



Handwara Tragedy: Left for Tulips, Returned in Coffins

2 Students Dead, 22 Injured; Questions Mount over Bus Fitness

■ DR.AB QAYOOM

KUPWARA, APRIL 12: A day meant for joy and celebration ended in heartbreak as two students from Government Degree College (GDC) Sogam lost their lives and 22 others sustained injuries after their picnic bus overturned in Vodhpura area of Handwara on Saturday. The accident occurred early in the morning when the bus, carrying students on an educational picnic, lost control and overturned under circumstances that are now under investigation. One student died on the spot, while another succumbed to injuries later in the

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LG, CM, others express grief; magisterial inquiry ordered

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 12: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, in a condolence message on X (formerly Twitter), said: "The news of the death of two young students in Handwara College Bus accident is extremely heartbreaking. In this hour of grief, my thoughts are with the bereaved family members. Praying for the early recovery of the injured."

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah extended his condolences, stating, "The loss of two young prom

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CM announces Rs 1 lakh ex-gratia for deceased families, up to Rs 50,000 for injured

Advisor Wani promises health sector revamp; Sopore-Kulangam road to be four-laned

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 12: Following the tragic accident in Handwara that claimed the lives of two young students, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah announced an ex-gratia relief package for the victims and their families.

Expressing profound grief over the loss, Omar, as reported by the news agency—, said, "No amount can ever

fill the void left by the tragic loss of young lives in the Handwara accident. We stand with the families in this hour of deep sorrow".

The chief minister announced that Rs 1 lakh will be provided to the families of the deceased, Rs 50,000 for those injured and Rs 25,000 for those who sustained minor injuries.

Meanwhile, speaking with the



reporters, Nasir Aslam Wani, Advisor to CM, said the tragedy was a personal loss as the victims were from his neighbourhood. "Kupwara has been left behind in the health sector, and we are working to change that," he said, stressing that efforts are underway to ensure patients don't have to be transferred to Srinagar for specialised care.

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PM to travel in train from Chenab bridge to Katra, inaugurate two vital bridges enroute

■ HT News Network



JAMMU, APR 11: Before inauguration of Vande Bharat train to Kashmir from holy town of Katra, the base camp of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji shrine on April 19, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel from Chenab railway bridge to Katra in train during which he will inaugurate and inspect the highest bridge as well as cable stayed bridge, which have become the engineering marvel and are being talked about across the country.

Yet another significant decision, the Railways have invited large number of workers who were associated with one of the most toughest project in history of the Railways including those who retired during the services to travel from Katra to Srinagar and Baramulla in the inaugural Vande Bharat train.

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NEWS BRIEF

Lieutenant Governor Greets people on Baisakhi

JAMMU, APRIL 12: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha has greeted the people on the auspicious occasion of Baisakhi, which will be celebrated on Sunday, April 13, 2025.

In his message, the Lieutenant Governor has said: "On the auspicious occasion of Baisakhi, I convey my heartiest greetings and best wishes to all.

It is a pious occasion to express our deep gratitude to 'Annadata' farmers and honour their invaluable contribution to the progress of the nation. Baisakhi holds profound historical

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CM Omar Abdullah greets people on Baisakhi

JAMMU, APRIL 12: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has extended warm greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the occasion of Baisakhi festival.

In his message, the Chief Minister said that Baisakhi, which marks the beginning of the New Year in the Indian Calendar, holds special significance for the people of northern India.

Highlighting its cultural and agrarian importance, the Chief Minister

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J&K left out of Centre's plan to build new Anganwadi centres

Gol says no proposal received from UT govt since 2020

SRINAGAR, APR 12: In an exemplary display of dedication and integrity, the Railway Police wing of the Jammu and Kashmir Police successfully traced the owner of an unclaimed bag and returned it along with Rs 30,000 cash.

As per a statement issued to the news agency—, the incident occurred yesterday when SPO Umar of the RSB section of Railway Police Kashmir discovered an unattended

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Akhnoor: Infiltration bid foiled, injured JCO succumbs

LG pays tribute to Subedar Kuldeep Chand

■ HT News Network



JAMMU, APR 12: Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) of the Army, who was critically injured during the exchange of fire with terrorists in Akhnoor sector in Jammu last night succumbed to his injuries, officials said on Saturday.

The officials told news agency—that Army foiled an infiltration bid by engaging terrorists in a gunfight near forward post in the Keri-Battal sector.

"Terrorists fired at an Army patrol. The fire was retaliated, resulting in some exchange of fire. In this

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Statehood Is BJP's Promise, No Need For Omar Abdullah To Seek It: LoP Sunil Sharma

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 12: Jammu and Kashmir BJP on Saturday said there was no need for Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to seek restoration of the Union Territory's statehood as it was the saffron party's narrative, and that it would be restored at an appropriate time.

"It is unfortunate that the National Conference keeps on harping about statehood.



Statehood is our narrative, it is the BJP's promise," said senior BJP leader and leader of opposition in the J&K Assembly Sunil Sharma.

Talking to reporters here, he said Abdullah should rather

focus on fulfilling the promises he made to the people.

Raising religious and provocative slogans inside the assembly will not accelerate the process of statehood restoration, Sharma said, alleging that National Conference leaders were attempting to provoke religious sentiments in the assembly.

"The assembly is not Jamia Masjid. Slogans that should be raised in Jamia Masjid were raised in the assembly.

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Justice Arun Palli appointed chief justice of J&K High Court

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 12: The Central Government on Saturday, notified the appointment of Justice Arun Palli as the Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal, as per the news agency—, announced the appointment on social media, stating that the President of India approved the decision following consultation with the Chief Justice of India.

His appointment comes days after the Supreme Court Collegium recommended his name for the post.

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Withdrawal of fraudulent payments: ACB chargesheets MP Ruhullah, Aga Hassan among 22

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 12: Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Saturday said to have produced a charge-sheet against 22 persons including the Member of Parliament from Srinagar Lok Sabha Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, President Anjumane Shri- Shiyani Aga Hassan and others.

The charge sheet has been produced in a case related to the withdrawal of fraudulent payments by way of making insertions and tampering with the Revenue records in Budgam, reads a state-



ment issued to the news agency—"Anti Corruption Bureau produced charge

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Amarnath Yatra 2025 to begin on July 3; pilgrimage to proceed with enhanced preparations: Div Com

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 12: The annual Amarnath Yatra, one of Jammu and Kashmir's most significant religious pilgrimages, is set to commence on July 3, 2025 and will span till August 19, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Vijay Kumar Bidhuri announced on Saturday.

As per the news agency—Correspondent, speaking to reporters, Div Com confirmed that all necessary arrangements—including security, logistics, and infrastructure—



are being finalized to ensure a smooth and safe pilgrimage for devotees.

The pilgrimage, which sees lakhs of devotees trekking to the sacred Amarnath Cave in

the Himalayas, remains a key focus for the administration, with heightened coordination between security forces and civil departments.

Simultaneously, he highlighted ongoing developmental projects in the region, noting that two of three major bridges under construction have been completed, while work continues on the Sanat Nagar Bridge. "The Roads and Buildings Department along with NHAI are closely supervising engineering standards across all projects."

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'First-of-its-kind in India' Srinagar Police launches 'BHAROSA' QR Feedback System

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 12: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Srinagar, Imtiyaz Hussain on Saturday said the police are working to further strengthen public trust by adopting transparent and accountable systems.

"Public trust in the police already exists; however, our aim is to build on it with new initiatives," the SSP said while briefing media persons here.

Hussain, as reported by



the news agency— said police have taken a "first-of-its-kind" step in the country by launching a QR code-based feedback system in the city, starting from Nehru Park.

"This system will have QR codes installed at all

police stations, police offices, marketplaces, public places, and important institutions. People can scan the code, and a feedback window will open where they can share their complaints, suggestions, or experiences," he said.

The initiative, he said, is designed to promote accountability and transparency in policing. "It takes less than a minute to register your feedback, and this helps us understand how effective we are in our

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

HANDWARA

hospital. The tragic incident has triggered shock and mourning across the Valley, prompting a swift response from the administration and top political leadership. J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed profound grief over the loss. In a message posted on X, he said, "The loss of two young, promising students from GDC Sogam is a tragedy that weighs heavily on all of us. My deepest condolences to their families. Prayers for the recovery of the injured." Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan, visited GMC Handwara where the injured are undergoing treatment. "The administration is ensuring the best possible care. A case has been registered and an investigation is underway," she stated. MS Handwara, Dr. Aijaz, informed that while most students are stable, two critically injured have been referred to Srinagar for advanced care. Political leaders, including People's Conference Chairman and MLA Handwara Sajad Gani Lone, Minister Javid Ahmad Dar, and Chief Minister's Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, visited the hospital to take stock of the medical response. Wani, moved by the incident, said, "The children who lost their lives were my neighbors. The injured are like my own." The Chief Minister has approved ex-gratia relief of Rs 1 lakh each for the families of the deceased, Rs 50,000 for the severely injured, and Rs 25,000 for those with minor injuries. A magisterial inquiry has been ordered to ascertain the exact cause of the accident, including whether it resulted from mechanical failure, negligence, or road conditions. The tragedy has sparked renewed calls from civil society and parents for enhanced safety protocols on school and college excursions to prevent such incidents in the future. As Kupwara mourns, the focus now turns to ensuring the best care for the injured and accountability for the devastating mishap.

LG, CM

Using students from GDC Sogam, in the tragic accident near Handwara is a tragedy that weighs heavily on all of us. My deepest condolences to her family in this hour of grief. Prayers for the swift recovery of the injured." He added that the government is closely monitoring the situation and ensuring all necessary support is provided.

The Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo said, "Deeply saddened by the tragic road accident involving students of GDC Sogam that claimed the lives of young Asiya Rashid and Maymoonah Ali and injured several others. My heartfelt condolences to their family. Praying for the speedy recovery of the injured."

"I've directed Director SKIMS, Principal GMC Handwara, Principal GMC Srinagar, CMO Kupwara and other health officials to ensure the best treatment for the injured," she posted on X.

Similarly, PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti, MLA Handwara Sajad Gani Lone, MLA Langate Sheikh Khurshed and others extended their heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the swift recovery of those injured.

Meanwhile, Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani, cabinet ministers Javed Dar and Sakina Itoo along with Deputy Commissioner Kupwara visited GMC Handwara to review the condition of the injured. They assured full support from the administration. "We are committed to extending all possible help to the victims and their families," they said.

1. LAKH

Wani assured that the health infrastructure in the region will be overhauled comprehensively. "Our aim is to build such facilities locally that no one needs to be shifted out for treatment," he added.

Responding to queries on road infrastructure, the CM's Advisor said the government is actively working on four-laning projects, including Kulangam and the Sopore-Kulangam stretch.

Wani confirmed that a magisterial inquiry has been ordered to probe the circumstances surrounding the accident. "Preliminary findings will be shared in due course," he said—

PM

Official sources told the Excelsior that after landing at Chenab rail bridge, the world's highest railway bridge from Udhampur airport, the Prime Minister will inaugurate and have an inspection of the bridge which is 1178 feet high, 82 feet more than the Eiffel tower of France.

The Prime Minister will travel in train from Chenab railway bridge up to Katra and enroute will also inaugurate Anji Khad bridge, which is another engineering marvel as it is India's first Cable Stayed bridge. He will also inspect the bridge.

He will reach Katra by train and flag off Vande Bharat train from Katra to Baramulla. Simultaneously, he will virtually flag off another train from Baramulla to Katra, the officials said.

Modi will then address a rally at Katra, his

second in last seven months before flying back to Udhampur airport on way back to New Delhi. He had addressed an election rally at Katra during Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir in September last year.

"The Vande Bharat train which the Prime Minister will flag off from Katra to Baramulla will carry large number of Railways workers who have been invited for travel in the inaugural train. They worked on the world's most tough railway project from Udhampur to Baramulla. The workers who have retired have also been invited," the officials said describing the decision as fitting tribute to the people associated with the project.

In line with the BJP's popular slogan of 'Kashmir to Kanyakumari, India is one', the sources, said a half an hour long event has been planned at Katra railway station which will also be witnessed by the Prime Minister. The programme will be presented by the school children.

Inauguration of train by the Prime Minister from Katra will end wait of several decades for direct train to Kashmir as presently the train services are operational between Sangaldan to Baramulla and from across the country to Katra.

Initially the train will run from Katra to Baramulla. However, after completion of expansion work at Jammu Railway Station including increase in number of platforms, the train to Valley will start operations from Jammu, most likely in August.

To begin with, there will be no direct train from Delhi or any other part to Kashmir.

Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan visited Katra few days back and reviewed launch of train service to Kashmir with particular reference to all security aspects.

Several trials of train from Katra to Baramulla including that of Vande Bharat have been successful and now security issues have also been taken into account, the sources said.

Out of the total 272-kilometer, Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, 209 kilometer was commissioned in phases with the first phase of the 118-kilometre Qazigund-Baramulla section commissioned in October 2009, followed by 18-kilometre Banihal-Qazigund in June 2013, 25-kilometre Udhampur-Katra in July 2014 and 48.1-kilometre long Banihal-Sangaldan stretch in February, last year.

The work on the 46-kilometre Sangaldan-Reasi section was also completed in June last year, leaving a total of 17 kilometre stretch between Reasi and Katra which was also completed nearly three months back leading to start of different trials of trains including that of Vande Bharat.

The project involved a cost of Rs 41,000 crore

On January 4, a successful trial run of an electric train was successfully conducted on the Katra-Banihal section. The Railways have conducted series of trials over the past few months on various segments of the track, including the two major milestones of the Anji Khad and Chenab bridges.

LOP

the assembly.

"The assembly is not Jamia Masjid. Slogans that should be raised in Jamia Masjid were raised in the assembly. The assembly is a place for debate and legislation," the BJP leader said.

"Do they want to make assembly a ring of jihad? Do they want to instigate legislative jihad? Such activities will not be accepted," he said, adding, "No citizen of Jammu and Kashmir, including the Muslims, will accept a statehood in which such slogans are raised in its assembly." Sharma said the ruling party was "enacting a drama" inside the assembly to run away from discussions over people's issues.

"It was for the first time in the history of the assembly that the government itself did not allow the House to run. The government was theirs, the Speaker was theirs, but they enacted a drama opposing the Waqf Amendment Bill and did not allow the House to run for three days because they did not want people's issues to be discussed," he said.

The leader of opposition said two assembly sessions were held in the last six months, but none of the promises in the National Conference's manifesto were reflected in either the assembly or in normal governance.

"They gave free bus rides to women, but they increased the fares and fuel prices. The routine governance and the assembly sessions reflect the failure of the National Conference government. It reflects betrayal of the people," he added.

Sharma said the BJP-led Central government is committed to the holistic development of Jammu and Kashmir. "All centrally-sponsored schemes will continue to run without any hurdles," he said.

He however, said there will be no compromise on terrorism and separatism.

"We will not rest until we wipe out terrorism, separatism and stone-pelting. There will be no compromise until peace is established fully," he stated.

Sharma said situation in the Union Territory has improved significantly and the BJP will not allow the return of violence.

"The situation has improved significantly. Schools are open, there are no hartals, no

stone-pelting. Since Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah took the responsibility of the security, normalcy has returned to downtown Srinagar and it is flourishing," he said.

HAJJ

taking up their pilgrimage through Haj Group Organiser (HGOs).

"As of now, 550 pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir are scheduled to travel through private arrangements," the senior official confirmed. "It is essential that pilgrims confirm whether the HGO they are dealing with is officially listed and has been allotted a quota by the Ministry. Unverified operators have previously caused serious issues, including pilgrims being stranded or denied access to Hajj facilities."

As per the officials, the pilgrims can cross-check the approved list of HGOs and their quota on the official website of the Ministry of Minority Affairs.

Meanwhile, the third phase of orientation and training is currently ongoing. Following this, the vaccination drive will begin, and every pilgrim will be administered three vaccines, including for influenza and polio, in their respective districts.

Notably, the Saudi government recently imposed a temporary suspension of Umrah, tourist, and visiting visas ahead of the Hajj season. However, the move has been described by officials as a positive move, stating that this will improve the experience and facilities for legitimate Hajj pilgrims, especially those travelling through the official Hajj Committee.

Officials confirmed that 3,626 pilgrims from Jammu & Kashmir were proceeding for the holy pilgrimage this year—

HC

Justice Palli began his legal career at the Punjab and Haryana High Court and was designated as a Senior Advocate in 2007. He was elevated to the bench in December 2013.

Over the years, he has appeared in cases before the Supreme Court, Delhi High Court, and Himachal Pradesh High Court, and has served as Amicus Curiae in several matters.

He currently holds the position of Executive Chairman of the Haryana State Legal Services Authority and has been a member of the National Legal Services Authority's (NALSA) governing body since October 2023—

JCO

incident, one JCO was critically injured, who was immediately airlifted to a hospital for treatment" they said, adding, "Despite best efforts the critically injured JCO could not survive and he succumbed to injuries."

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha paid tributes to Army Brave heart Subedar Kuldeep Chand, who laid down his life in the line of duty in Keri-Battal area of Sunderbani.

"I salute the supreme sacrifice of our Army Braveheart Sub Kuldeep Chand who laid down his life in the line of duty. His valour and sacrifice will never be forgotten. The entire nation stands firmly with the family of the martyr in this hour of grief," the Lieutenant Governor said—

MP

sheet before the Hon'ble Court of Special Judge, Anti-Corruption Srinagar in Case FIR No. 18/2009 under Section 5(1)(d) r/w 5(2) of J&K PC Act Svt. 2006 and Section 120-B, 467, 468, 471 RPC against 22 accused persons including 02 Collectors of LAWDA, 04 other public servants (now retired) and 16 beneficiaries," a spokesman said.

The instant case was registered on the basis of outcome of a Joint Surprise Check (JSC) conducted by ACB into the allegation of abuse of official position by the officers/officials of Rukhs and Farms department Kashmir by way of making insertions and tampering with the Revenue records which led to the subsequent drawl of fraudulent payments against the excess State land and shown allotted to Kamas (Tenants) at Rakh-e-Aerth Budgam, reads the statement.

"During JSC conducted into compensation payments made for the rehabilitation of Dal dwellers under Govt. order No. 56-Rev(S) of 2006, it was revealed that the officials of Revenue and Agriculture department conspired with certain beneficiaries (Kamas/tenants) to fraudulently inflate land records to claim excess compensation. These officials abused their positions to show excessive land possession in favour of beneficiaries leading to undue payments and losses to the state exchequer. The officials of Rukhs and Farms in connivance with officials of LAWDA and Revenue Department through tampering/insertions in revenue records and managed to inflate the quantum of land in possession of tenants (Kamas). Through fraudulent mutations, the land in possession was shown as 60 kanals instead of 6 kanals under Khasra No. 1692, 40 kanals instead of 4 kanals under Khasra No. 1666/750 and 07 kanal-10 Marlas instead of 2 kanals under Khasra No. 1736," it added.

Due to the inflated quantity of land the excessive payment to the Kamas/tenants was

38.20 lakhs and in this way, the officials, according to the statement, misused the official position and the losses were incurred against the State Exchequer.

"A case FIR No. 18/2009 was accordingly registered under J&K PC Act Svt. 2006 read with 120-B RPC in ACB Srinagar for further investigation," the spokesman said.

After registration of Case FIR No. 18/2009 in P/S ACB Srinagar Kashmir, the investigation of the case was concluded as proved and after the accord of government sanction for launching prosecution against the following 22 accused persons including the then two Collectors of LAWDA, four other public servants and 16 beneficiaries.

The challan of the case was produced before the court of Special Anti-Corruption Judge Srinagar on 12.04.2025 for Judicial determination against Abdul Majid Akhtar S/O Abdul Ahad Akhtar R/o Saraiballa Srinagar A/P Chanapora Srinagar, the then Patwari Rakhs & Farms (now retired), Zaffar Ahmad Hakak S/O Gh. Ahmad Hakak R/O Dokani-Sangeen Fatehkadal, Srinagar (Now Habib Colony Baghat Barzulla Srinagar), the then Assistant Director Rakhs & Farms Department (now retired), Manzoor Ahmad Rather S/O Gh. Hassan Rather R/O Dehrana Dooru District Anantnag (Senior Circle Inspector) Rakhs and Farms Department (now retired), Ali Mohd Wani S/O Abdul Gani Wani R/O Habbak Naseembagh Hazratbal Srinagar, the then Girdawar Rakhs & Farms Kashmir (now retired), Hafiz-ullah Shah S/O Peer Gh. Mohd Shah R/O Khiagam Pulwama, the then Collector LAWDA (now retired), Mohd Hussain Mir S/O Qasim Ali Mir R/O S.K. Colony Sector 3rd Qamarwari Srinagar, the then Collector LAWDA (now retired), Aga Syed Mussa S/O Aga Syed Hussain R/O Budgam, Aga Syed Aqueel S/O Aga Syed Hussain R/O Budgam, Aga Syed Mohsin S/O Aga Syed Mustafa R/O Budgam, Aga Syed Ali S/O Aga Syed Mustafa R/O Budgam, Aga Syed Hassan S/O Aga Syed Mustafa R/O Budgam, Aga Syed Ahmad S/O Aga Syed Mustafa R/O Budgam, Aga Syed Rohullah S/O Aga Syed Mehdi R/O Budgam, Mohd Sadiq Wani S/O Hassan Wani R/O Durbal, Bemina, Mohd Talib Wani S/O Hassan Wani R/O Durbal, Bemina, Ali Mohd Wani S/O Hassan Wani R/O Durbal, Bemina, Gh. Hussain Wani S/O Hassan Wani R/O Durbal, Bemina, Abdul Rahim Wani S/O Hassan Wani R/O Durbal, Bemina, Hyder Ali Wani S/O Hassan Wani R/O Durbal, Bemina, Nazir Ahmad Wani S/O Gh. Ahmad R/O Durbal, Bemina, Gh. Rasool Wani S/O Gh. Ahmad Wani R/O Durbal, Bemina and Ahamadullah Dar S/O Gh. Mohd Dar R/O Kolipora Bemina (expired)—

DIV COM

The Divisional Commissioner also outlined special arrangements being made for upcoming Baisakhi celebrations, with enhanced security at prominent religious sites including Tral, Charar-e-Sharif and Baramulla.

Asked about the government directive of installing CCTV cameras inside school buses, the Div Com said that the timeline has been set for the installation and the measure has been taken keeping in view the security and safety of the school going kids—

LG GREETS

and spiritual significance, marking the foundation of the Khalsa Panth by the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib Ji. On this sacred day, let us resolve to uphold the principles of selfless service, righteousness, courage, unity, equality and devotion exemplified by Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

May Baisakhi this year usher in peace, prosperity and happiness for all".

CM GREETS

noted that in the northern states, Baisakhi marks the commencement of the harvesting season, a time when farmers reap the fruits of their year-long hard work.

"Baisakhi symbolises the harvesting of hard labour and the spirit of celebrating it with harmony and brotherhood, adding vibrant colours to the festivity," he said.

The Chief Minister further observed that festivals like Baisakhi strengthen the bonds of love among people and promote amity and harmony in society.

On this joyous occasion, Omar Abdullah prayed for peace, prosperity and the overall well-being of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

QR

duties," he added, saying it is a full-fledged system to respond within 12 hours.

SSP Hussain further informed that a full-fledged system has been put in place to monitor all feedback collected through the QR code system. "If the complaint is genuine, we will ensure a response within 12 hours, and the issue will be forwarded to the concerned officer for action," he said.

He added that police QR codes will soon be pasted across the city, especially at key locations, to encourage public participation. "In a democracy, power belongs to the people. We want to see how we are perceived by the public and improve wherever needed," he said.

Imtiyaz said the Srinagar Police have also established dedicated helplines for verification queries and for sharing information related to drug abuse—part of their larger effort to modernise and make policing more citizen-friendly.

Meanwhile, a police spokesperson in a statement issued to KNO termed the initiative a significant step towards further promoting transparency, accountability and strengthening public trust.

"Srinagar Police has launched a QR Code-based Feedback Management System named BHAROSA QR to collect real-time feedback from the general public regarding the functioning and services rendered by the police," the spokesperson said.

He added, "This citizen-friendly initiative allows individuals to scan QR codes placed at all police stations, police offices and prominent public locations such as bus stops, marketplaces, and major institutions."

Once scanned, users are redirected to a secure feedback page where they can share their experiences, suggestions and concerns related to police behaviour, responsiveness and overall service delivery, police said, adding that the process is quick, simple and takes less than a minute.

To further ease communication, police have introduced a dedicated WhatsApp number: 8899112888, where citizens can send feedback directly through text, voice messages, photos or videos, the spokesperson said.

GOVT

bag in the last down train.

Demonstrating prompt action, SPO Umar immediately secured the bag and initiated efforts to identify its owner.

Following due procedure, potential claimants were contacted. The efforts paid off when Ifthikhar Naseem contacted the Railway Police to claim the bag.

Upon verification of his identity and rightful ownership, the bag was formally handed over to Naseem by the In-Charge RSB Section in the presence of the SHO Railway Police Station Srinagar ensuring transparency and adherence to protocol.

Naseem expressed his profound gratitude to the Railway Police team—

49th National Conference of Archivists concludes

JAMMU, APRIL 12: The second day of the 49th National Conference of Archivists concluded here today with focused discussions on digitalization of archival records, conservation strategies, outreach initiatives and collaborative efforts to strengthen India's archival infrastructure.

The sessions brought together experts, administrators and delegates from across the country to share insights, progress updates and policy innovations in the archival domain.

The day began with a presentation by K.K. Sidha, Director, Directorate of Archives, Archaeology and Museums, who highlighted CSR support for archival activities. He explained the kinds of initiatives eligible for CSR funding, how such funds are mobilized and the recent efforts by the J&K government to launch a dedicated CSR policy.

He also detailed current digitalization efforts stating that the entire digitalization process is expected to conclude by November 2025 with an estimated cost of Rs. 25 lakh. He also mentioned that Shri Mata Vaishnav Devi Shrine Board has agreed to donate about 1006 manuscripts to the department. He further introduced the recently launched e-cart facilities aimed at enhancing visitor footfall to museums and empowering specially-abled individuals, orphans, widow and single women through livelihood opportunities.

The next presentation was delivered by Suresh Kumar Gupta, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests who spoke about manuscripts in private possession and the importance of awareness for their preservation and conservation. He stated that over 30,532 manuscripts have been registered by local individuals, so far. He proposed awareness campaigns and workshops, open to students and experts alike. He also suggested launching online portals for privately owned manuscripts and archival exhibitions, with the Forest Department pledging full support.

Dr. Rajesh Prasad, Assistant Professor at Daulat Ram College, University of Delhi, presented a roadmap for establishing Oral History Archives. He outlined a three-phase approach covering pilot projects, infrastructure, metadata cataloguing, public access and long-term sustainability.

Delegates advised that rather than investing in new equipment at this stage, partnerships should be formed with institutions like Doordarshan and All India Radio, which already possess the necessary technical resources.

In a significant acknowledgment of India's progress, it was mentioned that CBSL, the company responsible for digitalization, has successfully digitised over 8.5 crore pages in just the last 10 months.



EDITORIAL

People have their fingers crossed over restoration of statehood

The restoration of statehood has become a buzzword in Jammu & Kashmir and the different political parties are using the issue for their own means. The National Conference that has been in power for the past almost six months in the union territory has been demanding the restoration of statehood from the word go. The leaders of the party have been quoting the statements of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah made by them before the 2024 assembly elections.

As on date both the Prime Minister and Home Minister have been saying that the statehood would be restored at an appropriate time. One fails to understand what is the appropriate time for the restoration of statehood? This is a million dollar question and the answer lies with Modi and Shah. The local leadership of Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) has attached yet another rider to this issue and going by their contention the restoration of statehood would take place later rather than sooner.

Senior BJP leader and leader of opposition in the legislative assembly Sunil Sharma said that restoration of statehood would happen only when the situation is normal in Jammu & Kashmir. He in fact has asked the leadership of National Conference to stop making demands for the restoration adding that the same will take place at the opportune time with the central government taking the decision about the same. Importantly the issue could not be discussed in the recently concluded budget session of assembly.

It would be in place to mention here that restoration of statehood was one of the emotive issues touched by the different political parties including National Conference during the last year's assembly elections. These political parties claimed that restoration of statehood would be one of their major planks once elections are over and they would leave no stone unturned in ensuring that Jammu & Kashmir becomes a state yet again. Since the National Conference is in power a party like the Peoples Democratic Party is aiming barbs at them over this issue.

There are legislators within the National Conference who believe that the party is not doing enough to get the statehood restored to Jammu & Kashmir. The common masses are also keeping their fingers crossed on the issue and they too are waiting for the day when Jammu & Kashmir becomes a state once again. There are people who believe that the problems being faced by them can be resolved if only statehood is restored.

Reclaiming J&K's Water: A Path to Revival



SYED HIDAYAT BUKHARI
THE SOCIETAL LENS

Jammu and Kashmir, a region once renowned for its pristine lakes, glistening rivers, and abundant natural springs, is now at the brink of an environmental catastrophe. Water bodies that once sustained generations, served as natural flood barriers, and supported a thriving eco-system are choking under pollution, unregulated sand mining, encroachments, and climate change.

Dal Lake, often referred to as the "Jewel of Kashmir," is shrinking under layers of untreated sewage and floating waste. The Jhelum River, the lifeline of the Valley, is being exploited for its sand and gravel, disturbing its fragile ecosystem. Traditional springs in villages, once considered sacred sources of life, are rapidly drying due to deforestation and over-extraction of groundwater.

Despite these challenges, revival is possible. Across India and the world, success stories of water body restoration serve as blueprints for Kashmir. From the Thames River in the UK, which was once biologically dead but is now thriving with over 125 fish species, to the Hauz Khas Lake in Delhi, which was revived using bioremediation techniques, sustainable intervention can reverse this crisis. But to succeed, Kashmir needs strong policy enforcement, public participation, and technological advancements.

The Decline of Kashmir's Water Bodies: A Crisis Unfolding

Illegal Sand Mining: A Threat to Rivers and Groundwater

The Jhelum, Chenab, and Tawi Rivers are under constant attack from unregulated sand mining, where contractors illegally extract sand, gravel, and boulders using heavy machinery. This activity is severely affecting:

•Groundwater Recharge: Excessive mining deepens riverbeds, preventing groundwater from being



replenished, which leads to the drying of natural springs.

•Aquatic Life and Riverbank Erosion: Removing large quantities of sediment destabilizes riverbanks and disrupts fish breeding cycles, leading to declining fish populations.

•Flood Risks: Excessive excavation reduces the river's capacity to absorb excess rainwater, increasing the chances of flash floods, similar to the ones witnessed in 2014.

Pollution and Encroachments: Kashmir's Dying Lakes

Lakes such as Dal, Wular, and Anchar in Kashmir have been severely degraded due to unchecked human activities, turning them into dumping grounds for solid waste, plastic, and untreated sewage. A particularly concerning case is Dal Lake, where over 60% of the water inflow originates from untreated municipal drains. This has drastically impacted on the eco-logical balance of the lake.

The influx of nutrients from domestic waste has caused the proliferation of algal blooms and invasive water hyacinths. These rapidly growing weeds cover the lake surface, block sunlight penetration, deplete oxygen levels, and suffocate aquatic life, thereby disrupting the lake's biodiversity and ecological function.

Additionally, the lake's water storage capacity has been compromised due to continuous silt deposition. Dal Lake has witnessed a significant reduction in its surface area—from 24 square kilometers a few decades ago to approximately 18 square kilometers today. This shrinkage limits its ability to support tourism, fisheries, and agriculture that depend on the lake.

Moreover, rampant and unregulated construction around the lake's buffer zones and wetlands has

exacerbated the problem. These areas, once vital for groundwater recharge and flood mitigation, are now being converted into residential colonies and commercial establishments. This not only reduces the natural resilience of the region to climate variability and flooding but also increases the pressure on an already fragile aquatic ecosystem.

A similar fate was seen in Bhopal's Upper Lake, which was once heavily polluted but re-vived through strict wastewater treatment and public participation efforts. Kashmir's lakes can follow the same path if sewage treatment plants (STPs) are fully implemented, and encroachments are removed.

Vanishing Springs: A Rural Water Crisis

For centuries, springs (Naags) provided clean drinking water to villages across Kashmir. But urban expansion, deforestation, and climate change have caused many of them to dry up. Reports indicate that nearly 50% of springs in the Valley have either disappeared or are on the verge of depletion.

A successful example can be seen in Maharashtra's "Jal Yukta Shivar" project, which re-vived over 12,000 traditional water bodies using rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge techniques. Similar efforts in Ladakh, where artificial glaciers are being built to store water for the summer months, prove that sustainable interventions can save Kashmir's disappearing springs.

The Guardians of Kashmir's Water: Activists and NGOs Leading the Way

wDr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat: Fighting Against Illegal Mining

Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat, an RTI activist and environmentalist, has played a crucial role in challenging illegal riverbed mining through petitions at the National Green

Tribunal (NGT). His advocacy has resulted in the closure of illegal mining operations in Budgam and Pulwama, forcing the government to issue stricter regulations.

Manzoor Wangnoo: The Man Reviving Urban Lakes

Manzoor Wangnoo, founder of Nigeen Lake Conservation Organization (NLCO), has led Mission Ehsaas, a community-driven initiative that restored Khushal Sar and Gilsar Lakes and other waterbodies and springs in Srinagar. His work proves that when citizens take charge, water bodies can be restored.

Community-Led Spring Restorations

In many rural areas, villagers and panchayats have taken it upon themselves to clean, de-silt, and revive traditional springs. These efforts must be expanded and financially supported by the government.

How Technology Can Help Revive Kashmir's Water Bodies

Satellite & GIS Mapping for Monitoring

•Using ISRO's Bhuvan Portal, authorities can track illegal encroachments on lakes and rivers.

•Drones can monitor sand mining in real-time, helping enforce environmental laws.

Bio-Remediation & Floating Wetlands

•Dal and Wular Lakes can be restored using floating wetlands, which naturally absorb pollutants and reduce algal blooms.

•Hauz Khas Lake (Delhi) was revived through bioremediation, proving this technique's effectiveness.

IoT & AI-Based Water Sensors

•Smart water sensors can monitor pollution levels in springs, lakes, and rivers.

•AI-based early warning systems can predict contamination risks, helping prevent outbreaks of waterborne diseases.

Artificial Groundwater Recharge & Rainwater Harvesting

•Artificial recharge wells can revive drying springs.

•Rainwater harvesting should be made mandatory in new buildings, ensuring long-term water sustainability.

The Road Ahead: A Call to Action

Urgent government intervention is critical to reversing

the environmental degradation of Kashmir's lakes. Illegal mining activities, which contribute significantly to siltation and ecological disruption, must be banned outright, with strict penalties enforced to deter offenders. Equally important is the installation of sewage treatment plants (STPs) in all major towns and cities. This infrastructure is essential to prevent untreated sewage from flowing directly into lakes, which has been a major contributor to their deterioration. Furthermore, urban development must be rigorously regulated near water bodies to preserve wetlands and buffer zones, which are vital for flood control and groundwater recharge.

At the same time, community participation is essential for long-term conservation. Initiatives such as Mission Ehsaas, which aim to clean lakes and rivers, require active public engagement to succeed. Citizens should be encouraged to reduce water wastage and adopt sustainable irrigation practices, especially in agriculture, which place a significant demand on water resources. Additionally, communities must hold local authorities accountable for their role in environmental management. Transparency and civic pressure can ensure that pollution control measures are not just policies on paper but are actively implemented on the ground.

A Future of Clean, Thriving Water Bodies

Kashmir's water bodies are not just natural resources; they are a part of its cultural and ecological identity. The time for inaction is over—if policies, technology, and community efforts come together, Kashmir can reclaim its water heritage.

The future of Kashmir's lakes, rivers, and springs depends on what we do today. The choice is ours—to restore or to lose them forever.

It's time to act now!

Syed Hidayat Bukhari works as a consultant with a US-based software company. He is also pursuing his PhD in Artificial Intelligence and is engaged in various social activities).

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The Importance of Field Trips in Schools



Sahil Manzoor, Raiyar-Ich
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Learning becomes truly interesting when it goes beyond the walls of a classroom. The education system is familiar to all of us, and its importance continues to shape the world. In every corner of the globe, people have come to realize the power of education and its potential to bring about greatness.

Education has no boundaries, no limitations—it is a universal right and a foundational pillar of a civilized society. What distinguishes humans from animals is not just our biology, but our ability to learn, reflect, and grow. The Quran beautifully describes humans as Ashraf-ul-Makhlukat—the noblest of

all creation. To become truly noble, however, we need nurturing environments that foster kindness, knowledge, and responsibility.

Every human being holds the power to influence society. A single idea, when nurtured in the right environment, can change the world. Our mindset is shaped by the surroundings we grow up in. Sensible people surround themselves with positive influences and treat every challenge as an opportunity to learn. Success doesn't come from strength alone, but from the strength of the mind and heart. Great minds are those that solve problems, innovate, and lead—not for recognition, but for a greater cause.

Great minds have no boundaries; they don't belong to a single caste, color, or nation. They are assets to the entire world. Out of eight billion people on Earth, only a few rise to become influential in science, education, art, politics, religion, or sports. These are the people who work quietly behind the scenes, sacrificing their comforts for the



betterment of others.

So, how can we produce more great minds?

We need to provide our children with what I call a free zone—a learning environment without fear, punishment, or pressure. Fortunately,

modern schools are moving toward such spaces, focusing on creativity, curiosity, and exploration. Teachers play a crucial role in this transformation. They are the real builders of our nation—not just

with words, but with identity, recognition, and support.

Unfortunately, teachers often lack the respect and support they deserve, even from those who owe their success to them. Let us never forget the hands that helped

us climb. Recognizing and honoring teachers brings not only dignity but lasting improvement in the entire education system.

Field Trips: Learning Beyond the Classroom

Field trips are an essential

part of this nurturing environment. They offer students the opportunity to witness and experience what they learn in textbooks. For example, while studying plants, take students outside. Let them enjoy lunch in nature, observe real-life examples, and ask questions. Teach in a way that sticks with them for life—especially skills like measurement, observation, and analysis.

Encouragement is another powerful tool. Praise effort, even if it falls short. Give students a 9 out of 10 when they deserve 6—not to mislead them, but to motivate. Let them feel like leaders—make them class monitors, praise their appearance, and celebrate their small wins. These moments can shape a child's self-esteem and future choices.

Let's create schools that grow minds, not just fill them. Let's raise a generation that values honesty, kindness, and curiosity. And let's remember: a simple field trip might just be the beginning of a great idea that changes the world.

Power, martyrdom, and questions: Today’s relevance of Jallianwala Bagh



DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

13 April 1919, Amritsar. Vaisakhi Day. Thousands of people had gathered in Jallianwala Bagh—some for peaceful protest against the Rowlatt Act, some simply to celebrate the festival. Then Brigadier General Reginald Dyer of the British Army entered with his troop, closed the only gate to the garden, and opened fire on the crowd without any warning. About 1650 bullets were fired in about ten minutes.

Hundreds died, and thousands were injured. The walls were soaked in blood. And a decisive turning point came in India's freedom struggle. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre was not just a historical tragedy; it was the culmination of imperialist oppression. But today, more than 100 years later, we have to ask ourselves, is Jallianwala Bagh just a sad story of history, or is it a mirror in which today's democracy can also be seen?

From General Dyer to today's power

Brigadier General Dyer called the massacre a “necessary action.” The British Empire did not rebuke him, and some even called him a

“true patriot.” This incident teaches us how brutal power can be when it is absolved of accountability. Today, when peaceful protesting farmers are lathi-charged, students are beaten up in universities, journalists are jailed, and dissent is labeled “sedition,” the question arises—is the same “Dyer mentality” of power still alive today?

Protest and democracy: A delicate relationship

Democracy is built on dissent. If people do not question, criticize, and demand accountability from the powers that be, democracy can slowly turn into an authoritarian structure. Unarmed people were killed in Jallianwala Bagh because they raised questions. If today those who raise questions are called “anti-nationals,” have we really learned anything from history? When asking questions becomes a crime, and the powers that be declare themselves the “nation,” then the alarm bells ring for democracy.

Don't embellish history.

When the Jallianwala Bagh memorial was renovated in 2021, it faced sharp criticism. Colorful lights, decorative corridors, digital shows – everything seemed like an attempt to turn martyrdom into an “event.”

Should memories of martyrs become selfie points?

The job of history is not just to glorify; it is also to warn. When



we turn the pain of our past into a mere celebration, we ignore that warning. The renovation of Jallianwala Bagh is an example of how we can lose the soul of history if we only embellish its surface.

The language of power has changed, not the intention.

The British government considered protesting against the country. Today, when our own democratic institutions suppress the voice of the people by considering it “uncomfortable,” that too is a violation of democracy. Internet shutdown, control over media, attack on freedom of expression—all these are the “genocides” of modern India. The only difference is that now there is a lathi instead of a gun, and the system instead

of Dyer. Movements in the past years—such as the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act, the farmers' movement, and student movements in universities—have shown that even today, when people take to the streets, the government does not first communicate but uses force.

Asking questions is not a crime.

The Jallianwala Bagh incident teaches us that it is the right of the people to challenge the authority. And this right is the basis of democracy. Rabindranath Tagore returned the title of 'knighthood' from the British government after this massacre. Mahatma Gandhi considered it the inspiration for the non-cooperation movement. Bhagat Singh called it the initial

moment of his revolutionary consciousness. Today, if a citizen asks questions of the government, why is he considered a “traitor”? Is the nation what the government says? Or is the nation what the citizens make together?

Are we repeating history?

India is the world's largest democracy today, but it is not made by just voting. It is made by transparency, accountability, and civil liberties.

When governments become afraid of questions, the media becomes biased, and the courts become silent—then democracy begins to suffocate.

What happened in Jallianwala Bagh was the result of this silence and injustice. Even today, when a

journalist exposes the truth and is put in jail, that too is a kind of “genocide”—of” truth.

What do we need to do?

Children should be taught the story of Jallianwala Bagh not just as a chapter but as a warning. They should be taught that asking questions is patriotism, not a crime.

We have to learn to accept dissent. If a citizen criticizes the government, calling him a traitor is an insult to democracy. Every government must understand that its existence is because of the people. If it suppresses the voice of the people, its moral basis is lost. Places like Jallianwala Bagh should be preserved as centers of national consciousness, not as tourist attractions.

The cries of the martyrs are still echoing.

Jallianwala Bagh is not just a dark chapter in history but a relevant warning in today's political and social circumstances. As long as there is no freedom to question the power, democracy will remain incomplete.

It is our responsibility that we do not limit the sacrifice of the martyrs to just two minutes of silence or offering flowers. We have to fulfill their dream—an India where the government is accountable, citizens are free, and asking questions is a right, not a crime.

The walls of Jallianwala Bagh are still speaking. The question is, are we listening?

Do the internship responsibly for success



VIJAY GARG

If you want a successful career, start it not with the first job but from the first internship. Internships contribute a lot in giving the career a systematic direction. So must do your first internship very seriously and well-planned. It not only gives you practical experience but systematically prepares for the future. So this time definitely pay attention to this while planning an internship for yourself. Internship means Coarse taurper internship means- working in a company for 8 to 10 weeks in holidays. Where students can connect themselves to the real world of work i.e. where there is an office in reality, in which you

can engage in reality with work by being in someone's guidance or by staying in your mentor's guidelines. Through this, you get to learn a lot new and also have income. Internship i.e. a chance for pupils to learn, develop their own and improve themselves professionally. It can be paid or unpaid, parttime or fulltime of any kind. The knowledge learned in the classroom in a professional environment through internships is learned in a new way by connecting it to the world of reality. Internships are the medium to develop new skills in Vidyarthio and convert it into work form. In which the motive of learning something new is fixed and feedback is given in the supervision of a professional, expert. Students can understand the right direction of their career in the coming days by internship. It introduces them to an industry, company or institution. Through this they can decide the direction of their career whether these are really right for them or not. Overall the medium of converting the theory learnt in the class into workform is the internship. The fear of interview goes away Students by internship can prepare themselves

for an interview to be given for a job in the future. For them it can also prove to be a medium that they can gain their life with people and better networking for a future career and outgrow professional relationships by internships that can prove beneficial for them in the coming days. Usually small-by institutions advertise for internships in summer vacations and they are looking for new energy-rich youngsters who bring some changes in their office environment. By this various companies prove helpful for them in educating new talented people, training them and shaping their professions. First time apply then... It is easy for those who are familiar with the internship before and have done the internship even before that. They can also re-do internships in their old institution. But students who are in this pasopesh where to start it. In such a situation, it is important to know which career options are going to be chosen for themselves in the coming days and what kind of specific kind of work they want to see by connecting themselves to activity. They then have to seek alternatives for themselves in small-by institutions

or companies from the workplace. They also have to understand which of their skills to use and how to develop it. Counsellor advice Though its trend is low, but just as we have to consult the counselor for which field to make a career many times and also get the benefit, similarly for the internship also if the counselor's advice is taken, it remains good for what kind of internship to be done according to their scheduled career in summer vacations. For this various small by institutions advertise for internships on various newspapers and websites. Also many students look for internships for themselves by life-recognition of their friends, family people. Overall internship is a test drive that takes your career forward. It also helps to mark your attachment to work and your trend and encourages you to mentally build your career in the same field. During the internship you also learn many new skills that are not usually taught to you inside the classroom.

Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational Columnist Street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab

THE STORM NAMED MEHRAJ MALIK: VOICE OF THE POOR



From valleys deep where rivers sing,

A quiet spark began to spring.

In Bhalessa born, with dreams so wide,

He walked with truth as his only guide.

Not wealth, nor power, did he chase,

But justice carved into his face.

Books in hand and fire in soul,

He aimed to heal, to make whole.

A teacher's heart, a leader's mind,

With every step, he served his kind.

In fields where old flags long had flown,

He stood, with courage all his own.

The voices faint, the hopes once thin,

He gathered all, and fought to win.

No princely past, no gilded name,

Yet through the dust, he rose to fame.

In Doda's hills, his people spoke,

A chain of silence finally broke.

They crowned not gold, but grit and grace,

A symbol of the common face.

He walked where money ruled the game,

And called out greed without the shame.

No suit, no tie, no hidden deal,

Just iron truth, and grit of steel.

Corruption trembled at his name,

For he played no puppet's game.

A storm in courts, a shield in streets

He broke the chains, exposed the cheats.

He wasn't born with power in hand,

No silver spoon, no promised land.

Just books, belief, and burning will,

To climb each fight, to climb each hill.

The Aam Aadmi, now they say,

Has found its dawn in Malik's way.

With humble heart and vision clear,

He carries hope, he casts out fear.

Oh Mehraj, son of mountain streams,

You are the bearer of our dreams.

May your path be bold and true

The people's light now walks in you.

He made the system face its flaws,

He rose not for applause, but cause.

So if you doubt the power you hold,

Remember Mehraj—brave and bold.

Written by POET AND AUTHOR MUZAMIL ARIFF BHALESSI
A WELL KNOWN WRITER whose work delves into the complexities of human nature and society. With a keen eye for detail and an inquisitive mind, he tackle(s) the issues that matter most in today's world.

Maintaining Discipline in Schools Without Fear: A Growing Challenge



JAVAIID BHAT

In today's rapidly changing world, schools are under increasing pressure to cultivate not only academic excellence but also a disciplined environment. However, with the decline of fear-based disciplinary methods—once seen as effective tools—teachers and school authorities

are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain order in classrooms.

The traditional notion of discipline often relied on strict authority and, at times, corporal punishment. Today, as educational philosophies shift toward child rights and emotional well-being, fear has been replaced with freedom. While this is undoubtedly a progressive step, it brings along the challenge of managing students who sometimes mistake freedom for license.

Modern students are more aware of their rights than ever before. Exposure to media, the internet, and growing societal awareness has made them confident—but in some cases, defiant. Some students now see discipline as an infringement rather than a guiding force. This shift in attitude can lead to unruly behavior, lack of focus, and even disrespect toward teachers.

With corporal punishment banned and strong reprimands discouraged, many teachers feel powerless in the face of indiscipline. The respect that once came with the position of a teacher is now often conditional. Without authority rooted in fear, it takes more effort, patience, and emotional intelligence to manage a class effectively.

The Role of Parents and Society:

Parents, too, play a crucial role. In some cases, they side with children even when they are at fault, weakening the teacher's authority. Society must recognize that discipline is not about punishment but about helping children become responsible and respectful citizens. This can only happen when schools and homes work together.

Despite the challenges, main-

taining discipline without fear is possible. Schools must invest in training teachers in classroom management, emotional regulation, and positive behavior strategies. Introducing life skill programs, value education, and peer mentorship can also help create a disciplined yet stress-free environment.

While it is tough to maintain discipline without fear in today's schools, it is not impossible. What is needed is a collaborative effort—between teachers, parents, and students—towards creating an environment where respect is mutual, freedom is not misused, and discipline is rooted in understanding, not intimidation. Education, after all, is not just about filling minds but also about shaping character.

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Director Agriculture assesses Saffron cultivation, other field activities during 2-Day Tour to District Kishtwar

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, APRIL 12: Director Agriculture Production Jammu S. Arvinder Singh Reen undertook a comprehensive two-day tour of District Kishtwar.

The visit aimed at reviewing the status of agricultural activities in the region, with a special focus on saffron cultivation.

During the tour, the Director visited saffron-growing fields in the Pochhal area and the Saffron Development Farm at Berwar. He interacted with saffron growers and agricultural field staff to assess on-ground progress and address

challenges in the cultivation process. The Director took note of ongoing interventions and provided guidance on improving saffron productivity and quality.

Meanwhile, S. Arvinder Singh Reen visited the office of the Sub-Divisional Agriculture Officer, Gulabgarh/Padder, Zeera Development Farm at Padder, and conducted a field visit to Karthie, Padder. These visits were aimed at evaluating the potential for diversification and expansion of agricultural practices in remote areas.

A strategic meeting was held with the District Development Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan, Chief Agriculture Officer, Amjad Hussain Malik and



Chief Horticulture Officer, Sajid Mustafa to discuss a future

roadmap for the agricultural development of the district.

Emphasis was placed on infrastructure development,

sustainable practices, and strengthening market linkages.

The Director also visited the KKG-cum-sale-out counter at the AEO Office, verified the functioning of the KKG, and appreciated the efforts of the Krishi Udhayam. Additionally, the Director addressed the ongoing camp on mushroom cultivation at the AEO Office Kishtwar, organized in collaboration with SBI RSETI Kishtwar, and informed the participants about the departmental initiatives.

On the concluding day, the Director chaired a detailed review meeting with the district agriculture staff and held a separate interaction with

saffron growers.

He appreciated the ongoing efforts of the department and encouraged all stakeholders to work collaboratively towards making Kishtwar a leading saffron-producing district in the region.

The Director assured full departmental support for enhancing farmer capacity, infrastructure improvement, and technical guidance.

The Director was accompanied throughout the tour by Amjad Hussain Malik, Chief Agriculture Officer Kishtwar, DAO Kishtwar, SDO Kishtwar, SDAO Marwah, SDAO Padder and other senior field functionaries of the Agriculture Department.

District Development Commissioner reviews progress of NABARD RIDF Projects in Poonch District

HT News Network

POONCH, APRIL 12: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Vikas Kundal on Saturday chaired a meeting here in the meeting hall of DC Office Complex and conducted a thorough assessment of the physical and financial progress of the NABARD Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) projects in Poonch district. The meeting was attended by ACR Mohammad Sayed; SE PWD (R&B); Xen PWD Division Poonch; Xen PHE; Tehsildar Haveli; and Teh-

sildar Mandi. Several officers participated virtually, including SDM Mendhar, SDM Surankote, and Tehsildars from Mendhar, Balakote, Mankote, and Surankote. These officials provided detailed updates on ongoing works in their respective divisions, all demonstrating a strong commitment to advancing infrastructure development within the district. The meeting evaluated the developmental initiatives that target infrastructure improvement in underserved areas. DDC Kundal reviewed progress on both tehsil-

wise and project-wise basis, emphasizing the importance of timely reporting on advancements to effectively meet public needs. He directed concerned officials to expedite dispute resolution, if any that could hinder development processes. He asked all officials associated with projects showing slow progress to identify actionable solutions that could facilitate timely completion. The DDC called for a proactive approach to ensure that the developmental initiatives under the NABARD RIDF not only enhance,

Book "Kar Phol-e-Sahar" Released in GDC Sumbal

HT News Network



Sumbal/ April 12: The book "Kar Phol-e-Sahar", authored by renowned writer Saleem Yousuf, was formally released at a prestigious function held in Sonawari. The event was organized by Inder Cultural Forum Sonawari in collaboration with the J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages.

The function witnessed a vibrant gathering of literary enthusiasts, cultural figures, and dignitaries. Esteemed personalities including Syed Himayoun Kaisar, Shabnam Telgami, Dr. Shubeena Iqbal (Principal GDC Sumbal), Dr. Shaista Ahmad, Nisar Naseem, Prof Shad Ramzan, Prof Mohahamad Zaman Azurda and Mohammad Amin Bhat graced the occasion and shared their insights on the literary significance of the work.

Speakers highlighted the poetic depth and cultural relevance of "Kar Phol-e-Sahar", appreciating Saleem Yousuf's contribution to regional literature.

The event was hosted by Gulfam Barji. The event concluded with a vote of thanks, celebrating the power of words in preserving and promoting the rich literary heritage of Kashmir.

J&K Students Association Expresses Grief Over Tragic Handwara Road Accident

HT News Network

Srinagar April 12 The Jammu and Kashmir Students Association (JKSA) on Saturday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the devastating bus accident near the Vodpora area of Handwara, which claimed the lives of two young female students and left 22 others injured, some of them critically.

In a heartfelt statement issued, the Chairman of the Association, Mushtaq Habeeb, said, "Our deepest condolences go to the bereaved families. The entire student community mourns this irreparable loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with the 23 injured students affected by the tragic Handwara bus accident. We urge Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to ensure the best possible medical care for the injured. The Association stands in solidarity with the victims and their families in this hour of grief."

Mushtaq said that, This is an unbearable loss; a bright life full of dreams and promise cut short far too soon. Our heartfelt condolences go out to the families of both students, their friends, and the entire college community during this unimaginable time of grief. We stand in solidarity with all those affected by this tragedy and pray for strength and healing for the injured and the bereaved. May their souls rest in eternal peace.

What has added to the anguish, the Association noted, is the highly insensitive and exploitative coverage by certain self-styled journalists and social media pages following the accident. "Raw and graphic visuals of the tragedy are being broadcast merely for clicks and clout.

Pensioners' Federation Holds Welfare Meet in Handwara, Urges Release of Pending Liabilities

DR.AB QAYOOM



Handwara, Apr, 12: The All Jammu and Kashmir Pensioners, Senior Citizens Welfare Federation and Civil Society, affiliated with the Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS) New Delhi and the All India State Pensioners Federation, organized a day-long programme at Dak Bungalow, Handwara. The event was presided over by State President Nassar Ali Mir and General Secretary Mohd Ashrif Mir, with active participation from senior executive members including Gh. Nabi Khanyari, and district presidents from Baramulla and Bandipora. Block presidents from various parts of Kupwara district—including Shabir Ahmad, Mushtaq Ahmad Khan, and Mir Gh. Rasool—were also in attendance, along with over 150 core members. The programme focused on the welfare, rights, and pending issues of pensioners and senior citizens in the region. Federation leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the principles of the late Sampat Prakash, vowing to continue the struggle for justice and dignity for pensioners in Jammu and Kashmir. In a joint appeal, the Federation heads urged Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to release all pending liabilities of pensioners without further delay. They also called on the elected government to regularize the services of 60,000 casual labourers and daily wagers who have long awaited justice. Meanwhile, the Federation expressed deep sorrow over the tragic loss of two young students in a recent bus accident in Handwara. The members offered heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the speedy recovery of those injured.

Dr. Seema Naz Condoles Demise of Students in Handwara Road Accident

HT News Network

Srinagar, April 12: Professor (Dr.) Seema Naz, Nodal Principal of Kashmir Division Colleges, has expressed profound grief over the tragic demise of two students from Government Degree College (GDC) Sogam in a devastating road accident that occurred earlier today at Vodhpura, Handwara. In her condolence message, Dr. Seema Naz extended heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved families and the entire college community. "I am deeply saddened by the untimely demise of these young students. It is an irreparable loss, and our thoughts and prayers are with their families in this difficult time," she stated. Dr. Naz further expressed solidarity with the GDC Sogam fraternity and emphasized the need for collective strength and courage to cope with this tragic loss. In a compassionate gesture, Dr. Naz also visited the hospital to personally check on the injured students, inquiring about their condition and offering prayers for their swift and full recovery.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is being notified that my name in school record as well in my Aadhar Card having Aadhar card number this 430060985997 has been wrongly mentioned as Peer wajid Mushtaq now I want to update it in both aadhar card as well as in school record as wajid Mushtaq shah
DOB 28/12/2020 C/o Mushtaq Ahmad Shah
Address : HARDUTOORU, achabal anantanag , j&k 192201
If anyone have objection plz contact us

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 ADNAN ALTAF S/O MOHAMMAD ALTAF CHOPAN R/O AUTHOORA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 08/04/2020 and event has been shown to be occurred at CHC 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 TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer WAGOORA) / chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of MOHAMMAD ZEYAN S/O REYAZ AHMAD LONE R/O DOLIPORA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 08/04/2021 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order. In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform that there has been a correction in the name of my daughter. Which was Meliha feroz now corrected to Maliha feroz. if anyone has any objection regarding this correction, they are hereby requested to raise their concern within seven (7) days from the date of this notice. failing to do so within the stipulated time, no objections will be considered.

Name of guardian: Feroz Ahmed Dar
Address: hyderpura
Date: 12-04-2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that my dob. has been incorrectly mentioned on my Adhar card 994606844372, as NADEEM FAYAZ LONE S/O FAYAZ AHMAD LONE DOB 06/06/2005 R/O KULTOORA Tehsil LANGATE the correct DOB is 06/04/2008 NADEEM FAYAZ LONE S/O FAYAZ AHMAD LONE r/o KULTOORA now i have applied for the correction. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection at UIDAI OFFICE/ concerned authority / TEHSIL LANGATE within a period of 07 days after that no objection will be accepted.

NAME: NADEEM FAYAZ LONE
DOB 06/04/2008
S/O FAYAZ AHMAD LONE
R/O: KULTOORA TEHSIL LANGATE DIST KUPWARA

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is being notified that my name in school record as well in my Aadhar Card having Aadhar card number this 880778217731 has been wrongly mentioned as Peer Raafiq Mushtaq now I want to update it in both aadhar card as well as in school record as Raafiq Mushtaq Shah DOB 05/03/2015
C/o Mushtaq Ahmad Shah
Address : HARDUTOORU, achabal anantanag , j&k 192201
If anyone have objection plz contact us

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 MUBASHIR JAVID S/O JAVID AHMAD GANAI R/O NAIDKHAI Tehsil HAJIN Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 16/11/2022 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

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill) power connection is registered on the name of ABDUL RASHID KHANDAY S/O SONAULLAH KHANADAY R/O LOOKWA BUDOO MOHALLAH . Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040014509 wants to be registered on the name MOHAMMAD SHAFI KHANIPORA S/O SONAULLAH KHANDAY R/O KHISIPORA KREERI . if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name... MOHAMMAD SHAFI KHANDAY
S/O ... SONAULLAH KHANDAY
R/O KHISIPORA KREERI
DISTT..... BARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

My daughter's parentage name has been wrongly written as SAHIL AHMAD LONE in Hospital record bearing ID No 101002578718 while her correct parentage is SUHAIL HASSAN LONE 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... SUHAIL HASSAN LONE
F/O FATIMA
R/O TAPPER PAYEEN

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Farooq Ahmad Badana S/O Mam Din Badana R/o Lohikot Tehsil Qalamabad DIST KUPWARA have applied for DOB Certificate of my daughter and son's Namely Aaqib Ahmad Badana DOB 15/08/2016 Seerat Jan DOB 18/06/2023 Rafakat Ahmad Badana DOB 21/06/2020 Parentage Farooq Ahmad Badana R/O Lohikot Tehsil Qalamabad DIST KUPWARA in this record if anybody has any kind of objection He/she may contact concerned authority within 7 days no objection will be entertained after the date expire.

AAQIB AHMAD BADANA DOB 15/08/2016
SEERAT JAN DOB 18/06/2023
RAFAKAT AHMAD BADANA DOB 21/06/2020
PARENTAGE/FAROOQ AHMAD BADANA
R/O LOHIKOT TEHSIL QALAMABAD DIST KUPWARA

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 AATIF MASHOOQ S/O MASHOOQ AHMAD BAHT R/O BATPORA Tehsil TANGMARG Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 28/03/2015 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

PUBLIC NOTICE

I SARTAJ AHMAD YAQUBI GANIE S/O MOHD YAQUB GANIE R/O Khirman Ganesh Raina Wanpoh Tehsil & District Anantnag UT of Jammu and Kashmir have applied for rectification/ addition of caste details in the 10th/ 12th Certificates Issued / to be issued by CBSE in favour of my ward namely IZHAN YAQUBI S/O SARTAJ AHMAD instead of IZHAN YAQUBI S/O SARTAJ AHMAD YAQUBI GANIE , his Actual particulars as per birth, revenue and other allied records. Now I am going to apply for Correction of the same. Objection if any may be Conveyed to the concerned authorities within seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

Sartaj Ahmad Yaqubi Ganie
S/O Mohd Yaqub Ganie





Day-Long Workshop on Realising the Goals of Sustainable and Holistic Development through MGNREGA held at Kulgam.

■ Farooq Rather.

Kulgam: April 12, A day-long workshop on "Realising the Goals of Sustainable and Holistic Development through MGNREGA" was conducted today at Conference Hall of Mini-secretariat Kulgam. The workshop aimed to bring together key stakeholders to deliberate on how the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) can be leveraged more effectively to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth in rural areas. The event was inaugurated by District Development Commissioner Kulgam Athar Aamir Khan (IAS).

Speaking on the occasion the DDC emphasized the transformative potential of MGNREGA in promoting not just rural employment, but also environmental sustainability, social equity, and grassroots development. "I have seen deserts gets converted into green land under MGNREGA in "natural resource management" programme. "It is right opportunity to make people to earn their livelihood under this scheme." he added. "This scheme is meant for the poorest of the poor, for their welfare if implemented properly on ground" he maintained. The key issues discussed during the



workshop included: Best Practices in Sustainable Asset Creation under

MGNREGA Convergence Strategies with other rural development programs. Role of Community Participation in holistic development Capacity Building and Innovation in MGNREGA implementation. The officials from Rural Development and Panchayati Raj department participated in knowledge-sharing and interactive discussions. Case studies highlighting successful MGNREGA interventions from across the country were presented, showcasing the program's role in water conservation, afforestation, livelihood diversification, and resilience building. The workshop concluded with a set of actionable recommendations to

enhance the effectiveness of MGNREGA in aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensuring that economic development goes hand in hand with environmental care and social inclusion. The event had a special focus and discussion on annual action plan 2025-26. The event was organized by rural development department in collaboration with Distt Administration. Among others, the workshop was attended by ADDC Reyaz Ahmad, ACD Syed Naseer, Xen RDD, all BDO's, AEEs, Programme Officers, VLWs, GRS's and other officials of department.

DC Kupwara reviews implementation of PCMA

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, APRIL 12: To take stock of the implementation of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA) in the district, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today convened a meeting of concerned officers, here. Addressing the meeting, DC said that prevention of child marriage is an important cause which needs joint efforts from all stakeholders to curb the menace from the society. She impressed upon the officers to work with close coordination and make concerted efforts for this cause. DC directed all the concerned officers to hold awareness camps at their respective levels to prevent the incidences of child marriage. It was given out that



the awareness about PCMA shall be made part of the Block Diwas and Thana Diwas. To ensure timely action on the cases, Ashas and Anganwari Workers shall report the cases to BMO or CDPO or Tehsildars/NTs who are designated as Child Marriage Prohibition Officers under prohibition of the

child marriage. The Education department shall investigate into the dropped out students to check whether it is related to child marriage. ACR Kupwara, CEO, ALC, CDPOs and officers from Social Welfare, Police and Child Welfare Committee Kupwara were present in the meeting.

Distt admin Bandipora conducts GCES training for Revenue officials

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, APRIL 12: In order to strengthen the agricultural data collection mechanism, the District Administration Bandipora on Saturday organized a training programme on General Crop Estimation Survey (GCES) for revenue officials at the Mini Secretariat, Bandipora.

The training session was aimed at equipping the revenue officials with a thorough understanding of the methodology involved and use of mobile application devised for conducting crop cutting experiments including sampling techniques, plot selection, harvesting procedures, and weighing—essential components for accurate estimation of crop yields. Assistant Commis-



sioner Revenue (ACR) Bandipora, was present at the event, while as Naib Tehsildar conducted the training session and delivered a detailed presentation on GCES methodology and field-level protocols.

Speaking on the occasion, ACR highlighted the importance of such trainings, stating that GCES plays a pivotal role in generating reliable and authentic crop yield data. He said the training is designed to empower our field functionaries to con-

tribute effectively towards accurate agricultural statistics, which are essential for evidence-based policy-making and strategic planning in the agriculture sector.

ACR urged the officials to treat the crop estimation process with utmost seriousness and adopt standardized procedures during field operations.

The training also included a discussion session where participating officials shared field-level challenges.

Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan: Series of awareness programmes held across Pulwama

■ HT News Network

PULWAMA, APRIL 12: As part of the ongoing flagship campaign- Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan aimed at combating drug abuse, a series of impactful awareness programmes were today held at Pulwama, Khrew, Tral, Pampore and Awantipora Municipalities of Pulwama district. These programmes mark a significant intensification of the district administration's anti-drug initiative, following the earlier awareness drives held across rural panchayats.

Today's events witnessed active participation from officials of key departments including Health, Education, Police, Social Welfare and Rural Development, alongside representatives from Women Self Help Groups (SHGs), local civil society and large gatherings of students and youth.

The sessions focused on sensitizing the public, particularly the youth about the devastating physical, psychological and social consequences of drug addiction. Special emphasis was placed on preventive education, role of families and communities in early detection and the accessibility of rehabilitation and counselling services.

Speakers at the events reiterated the need for a community-driven approach to effectively tackle the growing challenge of substance abuse. Thorough discussions, interactive sessions and expert talks were held during which participants were encouraged to act as agents of change within their localities.

Ayesha Ali Academy kanipora kulgam Organizes Annual Road Race

■ Farooq Rather.

Kulgam: Ayesha Ali Academy successfully conducted the Annual Road Race 2025 for boys from grades 6th to 10th. Over 70 students participated with remarkable enthusiasm and determination in the 2 km uphill race from Laroo to Kanipora, showcasing their fitness, spirit, and competitive drive. Winners of the Event, Attaul Mujeed Hammad Shah – 1st Position, Athar Subzar – 2nd Position, Aarfeen – 3rd Position, Mir Hatim – 4th Position, Samar Nazir – 5th Position, Munazim Nisar – 6th Position Chairman Dr. Feroz Ahmad Padder extended his heartfelt congratulations to all the winners and participants for their commendable performances. He also expressed sincere gratitude to the District Administration – DC Kulgam Athar Aamir Khan (IAS), SSP Kulgam Sahil Sarangal (IPS) DYSP Kulgam Mohd Ayoub Rather, and SHO Kulgam Sabzar Ahmad for their support and presence, which ensured the smooth and secure conduct of the event. Dr. Padder emphasized that such events are crucial in promoting physical fitness and instilling discipline among the youth. Principal Mr. Javid Ahmad Bhat also congratulated all the students and staff for organizing the event with such coordination and excellence. He appreciated the students' sportsman spirit and reaffirmed the academy's commitment to holistic development through sports and extracurricular activities.

90 Bn CRPF Organizes Free Medical camp at Bejebahara.

■ HT News Network

Anantnag: April, 12: 90 BN CRPF, in its ongoing efforts to strengthen community relations and provide essential services to the local populace under the aegis of CRPF Madadgar organized a free medical camps at Govt Primary School, vill Kanjigund, Bijbehara, distt Anantnag. This camp aimed to offer medical assistance to underprivileged sections of society, especially in remote areas where access to healthcare is limited. During the camp a range of healthcare services including free general checkups, consultations with specialist doctors and free distribution of medicines were provided. Sh. Kamalendra Pratap Singh (Commandant 90Bn), Sh. S.N. Meena (Second in Command 90 Bn), and Abdul Rashid, (Principal, Govt Primary School, Kanjigund) also were present. A team of experienced CRPF, civil doctors and paramedics were present to ensure the highest quality of care. The event saw an overwhelming response from all age group of the society. Total 224 people of different age & gender have been benefitted during the medical camp from village Kanjigund and Uranhall. "These effort by the CRPF not only address to provide healthcare needs but also play a significant role in building trust.

One-Day Scientific Symposium on Millets Convened at Middle School Chountipora Zone Mawer

■ HT News Network

Chountipora, April 12: In a laudable stride towards fostering agricultural awareness and sustainability, a one-day scientific symposium was held at Middle School Chountipora. The enlightening event was meticulously organised under the stewardship of Mr. Mohsin Ahsan War, Zonal Nodal Officer for National Initiatives, in synergy with Mr. Javed Iqbal Mir, the Zonal Cultural Coordinator of Mawer Zone.

The seminar, thematically anchored in "Millets for Sustainable Development: Utilisation and the Imperative for Enhanced Millet Yield", sought to underscore the pivotal role of millets in ensuring food security, ecological balance, and economic resilience. This significant academic convergence unfolded under the noble directions of the esteemed Zonal Education Officer Mawer, whose unwavering support lent the event an aura of purpose and intellectual



gravitas. Among the dignitaries gracing the occasion were the Headmaster of UPS Chountipora, the Zonal Nodal Officer for Inclusive Education, and a cadre of distinguished escort teachers from various high and higher secondary institutions of the zone. Their presence added a layer of scholarly and pedagogic depth to the deliberations. The symposium served as an imperative platform for disseminating knowledge, cultivating scientific temperament among students, and accentuating the indispensability of traditional grains.

DLSA Ganderbal holds Legal Literacy Camp at GBHSS Chattergul

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, APRIL 12: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Ganderbal, in collaboration with the Chief Education Office, Ganderbal, organised Legal Literacy Camp today, at Government Boys Higher Secondary School (GBHSS) Chattergul Kangan.

The camp aimed to educate children, women and their families on child protection laws like Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, informing communities about the role of Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) and Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) and providing information on accessing legal aid for children who are victims of abuse.

During the event, awareness was also raised on the rights of children in conflict with the law, ensuring fair and humane treatment as per the provisions of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and to promote rehabilitation of children in conflict with the law. The event was held under the leadership of Abdul Nasir, Chairman DLSA Ganderbal.

The program was attended by a diverse group of dignitaries and stakeholders, including, Sheikh Babar Hussain, Secretary DLSA Ganderbal; Oneel Kumar Bhat, Chief Education Officer Ganderbal; Aman Ashraf Wani, Principal, GBHSS Chattergul; faculty members of GBHSS Chattergul, officials from the Chief Education Office.

Chairperson DDC Pulwama takes review of District Capex

■ HT News Network

PULWAMA, APRIL 12: Chairperson, District Development Council (DDC) Pulwama, Syed Abdul Bari Andrabi, today chaired the General Council meeting at Circuit House Pulwama to review the progress of developmental works undertaken under the District Capex Budget 2024-25.

At the outset, the Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Pulwama presented a comprehensive overview of the projects completed in the previous financial year. The presentation covered progress across key sectors including Minor Irrigation, Roads and Buildings (R&B), Elementary and Secondary Education, Health, Youth Services & Sports, Public Health Engineering (PHE), Aspirational Block Development Schemes and Aspirational Panchayat Development Schemes.

The meeting was informed that the total approved outlay for 2024-25 stands at



Rs. 8471.57 lakh. Funds available up to the end of March 2025 amounted to Rs. 7299.70 lakh, while expenditure incurred amounts to Rs. 6141.36 lakhs, reflecting an impressive 84.13% expenditure against the available funds, which is among the highest in the UT.

During the meeting, Chairperson DDC

undertook a detailed review of the physical and financial status of works executed under the District Capex and other development schemes. He emphasised the timely completion of all approved works and urged officers to ensure 100% fund utilisation to prevent any lapses. He also underscored the need for trans-

parency and accountability in the implementation of all projects.

While reviewing the functioning of the Rural Development Department (RDD), Chairperson advised the Block Development Officers (BDOs) to focus on effective convergence with departments such as Horticulture, Floriculture, Sericulture, and Youth Services & Sports. He particularly stressed the need for the augmentation and beautification of Amrit Sarovars and urged BDOs to ensure the development of at least one functional Amrit Sarovar per block.

The meeting was attended by the members of DDC, Assistant Commissioner Development, Pulwama; Chief Education Officer, Pulwama; Joint Director Planning (CPO), Pulwama; Block Development Officers and Officers of other departments.

The meeting concluded with a call for enhanced inter-departmental coordination and community involvement to achieve tangible results on the ground.





SSP Kulgam chairs crime/ security review meeting.

■ Farooq Rather.



Kulgam: April 12: In order to review the crime/ security scenario of district Kulgam, SSP Kulgam Shri Sahil Sarangal-IPS chaired a meeting at Conference Hall DPO Kulgam. The primary focus of the meeting was on addressing issues related to new criminal laws, NDPS, UAPA, CCTNS, data dynamic and assessing the overall security scenario in the district. During the meeting, SSP Kulgam emphasized the importance of efficient law enforcement, proper investigation procedures, and the swift disposal of cases. He directed officers to ensure a proactive approach in dealing with drug-related offenses under the NDPS Act and stressed the need for strict action against individuals involved in unlawful activities under the UAPA. Further SSP Kulgam said that the supervisory officers and SHO's must take all the measures to improve investigation with latest techniques and standard operating practices. Moreover, officers were directed to ensure safety and security of non-local labourers and employees. Discussions also revolved around enhancing intelligence gathering, strengthening anti-drug initiatives, and improving coordination among different security agencies to ensure a robust security environment in the district. The officers were instructed to maintain heightened vigilance, particularly in sensitive areas, to counter any potential threats to peace and stability.

DC Kupwara expresses grief over College bus accident; visits injured at GMC Handwara

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, APRIL 12: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today expressed deep sorrow over the unfortunate road accident of College Bus early morning on Saturday at Vodhpura Handwara that resulted in the death of two students and injury to several others. Soon after the incident, the DC rushed to the GMC Handwara where injured persons were taken and are undergoing treatment. She monitored the situation and directed the hospital authorities to ensure proper treatment and care of the injured for their speedy recovery. Ayushi expressed her deep sorrow over the incident and extended condolences with the bereaved families who lost their dear ones in the unfortunate accident. Talking to media persons, the DC said that an investigation in the matter is going on and an FIR has been registered. Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC), Handwara, Javed Naseem Masoodi also visited the road accident victims at District Hospital Handwara and took stock of the situation. He interacted with the injured students and hospital staff and directed the hospital administration for best possible medical care for speedy recovery of the injured. He expressed deep regret over the incident and prayed for the recovery of the injured.

Seeds, Herbs & Saplings distributed to promote Poshan Vatikas in Tribal areas of Shopian

■ HT News Network

SHOPIAN, APRIL 12: In a significant step towards improving the nutritional well-being of tribal communities in Shopian, the District Administration under the DA-JUGA organized a distribution drive of seeds, medicinal herbs and seasonal vegetable saplings at Anganwadi Centres of Pehlipora and Government Upper Primary School Kathuhan. The initiative was held under the directions of the Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta and was spearheaded by District Nodal Officer AYUSH. The activity aimed at establishing Poshan Vatikas in tribal villages to encourage the use of home-grown herbs and vegetables, thereby promoting sustainable and self-reliant nutrition practices.

Fit India Movement: YSS Bandipora conducts Road Race

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, APRIL 12: Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS), Zone Bandipora today organized Road Race under the Fit India movement. The race witnessed enthusiastic participation from boys and girls across all age groups, commencing from various venues and culminated at ZPEO Office, Gamroo Bandipora. District Youth Services and Sports Officer Bandipora highlighted commitment of department in promoting physical fitness and sports culture among the youth.

Javed Rana announces Rs 1 crore for the construction of Multi-Purpose Marketing Asset in Nagrota Constituency

Voos to make Nagrota a Model Constituency with 24x7 basic amenities

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, April 12: In a major boost to rural infrastructure and youth empowerment, Minister for Forest, Jal Shakti and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana announced Rs 1 crore for the construction of a Multi-Purpose Marketing Asset in Nagrota Constituency.

The announcement was made during a well-attended public meeting at Village Panj Garain in Dansal Block of Nagrota. The meeting was held under the chairmanship DDC Member Dansal, Shameem Begum, and witnessed participation from key National Conference leaders including senior leader and former minister Ajay Sadhotra, Provincial President JKNC Adv. Rattan Lal Gupta, BDC Chairman Ch. Rehmet Ali, Thoru Ram, Saraj Din, Balwant Singh and Neetu Jamwal Block Presidents. At the beginning of the meeting, BDC



Chairman Rehmet, DDC Shameem Begum Block Presidents Thoru Ram and Saraj Din apprised the senior leadership of the pressing issues faced by the people due to lack of interest of earlier government, including poor water supply, forest clearance delays,

and challenges in tribal affairs.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Javed Rana said that the Omar Abdullah-led Government is committed to ensuring inclusive growth, safeguarding the rights of tribal communities, and delivering

essential services with efficiency. He assured the people that their long-pending demands for improved water supply would be fulfilled under the Jal Shakti schemes, with efforts underway to provide 24x7 drinking water to every household in the region. The Minister further assured that issues related to forest clearances and tribal rights would be taken up on a priority basis, reaffirming the government's dedication to protecting the interests of marginalized and forest-dwelling populations. Highlighting his vision for the constituency, Rana announced the allocation of Rs 1 crore for the construction of a Multi-Purpose Marketing Asset in Nagrota Constituency, which he said would serve as a game-changer for the local economy. "This initiative will create employment avenues, especially for the youth, by promoting entrepreneurship and providing a platform for marketing local produce and goods," he added.

Dy CM pays surprise visit to Govt Ayurvedic Medical College Akhnoor

Directs executive agency to ensure timely completion of development works

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 12: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary today paid a surprise visit to Government Ayurvedic Medical College and Nursing College at Akhnoor to inspect the progress of development works being executed there.

The concerned official apprised the DyCM regarding approved works including boys hostel and girls hostel at Ayurvedic Medical College and a new block at Nursing College.

It was informed that Boys hostel has been sanctioned with an estimated cost of



Rs 6.39 crore while girls hostel has been approved with an estimated cost of Rs 6.50 crore and an additional new block in Nursing College has to be completed with an estimated cost of Rs 2.64 crore. It was also informed that all the works

will be completed within 10 to 12 months duration. During the visit, the Deputy Chief Minister inspected the quality of construction works and directed the executing agencies to expedite the pace of progress while maintaining high

standards in work execution. He emphasized the significance of timely completion of development works besides maintaining the quality of material to enhance the public amenities. The Deputy Chief Minister reiterated government's commitment towards accelerating developmental projects for welfare of the people. He asked the officials to address any bottlenecks and ensure the projects are completed within the stipulated timelines. The Deputy Chief Minister reiterated government's commitment towards accelerating developmental projects for welfare of the people.

DC Jammu conducts extensive tour of Jammu North, Marh Tehsils

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 12: Deputy Commissioner Sachin Kumar Vaishya today undertook a comprehensive tour of villages in Jammu North and Marh tehsils. Accompanied by Additional District Development Commissioner Sher Singh, the DC inspected the on-ground functioning of the Revenue Department and reviewed the status of Girdawari registrations. Additionally, the DC reviewed functioning of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Office and Tehsil Office Jammu North, issuing necessary instructions to improve efficiency and services delivery. The villages visited during the tour included Pakhian, Flora Harmkund and other intermediate villages between the two tehsils. The DC examined revenue records, registers and Girdawari documentation to ensure compliance with standard procedures. At Flora Harmkund, the DC interacted with locals to address their grievances. He enquired about the progress of the SVAMITVA survey and Girdawari registration while also noting local issues such as irrigation facilities and road connectivity for appropriate redressal. During his visit to Pakhian village, Sachin Kumar Vaishya inspected Government High School Pakhian of Zone Bhalwal. He observed unauthorised absence of some staff members and directed that show-cause notices be issued to them. Furthermore, he instructed that their salaries.

District Administration Rajouri organises series of events to mark Rajouri Day Celebration

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, APRIL 12: A series of vibrant and impactful events were organized here today as part of the Rajouri Day Celebration, drawing enthusiastic participation from all sections of society. In a significant initiative to combat drug abuse, Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma, flagged off a special vehicle to spread awareness under the Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan. The initiative aims to sensitize the public, especially youth about the perils of substance abuse and promote a healthy lifestyle. Adding a cultural dimension to the celebrations, an impactful play was staged by the renowned Rangmanch Theatre Group at Raina Auditorium, highlighting the historical and cultural significance of Rajouri and showcasing its rich heritage. The much-anticipated Rajouri Got Talent competition reached its grand finale at the

Sports Stadium, where talented participants from across the district showcased their artistic prowess. Winners of the event were felicitated by the District Administration for their exemplary performances. The Deputy Commissioner also inspected the departmental stalls put up at the venue, showcasing the achievements and services of different government departments aimed at enhancing citizen awareness and outreach. A special highlight of the day was the arrival of the Motorbike Rally (Biking Expedition) organized by Asphalt Adventurers in collaboration with Rotary Club Rajouri Grand. The rally, flagged off from Jammu by Transport Commissioner Vishesh Pal Mahajan, was received with great enthusiasm at the Sports Stadium Kheora. The expedition sought to spread messages on Road Safety and Drug-Free Jammu and Kashmir.

SVaNidhi se Samriddhi-Main Bhi Digital: Week-long campaign concludes in Udhampur

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 12: The week-long campaign under "SVaNidhi se Samriddhi and Main Bhi Digital" conducted by the Udhampur Municipal Council successfully concluded here today.

The campaign was aimed at empowering eligible beneficiaries of flagship schemes through financial inclusion, digital literacy and comprehensive outreach.

As part of the campaign, a robust door-to-door outreach drive was carried out by field teams to spread awareness, facilitate enrolment and link the beneficiaries to various government schemes.

The campaign received an overwhelming response from the people who evinced keen interest in availing the benefits of these welfare schemes.

Special emphasis was laid on promoting

digital transactions and equipping people with the knowledge and tools to operate digitally.

Chief Executive Officer MC, Rajinder Digra appreciated the efforts of the field staff and encouraged the beneficiaries to make full use of the opportunities being provided under the mission. He reiterated the commitment of the Urban Local Body to continue such outreach initiatives to ensure inclusive growth and self-reliance. As part of the campaign, a robust door-to-door outreach drive was carried out by field teams to spread awareness, facilitate enrolment and link the beneficiaries to various government schemes.

The campaign received an overwhelming response from the people who evinced keen interest in availing the benefits of these welfare schemes.

JNV Doda conducts admission Test for academic yr 2025-26

DC inspects Exam Centres, emphasises fair conduct

■ HT News Network

DODA, APRIL 12: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Harvinder Singh today conducted inspection visits to Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Selection Test (JNVST)-2025 examination centres established here at Government Boys Higher Secondary School and Government Higher Secondary School Khalleni.

The JNVST was held for admission to Class 6th for the academic session 2025-26. At the main centre in Govt. Boys HSS Doda, a total of 112 out of 134 registered students appeared for the entrance test. The examination was conducted in a fair, peaceful and well-coordinated manner under proper supervision.

During the visit, DC Doda reviewed the seating arrangements, security measures, and overall exam preparedness. He inter-



acted with the examination staff and appreciated their efforts in ensuring trans-

parency and discipline during the conduct of the test. Later, the DDC visited the Govt

HSS Khalleni to inspect the arrangements for the JNVST examination. He interacted with the teaching staff and students, reviewed the classroom environment and took note of the existing infrastructure in the school. He directed the concerned departments to immediately initiate repair and renovation work for the classrooms. Further, the DDC instructed the officials to prepare a comprehensive proposal for necessary infrastructural upgrades, including improved classroom facilities, enhanced sanitation provisions, and overall campus development to ensure a better learning environment for students.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner Doda also inspected the market area at Khalleni. During the visit, local residents raised demands for the establishment of a bus stand and a passenger shed to address the needs of daily commuters.



DDC reviews implementation of Holistic Agriculture Development Programme in Udhampur district

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 12: District Development Commissioner Saloni Rai today chaired a meeting with officers of the line departments and representatives from banking institutions to review the implementation of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme. The review meeting primarily focused on assessing the performance matrix of departments involved in HADP, Daksh Kisan portal enrolment, sanctioning status of applications, progress on established and tracked units and enrolment of farms and farmers by Krishi Kendra Groups and Krishi Udyamis, status of credit disbursement by financial institutions to eligible beneficiaries. Speaking at the meeting, the DDC directed the stakeholder departments to adopt a proactive and coordinated approach in sanctioning pending applications under HADP. She laid special emphasis on increasing enrolment on the Daksh Kisan



Portal and ensuring timely completion of courses by the enrolled candidates. She stressed the importance of organizing awareness camps at grassroots level to motivate more farmers to register on the portal and take full advantage of the training modules.

Highlighting the role of financial support in setting up agricultural and allied units, the DDC directed officers to motivate farmers to come forward and avail credit facilities being extended by the banking institutions. She also impressed upon the bank representatives to expedite the

process of loan disbursement to the eligible beneficiaries. The DDC further instructed the concerned departments to formulate a robust action plan for improving the overall progress under HADP. She emphasized the need for better inter-departmental coordination to ensure seamless implementation of the programme and achieve tangible outcomes on ground. Speaking at the meeting, the DDC directed the stakeholder departments to adopt a proactive and coordinated approach in sanctioning pending applications under HADP. She laid special emphasis on increasing enrolment on the Daksh Kisan Portal and ensuring timely completion of courses by the enrolled candidates. She stressed the importance of organizing awareness camps at grassroots level to motivate more farmers to register on the portal and take full advantage of the training modules. Highlighting the role of financial support in setting up agricultural and allied units, the DC directed officers to motivate farmers to come forward.

Vivek Bali Greets People of Jammu & Kashmir on the Auspicious Occasion of Baisakhi

HT News Network



Jammu | 12 April:- Vivek Bali Prominent Political leader, has extended warm greetings and best wishes to the people of Jammu & Kashmir on the joyous occasion of Baisakhi, a festival that marks the harvest season and holds immense cultural and religious significance. In his message, Mr. Bali said, "Baisakhi is a celebration of prosperity, hope, and new beginnings. It reflects the vibrant culture and spirit of unity among our people. I wish this auspicious day brings happiness, peace, and development to every home in Jammu & Kashmir." He also emphasized the importance of festivals in promoting harmony and mutual respect in society. "Let us all come together to celebrate this day with joy and reaffirm our commitment to the progress and well-being of our region," he added.

MVD Rajouri conducts Enforcement Drive

HT News Network

RAJOURI, APRIL 12: In a concerted effort to promote road safety and reinforce traffic regulations, the Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) Rajouri, under the supervision of ARTO Rajesh and MVI Rahul Singh, conducted an intensive drive against traffic violations across the district. As many as 32 vehicles were e-challaned under different provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act, amounting to a total fine of over Rs. 2.71 lakh. In a specific case, a bus was seized at Police Post Chingus for illegally transporting goods on its roof, which is a serious violation of safety norms.

Empowering Field Forces for Greener Tomorrow J&K Forest Department hosts workshop on Forest Inventory Techniques

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 12: In a significant step towards strengthening forest resource assessment and sustainable management, the Jammu and Kashmir Forest Department today hosted a two-day training workshop on National Forest Inventory (NFI) and Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) for field functionaries drawn from the Forest Divisions of the Jammu region. The workshop was held in the presence of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force (PCCF & HoFF) Suresh Kumar Gupta, who graced the event as the Chief Guest. Among others present were CEO CAMPAT Rabi Kumar, Nodal Officer FCA Dr. K. Anandh and Chief Conservator of Forests, Jammu Dr. M.K. Kumar, besides other Forest officers. Two technical experts from the Forest Survey of India (FSI), Regional Office Northern Zone, Shimla, led the first day's sessions with in-depth training on forest inventory methodologies, data collection standards, and the significance of NFI and CFI in scientific forestry. The second day featured hands-on field training on the laying out of sample plots, an essential component of forest monitoring and resource estimation. The training underscored the



pivotal role that NFI and CFI play in the compilation of the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) and the preparation of Working Plans, both crucial for policy-making and forest management in India and the region. The workshop witnessed the participation of 70 officers of various ranks from the Forest Department, representing all the 18 territorial divisions of Jammu region. This initiative significantly contributed to the capacity building of field staff, equipping them with modern methodologies and best practices

for conducting forest inventories.

Notably, the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is a pioneer in undertaking such an inventory exercise on a self-reliant basis, unlike many other states which depend on the Forest Survey of India (FSI) to carry out similar studies. This step showcases the J&K Forest Department's commitment to institutional strengthening and data-driven forest management strategies aimed at preserving the ecological wealth of Jammu and Kashmir.

Chairman DLSA leads UTRC visit to District Jail Udhampur

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 12: Principal District and Sessions Judge (Chairman DLSA) Udhampur Virinder Singh Bhou led a visit of the Under Trial Review Committee (UTRC) here to District Jail to assess cases of individuals recommended to the Committee.

Accompanied by Dr. Smriti Sharma Secretary District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Advocate Pawan Gupta, Deputy Legal Aid Defence Counsel (LADC) and Advocate Viney Singh, Assistant Legal Aid Defence Counsel (LADC) Udhampur.

The Chairman and Secretary DLSA inquired about the charges against the individuals, the progress of their cases, and any legal representation they currently had.

Further they interacted with other inmates, inquiring about their problems and grievances related to their confinement. They visited barracks to assess their condition.



The Chairman checked the quality of the food provided to the inmates. He also inspected the overall hygiene of facilities, including cleanliness of the washrooms.

During the interaction, the Secretary emphasised the importance of the Right to Free Legal Aid and Legal Representation. She explained to the inmates how they could access these rights and the procedures involved in seeking legal assistance. This was crucial in ensuring that the inmates understood their entitlements and the support available to them under the law. During the interaction, the Secretary emphasised the importance of the Right to Free Legal Aid and Legal Representation.

Long standing demand met: Kathua Admin dedicates Fire Tender to Basohli people

HT News Network

KATHUA, APRIL 12: The District Administration Kathua led by District Development Commissioner Dr. Rakesh Minhas today handed over a fully-equipped fire tender to Basohli Public. The significant step addressed the long-standing demand of the local community and marks a crucial improvement in the region's fire safety infrastructure. The fire tender, sourced by Administration from NHPC as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative, will be stationed at Basohli—a region that, until now, lacked a sanctioned unit of the Fire & Emergency Services Department. The newly deployed vehicle will serve as a crucial first-response resource in fire-related emergencies, significantly improving the region's disaster readiness. Speaking at the handover ceremony, MLA Basohli Darshan Singh underscored the importance of accessible emergency infrastructure in remote areas. "This is a vital step towards bridging a critical gap. In the absence of a dedicated fire and emergency services unit in Basohli, the district administration come up with this initiative of having dedicated Fire Tender stationed at Basohli. He said "We will ensure this fire tender is fully functional and effectively managed by locally." District Development Commissioner Dr Rakesh Minhas reiterated the administration's broader commitment to improving emergency services across Kathua. "This initiative is just the beginning. We are actively working to replicate this model in other underserved and high-risk areas of the district and similar service will be started in Billawar and Bani soon.

District Admin Udhampur conducts awareness programme under Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

HT News Network



UDHAMPUR, APRIL 12: District Administration Udhampur, under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai, today organized an awareness programme at Devika Ghat as part of the Information, Education & Communication campaign under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan.

The programme was presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh.

Addressing the participants, the ADC highlighted the pivotal role of parents in identifying early signs of drug abuse. He emphasised the importance of vigilant monitoring and timely intervention in preventing youth from falling prey to substance abuse.

He added that the District Administration is conducting a series of IEC campaigns at the panchayat level, in municipalities and across educational institutions, particularly targeting vulnerable age groups. These efforts aim to raise awareness at the grassroots level and ensure the effective rehabilitation of individuals affected by drug addiction. The ADC encouraged students to actively participate in awareness initiatives and serve as ambassadors in spreading the anti-drug message among their peers, families, and communities. Resource persons from various departments threw light on the social, economic and medical impacts of drug addiction.

Fit India Movement: GGHS Pul Doda hosts Inter-House Competitions

HT News Network

DODA, APRIL 12: Government Girls High School Pul Doda today organized school-level intramural house competitions in the recess break under the banner of the Fit India Movement and the School Games Federation of India (SGFI).

The events aimed to promote physical fitness, team spirit and active participation among students. A series of competitions were held to encourage students to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle, in alignment with the goals of the nationwide Fit India initiative. The events were conducted under the supervision of Incharge Headmaster Indu Bhushan Razdan, with active support from staff members including Swami Raj (Master), Akhter (Teacher), Touseef Ahmed (Teacher) and Firdous Hussain (Teacher). Among the various competitions, the Kho-Kho and Kabaddi matches for boys under 17 years of age were the major highlights. Both events were fiercely contested and were ultimately won by Eco House, showcasing the strength, coordination, and sportsmanship of its participants. The competitions were a grand success, thanks to the collective efforts and coordination of the school staff. The events also helped build leadership qualities, discipline, and mutual respect among students from different houses. Such intramural activities contribute significantly to students' overall personality development alongside their academic progress.

Tawi Arti, Baisakhi to be celebrated with Grandeur at Suryaputri Tawi River Front

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 12: The Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) in collaboration with Jammu Smart City, Directorate of Tourism and Raghunath Bazar Vikas Corridor Council is all set to celebrate Baisakhi with great enthusiasm and cultural splendor at the newly developed Suryaputri Tawi River Front. The announcement was made by Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation, Dr Devansh Yadav during a press conference held today. Dr. Yadav informed the media that the festivities will be formally inaugurated by the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Shri Manoj Sinha. He emphasized that this year's celebrations aim to highlight the rich cultural heritage of the region and foster a spirit of unity among the citizens. As part of the vibrant festivities, a traditional wrestling competition would be organized at the River Front, showcasing local talent and traditional sports.

District Court Udhampur discusses preparations for National Lok Adalat scheduled on May 10, 2025

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 12: A virtual meeting was held today in the Conference Hall of the District Court Complex Udhampur to discuss preparations for the upcoming National Lok Adalat scheduled on May 10, 2025.

The meeting was attended by representatives from various banks

operating in Udhampur, insurance companies, and their respective advocates.

The meeting was chaired by Virinder Singh Bhou, Principal District and Sessions Judge (Chairman DLSA) and attended by Kamlesh Pandit, Addl. District and Sessions Judge Udhampur and Dr. Smriti Sharma, Secretary DLSA.

The meeting aimed to ensure that



all the necessary arrangements in place for the successful conduct of National Lok Adalat.

The Chairman emphasised the importance of the National Lok Adalat and outlined the strategies for resolving and disposing of as many cases as possible. He discussed different aspects like Case Selection and categorization, etc. He further suggested that banks/companies should

offer flexible settlement options to customers and asked them to proactively publicize their involvement in Lok Adalat through their website, social media or branch communication materials so that the general public can settle their cases. The meeting was attended by representatives from various banks operating in Udhampur, insurance companies, and their respective advocates.





EAM Jaishankar, Italian FM Tajani renew commitment to take forward IMEEC

UNI
NEW DELHI, APR 12

Visiting Italian Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held bilateral talks here during which they renewed their commitment to take forward the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) strategic initiative.

In this context, EAM also welcomed Italy's appointment of a Special Envoy for IMEEC.

Tajani is visiting India from April 11-12, and is accompanied by the Minister of University and Research, Anna Maria Bernini, and a large delegation of businesses, leading universities and research institutions.

FM Tajani also met with the Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal. Minister Bernini met with Ministers of State of Science and Technology, and Education.

During the delegation level talks, EAM and FM Tajani reviewed the growing bilateral cooperation under the ambit of the Joint Strategic Action Plan (JSAP) 2025-29, which included the areas of trade and investment, defence and security, space, science and technology, clean energy transition, culture, tourism and people to people ties, a statement said.

They expressed satisfaction at the regular



high-level interactions and exchanges, and noted the vast potential of cooperation between India and Italy in areas of AI, cyber, telecom, digital technologies, renewable energy, biofuels, education and academic collaborations, scientific research and mobility of youth and professionals, among others.

The Ministers reiterated their commitment to elevating the bilateral strategic partnership and ensuring concrete outcomes from the JSAP.

EAM Jaishankar and FM Tajani exchanged views on global and regional developments of mutual interest. EAM welcomed Italy's continued focus on the Indo-Pacific. EAM and FM Tajani renewed their commitment to take forward the India Middle East Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC). In this context, EAM welcomed Italy's appointment of a Special Envoy for IMEEC.

EAM, DPM Tajani and Minister Bernini co-chaired the inaugural India-Italy Business, Science and Tech Forum which seeks to facilitate

tech collaborations, innovation, academic and R&D partnerships, co-production and joint business ventures.

The forum saw the participation of more than 100 Italian companies and counterpart Indian companies from four key sectors: Industry 4.0 and new technologies; infrastructure, transport and logistics; clean energy transition; and aerospace and defence.

Several B2B meetings were held with the objective of forging economic and commercial partnerships.

An Education, Science and Tech, Innovation Forum was also organized in which Heads of universities and research centres from both countries participated to explore research and innovation, and higher education collaborations. The Ministry of Science and Technology, GOI and Ministry of University and Research, Italy signed an MoU for cooperation in the field of scientific research.

EAM and DPM also visited the painting of Cara-

vaggio, the 17th century Italian artist at the Italian Cultural Centre. This, along with the exhibition of Roman mosaics and Italian textiles inaugurated during the visit, further enriched the strong cultural ties between the two countries.

India-Italy bilateral relations are acquiring diversity and depth, with regular Leaders level engagement and Ministerial dialogues. The visit and engagements of DPM Tajani were instrumental in taking forward the strategic partnership and diversifying bilateral cooperation across domains, as per JSAP 2025-29, the statement added.

Ahead of his India visit, FM Tajani said: "We strongly believe in the Italy-India partnership, particularly in light of the Joint Strategic Action Plan aimed at strengthening our bilateral ties in key areas of cooperation.

"Energy transition, connectivity, advanced manufacturing, defence, security, tourism, migration and mobility are just some of the sectors we intend to promote together during the 2025-2029 period.

"In 2024, trade between Italy and India exceeded euro 14 billion, with Italian exports growing by over 30% in the past seven years. The spirit of my visit to New Delhi is to give further momentum to these relations."

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj a source of inspiration not only for the country but also for the world - Amit Shah

UNI
KOLHAPUR, APR 12

Union Home minister Amit Shah on Saturday said Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was a source of inspiration not only for the state or country but also for the world.

Shah, who arrived from Pune by helicopter, accompanied with state chief minister Devendra Fadnavis and his two deputies - Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar - earlier paid tribute to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's statue at historic Raigad fort on his 345th death anniversary



and on the occasion of centenary celebrations of the renovation of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's mausoleum on Raigad fort.

He said there was need

to spread the thoughts of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in the country.

With great respect to Rajmata Jijamata, Shah said, "Jijau not only gave

birth to Shivrai but gave the thoughts of independence to fulfilment the dream of 'Swarajya'.

He said he has read the 'ShivCharitra' (Biography of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj). Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj had put up a fight with 'Adilshahi, Nizamshahi, Kutubshahi and Aurangzeb.

Fadnavis in his address warned those people who insulted Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

The State government was trying to erect a huge memorial of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in Arabian sea in Mumbai in early.

Mamata appeals for peace following violence in several parts of the state

UNI
KOLKATA, APR 12

Amidst reports of unrest in parts of the state in protest against the new Waqf Act, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday appealed to people to exercise restraint and desist from engaging in any "irreligious" acts in the name of religion.

Without taking any names or mentioning any political party, Banerjee also cautioned not to "incite riots for political gain".

Posting a Bengali message on her official X handle, the Chief Minister wrote, "My sincere appeal to all people of all religions is to remain calm and exercise restraint. Do not engage in any irreligious acts in the name of religion. Every human life is precious—do not incite riots for political gain. Those who are inciting unrest are only harming society."

Banerjee also reiterated that her government would not implement the new law in the state and it did not support the legislation.

"We have made our position absolutely clear—we do not support this law, and it will not be implemented in our state. So, what is the need for vio-



lence? Also keep in mind, legal action will be taken against those instigating riots. We do not tolerate or support any form of violence," she added.

Taking a dig at the central government and BJP in particular, the chief minister wrote, "Let us not forget that the law many are protesting was not made by us; it was enacted by the Central government. Therefore, the responsibility and answers lie with them."

"Certain political parties are trying to exploit religion for their own political benefit. Please do not fall into their trap," she added.

The chief minister's appeal came four days after she addressed a gathering at the Vishwa Navkar Mahamantra Divas, organised by the Jain community in Kolkata where she acknowledged

the concerns of the minority community regarding the Waqf property issue and assured them that their rights and property would be protected under her leadership.

"I want to tell minorities - we know that you are hurt over the Waqf property matter. Please remember that when Didi is here, Didi will protect you and your property. If I resist someone from occupying my house, I cannot allow anyone else's property to be taken away," she had said.

The chief minister, acknowledging the longstanding presence of Muslims in the state, who make up 33 percent of the population, had said that it was her responsibility to ensure their safety and well-being, firmly rejecting any notion of exclusion.

The Bengal Chief Minister's appeal comes in the

aftermath of widespread violence that erupted during protests against the new law on Friday, leading to several vehicles—including police vans—being set ablaze, stone-pelting at security personnel, and road blockades in Malda, Murshidabad, South 24 Parganas and Hooghly districts.

According to the police, over 110 people were arrested in connection with the unrest, and raids continued across the four districts where the protests had turned violent. However, at least 10 police personnel were injured, while both road and rail traffic faced significant disruption.

Sources in the police said that security has been stepped up in Murshidabad's Jangipur and Suti areas on Saturday following widespread violence.

Shortly before the chief minister's message, the state's Director General of Police, Rajeev Kumar, and Additional Director General (Law and Order), Jawed Shamim, also appealed to the people of the state not to pay attention to rumours. Shamim further mentioned that rumour mills are actively operating in various places of the state and the police are identifying the people and are arresting them.

Bihar: Congress leader Akhilesh favours Tejashwi as CM face of Grand Alliance

UNI
PATNA, APR 12

Former president of Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee (BPCC) Akhilesh Prasad Singh on Saturday favoured senior RJD leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav as CM face of Grand Alliance in the next state assembly elections to be held in October-November this year.

Singh said here that Tejashwi was CM face of Grand Alliance in 2020 Bihar assembly elections. Tejashwi was leader of



the opposition in Bihar assembly and he was natural choice for CM face of Grand Alliance, he noted.

"Some leaders of Congress are giving statements that CM face of Grand Alliance would be decided after next assembly elec-

tions," former BPCC president said adding that leaders should avoid making such statements.

He was referring to Bihar in-charge of Congress Krishna Allavaru and former Deputy Chief Minister of Rajasthan Sachin Pilot who had recently said that CM face of Grand Alliance would be decided after next Bihar assembly elections.

"It would be suicidal for Congress to contest alone in Bihar assembly elections as party is not in a position to go solo in next

state electoral battle", Singh said adding that even strong party like BJP did not contest elections alone in Bihar.

BJP had its allies like JD(U), HAM, LJP-R headed by Chirag Paswan and RLM led by Upendra Kushwaha in Bihar, he pointed out. It should be easily understood that BJP claiming itself to be largest party in world, did not contest elections alone in Bihar and how could Congress decide to go alone in electoral battle in the state, he pointed out.

Army chief reviews operational preparedness of Vajra Corps along Western borders

UNI
NEW DELHI, APR 12

Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi visited the Indian Army's Vajra Corps to assess its operational preparedness along the Western borders.

He was accompanied by General Officer Commanding in Chief, Western Command, an Indian Army statement said here on Saturday.

During a comprehensive briefing, the GOC, Vajra Corps, updated the Army chief on the prevailing security environment and the Corps' readiness posture. General Dwivedi later visited select forward locations to gain a first hand appreciation of ground level preparations by frontline formations.

The Army Chief expressed his satisfac-



tion with the seamless synergy among the Indian Air Force, Border Security Force, Punjab Police, and other stakeholders in safeguarding both the border and the hinterland.

Commending the troops' high morale, professionalism, and unwavering dedication, he urged them to maintain the Army's exacting stan-

dards of operational excellence. General Dwivedi also encouraged all ranks to harness cutting edge technologies in line with the Army's transformation roadmap toward a modern, agile force under the national vision of Viksit Bharat - India@2047.

A key highlight of the visit was the COAS's interaction and felicitation of veterans for their selfless

service and ongoing contribution towards nation building. Accompanying him, Sunita Dwivedi, President, Army Women Welfare Association (AWWA), reviewed various welfare initiatives being undertaken by Vajra Corps for the well-being of families and ex-servicemen, reflecting the Army's holistic approach towards welfare and community support.

Gabon starts voting in 1st presidential election since 2023 coup

UNI
LIBREVILLE, APR 12

Gabonese voters went to the polls on Saturday to elect a president in its first presidential election since a coup two years ago, marking the final phase of the country's political transition and the anticipated return to constitutional order.

Polling stations have been in full swing since Saturday morning, observed Xinhua correspondents in Libreville, the country's capital.

Transitional President Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema, who led the coup that ousted former President Ali Bongo Ondimba, is among the eight candidates contesting the presidency.

Nguema resigned from his military post in accordance with Gabon's Elec-



toral Code to participate in the election. His main challenger is Alain-Claude Bilie By Nze, former prime minister under the Bongo administration.

Other candidates include former 2023 presidential contenders Axel Stophene Ibinga Ibinga, a businessman, and Thierry Yvon Michel Ngoma, also a businessman. The only female candidate, businesswoman Zenaba Gninga Channing, has advocated for population growth and the promotion of traditional practices

such as polygamy.

According to the Ministry of the Interior, 3,037 polling stations, including 2,941 within the country and 96 abroad, will close at 6 p.m. local time (1700 GMT) on Saturday, with extensions possible under the electoral law. A total of 920,200 voters are registered, including over 28,000 overseas.

The ministry announced that all bars will be closed from 11:30 p.m. on Friday until midnight on Saturday, describing the decision

as a measure to maintain public order and ensure a peaceful voting environment during this critical moment in the country's democratic process.

Gabon's new constitution, approved in a referendum in November 2024, sets a seven-year presidential term, renewable only once.

A total of 48 national and international observer missions, comprising about 2,450 observers, have been accredited to monitor the vote.

Under the new electoral provisions, the president is elected through a two-round system. A candidate must secure an absolute majority of valid votes in the first round to win outright. If no candidate achieves this threshold, a runoff election will be held between the top two contenders.

Covid-induced immunity-debt behind global rise in flu cases: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

A team of UK researchers has found evidence on how "immunity debt," caused by extended periods of restrictions during Covid-19 pandemic, is causing changes in global transmission patterns of flu.

"Immunity debt" is a phenomenon where populations become more susceptible to infections after extended periods of reduced exposure. While the hypothesis was widely accepted, until now there has been little evidence to back up the theory.

The Covid pandemic led many countries around the world to implement strict public health measures like lockdowns, social distancing, mask-wearing, and travel restrictions.

While these steps were crucial and effective in controlling the spread of



Covid, they led to a dramatic drop in cases of other illnesses like influenza (flu) and respiratory viruses.

However, post-Covid countries worldwide have seen a dramatic surge in cases of flu.

The researchers warned that this "immunity debt" could lead to major flu outbreaks in the years following a pandemic, as populations regain susceptibility to other viruses.

"Our findings provide evidence for the 'immunity debt' hypothesis," said

senior author Daniel Prieto-Alhambra, Professor of Pharmaco- and Device Epidemiology at NDORMS, University of Oxford.

"By limiting flu exposure over the past few years, we've built up a more vulnerable population that is now seeing a major rebound in infections. Fortunately, strategies are available to minimize the impact of these on vulnerable populations, and (flu) vaccination should be encouraged among them," he added.

The study, published in

Advanced Science, analysed global flu data from 116 countries between 2012 and 2024.

They found that during the Covid restriction periods, flu cases dropped by an average of 46 per cent worldwide. However, in 2022, the first winter season after restrictions were lifted, flu cases surged by an average of 132 per cent above pre-pandemic levels.

Notably, the team found that the degree of immunity debt was linked to how stringent a country's Covid-19 restrictions had been during the pandemic.

Countries with severe lockdowns and social distancing measures tended to see the largest flu resurgences later on.

The researchers urged public health authorities to factor in the risk of immunity debt in planning for future pandemic response strategies.

New AI tool to track efficacy of multiple sclerosis treatments

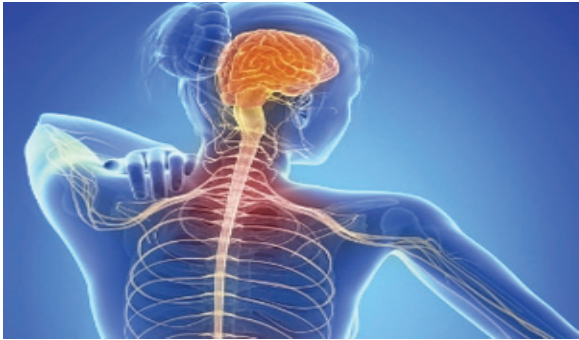
AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

UK researchers have developed a new artificial intelligence (AI) tool that can help interpret and assess how well treatments are working for patients with multiple sclerosis (MS).

MS is a condition where the immune system attacks the brain and spinal cord. This causes problems in how a person moves, feels or thinks.

The AI tool, called MindGlide, developed by researchers from the University College London (UCL) uses mathematical models to train computers by using massive amounts of data to learn. It solves problems in ways that can seem human, including how to perform complex tasks like image recognition.

MindGlide can extract key information from brain images (MRI scans) acquired during the care of MS patients, such as



measuring damaged areas of the brain and highlighting subtle changes such as brain shrinkage and plaques.

While MRI markers are crucial for studying and testing treatments for MS, measuring them needs specialised scans, limiting the effectiveness of many routine hospital scans.

"We hope that the tool will unlock valuable information from millions of untapped brain images that were previously difficult or impossible to understand, immediately leading to valuable insights

into multiple sclerosis for researchers and, in the near future, to better understand a patient's condition through AI in the clinic. We hope this will be possible in the next five to 10 years," said Dr. Philipp Goebel from UCL's Queen Square Institute of Neurology.

In the new study, published in the journal Nature Communications, researchers tested the effectiveness of MindGlide on over 14,000 images from more than 1,000 patients with MS.

MindGlide was able

to successfully use AI to detect how different treatments affected disease progression in clinical trials and routine care, using images that could not previously be analysed and routine MRI scan images. The process took just five to 10 seconds per image.

"Using MindGlide will enable us to use existing brain images in hospital archives to better understand multiple sclerosis and how treatment affects the brain," Goebel added.

The results from the study show that it is possible to use MindGlide to accurately identify and measure important brain tissues and lesions even with limited MRI data and single types of scans that aren't usually used for this purpose -- such as T2-weighted MRI without FLAIR -- a type of scan that highlights fluids in the body but still contains bright signals -- making it harder to see plaques.

Healthcare hiring in India sees surge in intent in H1 2025: Report

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Expanding on the previous year's trends, healthcare hiring in India is set to increase in the first half (H1) of this year, a report said on Monday, adding that there is a 52 per cent hiring intent in the January-June period -- a 5 per cent increase from July-December 2024.

This is driven by advancements in digital health solutions, the expansion of diagnostic services, and the growing need for specialised care professionals, according to the report released by TeamLease Edtech.

The healthcare market is projected to reach \$638 billion by 2025, creating abundant opportunities for job seekers.

Metropolitan cities such as Bengaluru, Delhi and Chennai are witnessing a significant surge in healthcare hiring, according to the report.



With hospitals and healthcare providers integrating AI-driven diagnostics, telemedicine, and data-driven treatment models, the demand for skilled professionals has intensified, said Shantanu Rooj, Founder and CEO, TeamLease Edtech.

Additionally, increased investments in research and medical infrastructure are fuelling opportunities in emerging healthcare hubs, Rooj added.

The demand for healthcare professionals in India is witnessing a significant shift, with the highest need for Medical Transcriptionists observed in Bengaluru, where demand stands at an impressive 65 per cent.

Delhi follows closely with a 60 per cent demand for clinical data analysts. Other key roles also show notable interest, such as pharmacy technicians in Gurugram at 58 per cent,

phlebotomists at 55 per cent, and dieticians at 51 per cent.

Interestingly, tier 2 cities are emerging as vibrant hubs for the healthcare and pharmaceutical sectors.

As aspiring professionals consider pursuing careers in the healthcare industry, several certification courses are gaining prominence.

These in-demand programmes include Applied Clinical Data Analysis, Medical Reference Application, Pharmacy Technician Certification, Data Management, Clinical Documentation Software Training, Laboratory and Phlebotomy Software, and Automated Transcription Applications, among others.

These certifications are not only enhancing skill sets but also aligning industry professionals with the growing needs of the healthcare landscape, said the report.

Over 525 individuals receiving mental health support daily under Tele-Manas programme

AGENCIES
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government is setting new milestones in revitalising the healthcare landscape of the state, while also implementing the Central healthcare schemes with precision and penetration in distant and remote areas.

Tele-Manas, a mental healthcare system, has seen extensive success in Uttar Pradesh much like Ayushman Bharat scheme, and today it is catering to more than 500 patients, requiring assistance with mental health conditions.

Currently, 525 individuals are receiving free and confidential mental health support on a daily basis in the state, said an official statement. A total of 64 trained counselors are responding to an average of 525 callers daily and tending to them, providing counselling and physiological assistance.



Uttar Pradesh's Tele-Manas service was also recognised by the Central Government recently, as one of the best in the country, awarding it third place among large states.

A standout feature of Tele-Manas is its round-the-clock availability, offering free and confidential counseling from trained mental health professionals.

Presently, four Tele-

Manas centers are operational in Uttar Pradesh--at the Department of Psychiatry, BRD Medical College (Gorakhpur), Mental Health Institute and Hospital (Agra), Mental Hospital (Bareilly), and Mental Hospital (Varanasi). Through these centers, callers receive primary consultation, guidance, and referrals to further medical support when required.

The Yogi Adityanath government had launched the Tele-Manas helpline in October 2022, extending mental health services to both urban and rural areas. Since then, over 3.45 lakh people have benefited from the initiative.

To ensure easy access, the state government launched two helpline numbers -- 14416 and 1800-891-4416 (toll-free) -- through which anyone in need of mental health support can connect with expert counselors. The entire consultation process is confidential, providing a safe and supportive environment for callers to express their concerns freely.

The Tele-Manas mental health counseling service has not only helped raise awareness about mental well-being but has also emerged as a lifeline by offering free and high-quality consultations to those struggling with mental health challenges.

Indian scientists develop new magnetic nanoparticles to boost cancer treatments

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

A team of scientists from the Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology (IASST), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), has developed new magnetic nanoparticles that will help boost treatments against cancer.

The magnetic system developed using nanoparticles treats cancer by increasing the temperature of tumour cells. The system works through a procedure called magnetic hyperthermia for treating cancer.

Cancer has been considered one of the most threatening diseases for humanity. Of several available treatment methods, the most effective treatments for cancerous cells are radiation therapy, chemotherapy, targeted therapy, and stem cell transplant.



All the cancer treatment methods have demonstrated multiple side effects.

In addition to being costly, the treatments are also inaccessible to many.

The team from IASST focused on nanomagnets, which opened a targeted heat generation process (hyperthermia) to treat cancer cells.

The therapy comes with comparatively fewer side effects and is controlled by the magnetic field from outside.

Due to the direct impact of various physical parameters of nanomagnets on the self-heating efficacy, it is challenging to create and control bio-friendly coated magnetic nanoparticles with an effective heat generation efficiency.

Thus, the team synthesised nanocrystalline cobalt chromite magnetic nanoparticles with varying rare-earth Gd dopant contents using the conventional chemical co-precipitation route.

These magnetic nanoparticles' inhomogeneous in fluid form was used further to generate heat under the applied alternating magnetic field."

"The heat generation method of magnetic nanoparticles can be used in treating cancer cells by elevating the cell temperature up to 46 degrees Celsius for a specific duration, causing necrosis in the injured cells when applied to particular cancer locations," the researchers said.

"Thus, superparamagnetic nanoparticles act as nano-heaters and can potentially be utilised in magnetic hyperthermia applications for treating cancer and offering alternative cancer therapy," they added.

The findings have recently been published in Nanoscale Advances, a peer-reviewed journal of the Royal Society of Chemistry, UK.

Study finds 1 in 3,000 people at risk of punctured lung from faulty gene

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

UK researchers have found that one in 3,000 people could be carrying a defective gene that significantly raises their risk of having a punctured lung.

Punctured lung -- known as pneumothorax -- is caused by an air leak in the lung, resulting in painful lung deflation and shortness of breath.

In a study, encompassing more than 550,000 people, researchers from the University of Cambridge discovered that between one in 2,710 and one in 4,190 individuals carry a particular variant of gene FLCN that raises the risk of Birt-Hogg-Dube syndrome.

Birt-Hogg-Dube syndrome is a rare, inherited disorder characterised by benign skin tumours, lung cysts, and an increased risk of kidney cancer. However, not every case of



punctured lung is caused by a fault in the FLCN gene.

The study, published in the journal Thorax, showed that patients with a diagnosis of Birt-Hogg-Dube syndrome showed a lifetime risk of punctured lung of 37 per cent. However, in the wider cohort of carriers of the genetic mutation in FLCN gene, this was lower at 28 per cent.

More strikingly, while patients with Birt-Hogg-Dube syndrome have 32 per cent of develop-

ing kidney cancer, in the wider cohort this was only 1 per cent.

Professor Marciniak, a researcher at the University of Cambridge said he was surprised to discover that the risk of kidney cancer was so much lower in carriers of the faulty FLCN gene who have not been diagnosed with Birt-Hogg-Dube syndrome.

This signals that the faulty FLCN gene may not be alone behind the disorder.

"There's clearly something else going on," he added.

The study showed that about one in 200 tall, thin young men in their teenage or early twenties will experience a punctured lung. For many, the condition will resolve itself, or doctors will remove air or fluid from their lungs while treating the individual as an outpatient.

If an individual experiences a punctured lung and doesn't fit the common characteristics -- for example, if they are in their forties -- doctors will look for tell-tale cysts in the lower lungs, visible on an MRI scan. If these are present, then the individual is likely to have Birt-Hogg-Dube syndrome, the researchers explained.

"If an individual has Birt-Hogg-Dube syndrome, then it's very important that we're able to diagnose it, because they and their family members may also be at risk of kidney cancer," Professor Marciniak said.



Kohli-Salt opening threat looms large as RR bowlers face acid test

UNI

JAIPUR, APR 12

As the Indian Premier League 2025 enters a crucial phase, Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) will bank on the red-hot form of their opening duo, Virat Kohli and Philip Salt, when they face Rajasthan Royals (RR) in the 28th match at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium here on Sunday afternoon.

With three wins in five games, RCB are slightly ahead in the mid-table scramble and will look to consolidate their position against an RR side coming off a heavy 58-run defeat to Gujarat Titans. The key concern of the hosts has been their inconsistent bowling, and they now face the daunting task of containing arguably the most dangerous opening pair in the tournament.

Kohli, leading the Orange Cap race early in the season, has rediscovered his vintage touch with elegant timing and calculated aggression. Partnering him at the top, England's Salt has added an explosive dimension, scoring at a strike rate of 217.65 in the previous match. Their aggressive starts have routinely taken the pressure off the middle order and allowed RCB to



post or chase down high totals on flat surfaces.

The duo's combined form is not just a strength but a strategic advantage. On a Jaipur pitch that offers true bounce and rewards strokeplay, the Kohli-Salt combination could make or break the contest in the powerplay overs.

Rajasthan, on the other hand, are grappling with a bowling lineup that has failed to deliver consistently. Archer's return to form is a silver lining, but Fazalhaq Farooqi has been expensive, and even the normally reliable Sandeep Sharma leaked 53 runs in four overs against Gujarat. Maheesh Theekshana, though among the wickets, has struggled with economy.

RR's inability to contain runs in the middle overs and at the death has exposed them repeatedly. Captain Sanju Samson has called for greater discipline from his bowlers, but facing a rampant RCB top order will be their sternest test yet.

While RCB's middle order, featuring Rajat Patidar, Devdutt Padikal, Liam Livingstone and Jitesh Sharma, has shown flashes of brilliance, it still lacks consistency. The lower-order hitting prowess of Tim David and Krunal Pandya lends depth, though.

For the Royals, Yashasvi Jaiswal's dip in form is a concern, and they will need solid contributions from Nitish Rana, Riyan

Parag, and the experienced Shimron Hetmyer. Samson himself remains a key figure, both with the bat and behind the stumps.

With sunny skies and dry conditions forecast, the Jaipur track is expected to play true throughout the game. Historically, it has offered some turn for spinners, but not enough to make a decisive impact unless backed by disciplined bowling. Teams chasing have had a better record at this venue, and both captains are likely to opt to bowl first if they win the toss.

With both teams looking to bounce back from losses, the clash promises to be intense. RCB hold the edge with their in-form opening pair and a more settled bowling combination featuring Josh Hazlewood, Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Yash Dayal. For RR to challenge, early wickets and a spirited batting response will be crucial. RCB and RR have shared two wins each in their last four encounters, with their most recent meeting seeing Rajasthan chase down 172 with ease.

As the race for playoff spots heats up, Sunday's match may well hinge on how Rajasthan handle the Kohli-Salt storm.

DC target perfect run as MI fight for survival

UNI

NEW DELHI, APR 12

Delhi Capitals will seek to consolidate their dominant start to the Indian Premier League 2025 campaign when they take on the inconsistent Mumbai Indians in Match 29 at the Arun Jaitley Stadium here on Sunday evening.

The Capitals have been a well-oiled unit this season, unbeaten after four games, second on the points table, and playing with the kind of clarity and confidence that most teams envy. In sharp contrast, Mumbai find themselves in a familiar mire, languishing in eighth place with just one win from five matches.

At the heart of Delhi's perfect start is the form of KL Rahul, who has emerged as the fulcrum of their batting lineup. The stylish right-hander has not only brought stability at the top but has played the role of the aggressor when needed. His unbeaten 93 off 53 deliveries in Delhi's last match, a clinical six-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bengaluru, was a masterclass in chasing under pressure. From 58 for 4, Rahul stitched together a match-winning partnership of 111 runs with Tristan Stubbs, who contributed a crucial 38* off 23 balls.

With 185 runs from three innings at an impressive strike rate of 169.72, Rahul's presence has transformed Delhi's bat-



ting approach, measured when required, and explosive when opportunity arises. Stubbs, meanwhile, has been a perfect foil in the middle order, rotating strike and capitalising on loose deliveries with finesse.

Delhi's bowling attack, too, has been clicking on all cylinders. Mitchell Starc's pace up front has fetched him 9 wickets in four matches, while Kuldeep Yadav has been outstanding with his wrist spin in the middle overs, taking 8 wickets and going at a miserly 5.66 runs per over.

Youngster Vipraj Nigam has emerged as a valuable asset, keeping things tight and picking up key breakthroughs, his 2/18 against RCB being a standout performance. Axar Patel's all-round presence and Mohit Sharma's deceptive slower balls have added depth to attack throughout the 20 overs.

While Delhi have looked settled and threatening,

Mumbai continue to battle inconsistency, both with bat and ball. Their most recent outing saw them fall short by 12 runs while chasing a daunting 222 against RCB at Wankhede. Though Tilak Varma (56 off 29) and captain Hardik Pandya (42 off 15) led a spirited late fightback, the top order once again failed to build a solid foundation.

Suryakumar Yadav has been their lone bright spot in the batting department with 199 runs in five innings at a strike rate above 150, but support has been lacking. Rohit Sharma has yet to find his rhythm, while Will Jacks and Ryan Rickelton have failed to convert starts into substantial scores.

Pandya, under growing pressure as captain, has tried to lead by example with the ball, picking up 10 wickets at an economy of 8.57. However, his bowlers have struggled to contain runs at key moments.

Trent Boult and Mitchell Santner have shown promise in patches, but haven't

been able to deliver consistently. Jasprit Bumrah's return has been a boost, but the ace pacer is still working his way back to full rhythm. Vignesh Puthur, the new face in the XI, has quietly impressed with regular wickets in each match, though he hasn't been able to change games singlehandedly.

The match venue is expected to favour batsmen. The Arun Jaitley Stadium has seen several high-scoring encounters in recent editions, including a record 266-7 by Sunrisers Hyderabad last year. With an average first innings score of around 170 and flat surfaces offering little for bowlers, anything under 180 could be considered below par.

Moreover, the toss is expected to play a crucial role. All five matches at this ground during IPL 2024 were won by the side batting first, suggesting that setting a total is the preferred strategy.

When these two sides last met at this venue on April 27, 2024, Delhi edged out Mumbai by 10 runs in a high-scoring thriller. In their last three encounters, Mumbai have won two matches, while Delhi claimed one win, their most recent meeting.

Delhi, in their current form, are overwhelming favourites. With Rahul anchoring the innings, a settled bowling unit firing in tandem, and momentum firmly on their side, they are eyeing their fifth consecutive win.

Fatima Sana takes confidence from upbeat start ahead of West Indies Qualifier clash

UNI

LAHORE, APR 12

As the Cricket World Cup Qualifier 2025 approaches a decisive phase, Pakistan are riding high on confidence after an undefeated run in the tournament so far.

Speaking after Pakistan's comprehensive win against Scotland, skipper Fatima Sana discussed the areas where her side will look to work on ahead of the all-important West Indies clash.

"We'll try to be calm and easy in batting partnerships because in situations like these teams tend to buckle down under pressure. We'll cope with it better and will keep working on it, as the future games will bring greater



pressure and intensity," she said.

The hosts' in-form run in the tournament has seen them excel with the bat and ball. They beat Ireland in their first encounter by 38 runs and then defeated Scotland by six wickets.

Perhaps the biggest positive out of these wins was that they were team results, with several squad members contributing, an

ICC report said.

These included likes of Muneeba Ali and Aliya Riaz who excelled with the willow in the recent encounter, and Fatima who brought crucial breakthroughs at the LCCA in their win yesterday. Similarly, Diana Baig, Riaz, Nashra Sandu, and Sidra Amin starred in the first game against Ireland.

The skipper was pleased

with her side's efforts, "This is a good thing for the team, we'll get a boost. When you win the team gets more confidence and with the big matches coming, we'll try harder."

Despite carrying an injury, Sana delivered five overs and picked four important wickets.

"It was a tough situation due to injury, but I performed well, the team will get confidence along with myself. So I'm hoping for more good things to come," Sana discussed her bowling performance towards the death overs.

Pakistan face West Indies on April 14 in Lahore as they look to cement their place at the upcoming Women's Cricket World Cup in India later this year.

I missed clay: Alcaraz into Monte Carlo semis

UNI

PARIS, APR 12

Carlos Alcaraz says he "missed" playing on clay after he booked his place in the semi-finals of the Monte Carlo Masters with a spirited fightback.

The Spaniard, 21, came from a set down to clinch a 4-6 7-5 6-3 victory over Frenchman Arthur Fils to secure his spot in the last four.

French Open champion Alcaraz will now face compatriot Alejandro Davidovich Fokina, who beat Australia's Alexei Popyrin in straight sets, on Saturday for a place in the final.

World number three Alcaraz saved three break points in the 11th

game of the second set in a thrilling tussle with 20-year-old Fils, the BBC reported.

Alcaraz said he had to "stay strong" and "wait for chances" against Fils before he was able to capitalise on any errors.

"I think his level is high right now and he puts a lot of pressure on his opponents," Alcaraz said. "Today I could feel it but in some moments he just made a few mistakes and I tried to make the most of those points."

"I have missed clay. It is good to play the drop shot and it is a shot I use a lot and feel comfortable using. In matches like this I won almost every drop shot I hit and it gives me more confidence."

Fils made a stunning start to the match as he surged into a 3-0 lead with two early breaks in the opening set.

Alcaraz managed to draw level at 4-4, only for Fils to break once more and then hold serve to take the set as he saved two break points.

Fils squandered seven break points in the second set, and Alcaraz squared the match with a superb lob to break Fils' serve in the 12th game.

Alcaraz dropped serve once again in the third game of the decider, but managed to break back and then secured another break in the eighth game to the frustration of Fils, who smashed his racket on the clay.

World number 15 Fils failed to regain his composure while Alcaraz kept his cool to seal the match.

Four-time Grand Slam champion Alcaraz is bidding to win his first Masters title since victory at Indian Wells last year.

Later on Friday, Italian Lorenzo Musetti beat Greek defending champion Stefanos Tsitsipas 1-6 6-3 6-4 to progress to his maiden ATP Masters 1000 semi-final.

World number 16 Musetti saved 14 of the 17 break points he came up against and will meet Australian eighth seed Alex de Minaur, who breezed past Grigor Dimitrov 6-0 6-0, in the last eight.

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Editorial Section- 7006846797, Multimedia Section-9419008414, Advertisement Section - 9697071471, RNI NO- JKENG/2011/39231