and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Departmental Website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule given below:-

	Publishing date	19-03-2025
1	Download date start	19-03-2025
2	Bid submission start date	19-03-2025
3	Bid submission date ends	02-04-2025
4	Bid opening date	03-04-2025

1. Bids must be accompanied with proof of cost of tender document in the shape of Treasury receipt/e-Challan under M.H.0701-PWD Remittance) in favour of Executive Engineer Irrigation Construction Division Pampore (tender inviting Authority), and Earnest Money /Bid Security in shape of CDR /FDR from any schedule or nationalized bank pledged to Executive Engineer Irrigation Construction Division Pampore (tender receiving Authority),

2. In the office of the Executive Engineer Irrigation Construction Division Pampore (Tender Receiving Authority).

DPK-13304/24

Date: Mar 22 2025

Executive Engineer,
Irrigation Construction Division,
Pampore



DC Baramulla reviews arrangements for Shab-e-Qadr, Eid-ul-Fitr & Navratra

HT News Network

BARAMULLA, MARCH 22: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today chaired a meeting to review the preparations and arrangements for the upcoming religious events of Shab-e-Qadr, Eid-ul-Fitr and Navratra.

The meeting, held at the DC Office Complex, aimed to ensure that all necessary measures are in place to facilitate smooth and peaceful observance of these important religious occasions.

During the meeting, the DC took a detailed assessment of the arrangements being made by various departments, including essential services, sanitation, traffic management, and security. He directed the officers to work in close coordination to address any potential issues and ensure that the public faces no inconvenience during the celebrations.

The DC emphasized the need for uninterrupted power and water supply, particularly at major religious places and areas with high public footfall. He instructed the PHE and PDD departments to put in place



contingency plans to tackle any disruptions and ensure backup facilities where required.

Special attention was also given to

maintaining cleanliness in and around Eidgahs, mosques, temples and other places of worship. The Municipal Committees were tasked

with conducting sanitation drives and ensuring waste disposal mechanisms are in place before and during the festivals.

Security arrangements were also reviewed in detail. SP Baramulla, Feroz Yahya, assured that comprehensive security measures will be implemented to maintain peace and order during the festivals. He highlighted the deployment of adequate police personnel at key locations and traffic management strategies to prevent congestion and ensure smooth vehicular movement.

The DC also directed the Food,

Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department to ensure the availability of essential commodities, including ration, LPG, and other daily-use items, at fair prices. He stressed the need for regular market inspections to prevent overcharging and hoarding.

Health department officials were instructed to set up emergency medical facilities and ensure the availability of ambulance services. The Fire and Emergency Services Department was also directed to remain on high alert and position fire tenders strategically.

DC reviews execution of Jal Shakti Schemes in Doda

HT News Network

DODA MARCH 22: Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh today chaired a comprehensive meeting at the Conference Hall DC Office Complex to review the status of under construction Jal Shakti schemes across the district.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Assistant Commissioner Development, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Divisional Forest Officer, Xen PHE, Chief Education Officer, District Welfare Officer, Principals of Degree Colleges from Kastigarh and Bhaderwah, AEEs JEEs and officials from concerned departments. The SE Jal Shakti also participated virtually. Discussions revolved around various interven-



tions required for conserving water resources, ensuring sustainable water management and strengthening traditional water conservation methods. The Deputy Commissioner directed RDD functionaries to ensure the establishment of rooftop water conservation systems in government buildings, schools and every panchayat to optimize rainwater harvesting. He

also called for the rejuvenation of traditional water bodies and mandated fencing around springs to maintain cleanliness and prevent contamination. The DC emphasized the need for regular updates and geo-tagging of all 195 Amrit Sarovar projects across the district to ensure their proper maintenance. Additionally he instructed CEO Doda to organize awareness pro-

grams in educational institutions under Jal Shakti Abhiyan fostering a culture of water conservation among students. The Chief Agriculture Officer was also directed to engage Krishi Kalyan Groups KKGs in promoting awareness regarding water conservation at the grassroots level. Highlighting the importance of afforestation in groundwater recharge the DC urged the forest department and other stakeholders to conduct extensive plantation drives near water bodies. He also underscored the implementation of Jal Shakti Abhiyan - Catch the Rain JSA-CTR across the district which includes rainwater harvesting, rejuvenation of small rivers, renovation of traditional water sources and intensive afforestation.

DLSA Srinagar observes 'World Water Day' at Bilaliya Educational Institute

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MARCH 22: In order to raise awareness about water conservation, legal rights related to water, and the collective responsibility of communities in safeguarding this vital resource, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar today observed 'World Water Day' at Bilaliya Education Institute, Lalbazar, Srinagar.

The program was held under the guidance of Shazia Tabasum, Member Secretary of the J&K Legal Services Authority, and the overall supervision of Tasleem Arief, Principal District & Sessions Judge and Chairman of DLSA Srinagar, along with Sajad Ur Rehman, Secretary DLSA Srinagar.

GN Qasba, former Commissioner of Srinagar



Municipal Corporation (SMC) was the chief guest on the occasion. He shared his valuable insights on community development and governance.

Drawing from his extensive experience, he discussed the challenges faced in urban planning, water management, and sustainable development. He stressed the need for collective responsibility in addressing environmental and civic issues and encour-

aged the youth to actively participate in initiatives that promote public welfare.

His address served as a call to action for all stakeholders to work together in tackling pressing societal concerns.

Tasneem Kausar, Deputy Chief Legal Aid Defence Counsel, spoke about the crucial role of legal aid in protecting environmental rights. She emphasized that access to clean water

is a fundamental right and that legal services play a vital role in ensuring justice for underprivileged individuals. By providing free legal assistance, the DLSA ensures that marginalized communities can demand accountability and fair treatment.

She further underscored the importance of enforcing water protection laws and encouraging legal literacy to empower citizens in environmental conservation efforts.

Students from Bilaliya Education Institute delivered an inspiring speech, emphasizing the role of education, youth engagement, and community participation in water conservation. The students highlighted how small yet consistent efforts by individuals can lead to significant environmental impact.

Anganwadi workers, helpers stage protest demonstration at Srinagar.

Farooq Rather



SRINAGAR MARCH 22: Hundreds of Anganwadi workers and helpers under the banner of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers Union J&K affiliated with CITU on Saturday assembled in Srinagar and held protest demonstration. With play cards in their hands, they chanted slogans in favour of their genuine demands. While addressing the protesters Mir Haneefa, President, Lateefa Ganie Chief Organiser and Suraya Bhat, general secretary of the Union highlighted long-standing issues faced by these grassroots caregivers. Despite their crucial role in implementing child development and nutrition programs, they continue to struggle with delayed and inadequate wages. Their demand for a wage hike and timely disbursement of payments is justified, considering that there has been no increase since 2018. Ignoring their contributions in both the Union and UT budgets reflects a lack of recognition of their efforts. Given the impact of their work on community health and child welfare, addressing their grievances is essential for the sustainability of Anganwadi services. They demanded implementation of Minimum Wages Act till their regularization is made.

World Arbor day Celebrated in Anantnag.

Farooq Rather

Anantnag, March, 21 On the eve of World Arbor Day, the employees of Forest Division Anantnag planted a conifer sapling in the backyard of Forest Complex Anantnag. It was just a humble yet profound act of love for our mother Earth on this Special Day. However, we should remember that this tiny sapling is more than just a plant; it's a symbol of hope, growth, and our sacred duty towards nature. Almighty Allah has entrusted upon us. I Pray to Allah that as long as its roots immerse deep into the soil, may our faith deepen in the Divine promise of peace and Prosperity. Let's draw inspiration from this simple act and each of us plant seeds of kindness, compassion, and unity in our hearts and communities.

World Water Day 2025 DC Srinagar administers Water pledge to staff; raises awareness, inspires action towards water conservation

HT News Network

SRINAGAR MARCH 22: On the occasion of World Water Day 2025, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, today administered the Water Pledge (Jal Shapath) to the Officers and officials here at the meeting hall of the DC Office Complex.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that World Water Day is observed to raise awareness and inspire action towards water conservation. He said that the water pledge on this day is aimed at creating a sense of collective responsibility and commitment towards responsible water use and promoting sustainable practices for efficient water management.

The DC also called one and



all to reiterate the pledge to save every drop of water and work towards saving water in all ways possible at our homes and at the community level as well so that our future generations do not suffer for want of the water. He maintained that it is our religious, social and legal obligation to ensure judicious use of water, so everyone should adhere to it for a social

cause and coming generations. Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that World Water Day is observed to raise awareness and inspire action towards water conservation. He said that the water pledge on this day is aimed at creating a sense of collective responsibility and commitment towards responsible water use and promoting sustainable practices.

Drug Control Authority Shopian conducts surprise inspections of medical shops

HT News Network

SHOPIAN, MARCH 22: In a decisive action to ensure compliance with drug regulations, the Drug Control Authority Shopian today conducted a series of inspections across various medical establishments in Shopian town under the directives of the NCORD meeting.

During the inspections, around 15 medical shops were scrutinized for adherence to licensing conditions and proper maintenance of purchase and sale records of scheduled formulations. One medical shop was sealed on the spot for gross violations of licensing conditions, while five other establishments were served show cause notices for non-compliance.

The inspection teams also randomly reviewed CCTV footage from



various establishments to verify adherence to regulatory norms and ensure that no violations occurred in the sale of prescription drugs.

The Drug Administration has adopted a zero-tolerance policy against the misuse of habit-forming drugs and has implemented strict measures, including prosecutions, suspension, and cancellation of licenses, to curb illegal practices in the pharmaceutical sector.

All JK Shia Association Organizes Grand Majlis to Commemorate Martyrdom Anniversary of Imam Ali (AS)

Zakir E Hussain and AJKSA President Molvi Imran Ansari Pay Tribute to Imam Ali (AS) in Emotional and Enlightening Program

HT News Network

Srinagar, 22 March 2025: In the blessed month of Ramadan, All JK Shia Association (AJKSA) organized a grand Majlis at Imam Bargah Zadibal to commemorate the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Ali (AS), the cousin and son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad (SAWW).

The program began with Suhur, followed by Zakir E Hussain's heartfelt recitation of Marsiya, which continued till 12 pm. AJKSA President Molvi Imran Ansari then delivered an emotional and enlightening Majlis on the life and legacy of Imam Ali (AS).

Molvi Imran Ansari spoke extensively on the virtues and accomplishments of

Imam Ali (AS), highlighting his unwavering dedication to Islam and his unshakable loyalty to Prophet Muhammad (SAWW). He also shed light on the significance of Ghadeer Khom, where Prophet Muhammad (SAWW) declared Imam Ali (AS) as his successor. Furthermore, Molvi Imran Ansari emphasized the importance of remembering the sacrifices of Imam Ali (AS) and the injustices he faced, including the treacherous actions of Muawiyah. He pointed out that Muawiyah had repeatedly disobeyed Prophet Muhammad (SAWW) during his lifetime, and later went on to wage war against Imam Ali (AS), causing immense suffering and bloodshed. Molvi Imran Ansari questioned how



people can glorify Muawiyah, who had shown such blatant disregard for the

teachings of Prophet Muhammad (SAWW) and the principles of Islam. Molvi Imran Ansari then recounted the tragic events surrounding the martyrdom of Imam Ali (AS), who was struck by the sword of Ibn Muljam while praying in the mosque of Kufa.

The Majlis concluded with the recitation of Marsiya, followed by the procession of Shabi-e-Tabood of Imam Ali (AS) from Imam Bargah Zadibal to Baba Mazar (Hawal). AJKSA General Secretary Abid Ansari also participated in the program. The grand Majlis was attended by thousands of devotees, who gathered to pay tribute to Imam Ali (AS) and to seek blessings and guidance from his exemplary life.





Plantation Drive held at AHWC & PHC Sedow Shopian

■ HT News Network

SHOPIAN, MARCH 22: Plantation drives were organized today at Ayush Health and Wellness Center (AHWC) Sedow and Primary Health Centre (PHC) Sedow under the directives of the Worthy District Development Commissioner, Shopian.

The event was led by District Nodal Officer Ayush, Dr. Javeed Ahmad Wani, along with Medical Officers of AHWC Sedow, Ayush and PHC Sedow, accompanied by staff members.

The drive aimed to promote environmental conservation, with medicinal and native tree saplings planted within the health center premises, reinforcing a commitment to sustainability and a greener future.

Over Rs 442 Crore disbursed to registered construction workers in Baramulla

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA, MARCH 22: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today released financial assistance of Rs. 4,42,72,100 in favor of the wards of 8,593 registered construction workers under the Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (BOCWWB) schemes.

The financial assistance covers multiple components, including death and funeral assistance, as well as educational support. The initiative aims to provide financial stability and social security to construction workers and their families.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC commended the Labour Department's efforts in reaching out to economically disadvantaged laborers. He emphasized the need to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries are covered under government welfare schemes, reinforcing the administration's commitment to improving the economic well-being of the labor class. He reiterated that strengthening the social and economic foundation of the labor force remains a key priority for the district administration. Assistant Labour Commissioner Baramulla, Rahil Amin highlighted the core objectives of the BOCWWB schemes, stating that the financial support aims to ease the financial burden on registered workers and enhance their economic security.

Handwara Police Crack Down on Illegal Auto Load Carriers, 17 Seized

■ DR.AB QAYOOM

Handwara, Mar, 22: In a continued effort to regulate vehicular movement and enforce traffic laws, Handwara Police conducted a special drive against illegally operating three-wheelers. The operation was carried out by Police Post Chogal, under the supervision of In-Charge PP Chogal, resulting in the seizure of 17 Auto Load Carriers found operating without valid documents. Officials confirmed that the action was taken under the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act, ensuring strict compliance with road safety norms. The enforcement drive was aimed at tackling the increasing instances of unauthorized transportation, which pose risks to both commuters and pedestrians. A police spokesperson emphasized that such crackdowns will continue in the future to deter illegal transportation and ensure public safety. "Vehicle owners and drivers must carry valid documents at all times to avoid legal consequences," the spokesperson added. The authorities have also urged citizens to cooperate with law enforcement agencies and report any violations to the nearest police station. This initiative aligns with Handwara Police's broader efforts to enhance traffic discipline and maintain order on the roads.

Chairperson J&K Waqf Board reviews arrangements for Eid-ul-Fitr, Jumat-ul-Vida and Lailat-ul-Qadr in Rajouri

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, MARCH 22: Chairperson of the Jammu & Kashmir Waqf Board, Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi on Saturday chaired a meeting here at Dak Bungalow to review the arrangements for the of Eid-ul-Fitr, Jumat-ul-Vida, and Lailat-ul-Qadr.

The meeting, attended by officials from district administration, focused on the availability of essential services including water supply, electricity, sanitation, security and traffic management, to ensure smooth observance of these important events. Dr. Andrabi also assessed the preparedness for the distribution of ration, market checking, and the availability of ambulances and Mobile Medical Units on these occasions. Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Mohammad Jahangir Khan provided a detailed briefing on the arrangements put in place by the district administration.

Emphasizing the importance of seamless facilities, Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi directed



stakeholder departments to take preemptive steps to meet all necessary arrangements so that the people may not face any inconvenience. She also stressed the urgent need to repair potholes on the road leading to the revered shrine of Baba Ghulam Shah

Badshah. "The Waqf Board is working tirelessly to provide best facilities to the devotees at all the shrines," said Dr. Andrabi, reiterating the board's commitment to provide a smooth experience to devotees. The District Administration assured that

all arrangements are being executed efficiently to facilitate smooth observance of these sacred occasions.

The meeting was attended by CEO Waqf Board Zaheer Ahmed Kaifi, DPO Ch. Mohd Nawaz, Executive Engineer PDD Abdul Rasheed, AD FCS&CA Rohit Kumar, EO Rajouri Yousaf-ul-Umar, DTI M.Y. Khan, Dy CMO Dev Raj and other district and sectoral officers. Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Mohammad Jahangir Khan provided a detailed briefing on the arrangements put in place by the district administration.

Emphasizing the importance of seamless facilities, Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi directed stakeholder departments to take preemptive steps to meet all necessary arrangements so that the people may not face any inconvenience. She also stressed the urgent need to repair potholes on the road leading to the revered shrine of Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah. "The Waqf Board is working tirelessly to provide best facilities to the devotees at all the shrines," said Dr. Andrabi, reiterating the board's commitment to provide a smooth experience to devotees.

Indian Army Hosts Iftar Party in Handwara to Foster Communal Harmony

■ DR.AB QAYOOM

Handwara, Mar, 22: In a heartwarming display of unity and brotherhood, the Indian Army organized an Iftar party for the local residents of Handwara 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.

District Administration Poonch launches Drug Awareness Campaign

■ HT News Network

POONCH: MARCH 22: Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal today launched the Nasha Mukat Bharat Abhiyan Campaign at Shaheed Manjeet Singh Honder Memorial Boys Hr Sec. School Poonch aimed to raise awareness about the dangers of drug abuse among the youth.

The event began with a solemn pledge against drug abuse, reaffirming the community's commitment to combating substance misuse. Later, the Deputy Commissioner inaugurated a Hockey tournament organized under the Nasha Mukat Abhiyan by the Social Welfare and Youth Services & Sports Department. The tournament aimed to foster a spirit of competition while promoting a drug-free lifestyle among participants. Engaging directly with the youth, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with the hockey players and kicked off the match with the official toss. In his address to the students, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the serious consequences of drug abuse, illustrating the importance of participating in sports and other healthy activities. He inspired the youth to engage in positive endeavors that contribute to their personal growth and community well-being. During the event, various officials, including the District Social Welfare Officer, Deputy Superintendent of Police Headquarters, District Youth Services Officer, and representatives.

Int'l World Water Day observed in Poonch amid resolve for effective Conservation

■ HT News Network

POONCH: MARCH 22: In observance of World Water Day, Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal, conducted an extensive visit to various locations, including the Pump Station Poonch, to underscore the importance of water conservation and management. During his visit, the Deputy Commissioner pledged to promote water conservation and emphasized the critical role of clean water in ensuring public health and well-being. He closely monitored the operations of the water testing laboratory at the



Pump Station and urged the Xen JAL Shakti, Rajiv Ghai, to enhance the overall water management system. The Deputy Commissioner advocated for increased public awareness regarding the laboratory's facilities and encouraged residents to take advantage of avail-

able resources to ensure access to clean water. Highlighting the significance of World Water Day, the Deputy Commissioner called upon the community to recognize water as a precious resource that must be preserved for future generations. Furthermore, the Deputy Commissioner visited the village Bainch, where he celebrated World Water Day with local residents and led a pledge to conserve water. He actively listened to community concerns regarding water scarcity and directed the Xen JAL Shakti to address these issues promptly.

KVK-Anantnag launches 05 day training prog. on National Mission on Natural Farming for Krishi Sakhis

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, MARCH 22: The Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Anantnag, SKUAST-Kashmir, inaugurated a five-day training programme today under the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF), exclusively designed for Krishi Sakhis of district Anantnag.

The initiative aims to equip these grassroots women agricultural workers with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote sustainable and eco-friendly farming practices in their communities.

Dr. Ishtiyaz A. Khan, Scientist and Head, KVK-Anantnag in his keynote address, provided an insightful overview of the programme. He highlighted the significance of the NMNF initiative and KVK-Anantnag's pioneering role in promoting natural farming.

He noted that KVK-Anantnag was selected by the Indian Council of Agricultural

Research (ICAR) in 2022-23 as one of the leading KVKs in the country to spearhead natural farming through a sanctioned project. Dr. Khan also outlined the remarkable achievements of the Kendra in advancing sustainable agricultural practices in the region.

Earlier, the inaugural session commenced with a welcome address by Dr. Shabeer A. Ganaie, Scientist and Training Coordinator, KVK-Anantnag, who emphasized the objectives of the training and the critical role of Krishi Sakhis in fostering natural farming.

Hakeem Imteyaz, District Programme Manager, JKNRLM, addressed the gathering and underscored the importance of natural farming in ensuring long-term agricultural sustainability. He praised the Krishi Sakhis for their pivotal role in taking this mission directly to the farming community and commended KVK-Anantnag for its exemplary efforts in organizing the training.

Showkat Mughal, District Agriculture

Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament 2025 Concludes at GDC Baramulla

■ HT News Network

Baramulla, 22 March – The Government Degree College (GDC) Baramulla successfully hosted the second round of the Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament 2025 on 22nd March, with Baramulla as the nodal district, accompanied by the associated districts of Kupwara and Bandipora. The theme of the event was "One Nation, One Election: Paving the Way for Viksit Bharat," offering a platform for students to engage in intellectual discussions and present their perspectives on the vision of a developed India. Selected candidates from this round will represent the nodal district of Baramulla at the State-Level Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament. The event was coordinated by Prof. Ishfaq-ul-Rehman, Assistant Professor of Public Administration at GDC Baramulla.

The participants were evaluated by a distinguished jury comprising Dr. Ibrahim Khaja, Assistant Professor of Political Science, J&K HED; Miss Aabida War, a prominent social activist from J&K; Mr. Arshid Ahmed Khan, Assistant Commissioner of Revenue, Baramulla; Prof. Reyaz Ahmad Wani, Assistant Professor of Political Science, J&K HED; and Dr. Nazir Ahmad Mir, Assistant Professor of Public Administration, J&K HED. After a thorough evaluation, the jury will select the top 10 candidates who will advance to the State Level.

Prof. Tariq Chalkoo, Staff Secretary of GDC Baramulla and Vice Chairman of the event, inaugurated the event and extended a warm welcome to participants from Kupwara, Bandipora, Sopore, and Srinagar. Students shared insights on topics including budget planning, infrastructure development, healthcare, gover-



nance, and public service, stressing how Viksit Bharat could help in bringing about a progressive change in Indian democracy by addressing challenges like poverty and unem-

ployment. Participants showcased passionate and thought-provoking views, with Syed Adeeba stating, "Voices rose, ideas shined, a vision for Bharat, well-defined. Debating

change, shaping the way, a stronger nation starts today." Another participant, Shafqat Ahmad Wani, questioned, "If this idea is so powerful, where was it till now? If it existed in India, why was it erased?"

Following the deliberations, the three top candidates who will represent Baramulla at the State-Level Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament were declared: Ulfat Hafiz, Shahid Dar, and Tasaduq Hussain. The Principal of GDC Baramulla congratulated the participants and the organizing committee, expressing appreciation for the remarkable speeches delivered. "I am glad to see such talented speakers who presented their thoughts so passionately. My sincere gratitude goes to the organizing committee, NSS volunteers, participants, the jury, the Head of the Department of Media Studies, and the media students, especially the girls," he said.

Jury members also shared their insights on the participants and the significance of the event. Mr. Arshid Ahmed Khan, Assistant Commissioner of Revenue, Baramulla, remarked, "I wanted to hear different perspectives on the topic, but no participant presented a contrasting viewpoint. I encourage participants to approach topics with an open mind." Miss Aabida War, a social activist, added, "I am pleased to see a significant number of female participants. It is essential to change societal norms. Every citizen matters, and we must all take responsibility." The event concluded with the distribution of certificates of participation to all students by the chairman, vice chairman, and other dignitaries. Mementos were also presented to the jury members as a token of appreciation for their valuable contributions.





DC reviews TB Cases, treatment protocols in Poonch Calls for timely diagnosis, providing nutritional support to patients

HT News Network

POONCH, MARCH 22: Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal today convened a meeting to review the current status of TB cases and the implementation of treatment protocols under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Program (NTEP) in Poonch District.

The meeting revealed critical insights into the number of reported TB cases, Human Resources (HR) status, condition of advanced testing laboratories, sputum examination results, treatment statuses, and overall incidence rates. The review underscored the urgency of timely diagnosis and strict adherence to treatment protocols to effectively manage and reduce the spread of this contagious disease.

During the discussions, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the necessity of organizing awareness IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) activities on Tuberculosis. He urged the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) to ensure effective case



detection and engage community support in the fight against TB.

Additionally, the need for involving Nikshay Mitras to provide nutritional support to all TB patients during their

treatment was highlighted as a key initiative to enhance patient care.

To further strengthen the TB management strategy, the Deputy Commissioner directed the PPM to conduct regular

visits to all blocks once every 15 days. These visits will facilitate meetings with doctors to ensure proper notification and testing of TB cases.

A significant decision made during the meeting was the directive to the CMO to install the True NAAT (Nucleic Acid Amplification Test) in Block Mandi within the next month. This installation aims to simplify and expedite TB testing for the local population. The meeting was attended by key health officials, including the Chief Medical Officer, Medical Superintendent, Deputy CMO, District Tuberculosis Officer, WHO Consultant, and Block Medical Officers (BMOs), along with other concerned stakeholders. During the discussions, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the necessity of organizing awareness IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) activities on Tuberculosis. He urged the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) to ensure effective case detection and engage community support in the fight against TB.x

Special Lecture on Fundamental Rights hosted at GDC Vijaypur

HT News Network

SAMBA, MARCH 22: To generate awareness among the students and general masses regarding fundamental rights guaranteed to Indian citizens under its Constitution, a Special Lecture on the theme "Fundamental Rights of Indian Citizens" was organized by the NSS Unit (KHIDMAT) of Government Degree College Vijaypur. NSS volunteers, college students, faculty members both teaching and non-teaching participated in the lecture with great enthusiasm, zeal and fervor.

The resource person Dr. Divya Gupta, Assistant Professor, Department of Law, University of Himachal Pradesh in her lecture stated that the "Fundamental Rights in India" enshrined in part III (Article 12-35) of the Constitution of India guarantee civil liberties such that all Indians can lead their lives in peace and harmony as citizens of India. These rights are known as "fundamental" as they are the most essential for all-round development i.e., material, intellectual, moral and spiritual and protected by fundamental law of the land i.e., constitution. If the rights provided by the Constitution, especially the fundamental rights, are violated, the Supreme Court and the High Courts can issue writs under Articles 32 and 226 of the Constitution, respectively, directing the State Machinery for enforcement of the fundamental rights.

Principal of the college, Dr. (Prof.) Vandana Verma while speaking on the occasion stated that these Fundamental Rights are defined as basic human freedoms

World Water Day celebrated across District Kishtwar

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MARCH 22: District Administration Kishtwar, in collaboration with the Department of Jal Shakti and DIET, today celebrated World Water Day, with a focus on the theme "Glacier Preservation".

The events were organised at each Block and Panchayat across the District.

At District Headquarters, District Coordinator IEC JJM Riaz Butt delivered a detailed presentation on conservation techniques and methods to preserve water. His insights included practical solutions such as rainwater harvesting and other conservation practices that can be implemented in daily life.

The event was graced by the esteemed presence of Rajesh Kumar Shavan,



Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar and Chairman of the JJM Kishtwar, as the chief guest. Shavan emphasized the crucial importance of water conservation, particularly in the face of the ongoing threat posed by melting glaciers. He urged the youth to take responsibility for preserving this invaluable resource, noting that water conservation efforts should begin at the individual level in our

homes, surroundings, and communities.

Speakers from various schools and institutions also contributed to the event, sharing their thoughts on water conservation. Notable speakers included Deepali Sen (GHSS Kishtwar), Parth Badyal (GBHS Kishtwar), Salma (GDC Kishtwar), Payal Sen (GHSS Kishtwar), Tanu Rana (GHSS Kishtwar), Preeti Devi (GMS

Kishtwar), and Mubeena (GMS Kishtwar). Their speeches underscored the significance of World Water Day and emphasized the collective responsibility to safeguard water resources for future generations.

Further, Phulail Singh, ACD Kishtwar, shared insights on the government initiative "Catch the Rain When It Falls and Where It Falls". He urged the community to embrace rainwater conservation, groundwater recharge structures, and other sustainable water conservation methods. His message focused on preserving water for the well-being of future generations.

Sunil Sharma, Ex-En, Jal Shakti Kishtwar, also provided valuable information regarding the ongoing Jal Jeevan Mission.

Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan District Admin Udhampur organizes awareness program on harms of substance abuse

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, MARCH 22: A day long awareness programme on Substance abuse, causes, symptoms and treatments under Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan was organized under the guidance Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Saloni Rai and overall supervision of Kanika Gupta District Social Welfare Officer by Department of Social Welfare in collaboration with Police Department and District Sports Office at Government ITI College Udhampur.

The initiative aimed at educating students and faculty about the dangers of drug abuse and the importance of seeking help for recovery.

SI Kulvinder from police department aware participants on drug abuse and focused on the legal implications for drug abuser and elaborated Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substance Act 1985(



NDPS) wherein it is illegal for a person to produce/manufacture/cultivate, possess, sell, purchase, transport, store and/or consume any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance. She narrated various case studies where a drug user and his family members were left in shambles.

Later, Som Dev Khajuria Physical Education Master Sports office took a pledge of Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan along with all the participants.

During the event, various activ-

ities were performed by the students viz. Volley ball match, painting competition and Debate competition.

The need to undertake such activities arise from the need to channelize the positive energy of youth into meaningful direction.

Department of Social welfare felicitated winner and runner up and also distributed certificates and hand bags to the participants under Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan.

GDC Marh hosts National Awareness Webinar on Financial Education

HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 22: The Department of Commerce and Economics of Government Degree College Marh, in collaboration with National Stock Exchange and G Institutions & Consultancy, Mumbai under SEBI, organized a two day national awareness webinar (three simultaneous sessions) on Financial Education.

The webinar was coordinated by Prof. Surbhi Gupta (HOD Commerce), Dr. Priya Sharma (HOD Economics), Dr. Younus Bhat (AA Commerce) and Gulzar Ahmad Mir (AA Commerce) under the supervision of college Principal Dr. Rakesh Kumar Koul who inaugurated the proceedings of the program. He emphasized the need for awareness of financial education among students and faculty for the benefit of society in the long term.

He explained briefly how financial education is a vital skill in today's world, where managing finances effectively can greatly influence our present and future by understanding how to handle money, make smart investments and plan. He also congratulated the coordinators for their initiative and go getter attitude. The resource persons were Dr. Svetlana Tatuskar, Director of Kohinoor Business School Mumbai (Program-I), Soniya, SEBI Smart Trainer (Program-II), Dr. Hiral Pathuk, SEBI Smart Trainer (Program-III) who presented a detailed power point presentation of the subject. They described in detail various aspects of Financial Education like Financial Planning, Retirement Planning, Power of compounding, Savings, Investment in Mutual Funds, Capital Market, Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme, Exchange Traded Funds, Financial products, SCORES 2.0, ODR, SEBI investor certification Examination.

JKAACL hosts Book Release Event for 'Basant Geet Tawi Da' by O.P Sharma Vidhyarthi

HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 22: Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages (JKAACL) organized a book release event for 'Basant Geet Tawi Da', written by O.P. Sharma Vidhyarthi here at K. L. Saigal Hall Jammu. The book was released by the chief guest, Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu, in the presence of S.P. Vaid, Former DGP J&K; Chander Mohan Sharma; and Dr. Mrinalini Atray, Secretary General ICICH. The event coincided with World Water Day.

While addressing a distinguished gathering of writers, forest officers, and poets, the chief guest, Ramesh Kumar appreciated the literary work, which highlights ecological concerns related to the Tawi River. He emphasized the need for responsible consumption and production in line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals to enhance environmental quality.

In his presidential address, Former DGP Dr. Shesh Paul Vaid quoted several verses from the poetry book authored by Tree Talk campaigner and Retired PCCF, O.P. Sharma Vidhyarthi. He stressed the importance of translating literary thoughts into action-oriented programs, including afforestation initiatives using native decorative plants along both banks of the sacred Suryaputri Tawi River, which is increasingly facing pollution and requires urgent conservation efforts.

The author-poet of the book recited Dogri and Hindi poems on various themes, including native grasses, the sacred Mansar and Surinsar lakes, plastic waste accumulation, and the beauty of flowering forest trees in spring and summer.

GCW Parade hosts 17th National Youth Parliament Competition 2024-25

HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 22: Government College for Women Parade Ground on Saturday organized the 17th National Youth Parliament Competition 2024-25 under the aegis of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India.

A total of 70 students participated in this prestigious event, showcasing their understanding of parliamentary procedures and honing their debating skills.

The event was graced by Member Parliament, Jugal Kishore Sharma as the Chief Guest. His presence served as a great source of motivation for the young participants.

In his address, the Member Parliament appreciated the students and faculty for organizing the event and remarked that the session reminded him of the real Parliament.

Also present on the occasion was Prof. Dinesh Chahal, Professor at Central University, Haryana, and Group Coordinator of the Youth Parliament. He shared his feedback and motivated the students with his inspiring words.

Former Nodal Principal, Jammu Division Colleges, Dr. S. P. Sarswat congratulated the college and students for their commendable efforts in making the event a success. nt Coordinator, delivered the Vote of Thanks.

5-Day Training Programme on Effective Communication Skills for HOIs concludes at DIET Poonch

HT News Network

POONCH, MARCH 22: A five-day training programme on Effective Communication Skills for Heads of Institutions (HOIs) of Primary and Middle Schools concluded today here at the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET). The training was attended by 215 HOIs, with 20 representatives from each educational zone of the district. The programme was organized under the direction of Prof. Dr. Sindhu Kapoor, Joint Director, SCERT, and conducted under the supervision of Parkash Lal Thapa, Principal DIET. The training aimed at enhancing the communication skills of school heads, enabling them to lead their institutions effectively. Various aspects of communication, including verbal, non-verbal, and leadership communication, were covered. Additionally, record maintenance, understanding, and implementation of official directives were also discussed.

Kishtwar hosts Spice Promotion Mela

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MARCH 22: As part of ongoing efforts to promote awareness of GI (Geographical Indication) Saffron and other regional Spice Products, the Department of Agriculture organized a one-day Mega Saffron Mela Cum Awareness Program here in the

Conference Hall. The event saw active participation from over 150 Progressive Farmers, including Farmer Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Officers from India Spice Board.

The program was hosted by Incharge Scientist & Head, Spice Board Regional Office Jammu Ashutosh Gautam. He gave a comprehensive



presentation on the GI procedure and its importance, especially in the context of regional spices. He highlighted the potential of Kishtwar district in growing these valuable products, stressing that the GI tag is essential to reduce adulteration and ensure the authenticity of local production.

Highlighting the uniqueness of Kishtwar Saffron, Gautam noted its

distinctive Guchha properties, which make it stand out globally. Rajesh Kumar Shavan, DC Kishtwar emphasized that Kishtwar saffron is the purest form available and must be recognized as a top-quality product. He underscored the importance of expanding saffron cultivation to other areas of the district and promoting other local spices.





JAC meet demands freeze on delimitation for next 25 yrs

AGENCIES

CHENNAI, MAR 22 (UNI)

The first Joint Action Committee (JAC) meeting convened by the Tamil Nadu government in which Chief Ministers, a deputy Chief Minister and representatives of several states took part, on Saturday demanded freezing on delimitation for the next 25 years.

A resolution was adopted at the JAC meeting presided over by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK President M K Stalin here on Saturday.

It said the JAC expressed its deep concern on the lack of transparency and clarity in the impending delimitation exercise without any consultation with the various stakeholders.

While lauding Mr Stalin for taking up this initiative to safeguard the political and economic future of performing States in India, it said based on the various points and scenarios put forth by the representatives during the discussions, the JAC unani-



mously resolved that any delimitation exercise carried out by the Union Government to improve the content and character of democracy should be done transparently, enabling political parties of all the States, State Governments and other stakeholders to deliberate, discuss and contribute in it.

"Given the fact that the legislative intent behind the 42nd, 84th and 87th Constitutional amendments was to protect / incentivise States which have implemented population control measures effectively and the goal of national population stabilisation has not yet been

achieved, the freeze on Parliamentary constituencies based on 1971 Census Population, should be extended by another 25 years", it said.

The resolution said States which have effectively implemented the population control program and consequently whose population share has come down, should not be penalised and the Union Government must enact necessary constitutional amendments for this purpose.

Resolving that the Core Committee consisting of Members of Parliament from the represented States will coordinate the

parliamentary strategies to counter any attempts by the Union Government to undertake any delimitation exercise contrary to the principles mentioned above, it said the Core Committee of MPs would submit a Joint Representation on the above lines to Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the ongoing Parliamentary session.

It was resolved that the Political Parties from different states represented in the meeting will initiate efforts to bring about appropriate Legislative Assembly resolutions in their respective States on the issue and communicate the same to the Centre.

"The JAC will also undertake necessary efforts to disseminate information on the history and context of past delimitation exercises and the consequences of the proposed delimitation among the citizens of their respective States, through a coordinated public opinion mobilization strategy", it said.

Cong condemns alleged assault on army official by Punjab police

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 22 (UNI)

The Congress on Saturday condemned the alleged assault on an army official and his son by Punjab police in Patiala and said that law and order has collapsed under the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Punjab.

Addressing a press conference here, AICC ex-servicemen department Chairman Col (retd) Rohit Chaudhry along with party general secretary Alok Sharma called it a case of "hooliganism committed by people in khaki uniform".

Chaudhry said, "A serving Army Colonel and his son were brutally assaulted by Punjab Police in Patiala. This is a very seri-



ous matter. In this incident, the Colonel's hand was broken, but no FIR was lodged for four days'. It is clear that law and order has collapsed under the AAP government in Punjab. We have not seen such incident in Punjab before".

He said that the whole country is hurt by this incident that happened with the army officer and his

son. Alok Sharma said, "The Congress party gave the slogan Jai Jawaan, Jai Kisan but today, the AAP government in Punjab has changed it to kill jawaan, kill farmer".

He claimed that the incident on March 13-14 night and when the victim reached hospital at 1 am, the treatment was given at 6 am and even after four

days, no FIR was lodged. "Yesterday, with the intervention of the Governor, there was discussion of providing security to the victim's family, but protection from whom? From the goons in uniform of the Punjab Police!", he said.

The situation in Punjab is such that even a soldier is not feeling safe in the state. In the last three years, Punjab has turned into a 'police state', he alleged.

Sharma also demanded an FIR be lodged against the SSP Nanak Singh accusing him of trying to shield the accused.

The Congress leaders said that the Punjab jawans, ex-servicemen, common people and the party are standing with the family of the Army official.

Delimitation BJP's ploy to implement its ulterior motives: Stalin

AGENCIES

CHENNAI, MAR 22 (UNI)

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK President M K Stalin on Saturday said the proposed delimitation exercise based on current population was BJP's ploy to implement its ulterior motives and it should not be acceptable. In his address at the first Joint Action Committee (JAC) meeting in which Chief Ministers of three states, a Deputy Chief Minister and leaders of more than 20 political parties took part, Mr Stalin said the BJP has always been a party that deprives states and state rights.

"They want to implement their ulterior motives



in the delimitation plan. No state should allow this. Realising this threat, Tamil Nadu is working with unprecedented unity", he said.

Naming this committee that was meeting today a 'Joint Action Committee for Fair Delimitation', the Chief Minister said "We are not against delimita-

tion; the name itself will say that we are in favour of fair delimitation!"

"This struggle will not end with us meeting - deliberating - and passing a resolution for one day. It is very necessary to take continuous action to establish rights", he said. Stating that this JAC is very necessary to create awareness among

the people-both to urge the Union Government and to explain this to the people, Mr Stalin invited suggestions from the leaders on how to conduct our political protest legally.

He also said he has proposed to set up a committee of experts to define the political and legal measures. "I request everyone to share their views on the overall proposal.

We can only win if everyone fights together with a sense of unity."

"We will fight with the determination that our representation should not decrease under any circumstances; we should not let it decrease. We will fight together until we achieve fair delimitation" he added.

Nagpur violence : Maha CM orders to recover cost of damaged public property from rioters

AGENCIES

MUMBAI, MAR 22 (UNI)

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Saturday ordered that the cost of public property damaged during Nagpur violence will be recovered from rioters and any failure to pay the cost would result in the seizure of assets.

After holding a review meeting with police officials regarding the recent incidents of violence in Nagpur, Fadnavis talking to media said that 104 rioters have been identified after analysing videos and foot-



age from CCTV cameras so far and action has been taken against 92 people, including 12 minors, as per the law.

He also said that the state government will not rest until the miscreants, who attacked the police,

are found and dealt with sternly.

The Chief Minister, who heads the Home Ministry said that 'it was too early to comment on a foreign or Bangladeshi hand in the riots as the probe is underway'. However the

incident cannot be termed "intelligence failure", but the intelligence (gathering) could have been better.

Fadnavis said the scheduled visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi will not be impacted due to the violence in central Nagpur areas.

Rioters threw stones at women constables. "They were not molested," he clarified.

Speaking on the investigations, the CM said no foreign hand or Bangladeshi link has surfaced.

"There is no political angle to the violence," he added.

SC Judges meet displaced persons in Manipur

AGENCIES

IMPHAL, MAR 22 (UNI)

A five-member delegation of the Supreme Court judges arrived here on Saturday and visited various relief camps where displaced persons were staying.

Justice Surya Kant, Justice Vikram Nath, Justice MM Sundresh, Justice KV Viswanathan, and Justice N Kotishwar will also attend a series of legal and humanitarian assistance events,



some virtually.

The 12th Foundation Day celebration of the Manipur High Court will also be organised on Sunday.

Justice Gavai, who also

serves as the Executive Chairman of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), virtually inaugurated legal and medical camps at Sawombung,

Imphal East. New legal aid clinics were also opened at Imphal West, and Ukhrul districts.

A team of about 25 doctors will also conduct medical camps.

The Judges visited Churachandpur along with Chief Secretary PK Singh, DGP Rajiv Singh and hold meeting at DC office.

The Judges interacted with the displaced persons and relief materials were distributed to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 22 (UNI)

The 13th edition of the India-Italy Military Cooperation Group (MCG) meeting took place in Rome, Italy and both discussed on identifying new avenues to expand the scope of bilateral military cooperation.

The meeting conducted from 20-21 March as co-chaired by the Deputy Assistant Chief of Integrated Defence Staff IDC (A) from Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ



IDS), representing India, and the Deputy Head of the Strategic Direction and Military Cooperation Division of the Italian Defence General Staff, represent-

ing Italy, a Defence Ministry statement said here on Saturday.

The key agenda points included enhanced exchange programs, capa-

bility development efforts and strengthening collaboration between the Indian and Italian armed forces.

Moreover, the meeting also reviewed ongoing defence engagements, assessing their progress and exploring ways to optimise future interactions.

The MCG serves as a key institutional mechanism to enhance defence cooperation between the armed forces of both nations, fostering stronger military-to-military engagements and strategic collaboration.

Telangana Govt provides incentives to women-owned enterprises: Minister

AGENCIES

HYDERABAD, MAR 22 (UNI)

Telangana IT and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu informed the Assembly on Saturday that the state government is providing several incentives to women-owned and women-centric enterprises in the state.

Replying to questions raised by members of the house during question hour, Babu explained that under the T-IDEA Scheme, the government is offering an investment subsidy of 15 percent on the total investment, limited to Rs 2 lakh for the general cat-

egory. However, for women-owned enterprises, an additional 10 percent subsidy is provided, totaling up to Rs 30 lakh.

The scheme also includes a 100 percent reimbursement of stamp duty and transfer duty, along with a 25 percent rebate in land cost, limited to Rs 10 lakh, in industrial estates and industrial parks.

Additionally, 25 percent of land conversion charges for industrial use, up to Rs 10 lakh, are subsidized. Fixed power cost reimbursement of Rs 1.00 per unit is provided, and there is a 100 per cent

reimbursement of net State Goods and Services Tax (SGST), he said.

Under the Pavala Vaddi Scheme, new micro and small enterprises receive an interest subsidy in excess of 3 percent per annum, subject to a maximum reimbursement of 9 percent per annum.

Infrastructure like roads, power, and water is provided at the doorstep of standalone enterprises and industries, with 50 percent of the cost covered under the Industrial Infrastructure Development Fund (IIDF), up to a ceiling of Rs. 1 crore, the Minister said.

Under the T-PRIDE



Scheme, the government is providing an investment subsidy of 45 percent on total investment, subject to a maximum of Rs 75 lakh. The scheme includes a 100 percent reimbursement of stamp duty and transfer duty.

The land cost is levied at prevailing rates on the date of allotment, with a 33.33 per cent rebate, subject to Rs 10 lakh, for SC/ST entrepreneurs.

A 25 percent subsidy on land conversion charges for industrial use, up to Rs. 10 lakh, is also provided. Fixed power cost reimbursement is set at Rs 1.50 per unit, and there is

a 100 per cent reimbursement of net VAT, CST, or SGST. Under the Pavala Vaddi Scheme, new micro and small enterprises receive an interest subsidy in excess of 3 percent per annum, subject to a maximum reimbursement of 9% per annum.

Infrastructure support, including roads, power, and water, is provided at the doorstep of standalone enterprises and industries, with 50% of the cost covered under IIDF, up to a ceiling of Rs. 1 crore.

All units must be established as sole proprietorships or have 100 percent shareholding in partner-

ship or private limited companies. As per data from the TG-IPASS portal, 5,626 units have received approvals for the establishment of food processing units in Telangana, with a total investment of Rs. 11,137.70 crore and the creation of 1,02,301 jobs.

Additionally, the Telangana government is planning to establish Mobility Valley at Yenkaithala in Vikarabad district, covering an area of 880 acres. This project is expected to attract investments worth Rs 50,000 crore and generate approximately 4 lakh job opportunities in the state.

AI-based solutions transforming public health system in India: Centre

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The Health Ministry on Friday said it is leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) to drive transformative change in public health services across the country.

The ministry has designated AIIMS Delhi, PGIMER Chandigarh and AIIMS Rishikesh as 'Centre of Excellence for Artificial Intelligence' with an aim to promote development and use of AI-based solutions in health.

The ministry has developed AI solution like Clinical Decision Support System (CDSS) in e-Sanjeevani, Media Disease Surveillance Solution in IDSP, Diabetic Retinopathy Identification solution and the Abnormal Chest X-ray Classifier Model and various



others are in early stages, said Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Prataprao Jadhav, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

'Media Disease Surveillance' (MDS) is an AI-driven tool that has been supporting event-based surveillance for infectious diseases since April 2022.

This tool scans digital

news sources across the country and shares relevant information with districts for early action and response.

Since April 2022, it has published over 4,500 event alerts, contributing to the timely prevention and mitigation of disease outbreaks, thereby reducing mortality and morbidity.

The 'Clinical Decision Support System' (CDSS), an AI solution has been integrated into the national telemedicine platform, eSanjeevani, to enhance consultation quality by streamlining patient complaints entry and providing AI-based differential diagnosis recommendations.

Since CDSS integration, 196 million eSanjeevani consultations benefitted from standardized data capture, ensuring consistency across health and wellness centres and 12 million consultations have been aided by AI-recommended diagnoses, allowing doctors to make informed decisions.

Under the Tuberculosis elimination programme, 'Cough against TB' AI solution is used for screening for pulmonary TB in the community settings.

Early diagnosis of TB crucial for effective treatment: Health Ministry

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Early diagnosis of tuberculosis (TB) is crucial for the treatment to be effective, said the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on Saturday, ahead of the World Tuberculosis Day.

World Tuberculosis Day is observed annually on March 24, to raise public awareness about the world's deadliest infectious disease.

"Recognising the signs of tuberculosis early is crucial for effective treatment. If you notice any symptoms, don't ignore them -- get tested," said the Ministry in a post on social media platform X.

In an infographic, the Ministry also share some symptoms of pulmonary or lung TB. It includes "persistent cough for two weeks or more; night sweats; chest pain; shortness of breath; evening rise of temperature (fever); fatigue; blood in sputum;



and weight loss".

According to the WHO Global TB Report 2024, India has witnessed a noteworthy 17.7 per cent decline in TB incidence from 2015 to 2023 -- a rate that is over twice the global average decline of 8.3 per cent.

TB deaths have also reduced by 21.4 per cent from 28 per lakh population in 2015 to 22 per lakh population in 2023," as per the data

However, India reported 28 lakh TB cases, account-

ing for 26 per cent -- the highest -- global TB burden in 2024, according to data from the World Health Organization (WHO). The country also reported an estimated 3.15 lakh TB-related deaths, accounting for 29 per cent of the deaths globally.

Notably, India aims to eliminate TB in 2025, five years ahead of the global target. To reach the goal, the Health Ministry in December launched a 100-day campaign aiming to continue till March 24. The

campaign targets selected 347 high-priority districts across 33 States/UTs.

Recently, Union Health Minister JP Nadda said the ongoing 100-day TB elimination campaign has detected five lakh TB patients already.

"The 100 Days TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan in priority districts, is fully aligned to the long-term TB elimination strategies of prevention, early detection, prompt treatment, and reduction of TB-related mortality," Nadda said.

India's bioeconomy sees 16-fold rise to reach \$165.7 billion in 10 years: Minister

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

India's bioeconomy has witnessed 16-fold rise in the last 10 years -- from \$10 billion in 2014 to an impressive \$165.7 billion in 2024, the government said on Friday.

This exponential growth is a testament to the government's commitment to fostering biotechnology as a key pillar of India's future economic growth, said Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh at the BIRAC Foundation Day ceremony in the national capital.

"In just 10 years, India's bioeconomy has expanded from a modest \$10 billion to \$165.7 billion, far surpassing our initial target of \$150 billion by 2025," Dr Singh stated, quoting the 'IBER 2025' report.

As per the report, the sector is contributing 4.25 per cent to the overall GDP. The sector has



shown a CAGR of 17.9 per cent over the past four years, showcasing India's potential as a global biotech powerhouse.

The minister also unveiled BioSaarthi, a pioneering global mentorship initiative aimed at nurturing biotech startups.

Designed as a six-month cohort, BioSaarthi will facilitate structured mentor-mentee engagements, offering personalised guidance to emerging entrepreneurs in the biotech sector.

The minister emphasised that this initiative will strengthen India's bio-

tech ecosystem by fostering innovation, enhancing industry-academia collaboration, and positioning Indian startups for global success.

The initiative would engage overseas experts, particularly from Indian diaspora as international mentors who would volunteer to give back to the society.

The minister also highlighted the recently approved BIO-E3 Policy -- Biotechnology for Economy, Employment, and Environment -- which aims to accelerate research, innovation,

and entrepreneurship in the sector.

Dr Singh also announced that Assam has become the first state to adopt the BioE3 framework, marking a significant step toward pan-India implementation. India's biotech startup ecosystem has grown from just 50 startups a decade ago to over 10,075 now.

India's gross expenditure on research and development (GERD) has more than doubled in the past decade, rising from Rs 60,196 crore in 2013-14 to Rs 1,27,381 crore in 2024.

Medical school deans in S. Korea to reject additional leave amid quota hike turmoil

AGENCIES
SEOUL

A consultative body of medical school deans in South Korea on Saturday said that they have rejected additional requests for leave, reaffirming they will no longer accept such requests by students who have left en masse to protest against the government's plan to hike school quotas.

"A total of 35 out of 40 schools have completed rejecting requests for leave of absence," the Korean Association of Medical Colleges and Graduate School of Medicine (KAMC), an association of the deans of 40 medical schools, Yonhap news agency.

The KAMC said the remaining five schools will also make a similar decision next week, stressing that requests for leave of absence, with the exception of those for military, medical and family-related



issues, will not be granted.

The announcement came a day after five medical schools closed their reinstatement deadlines for students to express their intent to return to class in the new school

year.

About half of the medical school students at Yonsei University were estimated to have expressed their will to return to class, raising speculations on whether

the move will spread to other medical schools.

Earlier this month, the government said it will scrap the contested plan to increase medical school admissions next year to resolve the ongoing health care crisis, on the condition that all medical students on leave return to classrooms by the end of March.

Under the conditional decision, the medical school enrollment quota for next year has been set at 3,058, reversing the government's plan to increase admissions by 2,000 each year for five years to address a chronic shortage of doctors.

The decision to scrap the disputed plan came amid mounting concerns that disruptions in the country's health system and medical education may become irreparable should the prolonged walkout by junior doctors and students continue.

Study links childhood obesity with chronic lung disease later

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Children overweight or obese may be at an increased risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) in adulthood, according to a study.

COPD is a progressive lung disease that makes it hard to breathe and worsens over time.

While smoking is a major risk factor for COPD, other risk factors like environmental, occupational, and even early life factors are increasingly being recognised.

The study led by researchers from Copenhagen University in Denmark focuses on examining the link between a high body mass index (BMI) in childhood and COPD.

The team found that compared to women with an average childhood BMI, risks of chronic COPD were 10 per cent higher for those who had an above-average BMI trajectory.

For women with an overweight trajectory, the risk was 26 per cent higher and for those with an obe-



sity BMI trajectory the risk was 65 per cent higher.

Similarly, compared to men with an average childhood BMI, the risks of COPD were 7 per cent higher for those with an

above-average trajectory.

For men with an overweight trajectory, the risk was 16 per cent higher and those with an obesity trajectory the risk was 40 per cent higher.

In contrast, a lower risk of future COPD was observed only for women with a below-average childhood BMI trajectory -- 9 per cent lower compared to women with an average childhood BMI trajectory.

"Having a BMI trajectory above average in childhood may increase the risk of subsequent COPD. Thus, our results suggest that being overweight during this early period of life is an indicator of risk for the development of COPD," said Frida Richter, from the Center for Clinical Research and Prevention, at the varsity.

The study included data from 276,747 Danish children (137,493 girls) born from 1930-1982, who had between 2 and 12 weight and height measurements between ages 6-15 years.

They were then examined for a diagnosis of the COPD from age 40 years onwards. The research will be presented at this year's European Congress on Obesity (ECO 2025) to be held in Malaga, Spain in May.

Antibody-based therapy shows promise against lethal mucormycosis

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

An antibody-based therapy has shown promise to treat lethal mucormycosis -- a fungal infection that caused serious infection among Covid-19 patients.

Mucormycosis is caused by fungi Mucorales and has high mortality rates in people with weakened immune systems. The disease caused serious infection among Covid-19 patients treated with high doses of corticosteroids with mortality rates close to 60 per cent.

While vaccines and immunotherapies are available for viruses and bacteria, effective antifungal immunotherapies for mucormycosis, specifically, are lacking.

Researchers from the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA) discussed the use of monoclonal antibodies to target a key fungal cell surface protein -- CoT -- which enables the fungus to



invade human cells and cause mucormycosis.

"Mucormycosis is a devastating disease that usually occurs in patients who suffer from weakened immune systems such as patients with poorly controlled diabetes, cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, and transplant patients," said Ashraf

Ibrahim, an investigator at The Lundquist Institute for Biomedical Innovation at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center.

In the study, published in the Science Translational Medicine journal, the researchers developed an antibody called VX-01 -- a humanised antibody that has proven more effective

at binding to the fungus compared to the original antibody.

Although both protect from infection, the humanised antibody reduces immunogenicity and enhances therapeutic effect when used in humans.

Early tests show that VX-01 is safe, with no harmful effects on healthy cells. This suggests that VX-01 could be a promising treatment to help fight mucormycosis in people with weakened immune systems.

"Our humanised monoclonal antibody allows antifungal drug therapy to reach infected tissues because it prevents fungal cells from damaging human cells and blood vessels," Ibrahim said.

Ibrahim added that the disease has had a steady increase over the last four decades due to an increase in people with diabetes and cancer, as well as advancement in transplant procedures.



SRH aim strong start against RR in Hyderabad

AGENCIES

HYDERABAD, MAR 22 (UND)

Sunrisers Hyderabad will commence their Indian Premier League (IPL) campaign against Rajasthan Royals in what promises to be an exciting day match at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium here on Sunday.

The home side, who had an impressive season last year but faltered in the final against Kolkata Knight Riders, will look to make a strong start.

Meanwhile, Rajasthan Royals, who were eliminated in the second qualifier by Hyderabad, will seek to turn the tables in this encounter.

Hyderabad have an enviable record at this venue, having lost only once here last season. They also enjoy a psychological advantage over Rajasthan, winning their last three meetings. Rajasthan, on the other hand, have concerns over their bowling attack and will hope their batting lineup can compensate.

Led by Australian pacer Pat Cummins, Hyderabad boast a formidable squad with depth in both batting and bowling. Cummins will aim to lead from the front, guiding his side to a winning start.

The opening combination of Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma will



look to provide a strong foundation. Ishan Kishan will anchor the middle order, with Nitish Reddy and Sachin Baby adding stability.

Heinrich Klaasen, one of the finest finishers in the game, will play a crucial role in the latter stages of the innings alongside Wiaan Mulder and Abhinav Manohar.

On the bowling front, the experience of Mohammed Shami and Pat Cummins will be key in securing early breakthroughs. Harshal Patel and Rahul Chahar will handle the middle overs, while Mulder and Abhishek Sharma will aim to restrict the scoring rate against Rajasthan's powerful batting order.

Rajasthan face an early setback as regular skipper Sanju Samson is unavailable for the first few matches due to a finger injury. In his absence, Riyan Parag will take over the captaincy, tasked with guiding the team past their

recent struggles against Hyderabad.

Yashasvi Jaiswal, playing as an opener, will need to provide stability at the top. The middle order, comprising Parag, Nitish Rana, and Dhruv Jurel, will be crucial in anchoring the innings. Finisher Shimron Hetmyer, alongside Wanindu Hasaranga and Mohammed Shami, will be expected to contribute valuable runs in the latter half.

Bowling remains a challenge for Rajasthan. The experienced Jofra Archer will spearhead the attack, looking for early breakthroughs alongside Sandeep Sharma. Wanindu Hasaranga and Maheesh Theekshana will handle spin duties, with Tushar Deshpande and Parag providing additional options.

Hyderabad is expected to have slightly overcast skies, but conditions will be favourable for batting. The surface is known for its high-scoring nature, with four 200+ totals

recorded last season by teams batting first. The wicket is expected to play flat early on, offering little assistance to fast bowlers. Spinners, however, are likely to play a vital role as the game progresses.

The team winning the toss is likely to bat first, considering the pitch's history of favouring batsmen early on before offering turn for spinners later in the innings.

Teams
Sunrisers Hyderabad: Travis Head, Abhinav Manohar, Atharva Taide, Sachin Baby, Aniket Verma, Abhishek Sharma, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Kamindu Mendis, Heinrich Klaasen, Ishan Kishan, Pat Cummins (captain), Mohammed Shami, Harshal Patel, Rahul Chahar, Adam Zampa, Simarjeet Singh, Eshan Malinga, Jaydev Unadkat, Brydon Carse, Zeeshan Ansari

Rajasthan Royals: Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shimron Hetmyer, Shubham Dubey, Vaibhav Suryavanshi, Nitish Rana, Riyan Parag (stand-in captain), Yuvraj Singh Chahal, Wanindu Hasaranga, Sanju Samson, Dhruv Jurel, Kunal Singh Rathore, Sandeep Sharma, Tushar Deshpande, Akash Madhwal, Kumar Kartikeya, Kwena Maphaka, Maheesh Theekshana, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Ashok Sharma, Jofra Archer.

MI, CSK gear up blockbuster clash at Chepauk

AGENCIES

CHENNAI, MAR 22 (UND)

The 18th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) gets underway tonight with excitement reaching fever pitch among cricket enthusiasts.

However, the real highlight comes on Sunday when Mumbai Indians (MI) take on Chennai Super Kings (CSK) in a much-anticipated encounter. Both franchises, tied with five IPL titles each, will be eyeing a historic sixth championship.

Chennai enter IPL 2025 with a renewed squad and fresh leadership under Rituraj Gaikwad. After missing out on a playoff berth last season, CSK is keen to reclaim its dominance.

Gaikwad, with an IPL tally of 2380 runs in 65 innings at an average of 41.75 and a strike rate of 137, will be the linchpin of CSK's batting lineup. He is likely to open with Rachin Ravindra, who has a superior strike rate of 140.46 compared to Gaikwad's 131.90, hinting at an aggressive start. Rahul Tripathi is expected to slot in at No.3, replacing Ajinkya Rahane.

CSK's middle order, featuring Shivam Dube and the ever-reliable MS Dhoni, will play a crucial role in finishing games. The allrounder department gets a boost with the return of Ravichandran Ashwin after a decade and Sam Curran after four years, adding invaluable experience.



Spin will be a key weapon for CSK at Chepauk. The trio of Ravindra Jadeja, Ashwin, and Afghanistan's Noor Ahmad will look to strangle the opposition during the middle overs. Meanwhile, the pace attack will be spearheaded by Matheesha Pathirana and Curran, with Pathirana's death-over yorkers being a potent threat.

MI, under the leadership of Hardik Pandya, enter the season determined to bounce back from last year's struggles. However, for their opening game, Pandya will be absent due to a slow over-rate suspension from the previous season. Suryakumar Yadav will take the captain's mantle in his absence.

MI have retained their core players, including Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar, Jasprit Bumrah, and Tilak Varma, while making significant acquisitions in the Jeddah auction. England's Will Jacks, New Zealand's Trent Boult, South Africa's Ryan Rickelton, and experienced spinner Mitchell Santner have bol-

stered the squad.

Suryakumar, despite an underwhelming run in recent T20 internationals, remains a game-changer. Alongside Rohit, Rickelton, and Tilak, he will be expected to provide a strong foundation for MI's innings. The middle order, featuring Jacks and Naman Dhir, adds firepower in the death overs.

With Pandya absent, the bowling attack will be led by Boult, supported by spinner Santner and pacers Karn Sharma and Deepak Chahar. Santner's recent form might give him an edge over Jacks for the spin allrounder role.

The surface at Chepauk has historically favoured spinners, but recent seasons have seen higher scores. The average first-innings total stands at 159, but in IPL 2024, four totals exceeded 200. Batting first is expected to be the preferred option, with teams likely aiming for a score in the range of 190-200 to gain a strategic advantage.

The weather in Chennai is forecasted to be hot and humid, with clear skies ensuring a full game.

Given the nature of the track here, the team winning the toss is expected to opt for batting first. As the pitch slows down later in the game, setting a target and applying scoreboard pressure has often been a successful formula at this venue.

As IPL 2025 kicks off, the CSK vs MI showdown promises to be an early blockbuster, setting the tone for what is expected to be another thrilling season of the world's most popular T20 league.

Teams
Chennai Super Kings: Rituraj Gaikwad (captain), Shaik Rasheed, Andre Siddarth C, Rahul Tripathi, Shivam Dube, Vijay Shankar, Deepak Hooda, Rachin Ravindra, Ramakrishna Ghosh, Ravindra Jadeja, Anshul Kamboj, Ravichandran Ashwin, Sam Curran, Devon Conway, MS Dhoni, Vansh Bedi, Jamie Overton, Kamlesh Nagarkoti, Matheesha Pathirana, Shreyas Gopal, Mukesh Choudhary, Nathan Ellis, Gurjapneet Singh, Noor Ahmad, Khaleel Ahmad.

Mumbai Indians: Suryakumar Yadav (stand-in captain), Rohit Sharma, Tilak Varma, Naman Dhir, Bevon Jacobs, Hardik Pandya, Raj Bawa, Vignesh Puthur, Will Jacks, Satyanarayana Raju, Mitchell Santner, Arjun Tendulkar, Ryan Rickelton, Robin Minz, Krishnan Shrijith, Jasprit Bumrah, Ashwani Kumar, AM Ghazanfar, Reece Topley, Lizaad Williams, Karn Sharma, Trent Boult, Deepak Chahar.

Hasan Nawaz strikes fastest T20I ton for Pakistan

AGENCIES

AUCKLAND, MAR 21 (UND)

Pakistan's opening batter Hasan Nawaz struck the fastest T20 International hundred for Pakistan blasting the existing record of Babar Azam in the third match of the ongoing series against New Zealand.

Nawaz slammed his maiden T20I ton off 44 deliveries.

Playing in just his third T20I, Nawaz stole the spotlight with a blistering, unbeaten 45-ball 105, leading the charge with the bat as Pakistan chased down New Zealand's 204 in just 16 overs.

The 22-year-old, who had registered two ducks on the trot in his first two T20Is, bounced back strongly to etch his name in the Pakistan record books, according to an ICC media release.

The record-breaking ton - which came off 44 balls - was the fastest-ever by a Pakistan batter and



sixth hundred overall in Men's T20Is for the Men in Green. Nawaz bettered former skipper Babar Azam, whose ton against South Africa in 2021 came off 49 balls.

Fastest 100 for Pakistan in Men's T20Is (by balls faced)
Player Opposition Balls
Hasan Nawaz New Zealand 44

Babar Azam South Africa 49

Ahmed Shehzad Bangladesh 58

Babar Azam New Zealand 58

Babar Azam England 62

Nawaz's outstanding performance included 10 fours and seven sixes at

the top of the order, as Pakistan lost just the single wicket of Mohammad Harris (41) in the run-chase.

The batter reached his half-century off just 26 balls, combining with Harris as Pakistan got off to a rapid start by forging a 74-run stand in just 5.5 overs.

Nawaz didn't slow down from that point, racing his way to his century off just the next 18 deliveries.

The batter also smashed Pakistan's highest-ever individual score against New Zealand in Men's T20Is, once again bettering Babar's 101 in Lahore in 2023.

Australia key all-rounder Gardner ruled out of remaining New Zealand T20Is

AGENCIES

AUCKLAND, MAR 22 (UND)

Australia key all-rounder Ashleigh Gardner has been ruled out of the remainder of the New Zealand tour after scans confirmed she fractured her right index finger

during the first T20I on Friday here, Cricket Australia announced.

Gardner left the field in the 17th over after injuring herself while attempting a return catch off her own bowling, with Sophie Devine striking the ball powerfully back at her. Australia's dominant top-order performance meant she was not required to bat in the chase.

She will now undergo further scans and seek specialist advice upon her return to Sydney.

England Women part ways with head coach Jon Lewis

AGENCIES

DUBAI, MAR 21 (UND)

England Women's head coach Jon Lewis on Friday stepped down from his post, ICC announced in a statement.

Lewis took charge of the England dressing room in November 2022 and was part of the team management across two ICC Women's T20

World Cups.

With Lewis in charge, England won 52 off the 73 games they featured in across formats since November 2022 and currently sit second behind Australia in the ICC ODI and T20I world rankings.

At the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2023 in South Africa, they finished as the semi-finalists, while missing

out narrowly on a final four spot in the previous edition of the tournament last year.

Under Lewis, England made the cut for the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in India later this year - finishing third in the Women's Championship standings behind Australia and India.

During Lewis' regime, England also drew the 2023 Women's Ashes back home

in a thrilling multi-format series.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as England Women's Head Coach," Lewis was quoted by the ECB.

"Unfortunately I won't be able to finish this incredibly challenging but enjoyable job of developing this young team, whilst winning and growing the women's game in this country."

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